



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to lead caretaker government

Published 10 November 2021

The Prime Minister has today requested to be relieved of office. The Prime Minister and the other ministers were therefore dismissed by the Speaker of the Riksdag. They retain their positions until a new government takes office. The Government is thus a caretaker government.

The Speaker will now consult with representatives of the party groups (Speaker's interview rounds) with the aim of proposing a new Prime Minister to the Riksdag.

A caretaker government primarily makes decisions on ongoing or urgent matters. The only explicit restriction on the powers of a caretaker government is that it may not decide to hold extraordinary elections.

The task of the Government Offices is to prepare government business and in other respects assist the Government and its ministers in their activities. This also applies when the Government is a caretaker government.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Covid-19, migration and energy prices on the agenda of the EU Summit

Published 21 October 2021

As the EU heads of state and government meet in the European Council in Brussels, the agenda includes the COVID-19 vaccine situation and how the EU can advance digital transformation. The high energy prices in many Member States will also be discussed. At Sweden's initiative, the leaders will hold a strategic discussion on trade issues.

COVID-19

The Council will take stock of the epidemiological and vaccine situation in Europe and discuss the coordination that will be needed in the EU to restore free movement and international solidarity in vaccine-sharing. Work to allow vaccine certificates from countries outside the EU is under way as part of efforts to normalise travel. Although border issues are dealt with at national level, Sweden considers it important that action within the EU is as coordinated as possible and that the joint recommendations are reviewed.

Digital transformation

Another matter on the European Council's agenda is the implementation of the EU's digital agenda and the negotiations on the major legal instruments in this area. Sweden welcomes strong EU engagement in advancing digital transformation. The EU needs clear regulations that do not impede development in this area. Prioritising digital transformation throughout the

EU will ensure more effective and rapid development, benefiting everything from health care to law enforcement.

Energy prices

At the request of a number of Member States, the EU leaders will discuss the recent hike in energy prices. The unusually high electricity prices affect both private individuals and businesses, and although Swedish electricity prices are among the lowest in the EU, we are also affected by the electricity shortage. This has been caused by a failure of production to meet the high demand that is emerging in the recovery from the pandemic. The European Commission has produced a toolkit with suggested measures that the Member States could take to tackle the situation and support those affected. For Sweden, it is crucial that the EU views a transition to sustainable energy as the only long-term solution and that the EU ensures access to cheap, fossil-free energy.

Migration

The EU leaders will also discuss the external dimension of migration and the proposals put forward by the Commission. It is important that the EU deepens its cooperation with countries of origin and transit countries to counter underlying causes of irregular migration and forced displacement, and that the EU works to strengthen these countries' own capacities. Sweden also considers it important that further efforts are made to put in place a long-term, sustainable joint asylum system.

COP26 in Glasgow

It is important to Sweden that the EU has a strong message to convey at COP26 in Glasgow. The climate crisis is happening here and now, and we must keep the target of 1.5 degrees alive. At COP26, the EU must establish how the Member States can live up to the commitments made. What is clear is that everyone needs to do more if the EU's climate finance target is to be met.

Trade

Sweden has taken the initiative to place trade discussions on the European Council agenda. Trade issues have long been characterised by trade conflicts and trade defence instruments. Sweden sees a need to transform a negative

trade agenda into a more open and forward-looking agenda. Trade plays a key role as a driver of growth, jobs and welfare.

One matter that is not on the agenda but may be touched upon is the Polish Constitutional Tribunal's widely discussed ruling on the relationship between EU law and national law.

Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will attend the meeting in Brussels.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Malmö Forum Breakout Sessions (2)

Published 13 October 2021

2.1 Implementing strategies and ensuring security

2.2 Combating antisemitism and hate speech on social media

2.3 Preserving testimonies and developing education for the future



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Malmö Forum Breakout Sessions (1)

Published 13 October 2021

- 1.1 Promoting remembrance, fighting distortion
 - 1.2 Developing education and reaching new target groups
 - 1.3 Countering contemporary antisemitism and other forms of racism online and offline
-



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven arrives at the conference Remember–ReAct

Published 13 October 2021

Wednesday morning 13 October Prime Minister Stefan Löfven arrived at Remember–ReAct, the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

“We all have a duty to stand up against antisemitism”

Published 11 October 2021

What does Prime Minister Stefan Löfven hope that the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism will result in, and what has Sweden pledged to do? Interview with Stefan Löfven ahead of the Malmö International Forum, which will take place on 13 October.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven has invited heads of state and government, international organisations and social media platforms to Remember-ReAct, the Malmö International Forum for Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism. The Forum will take place on 13 October in Malmö.

Why is this conference important?

“Even though antisemitism should be confined to history, we see that it is spreading in today’s society. Hatred of Jews is found in our history, in extreme right-wing groups, in certain left-wing groups and in Islamist environments. We see conspiracy theories in social media and how the memory of the Holocaust is distorted and exploited for political purposes.

“We all have a duty to stand up against antisemitism. An important part of this is Holocaust remembrance, which is becoming more difficult now that those who survived are growing old and will soon no longer be able share their experiences. By remembering and taking action against antisemitism today, we ensure that something like the Holocaust never happens again.”

During the conference, all countries are to make concrete pledges to strengthen Holocaust remembrance efforts and combat racism. What do you

hope this will result in?

“Our moving from words to action. The basis for remembrance efforts and combating antisemitism is already established, in part in the Stockholm Declaration from 2000. What we need now is not fine words and lofty phrases, we must ensure that more concrete action is taken. I hope that the fact that all Remember-ReAct participants are coming to the Forum with concrete pledges will result in our being able to jointly make real progress in this important work.”

What has Sweden pledged and why?

“We have made several pledges in connection with Remember-ReAct to contribute both to the memory of the Holocaust and to preventing antisemitism today and in the future. Sweden pledges to preserve and pass on the memory of the Holocaust; to promote education to prevent antisemitism and other forms of racism and to strengthen Holocaust research; to combat antisemitism, antigypsyism and other forms of racism – online and offline; and to promote Jewish life, strengthen Roma inclusion and enhance security for civil society.

“To accomplish this, we are implementing a range of measures, including establishing a museum to preserve and pass on the memory of the Holocaust, and an education initiative to prevent antisemitism and other forms of racism.”

Sweden’s pledges at the Malmö Forum



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Malmö Forum Videos

Published 11 October 2021

Videofilms from Malmö Forum

- Arrivals and doorstep at Malmömässan (Web-TV on demand)
- Prime Minister Stefan Löfven arrives at the conference Remember–ReAct (Web-TV on demand)
- Plenary session I – Remember (Web-TV on demand)
- Breakout sessions, 2 x 3 parallel sessions, in all six sessions (Web-TV on demand)
- Plenary session II – ReAct (Web-TV on demand)
- Press conference with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven (Web-TV on demand)

The content of the films are the opinions of the speakers



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Education and Research

The Programme of the Malmö Forum

Published 04 October 2021

The programme format will be interactive and action-oriented, with a focus on discussions between Heads of Delegations with active moderation. The head moderator of the Malmö Forum is Ms. Hala Gorani, anchor and correspondent for CNN International. HM King Carl XVI Gustaf and HM Queen Silvia will honour the Malmö Forum with their presence throughout the day the 13 October.

Tuesday 12 October

18.00–20.00 Welcome Reception (not open for media)

A welcome reception for the Heads of Delegations will be hosted by the Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. Delegates are invited to a separate welcome reception. This will be hosted by the State Secretary to Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Ms Karin Wallensteen, and State Secretary to the Minister for Education Anna Ekström, Ms Kristina Persdotter. The receptions will feature music in Yiddish by the Swedish/Danish duo Ida&Louise.

Wednesday 13 October

08.30–09.45 Doorstep

Web-TV on demand: Doorstep

10.00–11.15 Plenary Session I – Remember

Web-TV on demand: Plenary Session I – Remember

Today, few survivors remain to bear witness to the horrors of the Holocaust. The opening Plenary Session will reflect on the consequences of the diminishing number of survivors and witnesses of the Holocaust, the Roma genocide and the persecution that different groups were exposed to during the Holocaust. The international community has an obligation to ensure that the Holocaust is remembered and that future generations understand the causes of and the process leading up to the Holocaust, and to reflect on its consequences to prevent this from ever happening again.

The first Plenary Session will feature klezmer musician Giora Feidman and musical performances in Yiddish by Gabrielle Aaron-Johansson, and in Romani by Maria Salamanca Taikon Gonzalez. The speakers in this Plenary Session:

- Prime Minister of Sweden Stefan Löfven
- Mayor of Malmö City Katrin Stjernfeldt Jammeh
- President of the European Council Charles Michel
- President of Israel Isaac Herzog
- Professor Yehuda Bauer
- President of the World Jewish Congress Ronald Lauder
- President of the European Roma and Travellers Forum Miranda Vuolasranta
- President of France Emmanuel Macron
- United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

11.15–11.35 Family photo

11.50–12.50 Breakout Sessions

(Web-TV on demand: Breakout Sessions 1)

Three parallel Breakout Sessions will feature interactive discussions focusing on the different themes of the Forum with short interventions (approx. 3 min) by Heads of Delegations. Each Breakout Session will start with a brief “scene setter” by an expert. The format of these sessions is a moderated conversation where the moderator will play an active role. The organisers kindly ask all speakers to respect the limited time for interventions in order

to allow for an interactive conversation. At the end of each session there will be possibilities for questions or comments from delegates.

1.1 Promoting remembrance, fighting distortion

This session will focus on the significance of museums, memorials, and commemorative activities to promote Holocaust remembrance. Discussions will also cover how to combat denial and distortion – which includes safeguarding independent free research – to guarantee a correct presentation of historical facts and honour the memory of all victims of the Holocaust and other mass atrocities. This is also a prerequisite for lessons to be learnt and efforts to prevent mass atrocities in the future.

1.2 Developing education and reaching new target groups

This session will explore the development of Holocaust education and its various aims. These aims include preserving the memory and understanding of the historical course of events, and the role of education as a mean to prevent and combat antisemitism, antigypsyism and other forms of racism. The ways that Holocaust education and education to prevent antisemitism can reach a wider target group and approaches to capacity-building for teachers will also be covered.

1.3 Countering contemporary antisemitism and other forms of racism online and offline

This session will explore the nature of contemporary antisemitism and the various contexts where it exists. Discussions will also cover good examples of combating antisemitism, antigypsyism and other forms of racism and intolerance. A special area of emphasis will be antisemitism on social media platforms, Holocaust denial, distortion, disinformation, conspiracy theories and incitement to hate crimes and hate speech online.

13.00–14.30 Lunch

A lunch for the Heads of Delegations will be hosted by Prime Minister Löfven. Delegates are invited to a separate lunch. The lunch at the Malmö Forum will feature a musical performance by the Alma Quartet from the Malmö Symphony Orchestra. The lunch for the delegates will be hosted by the State Secretary to Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Ms Karin Wallensteen, and State Secretary to the Minister for Education Anna Ekström, Ms Kristina Persdotter.

14.50–15.50 Breakout Sessions

(Web-TV on demand: Breakout Sessions 2)

Three parallel Breakout Sessions will feature interactive discussions focusing on the different themes of the Forum with short interventions (approx. 3 min) by Heads of Delegations. Each Breakout Session will start with a brief “scene setter” by an expert. The format for these sessions is a moderated conversation where the moderator will play an active role. The organisers kindly ask all speakers to respect the limited time for interventions in order to allow for an interactive conversation. At the end of each session there will be possibilities for questions or comments.

2.1 Implementing strategies and ensuring security

This session will deal with the use of different tools, for example strategies and action plans to combat antisemitism, and the appointment of special coordinators/rapporteurs to combat antisemitism. The session will also explore examples of implementation of the IHRA non-legally binding Working Definitions on antisemitism and antigypsyism/Roma discrimination. Discussions will also cover the promotion of Jewish life and ensuring safety and security of persons belonging to minorities affected by antisemitism, antigypsyism and other forms of racism and intolerance.

2.2 Combating antisemitism and hate speech on social media

This session will address the use of social media to spread disinformation, incite hatred and incitement to violence and how these developments can be prevented and countered by various actors at state, regional and local level (law enforcement, education systems, etc.), social media platform companies and civil society. The session will also explore how social media can be part of the solution to promote human rights and strengthen democracy. Discussions will also cover media and information literacy.

2.3 Preserving testimonies and developing education for the future

How can we ensure that the testimonies and witnesses of survivors remain accessible and continue to be shared in the future? In order to reach new and changing target groups, diverse forms and methods within Holocaust Education will be explored. This includes coalition-building involving various sectors, such as civil society, experts and academics. Participants will also explore new practices and technologies of reaching out and making an impact.

16.15–17.15 Plenary Session II – ReAct

Web-TV on demand: Plenary Session II – ReAct

The Holocaust was driven by hatred against Jews. However, it affected not only Jews but the whole society. Antisemitism is a concern for society as a whole and may be symptomatic of eroding democracy. Contemporary antisemitism, antigypsyism and other forms of racism and intolerance exist in many forms and flourish in different contexts. Wherever we see it, we must both react – and – act. The concluding Plenary Session will focus on action, the steps forward to ensure implementation of the pledges presented at the Forum, and how we can join forces to strengthen the work for Holocaust remembrance and combating antisemitism and other forms of racism.

This concluding Plenary Session will be opened by the Swedish art music composer, Jacob Mühlrad. Cello soloist Johannes Rostamo will perform "Maggid", composed by Mühlrad. The Session will end with a musical performance by Swedish singer Lisa Nilsson. The speakers will be:

- President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen
- Panel:
 - President of Finland Sauli Niinistö
 - Prime Minister of Albania Edi Rama
 - Minister of State for Europe at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany Michael Roth
- Secretary-General of the United Nations António Guterres
- President of European Jewish Congress Moshe Kantor
- COO of Facebook Sheryl Sandberg
- Panel:
 - Secretary General of the Secretariat of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Kathrin Meyer
 - High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Miguel Ángel Moratinos
 - Minister of Diaspora Affairs of Israel Nachman Shai
- Prime Minister of Sweden Stefan Löfven.

17.30–18.00 Press Conference with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

Web-TV on demand: Press Conference with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

Prime Minister Löfven will host the Malmö Forum Press Conference. Heads of Delegations will have the opportunity to hold parallel press conferences after 18.00.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Education and Research

Sweden's pledges at the Malmö Forum

Published 13 September 2021

Sweden will assume the Presidency of the IHRA from March 2022 to the end of February 2023. This was Sweden's first pledge in connection with the Malmö Forum. Pledges presented at the Malmö Forum will be followed up during the Swedish Presidency. The ambition of the Swedish Government is to implement the measures below and allocate a total amount of approximately EUR 9.3 million/year.

We pledge to preserve and pass on the memory of the Holocaust

- A museum to preserve and pass on the memory of the Holocaust will be established in Sweden in 2022. The activities of the museum will be built up and formed over the years to come. One starting point is that stories of Holocaust survivors with a connection to Sweden will be at the core of the museum's activities. A Swedish-language version of the Dimensions in Testimony installation (developed by the Shoah Foundation) that allows visitors to interact with Holocaust survivors via pre-recorded answers to questions – using artificial intelligence technology – will be spread by the museum to schools and other museums all over the country.
- The Swedish Government will make a contribution of 5,5 million kronor to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation, so that this place is preserved and new generations can build a future from learning, reflecting and remembering the terrible past.

We pledge to promote education to prevent antisemitism and other forms of racism and to strengthen Holocaust research

- Education for active citizenship to prevent antisemitism and other forms of racism will be promoted through a nationwide undertaking conducted by the Swedish National Agency for Education in cooperation with the Living History Forum. It will focus on a wide range of target groups encompassing formal and non-formal education.
- Activities, based on the recommendations of the Swedish Research Council's survey of Swedish research on the Holocaust and antisemitism, including groups such as the Roma and antigypsyism, will be initiated during 2022, with funding allocated by the Swedish Research Council.

We pledge to combat antisemitism, antigypsyism and other forms of racism – online and offline

- An action programme with measures against antisemitism will be presented in 2022. Action programmes targeting antigypsyism, islamophobia, Afrophobia and racism against the Sami will also be presented. The IHRA working definitions of antisemitism and antigypsyism/Roma discrimination will be considered in these respective programmes. The programmes will e.g. include measures in the field of education, continued and enhanced efforts by the police to counter racism and hate crime, as well as an assignment to the Swedish Defence Research Agency to continuously monitor antisemitism and other forms of racism, hate speech and violent extremism in digital environments.
- Organised racism and support for organised racism will be criminalised. The Government will also consult the Parliament and appoint a parliamentary committee of inquiry to unbiasedly consider whether Holocaust denial should be more clearly criminalised.

We pledge to promote Jewish life, strengthen Roma inclusion and enhance security for civil society

- A government inquiry on a strategy to promote Jewish life in Sweden will be appointed. The National strategy for Roma inclusion will continue and permanent resources will be allocated from 2022. Language centres for Yiddish and Romani will be established.

- Funding for security-enhancing measures for civil society, including the Jewish community, will increase significantly from 2022.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister leads caretaker government

Published 28 June 2021

The Prime Minister and the other ministers were dismissed by the Speaker of the Riksdag today. They retain their positions until a new government takes office. The Government is thus a caretaker government.

The Speaker will now consult with representatives of the party groups with the aim of proposing a new Prime Minister to the Riksdag.

“Sweden is facing a difficult political situation following the Riksdag’s vote of no confidence, at the same time as we are in the midst of a pandemic. In this situation, my priority and that of my Government has been to do what is best for the country. With this in mind, rather than calling extraordinary elections I have today requested my dismissal as Prime Minister from the Speaker of the Riksdag. I have informed him that I stand ready to lead a government that can be tolerated by the Riksdag,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The task of the Government Offices is to prepare government business and in other respects assist the Government and the ministers in their activities. This also applies when the Government is a caretaker government.

A caretaker government primarily makes decisions on ongoing or urgent matters. The only explicit restriction on the powers of a caretaker government is that it may not decide to hold extraordinary elections.

On 21 June, the Riksdag voted in favour of a declaration of no confidence in the Prime Minister.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

LGBTIQ and Russia on European Council agenda

Published 28 June 2021

Discussions on the situation in Russia and how the EU should manage it, along with LGBTIQ issues, dominated the EU summit on 24–25 June. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and other EU leaders also addressed the COVID-19 situation and the economic recovery.

LGBTIQ issues in Hungary

The EU leaders began the summit with a discussion on new legislation in Hungary and the EU's fundamental values.

- Many of us are appalled by the legislative amendments proposed by Hungary. In addition to restrictions on academic freedom and limitations on freedom of the press and on civil society, Hungary has now crossed another line. The proposed amendments are appalling and contrary to the EU's fundamental values relating to the equal value of all human beings. The EU must now continue the legal proceedings currently under way to protect our common values. If you are a member of the EU you must respect all people, commented Mr Löfven after the meeting.

Russia and Belarus

The situation in several countries and regions was discussed at the summit, including Turkey, Russia, Libya, Belarus and the Sahel.

- There must be dialogue and contact between the EU and Russia, and these

already take place. But what several of us pushed for was to make clear demands for Russia to change the direction of its actions. The most important of course is to end the illegal annexation of Crimea and the involvement in the conflict in eastern Ukraine, said Minister for EU Affairs Hans Dahlgren at a press briefing in connection with the summit. The EU leaders also followed up the discussions they had in May on the situation in Belarus, and reiterated the demand that all political prisoners in the country be released, including Raman Pratasevich and Sofia Sapega.

COVID-19 coordination and migration

The EU leaders had a general discussion on vaccination efforts and the COVID-19 situation in and outside the EU, and what lessons for the future can be learned from the COVID pandemic.

Some Member States had presented conclusions on the external dimension of migration – how migration is affected by the situation in countries around the EU.

Economic recovery and Euro Summit

On Friday, the heads of state and government discussed economic recovery in the EU after the pandemic, with focus on the Next Generation EU recovery plan they had adopted in July 2020.

A Euro Summit in inclusive format with President of the Eurogroup Paschal Donohoe and President of the European Central Bank Christine Lagarde was also held on Friday.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Economic recovery and foreign affairs at EU Summit

Published 24 June 2021

When the EU's heads of state and government meet in Brussels on 24–25 June, they will discuss the economic situation in the EU, migration and a number of foreign policy issues. They will also look at activities related to COVID-19. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and his colleagues will kick off the summit with a working lunch with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

COVID-19 coordination and migration

As in earlier meetings, the EU leaders will have a general discussion about COVID-19 vaccinations and the situation in the Member States and globally. The EU leaders will likely also undertake an initial discussion of what lessons can be learned from the COVID-19 crisis.

Some Member States have initiated a discussion on the external dimension of migration at the summit – in other words, how migration has been impacted by the situation in countries around the EU.

Turkey, Russia and other foreign affairs

The heads of state and government will discuss the situation in several countries and regions at the summit, including Turkey, Russia, Libya, Belarus and the Sahel region.

With respect to the situation in Russia, they will proceed based on the discussions at the last meeting of the European Council and the report that

the EU institutions have since drafted. The EU leaders will also follow up on the discussions they held in May on the situation in Belarus, when they adopted a series of measures, including sanctions.

Economic recovery and Euro Summit

The heads of state and government will spend Friday discussing post-pandemic economic recovery in the EU. The discussion will likely focus on the Next Generation EU recovery instrument that they agreed on in July 2020. Almost all EU Member States have submitted draft recovery plans to the European Commission. Now several countries are awaiting the Commission's decision on the allocation of loans and grants.

On Friday, a Euro Summit will also take place in an extended format. This means that EU Member States outside the euro area are welcome. The heads of state and government will discuss the banking union and the capital markets union.



Article from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Government Offices

Government plan for phasing out restrictions

Published 28 May 2021

The spread of COVID-19 and the number of hospital patients being treated for it are now decreasing dramatically. The largest vaccination campaign in Sweden's history is protecting more people every day from serious illness. At a press conference on Thursday, the Government presented its five-stage plan to adapt and phase out the restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Government's plan has five stages. In Stage 1, which starts on 1 June, the Government will ease a number of restrictions. In the final stage, Stage 5, the Government will essentially lift all restrictions and recommendations imposed in response to COVID-19. The Government is keen to ensure that it lifts the restrictions responsibly and remains prepared to handle any situation in which transmission increases again.

The Public Health Agency of Sweden uses three levels as its basis for continued adaptations of COVID-19 restrictions. The Government, in dialogue with the Public Health Agency, determines these levels based on an overall assessment of the following indicators: infection rates, the burden on health and medical care and stability of the situation, and vaccination rates.

To determine whether it is possible to proceed to the next stage and lift further restrictions, the Government will make an overall assessment based on the indicators identified by the Public Health Agency. These will be used to describe the progression of the pandemic and to inform the continued

adaptation of COVID-19 restrictions.

Adapted restrictions from 1 June

Stage 1, as partly communicated earlier, includes new participant limits for activities such as public gatherings and public events. Permanent funfairs and markets are no longer subject to participant limits. Funfairs will be regulated as amusement parks and similar facilities, and markets will be regulated as shopping areas. Opening hours of eating and drinking establishments will be extended to 22.30. The Public Health Agency will no longer advise against small-scale camps and sports cups for children and young people. Outdoor matches and competitions for adults will also be permitted.

Stage 2, which is expected to begin around 1 July, will include raised participant limits for public gatherings and events and private gatherings. At that point, the Public Health Agency will completely withdraw its advice against sport and recreation activities to individuals. The opening hours of eating and drinking establishments will be extended further, and the regulation concerning the maximum number of people per group and distance between groups for outdoor establishments will be lifted. The advice to socialise only within a very limited circle will be withdrawn, but socialising outdoors will still be preferable. Advice to clubs and associations to cancel, postpone or hold meetings remotely will be relaxed. Such meetings can then take place, but close contact should still be avoided.

In Stage 3, expected to start on 15 July, limitations on long-distance public transportation and regulations limiting the number of people per square in indoor and outdoor environments will be lifted.

Stage 4 is expected to start in September, at which point all participant limits for public gatherings and events and private gatherings will be lifted. The restrictions in the restaurant sector with respect to group size will also be eased.

All remaining restrictions will be lifted with the start of **Stage 5**. These include regulations concerning crowding in shopping areas and cultural and recreational activities. The requirement on certain central government agencies to ensure that only employees whose physical presence is necessary are present in the workplace will be lifted. The Public Health Agency will withdraw general advice concerning avoiding crowding,

working from home and maintaining especially good hand hygiene. It has not been determined when Stage 5 can start.

Proof of vaccination

In mid-June, the Government plans to communicate its position on whether it will introduce the possibility of using a vaccination certificate or similar proof of vaccination for certain public gatherings and events for a limited period. The position will clarify how this should be regulated and which public gatherings and events it would concern. Proof of vaccination could be used to enable large-scale events that would not otherwise be possible due to the pandemic to take place.

Although the situation in Sweden is improving, the Government considers that it is still necessary to be well-prepared to take measures if the situation should deteriorate. If this happens, the Government may have to modify its plan for adapting the restrictions.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Belarus and climate action key issues at the EU Summit

Published 26 May 2021 Updated 26 May 2021

Discussions at the special meeting of the European Council on 24 May were dominated by the events in Belarus involving the forced landing of a passenger plane in Minsk to detain a journalist. The EU leaders also discussed the situation in Russia. On 25 May, discussions mainly centred on EU climate action and vaccine coordination.

Events in Belarus

The Council meeting opened with a discussion on the recent events in Belarus involving the forced landing of a commercial flight.

- As you know, the European Council decided last night on a range of measures against Belarus, and we demand the immediate release of Raman Pratasevich and Sofia Sapega, the two people detained when the plane landed, said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at a press briefing on Tuesday morning.

- We also decided to call for an international investigation, adopt further sanctions both through listings of persons and entities and targeted economic sanctions, call on EU Member States to suspend overflights of Belarusian airspace, and prevent access to EU airports of flights operated by Belarusian airlines. It's encouraging that we could quickly agree on clear and resolute measures by the EU, fully in line with Sweden's demands, added Mr Löfven.

The situation in Russia

The EU leaders also discussed the situation in Russia.

- Many, myself included, emphasised the importance of the EU Member States being united on the issue of Russia. We'll continue our discussions on this issue at the next European Council in June.

COVID-19 vaccine coordination

The EU leaders engaged in a general discussion on COVID-19 vaccination and the COVID-19 situation in the Member States and globally.

- The EU is continuing its work to ensure global access to COVID-19 vaccines. It is the leading exporter of vaccines around the world, but we've also purchased more vaccine doses than we need. Today we agreed to donate at least 100 million doses by the end of the year. This is an important step. Sweden will contribute 3 million surplus vaccine doses, said Mr Löfven after the meeting.

EU climate action

The European Council previously agreed on a binding EU target of a reduction in carbon emissions of at least 55 per cent by 2030 and climate neutrality by 2050.

- Efforts to implement the EU's climate goals and fulfil our commitments under the Paris Agreement continue. We must maintain a high level of ambition and every country must contribute to the EU becoming climate neutral by 2050, said Mr Löfven.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Climate change and Russia on European Council agenda

Published 24 May 2021

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will meet with other EU leaders at the European Council in Brussels on 24–25 May. Items on the agenda include climate action, vaccine coordination and the situation in Russia. The EU leaders will also discuss the EU's relations with the UK.

EU climate action

The European Council previously agreed on a binding EU target of a reduction in carbon emissions of at least 55 per cent by 2030 and climate neutrality by 2050. At the meeting, the EU leaders will engage in an orientation debate on how to proceed ahead of the Commission proposals to be presented in June.

External relations and the situation in Russia

The EU leaders will also discuss the situation in Russia. A previously scheduled discussion had been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The human rights situation and other conditions in Russia have now worsened and EU-Russia relations have also deteriorated. The EU leaders will also raise the issue of the passenger plane bound for Vilnius on 23 May that was forced to land in Minsk and the Belarusian journalist on board the plane who was subsequently arrested.

COVID-19 vaccine coordination

The EU leaders will hold a general discussion about COVID-19 vaccination and the situation in the Member States and globally. Issues will include vaccination and how to lift restrictions now that agreement has been reached on the EU digital COVID certificate. The leaders are also likely to discuss how vaccines should be distributed globally to ensure equitable access.

EU-UK relations

The leaders will discuss the EU's relations with the UK, following the entry into force of the EU-UK trade and cooperation agreement on 1 May 2021.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven welcomes US decision to join global Leadership Group for Industry Transition

Published 28 April 2021

The United States and President Joe Biden have joined the global Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT). The Group, launched in 2019 by Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, gathers countries and companies to drive the low-carbon transition of energy-intensive industries.

- It is very gratifying that the United States and President Biden have joined the Swedish-Indian initiative LeadIT. Heavy industry and the transport sector account for around 30 per cent of global emissions. Their transition is essential in the fight against climate change. I look forward to working with the US and others to realise the goals of the Paris Agreement by pushing for action to achieve fossil-free heavy industry and net-zero emissions by 2050, says Prime Minister Löfven.

LeadIT has been developed in cooperation with the World Economic Forum and gathers more than 30 countries and companies collaborating to achieve a fossil-fuel-free future and net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement. The LeadIT Secretariat is hosted by the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI). In the 2021 workplan, agreement was reached on concrete public and private action to promote innovation and technology exchange, the development of roadmaps for industry

transition, and policy solutions to drive the transition. At the annual LeadIT Summits, LeadIT's actions and results are followed up and new ambitious goals for future action are set. LeadIT also encourages increased international collaboration between key actors to accelerate the global climate transition of energy-intensive industries.

For Sweden, LeadIT is an important global platform for spreading the successful concept and working method developed through Fossil Free Sweden. Many of the companies involved in Fossil Free Sweden have also joined LeadIT.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Vaccine coordination and a meeting with Joe Biden at video conference

Published 26 March 2021

Vaccines and COVID-19 coordination were the main items on the agenda when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met with other EU leaders at a video conference on 25 March. The single market and digital transformation were also on the agenda. The conference ended with a meeting with US President Joe Biden.

COVID-19 and vaccine coordination

The EU leaders had a general discussion about the COVID-19 situation in the Member States and the ongoing work to vaccinate their citizens.

- Access to vaccines is a critical issue and all countries naturally want their citizens to be vaccinated without delay. Of course I want Sweden to receive as many vaccine doses as possible and as fast as possible. But at the same time, it's crucial that vaccines are available throughout the EU and around the world. We're in the midst of a pandemic and no one is safe until everyone is safe, said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven after the meeting.

Meeting with President Biden

On Thursday evening, US President Joe Biden joined the video conference for a discussion on transatlantic relations.

- President Biden spoke of the need for EU-US cooperation on COVID-19,

climate action, restarting the economy, and collaboration on democracy and values. President Biden emphasised that the highest priority now is to boost vaccine production and to vaccinate large numbers of people. He also said that the US will contribute to the COVAX vaccination programme as soon as possible, said Mr Löfven.

The single market and digital transformation

The single market is a recurring theme at the spring summits and this time the central issue was how digital transformation can strengthen the single market.

- We are in the throes of a digital transformation and it's important that Europe continue to develop its capacity to benefit as much as possible from the transformation, but this must be done in a smart way.

External relations and the Euro Summit

European Council President Charles Michel informed the EU leaders of his talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin ahead of a discussion on EU relations with Russia at a future physical meeting.

At the video conference of the members of the Euro Summit, EU leaders discussed the international role of the euro.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Coordination of COVID-19 response and meeting with Joe Biden at video conference

Published 25 March 2021

Coordination of the COVID-19 response is the main topic when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven meets his head of state and government colleagues during a two-day video conference on 25–26 March. On Thursday evening, the EU leaders will also have a meeting with US President Joe Biden. On Friday, they will discuss issues related to the single market and digital transformation, and hold a Euro Summit.

COVID-19 and vaccine coordination

The EU leaders will hold a general discussion on the COVID-19 situation in Member States. They will address the ongoing efforts to vaccinate citizens of EU countries and discuss efforts to produce and distribute vaccines. Efforts to produce a vaccination certificate will most certainly also be discussed, as will the COVAX global vaccine initiative.

Meeting with President Joe Biden

On Thursday evening, US President Joe Biden will join the conference for a discussion with the EU heads of state and government on future cooperation between the EU and the US.

Digital issues and the single market

The EU leaders usually address the single market at each March conference, and this time they will also discuss how digitalisation can strengthen the single market and open up to the world at large, while ensuring that everyone is able to participate. The single market is fundamental for the economy of EU Member States, and the pandemic has increased the demands on digitalisation.

Foreign policy issues

The EU's relations with Russia and Turkey will also be discussed on Thursday. European Council President Charles Michel will inform the EU leaders of his talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin ahead of a discussion on the EU's relations with Russia at a future physical meeting.

Euro Summit

On Friday, a Euro Summit will take place, in inclusive format. This means that EU Member States outside the euro area also participate. The heads of state and government will then discuss the international role of the euro together with President of the European Central Bank Christine Lagarde and President of the Eurogroup Paschal Donohoe.



Article from Government Offices

Gender equality will make post-Covid recovery more prosperous and stronger

Published 08 March 2021

Stefan Löfven joins eight fellow EU leaders in an open letter to the bloc and its people

This year is a special International Women's Day. Not only is it exactly 110 years since the first International Women's Day, when more than a million women and men joined forces and raised their voices for equal rights.

We are also at an important turning point this year on this March 8. Over the past year, many of our lives have been temporarily halted by the worst health crisis in generations. As they stood at the forefront in the fight against the pandemic in our hospitals and nursing homes, women were disproportionately affected by the pandemic; they paid a higher price, both economically and socially.

Domestic and gender-based violence increased, women took on a larger share of household tasks and Eurostat's unemployment figures show that while the male unemployment rate increased from 6.2pc to 7.1pc in December 2020, the increase among women was more significant, from 6.7pc to 7.9pc.

In the coming years, we need to rebuild our societies and our economies for the better. If we want to grow and thrive in the post-Covid-19 world, we need a more inclusive approach that unlocks all talents, including those of women.

How can we manage to do this? First of all, we need to move beyond the ideological debates of the past. Equality between women and men is

enshrined in Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. This right is non-negotiable. It is one of the fundamental pillars on which we have built our European societies.

Secondly, more than ever, we have to advance the economic case for gender equality. Of course, gender equality is morally the right thing to do. But equal opportunities also matter to enable social and economic progress. When women prosper, societies prosper. Gender-equal societies are richer societies, in all senses of the word. Gender equal economies perform better, according to all research.

Whether we manage to build back better will depend on the choices we make when rolling out our post-Covid-19 recovery plans. They are a unique opportunity to rebuild more efficiently and more inclusively, ensuring women's participation in the economy and addressing income inequalities.

If we want to build long-term economic resilience after Covid-19, we must address gender-specific issues that have been preventing women from having equal rights and opportunities. This is why we need to incorporate successful gender approaches in European stimulus and recovery packages. Gender equality and, more in general, inclusiveness are important transformation drivers for the renewal of our economies after the pandemic. If we succeed in unlocking women's full economic and entrepreneurial potential, our recovery efforts will lead stronger and more resilient economies and societies.

Thirdly, we need to step up our international efforts. Women and girls are often the first victims during crises. This was no different for the Covid-19 pandemic. The severe health crisis has exposed the vulnerable position of girls and women in many parts of the world, especially in fragile and conflict-affected states.

It is important the new US administration is back at the table to fight, together with us, for the rights of girls and women around the world.

As global development leader, Europe has a special responsibility. We must make every possible effort to make sure its humanitarian and development response to the Covid-19 pandemic includes strengthening access to education and healthcare for girls and women, including promoting SRHR [sexual and reproductive health and rights], and supporting girls and women in their journey to economic independence.

One op-ed on International Women's Day will not suffice to get there. It will require a much more sustained effort, for many years to come.

Let us seize this moment to build more inclusive and caring societies where equal rights are paramount, not only on paper but also in everyday life. It will not only empower women, but also men. Since equal rights will be a step forward for both, allowing men as well to break out of traditional roles and stereotypes.

It will not be easy. But it is possible.

Alexander De Croo
Prime Minister of Belgium

Klaus Iohannis
President of Romania

Kaja Kallas
Prime Minister of Estonia

Stefan Löfven
Prime Minister of Sweden

Sanna Marin
Prime Minister of Finland

Micheál Martin
Taoiseach

Kyriakos Mitsotakis
Prime Minister of Greece

Pedro Sánchez
Prime Minister of Spain

Ursula Von Der Leyen
European Commission President

Xavier Bettel
Prime Minister of Luxembourg



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Employment

The Government's gender equality work is more important than ever

Published 08 March 2021

Sweden has the first feminist Government in the world. Gender equality is central to the Government's priorities – in decision-making and resource allocation. The Government's gender equality work is based on six objectives. It addresses power and influence, gender equality in economy and education, and the equal distribution of unpaid housework and provision of care. It is also about gender equality in health and ending men's violence against women. In brief, it is about gender equality in all facets of life and society.

- Women and men must have the same power to shape society and their own lives – this is the primary goal of our feminist Government. This means that the work of all the ministers in my Government will contribute to the development and implementation of gender equality policy, says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

- Sweden is one of the most gender-equal countries in the world – but we can never take this for granted. We must continue to fight so that every woman can live a life in security, free from violence and oppression. We must do more to reduce the gender gap in lifetime earnings. I am proud to be involved in this work in a feminist Government, where all ministers are responsible for promoting gender equality, says Minister for Gender Equality and Housing Märta Stenevi.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

COVID-19 and vaccine coordination at the video summit

Published 25 February 2021

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will meet the other EU heads of state and government during a two-day video summit on 25–26 February. The EU leaders will discuss COVID-19 and vaccine coordination on Thursday. On Friday, they will discuss foreign and security policy and relations with the EU's Southern Neighbourhood

COVID-19 and vaccine coordination

The EU leaders will hold a general discussion about the COVID-19 situation in Member States. They will also discuss the ongoing vaccination efforts, as well as various testing methods and the work to produce and distribute vaccines. Travel restrictions and vaccine cooperation with countries outside the EU are other topics that the heads of states and government may address.

Security and defence

The EU leaders will also discuss enhanced cooperation on security and defence issues, for example within the framework of NATO and the UN. Cybersecurity is another topic that the heads of state and government will discuss. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg will join the discussion on Friday.

EU relations with the countries in Southern Neighbourhood

The EU's relations with the Southern Neighbourhood, i.e. Algeria, Egypt,

Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia, is another topic that the heads of state and government will discuss. The objective of this partnership is increased stability through economic development, initiatives for young people, transport and energy links, migration, and security.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Research

The Swedish Holocaust Museum will be established in Stockholm

Published 27 January 2021

The Statement of Government Policy presented by Stefan Löfven in the Riksdag in January 2019 announced that a new museum would be established to preserve and perpetuate the memory of the Holocaust. Today, 27 January, on Holocaust Remembrance Day, the Government has announced that the museum is to be established in July 2022 and that it will be located in Stockholm.

The Government will establish the Swedish Holocaust Museum as an independent museum within an existing museums agency. By doing so, the museum can be incorporated into an established organisation with management functions and museum expertise, thus providing stability for the new museum. Facilities for storage, conservation, archives and other functions can be jointly used and coordinated. If the museum is located in Stockholm, it will be easier for school pupils and the general public from around the country to visit.

Memories of the Holocaust can be found all over the country in all the local communities where thousands of Swedes volunteered to help refugees and survivors.

The Holocaust museum should collaborate with many key actors, such as county museums and local museums, both to facilitate involvement of the country's entire population in the activities and because the accounts, testimonies, objects and places concerning the Holocaust are found

throughout the country.

The murder, persecution and terrible suffering of the Jewish people, Roma and millions of other victims of Nazism have left an indelible scar across Europe. Although the killing did not take place on Swedish soil, Sweden both influenced and was influenced by what happened. The Holocaust is also part of Sweden's history. As a society, we have an obligation to promote education, remembrance and research on the genocide committed by the Nazis and their allies so that new generations will be able to learn from history. The Swedish Holocaust Museum will be one way of doing so.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Research

Sweden to lead the work of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance in 2022–23

Published 27 January 2021 Updated 28 January 2021

Sweden has been entrusted with holding the Presidency of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) from 1 March 2022 until 28 February 2023. The decision was taken at the IHRA's digital plenary meeting in Leipzig on 3 December 2020.

Sweden will chair the IHRA twenty plus years after the first Stockholm Forum on the Holocaust and one year after the Malmö Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism.

“I have promised survivors to do what I can as Prime Minister – and as a human being – for Holocaust remembrance and combating antisemitism today. I intend to keep that promise. The Presidency of the IHRA, the Malmö Forum and the coming museum about Sweden and the Holocaust are all important parts of these efforts”, says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

“Even though history has shown us what the ultimate consequences of antisemitism, antiziganism and racism can be, they still exist in all parts of society. Sweden must set an example and do all it can to prevent something similar from happening again. Remembering is also about learning from history”, says Minister for Culture and Democracy Amanda Lind.

In May 1998, on the eve of the new millennium, Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and the President of the United States Bill Clinton agreed to set up a Task Force to promote international cooperation on Holocaust education, remembrance and research, laying the foundation for the IHRA.

The first Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust took place on 26–28 January 2000. The Stockholm Declaration became the founding document of the IHRA.

It is with a sense of historical responsibility that the Government of Sweden declares itself ready to lead the IHRA, twenty years after its establishment, thus building on to the work of Prime Minister Persson two decades earlier.

Prime Minister Löfven's deep commitment to the cause of combating antisemitism has been expressed through a series of measures to strengthen security for Sweden's Jewish community.

A state museum for passing on the testimonies of those Holocaust survivors who sought refuge in Sweden is to be established. 50 heads of state and government and 20 organizations have been invited to the Malmö Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism, 13-14 October 2021.

The IHRA presidency will be another significant undertaking by Prime Minister Löfven and his government.

One central priority of the Swedish Presidency will be to follow up on the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism.

"Taking upon itself the Presidency of the IHRA, is the first and a central national pledge for Sweden", says Annika Ben David, Ambassador for Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law and Head of Sweden's delegation to the IHRA.

"The magnitude of the Holocaust must be forever seared in our collective memory. The unprecedented character of the Holocaust will always hold universal meaning", says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

"Antisemitism and all forms of racism are threats to us all and to our open and democratic societies. Wherever we see antisemitism, and no matter who expresses it, we must step in and – with unwavering resoluteness – expose, confront and combat it. Antisemitism is a direct threat to Jews, but it is not a

problem to be borne by Jews alone. We must address Holocaust denial and antisemitism by protecting and promoting democratic values and respect for human rights”, he continues.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

European Council on vaccine coordination

Published 22 January 2021

Vaccine coordination was the main topic on the agenda when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met other EU leaders via a video conference on Thursday afternoon. They also discussed the production and distribution of vaccines and cooperation with countries outside the EU.

At the video conference, the heads of state and government exchanged experiences of the ongoing efforts to vaccinate people in the Member States.

“We noted that the situation continues to be serious with a high infection rate and new infectious virus mutations. At the same time, we have rolled out the vaccine in record time and it is now important to ensure that deliveries are as fast as possible so that the vaccination rate can increase,” said Mr Löfven after the video conference .

The President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen also provided the EU leaders with a status report on vaccination in the Member States.

“We also discussed how we can hold the infection rate down and at the same time secure access to vaccines, both inside and outside the EU. There was also broad consensus on continuing the work on a vaccine certificate, which may form part of a return to more normal travel,” added Mr Löfven.

Mr Löfven represented Sweden at the video conference.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Vaccine coordination on European Council agenda

Published 21 January 2021

Coordination of the ongoing COVID-19 vaccination efforts will be the main topic for Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and other EU leaders when they meet by video conference on Thursday afternoon. Production and distribution of vaccines and cooperation with countries outside the EU are other topics that the heads of states and government will address.

The meeting will begin with President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen providing the EU leaders with a status report on vaccination in the Member States.

The heads of state and government will then exchange experiences of the ongoing efforts to vaccinate at-risk groups – and in due course everyone in the Member States – against COVID-19. The work to produce and distribute a vaccine, and how it will be deployed, is another topic that will likely be raised at the meeting.

The EU leaders will also discuss the issue of a possible vaccine certificate for those who wish to travel and vaccine cooperation with countries outside the EU.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will represent Sweden at the meeting.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Draft agreement between the EU and the UK

Published 24 December 2020 Updated 30 December 2020

The Swedish Government welcomes the fact that EU and UK negotiators have now agreed a draft agreement on the future relationship between the EU and the UK.

“It is very gratifying that the negotiators have now reached an agreement. This is something that we in the EU have worked together on for a long time. The agreement will be an important basis for the continued relationship with the UK,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The fact that the draft agreement is now in place creates predictability for Swedish citizens and companies. A no-deal scenario between the EU and the UK has thus been avoided.

“This is good for Sweden, good for the EU, and good for the UK. The agreement is broad and spans many areas. In addition to a free trade agreement and rules for a level playing field, the agreement also covers important areas such as internal security, fisheries, transport, climate and environment. It provides the conditions for long-term cooperation and good relations between the EU and the UK in the future,” says Minister for EU Affairs Hans Dahlgren.

The agreement has been negotiated on the basis of the negotiating mandate given by the Member States to the European Commission. The text is currently being analysed and will be reviewed by EU Member States in the Council in the coming days. To enter into application from 1 January, the agreement needs to be approved by the UK parliament. The Council must also adopt a decision to apply it provisionally, as the European Parliament will not be able to consider it until after the turn of the year.

“The fact that the negotiators from the EU and the UK were finally able to present a draft agreement demonstrates the taking of shared responsibility and the great value of regulated and deep cooperation,” adds Mr Dahlgren.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Climate, COVID-19 and the long-term budget at the European Council

Published 11 December 2020

The climate, COVID-19 and the long-term EU budget were among the issues in focus when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met with his head of state and government colleagues at the European Council in Brussels on 10–11 December. The EU leaders also considered a number of foreign policy issues and the EU's future relationship with the UK.

Coordination of the COVID-19 response

The EU leaders held a general discussion about the COVID-19 situation in the Member States.

“Firstly, we discussed the pandemic situation as it exists in the Member States and it is quite clear that it is serious in many places. However, there is naturally light at the end of the tunnel in the shape of the vaccines. There is broad consensus among the EU leaders on the importance that EU cooperation has had for gaining access to vaccines so quickly. This also strengthens our conviction to continue cooperating on COVID-19,” said Mr Löfven after the summit.

EU climate targets for 2030

The EU must review its climate targets for the next few years to become climate-neutral by 2050. At the Summit, the heads of state and government

decided on tighter climate targets for 2030.

“There were very long and at times difficult discussions on the climate. All science shows that we must do more here and now – time is quite simply running out. EU countries must actively drive the climate transition. It was therefore important that we could agree on a tighter target for 2030, namely a reduction of at least 55 per cent. By being at the forefront of the climate transition, the EU’s competitiveness is also strengthened, with more jobs in Sweden and the EU as a whole,” Mr Löfven also said.

The long-term EU budget

“Yesterday, we also agreed on the final part of the long-term budget. Sweden has long advocated that there must be a link between the payment of funds on the one hand and the rule of law on the other. When countries fail to respect the EU’s fundamental values, there must be consequences in terms of how much support they are still eligible to receive from the EU budget. Now that the German Presidency has proposed an explanatory statement, we finally have such a mechanism in place,” said Mr Löfven.

At the end of July, EU heads of state and government agreed on a proposal for a new long-term budget for the EU, as well as a recovery package. Since the summer, negotiations on the long-term budget have been ongoing and have been concluded with the European Parliament. Some EU Member States have had difficulty approving the agreement as payments from the EU budget are linked to the rule of law for the first time.

“This has been absolutely vital to ensure that the agreement between the European Council and the European Parliament remains in place. And it does. I would like to take this opportunity to say that the German Presidency, led by Angela Merkel, has done a very good job of getting this over the line without compromising on the rule of law,” added Mr Löfven.

Future relations with the UK

Negotiations between the EU and the UK have been intense in recent weeks. Outstanding issues include the formulation of regulations for a level playing field and agreement on fishing, as well as the formulation of regulations for dispute settlement.

At the Summit, the EU leaders were given a very brief account of the

negotiations on the future relationship with the UK by the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen.

Turkey and Russia

"Turkey was also discussed and it was noted that developments there have continued in the wrong direction during the autumn. It was agreed for preparations to be made to extend the sanctions already in place," Mr Löfven said.

"Finally, the green light was given to again extend the sanctions against Russia. It is extremely important that the EU continues to show unity on this issue."

Euro Summit

On Friday, a Euro Summit also took place in an extended format whereby EU Member States outside the euro area were also welcome. The heads of state and government discussed the banking union and the capital markets union.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

COVID-19 and the climate at EU Summit

Published 10 December 2020

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will meet his head of state and government colleagues at the European Council in Brussels on 10-11 December. The EU leaders' agenda includes climate targets, coordination of the COVID-19 response and foreign policy issues. They will also discuss the EU's long-term budget and the EU's future relations with the UK.

Coordination of the COVID-19 response

The EU leaders will hold a general discussion about the COVID-19 situation in Member States. Various testing methods and work to produce and distribute a vaccine, as well as how it will be deployed, are issues that will be raised at the meeting.

EU climate targets for 2030

The EU must review its climate targets for the next few years to become climate-neutral by 2050. At the Summit, the heads of state and government will decide on tighter climate targets for 2030. The objective of the EU is net-zero emissions by 2050, and to achieve that the Government wants to see a more ambitious EU target for 2030.

The long-term EU budget

At the end of July, EU heads of state and government agreed on a proposal for a new long-term budget for the EU, as well as on a recovery package.

Since the summer, negotiations on the long-term budget have been ongoing and have been concluded with the European Parliament. Some EU Member States are now having difficulty approving the agreement as payments from the EU budget are to be linked to the rule of law for the first time.

Future relations with the UK

Negotiations between the EU and the UK have been intense in recent weeks. Outstanding issues include the formulation of regulations for a level playing field and agreement on fishing, as well as the formulation of regulations for dispute settlement.

When the UK left the EU at midnight on 31 January, a transition period began that runs until the end of 2020. During the transition period, the EU and the UK are negotiating on the future relationship between the EU and the UK. High-level negotiations are now under way and the heads of state and government are likely to address the issue.

Euro Summit

On Friday, a Euro Summit will take place in an extended format. This means that EU Member States outside the euro area are welcome. The heads of state and government will discuss the banking union and the capital markets union during the Summit.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

A maximum of eight participants should be normative for all of society

Published 20 November 2020

The coming weeks are crucial to stop the spread of infection. Given our current situation, the Government considers that more measures are necessary. We therefore now propose that holding public gatherings and events with more than eight participants be prohibited. In addition, the previous exemption for eating and drinking establishments is removed.

“The decision to limit gatherings to eight participants is a very, very clear signal to every single person in our country and to all of Swedish society as to what applies in the days ahead.”

“No social situations involving more than eight people should take place, regardless of whether they are covered by the law in purely formal terms.”

“This is the ‘new normal’ for all of society, all of Sweden.”

This was the message Prime Minister Stefan Löfven delivered when new restrictions were presented at a press briefing on Monday, 16 November.

“Take your responsibility”

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven emphasised the seriousness of the situation we are now in and how important it is that everyone take their responsibility to prevent the spread of infection.

“Sweden is being severely tested. It’s going to get worse. Do your duty – take your responsibility to stop the spread of infection,” said Mr Löfven.

Advice to follow to avoid the spread of infection

- Only get together with those you live with.
- Stay home if you feel at all unwell.
- Wash your hands often and carefully.
- Employers should make it possible for employees to work from home.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

European Council meeting on the COVID-19 pandemic

Published 20 November 2020

Coordinated crisis responses and deployment of vaccines were two of the issues that Prime Minister Stefan Löfven discussed when he met other EU leaders via a video conference of the European Council on Thursday afternoon. The heads of state and government also considered the negotiations on the EU's long-term budget.

The EU leaders exchanged experiences of testing methods and discussed mutual recognition of tests and the efforts to produce and distribute a vaccine.

“We need to do more to coordinate our crisis responses. We must work together to procure and deploy a future vaccine, and we need to strengthen our joint preparedness. The EU's joint efforts to develop reliable rapid tests are also important,” said Mr Löfven.

At the meeting, the EU leaders also received an update on the negotiations on the EU's long-term budget and respect for the rule of law in relation to the long-term budget.

“From Sweden's perspective, it is important that the EU's long-term budget is adopted as soon as possible. It is very important that COVID-19 support can be rolled out to those who have been hit hard in the Member States. I don't want to speculate tonight on when it will be settled, but the negotiated budget, the recovery fund and the requirement of respect for the rule of law must apply,” added Mr Löfven after the meeting.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

COVID-19 response coordination on European Council agenda

Published 19 November 2020

Coordination of COVID-19 testing and deployment of vaccines are two of the issues that Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will discuss when he meets other EU leaders via a video conference of the European Council on Thursday afternoon.

The heads of state and government will exchange experiences of different testing methods and discuss mutual recognition of tests for travel within the EU. The work to produce and distribute a vaccine and how it will be deployed will also be raised at the meeting. The EU leaders will also look to the future and discuss different countries' thinking regarding restrictions in the longer term.

The meeting will begin with Angela Merkel, as representative of the German Presidency of the EU, briefly updating the EU leaders on the negotiations on the EU's long-term budget and respect for the rule of law in relation to the long-term budget

This is the EU leaders' second video conference on coordination of the COVID-19 response since the summer.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Prime Minister met Svetlana Tikhanovskaya

Published 19 November 2020

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, the exiled leader of the Belarusian opposition, yesterday, 18 November.

“Svetlana Tikhanovskaya is a symbol of the Belarusian people’s struggle and the peaceful opposition’s quest for democracy and human rights. It is a reminder of how valuable democracy is, and why we must stand up for it all over the world,” said Mr Löfven in a comment following the meeting.

Ms Tikhanovskaya received strong public support as a candidate in the presidential election in Belarus. The election was neither free nor fair, and was marked by widespread electoral fraud and political oppression. The Belarusian authorities have met peaceful demonstrations with brutal violence, and a large number of critics of the regime and political opponents have been detained. Ms Tikhanovskaya herself has left the country for her own safety.

A united EU has condemned the actions of the Belarusian authorities and introduced sanctions against Belarus, and will continue to support the Belarusian people’s legitimate demands to be allowed to choose the leader of their country through free and fair elections.

Sweden is one of the largest bilateral donors to Belarus, and Sweden’s long-term support has helped strengthen Belarusian civil society. In light of the very serious developments since the presidential election, Sweden’s support to civil society organisations has been further intensified.

During her visit to Sweden, Ms Tikhanovskaya also met with Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Sweden and Spain gathered world leaders for a meeting to boost UN cooperation

Published 13 November 2020

On Tuesday 10 November, some 10 heads of state or government met for a digital summit hosted by Spain and Sweden. The aim was to bring together a group of countries that together are ready to help strengthen the UN, in light of the UN's 75th anniversary. The countries also adopted a joint statement on this at the meeting.

The group represents countries from all over the world: Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Jordan, Canada, New Zealand, Senegal, South Africa, South Korea and Tunisia, which are all, together with Sweden and Spain, united in the idea that more cooperation is good for each individual country, but also for the world.

In addition to the vision of strengthening the UN's work, the meeting was also intended to build global support for sustainable post-pandemic reconstruction.

In September this year, when the UN celebrated its 75th anniversary, the countries of the world adopted an ambitious and forward-looking declaration to address the major challenges of our time. Sweden and the countries that attended the digital summit jointly wish to take the lead in implementing the goals presented in the UN75 Declaration.

Sweden views this as a long-term effort. We will continue to push for greater international cooperation. Global challenges require global responsibility – as well as global engagement. The results of the elections in the United States

mean there is good reason to believe that the incoming administration in Washington will be more involved in issues that concern the UN and international cooperation. We welcome this and look forward to cooperating with the US on these issues.

Read the full statement [here](#):

Joint Statement Reinforcing Multilateralism together building on the United Nations 75th Anniversary Declaration



Article from Prime Minister's Office

EU conference on coordinated COVID-19 approach

Published 29 October 2020

On Thursday 29 October, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will take part in a video conference with other EU heads of state and government. The leaders will discuss how EU Member States can better coordinate their response in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

The heads of state and government will discuss what can be done at EU level to reduce the current spread of COVID-19 in EU Member States. They will share experiences of how to effectively conduct COVID-19 testing and contact tracing to reduce the spread of infection and discuss the possibility of coordinating quarantine rules.

They will also discuss the work of producing and then distributing a vaccine, and how its allocation should proceed.

This is the EU leaders first video conference since the summer. Three video conferences were held during the spring.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Climate change, Brexit and COVID-19 at the EU summit

Published 16 October 2020

The European Union's future relations with the United Kingdom and climate targets for 2030 were on the agenda when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met the other EU leaders in Brussels on 15–16 October. The heads of state and government also discussed EU-Africa relations and the COVID-19 situation in the EU.

The EU's future relations with the UK

– There is strong consensus with regard to the negotiations on the future relations between the EU and the UK, and the negotiations are moving forward, but three very difficult matters remain unresolved. These are fisheries, a level playing field and dispute settlement, said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven after the summit.

On the first day of the summit, chief negotiator Michel Barnier updated the leaders on the EU-UK negotiations on the future relationship.

– Sweden naturally wants a deal, it is important for growth and employment. And we are united in the EU on continuing the negotiations. Both sides must do their utmost, said Mr Löfven.

EU climate targets for 2030

At the summit, the heads of state and government held an orientation debate on which climate targets the EU should achieve by 2030.

– With regard to the climate change issue, it is clear that there are different

levels of ambition among the EU countries. Sweden and like-minded countries have therefore taken the initiative to support the Commission's proposal to reduce emissions by at least 55 per cent by 2030, said Mr Löfven.

The European Council adopted the EU's current climate targets for 2030 in 2014.

– We must not end up in a situation in which the current target of a 40 per cent reduction is retained. It would mean that we would be unable to meet the long-term target of zero climate impact by 2050, added Mr Löfven.

COVID-19

The EU leaders also held a general discussion about the COVID-19 situation in the Member States.

– The increasing spread of COVID-19 is concerning. We also discussed what we can do together. Health care and decisions on disease control are national matters, as they should be. But perhaps we could also coordinate more with each other, exchange more experiences and learn from each other to help each other in this difficult situation,” was how Mr Löfven summed up the evening's discussion.

EU-Africa

The heads of state and government also discussed EU-Africa relations ahead of the upcoming summit between the EU and the African Union, as well as other foreign policy issues.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven represented Sweden at the summit in Brussels.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Brexit and climate change at the EU summit

Published 15 October 2020

The EU's future relationship with the UK and climate targets for 2030 are two topics that Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and other EU leaders will address when they meet in Brussels on 15–16 October. The heads of state and government will also discuss EU-Africa relations and a coordinated approach to COVID-19.

EU's future relationship with UK

The summit will begin with chief negotiator Michel Barnier updating EU leaders on the negotiations with the UK on the future relationship with the EU.

The negotiations have been going on during the spring and summer. Still to be negotiated are the design of the rules for fair competition, what the fisheries agreement should include and how disputes will be settled.

When the UK left the EU at midnight on 31 January, a transition period began that runs until the end of 2020. During the transition period, the EU and the UK are to negotiate an agreement on the future relationship between them.

EU climate targets for 2030

To achieve climate neutrality by 2050, EU Member States must review their climate targets for the next few years. Negotiations on a European Climate Law have been under way since the spring and in September, the European

Commission proposed new climate targets for 2030. At the summit, the heads of state and government will hold an orientation debate on which climate targets the EU should achieve by 2030.

COVID-19

EU leaders will also have a general discussion on the situation concerning the pandemic in the Member States and on the EU recommendation that Member States that have chosen to introduce restrictions that affect free movement in the Union should coordinate their measures. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen will update the heads of state and government on efforts to produce a vaccine.

EU-Africa relations

The heads of state and government will also discuss EU-Africa relations ahead of the upcoming summit between the UN and the African Union. Among the topics discussed will be how cooperation between EU Member States and countries in Africa can be improved and deepened.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will represent Sweden at the summit in Brussels.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Address by PM Stefan Löfven at the General Debate of the 75th Session of the General Assembly of the UN

Published 26 September 2020

Today Prime Minister Stefan Löfven addressed the UN General Assembly. He focused his statement on the importance of working together in international solidarity to support the UN and jointly tackle the pandemic and the climate crisis. He stressed that we must seize this opportunity to build back stronger, greener & more equal societies.

Check against delivery.

Excellencies,

We are celebrating the 75th anniversary of the United Nations in the midst of a global pandemic – a pandemic that has placed enormous pressure on our societies, our communities and our families. I would like to express my deepest condolences for the lives lost.

Times like these test the resilience of our societies and our international cooperation. More than ever, we need to work together in solidarity.

In this spirit, Sweden and Qatar co-chaired the negotiations on the “Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations”, which was adopted on 21 September. Member States sent a strong message of support for a rules-based international order and for

multilateralism. We all re-committed to strengthening international cooperation, with a modern, innovative and inclusive UN at the core.

We now have the rare opportunity to build better societies – societies that are more resilient. We have the opportunity to jointly address shared challenges:

- the pandemic,
- the climate crisis,
- widening inequalities,
- violations of international law
- and threats to international peace.

To create, as Secretary-General Guterres called for in his recent Mandela Lecture, a new social contract and a new global deal.

Excellencies,

Sweden fully supports the UN's leadership of the global COVID-19 response and recognises the crucial role of the World Health Organization.

So far, Sweden has contributed more than 170 million dollars to the global response. Together with a number of world leaders, I have expressed my commitment to securing equitable and global access to future COVID-19 vaccines. No one is safe until everyone is safe. Securing access to vaccines is a global challenge that requires international cooperation and solidarity.

Excellencies,

Climate change is one of our most pressing issues. Throughout the world, young and old people alike have marched together on the streets to demand that decision-makers like us act in line with scientific recommendations. We must reshape our societies and lower emissions. Sweden is striving to be the first fossil-free welfare nation but welcome all competition to beat us to the post.

We will continue to work with the industrial sector to achieve net-zero emissions, not least within the “Leadership Group for Industry Transition” that we launched with India at last year's Climate Summit. We call for more ambitious nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement. We will work for an ambitious outcome at COP26 in Glasgow.

Excellencies,

As we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, we need to strengthen our resolve to ensure that no one is left behind. Ensuring the equal participation of every individual, irrespective of their gender and sexual orientation, is essential to realising the 2030 Agenda.

The current pandemic is exacerbating existing discrimination and inequality and the risk of sexual and gender-based violence. It is having a disproportionate impact on women's and girls' access to essential health services. Robust funding of sexual and reproductive health and rights must be a priority.

The 25th anniversary of the landmark "Beijing Declaration" and Platform for Action" offers an opportunity to intensify our efforts for gender equality.

Sweden is ready to take on a leading role in UN Women's "Global Action Coalition on Economic Justice and Rights". I am delighted to see that others have joined Sweden in pursuing a feminist foreign policy.

Excellencies,

The pandemic is placing enormous pressure on the ability of democratic institutions to function and is having serious consequences for human rights. Far too many leaders and governments are using it as a pretext in their attempts to silence opposition, civil society and human rights defenders.

Sweden will continue to promote our Drive for Democracy, which aims to strengthen respect for democratic principles and institutions, civil society and international law. We support the Secretary-General's "Call to Action for Human Rights".

Excellencies,

Millions of people around the world have lost their jobs and livelihoods because of the pandemic. Social dialogue in the workplace can help mitigate the impact of the pandemic and shape solutions. We need a sustainable transition in the global labour market, an issue I worked very closely on with President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa, when we co-edited the ILO-report on the Future of Work. Sweden invites more countries to join the Global Deal partnership for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth.

We have also seen trade barriers introduced during the pandemic. Free, fair and sustainable trade is key in order to create new jobs and increase prosperity. The World Trade Organization has an essential role in upholding

a rules-based international trading system.

Around the world, record numbers of people need humanitarian aid to survive. The protracted conflict in Yemen has resulted in the world's largest humanitarian crisis. I urge donors to step up their support of the humanitarian response. We support UN peace efforts and urge the parties to immediately agree on a ceasefire, inclusive political talks and continued implementation of the Stockholm and Riyadh agreements.

We extend our solidarity and support to the Lebanese people following the devastating explosion in Beirut.

Excellencies,

The pandemic is a threat to international peace and security. Sweden and the EU strongly support the implementation of the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire. The UN Security Council has an enormous responsibility. To succeed in its mandated task of upholding international peace and security, it must be reformed to effectively address current and future challenges.

The fight against impunity for international crimes remains essential. Sweden is steadfast in its support of the International Criminal Court.

Women's influence – in peace processes, political transitions and crisis recovery – is crucial. This year marks the 20th anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325; it must be a year of concrete action.

Sweden remains an active partner to the United Nations through:

- financial core support,
- diplomacy,
- mediation
- and as a contributor of military and police personnel to UN peace operations, including MINUSMA. We are following developments in Mali with great concern. A peaceful, swift transition to civilian leadership, with democratic elections, is vital.

Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol and aggression in eastern Ukraine constitute serious breaches of international law, challenge global security and cause human suffering. The European Union is clear on the need for the implementation of the Minsk agreements. Sweden and the European Union condemn in the strongest possible terms the poisoning of

the Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny. The Russian government must investigate the assassination attempt thoroughly and transparently. Those responsible must be brought to justice.

We support, as the only viable means of solving the conflict between Israel and Palestine, a negotiated solution with two states living in peace and security. It must be based on internationally agreed parameters and an end to the occupation. The EU position is clear: annexation of occupied territory is illegal.

In Syria, sustainable peace can only be achieved through a political solution in line with resolution 2254. Sweden recently pledged 96 million dollars to the crisis response at the Brussels 4 Conference.

While there are plenty of challenges across the globe, there is also hope. Sudan now has a once-in-a-generation opportunity. Women and young people took to the streets in 2019, demanding political change, and courageous political decisions followed. Sudan deserves our support on its difficult path to democracy.

Excellencies,

Next year, Sweden will assume the role of Chair of the “Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe”. Our main priority will be working for conflict resolution that builds on the OSCE comprehensive concept of security, with democracy and human rights at the core. The European security order must be upheld, not renegotiated.

Sweden is alarmed at the situation in Belarus following the elections on 9 August, which were neither free nor fair. The increased repression of peaceful demonstrators, journalists and opposition leaders is unacceptable. We stand in solidarity with the Belarusian people in their desire to exercise their fundamental democratic rights. We continue to call on the Belarusian leadership to stop the repression and engage in genuine dialogue with the opposition. We stand ready to facilitate such dialogue.

Excellencies,

This year also marks the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It serves as a tragic reminder of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. The nuclear threat is as present as ever. Milestone treaties have been abandoned or are at

risk, and new nuclear capabilities are being developed. We call on the United States and Russia to agree on an extension of the “New START Treaty”, and on China to join discussions on follow-on arrangements.

As part of our multilateral disarmament diplomacy, Sweden – together with 15 non-nuclear-weapon states – continues to pursue the Stockholm Initiative on Nuclear Disarmament, which aims to contribute to a successful NPT Review Conference.

Together with the EU, we strongly support the full implementation of the “Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action”.

We call on the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to adhere to its international obligations and take steps towards denuclearisation.

We remain committed to a peaceful resolution of the situation on the Korean Peninsula.

Excellencies,

Future generations will grow up in a different world. We now have the opportunity to shape its direction.

Together with other countries, Sweden will mobilise support for the Secretary-General in advancing our common agenda laid out in the seventy-fifth anniversary Declaration.

- Together, we can build better societies.
- Together, we can build stronger societies.
- And, together, we can address the challenges that lie ahead.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by PM Stefan Löfven to IAEA General Conference 2020

Published 21 September 2020 Updated 21 September 2020

Today Prime Minister Stefan Löfven gave Sweden's national statement when the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) began its yearly General Conference in Vienna. Sweden is the current Chair of the Board of Governors of IAEA. In his statement, the Prime Minister focused on the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation as well as the benefits of using nuclear technology to address global issues such as the pandemic, the climate crisis and women's health.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Address by PM Stefan Löfven at the High-level Meeting of the Assembly to Commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the UN

Published 21 September 2020 Updated 21 September 2020

Today the United Nation's 75th anniversary is commemorated at the UN in New York. In his address to the high level meeting, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven focused on the importance of working together, across borders, to strengthen multilateralism and jointly face global challenges such as the pandemic and the climate crisis, while working to reform the UN.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven honouring the victims of the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

Published 06 August 2020 Updated 06 August 2020

Today marks 75 years since an atomic bomb was dropped on the city of Hiroshima in Japan. Three days later, Nagasaki met the same terrible fate. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven has been invited to attend the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony to honour the many victims. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, foreign officials will take part in the commemoration via video messages that will be broadcast in conjunction with the official ceremony.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Deal reached on long-term budget at EU summit

Published 21 July 2020 Updated 21 July 2020

After a marathon summit, the leaders of the 27 EU Member States reached a deal on the long-term EU budget for 2021–2027. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and his EU colleagues also agreed a post-COVID-19 recovery package.

- After four days of intensive and tough negotiations, we finally reached an agreement, said Mr Löfven after the meeting, and added:

- Europe is facing many challenges that we need to tackle collectively, and it's important that the budget is in place. And with the recovery package, we are also better equipped to manage the COVID-19 crisis and its economic impacts.

The Prime Minister commented on the difficult negotiations at the summit.

- Despite a difficult starting position, Sweden's interests and priorities have had a substantial impact. Sweden's budget contributions have been reduced, the rebates are the largest ever, and for the first time the EU has a framework that links EU payouts to respect for the rule of law. This is a huge change, said Mr Löfven.

Mr Löfven also commented on the good cooperation with several other EU member states during the negotiations.

- Together, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands and Austria also succeeded in tightening the conditions for the recovery package and getting green and digital investments that will build a stronger EU and speed up the green

transition.

The long-term budget for the entire period is worth EUR 1 074 billion. The recovery package is worth EUR 750 billion, EUR 360 billion of which will be provided as loans and EUR 390 billion as grants.

The meeting began on Friday morning and was concluded early on Tuesday morning.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

EU long-term budget at summit

Published 17 July 2020

The EU long-term budget will be the main focus when heads of state and government meet in Brussels for the first time since February. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and his 26 colleagues will negotiate the EU long-term budget for 2021–2027.

EU long-term budget for 2021–2027

At the end of May, the European Commission presented an updated proposal for the EU long-term budget for 2021–2027. After having spoken to heads of state and government, President of the European Council Charles Michel presented a more detailed proposal at the end of last week.

At the summit on July 17-18, the EU leaders will discuss the new proposal for a long-term budget with the aim of reaching an agreement. They will decide on the size of the budget, its financing and rebates for countries that are net contributors.

To support affected countries, there is also a proposed recovery package, known as the Recovery Instrument. EU leaders will discuss whether recovery support should be in the form of loans or grants, who should receive support, how large the support should be and how long it should be paid out.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven in honour of the victims of the Srebrenica genocide in 1995

Published 11 July 2020

Today we honour the memory of the victims of the Srebrenica genocide in 1995. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven has been invited by Sefik Dzaferovic, the Bosniak member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to attend the commemoration at the Memorial Hall for Srebrenica in Potocari. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, foreign officials will take part in the commemoration via a video message that will be broadcast at the official commemoration ceremony.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Video conference on long-term EU budget

Published 22 June 2020

On Midsummer's Eve, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven took part in a video conference of EU heads of state and government. The main topic was the long-term EU budget for 2021–2027 and the proposed recovery package.

- Europe remains in a serious situation with risk to life and health, and we are far from through this crisis. The pandemic's economic consequences have hit the EU and the world hard and we agree that it will require joint efforts to set the wheels in motion again. The package of economic measures has an important role, but it alone cannot solve the economic problems. To kickstart the real economy, the single market and free movement must function, said Mr Löfven after the summit.

At the end of May, the European Commission presented a revised proposal for the long-term EU budget for 2021–2027, as well as a proposal of measures to help those countries that have been hit hard by COVID-19.

- We believe that the recovery fund should be based on loans and not grants to the Member States. The Commission's proposal would increase the budget by 50 per cent, which is unreasonable. An arrangement involving long-term loans at favourable interest rates enables smart jobs, productivity and competitiveness throughout Europe, added the Prime Minister.

- The Commission has presented a revised budget proposal, but as previously we consider that the total volume remains too large and that continued rebates are a prerequisite for an agreement. However, it is positive that the budget is modernised through, for example, greater focus on the climate and

digitalisation, and that a clear link is proposed between the receipt of EU funds and respect for the rule of law. Sweden has fought hard for this, emphasised Mr Löfven.

The Prime Minister was clear that agreement was not expected at the video conference.

- The EU's recovery is important to Sweden, and I look forward to the continued discussions, concluded Mr Löfven.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

EU's long-term budget via video conference

Published 18 June 2020

On Midsummer's Eve, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will take part in a video conference with his fellow EU heads of state and government. The discussion will mainly focus on the EU long-term budget for 2021–2027, but Brexit will also be brought up.

EU's long-term budget for 2021–2027

At the end of May, the European Commission presented an updated proposal for the EU's long-term budget for 2021–2027. The new proposal contains measures to help countries hit hard by the COVID-19 outbreak to recover.

The meeting will be the first time that EU leaders discuss the new proposal for a long-term budget. Among the issues to be addressed are how the measures will be financed and which sectors, countries and regions are in greatest need of support.

To support the affected countries, the European Commission also proposes a recovery instrument. EU leaders will discuss whether recovery support should be in the form of loans or grants, who should receive support, how large the support should be and how long it should be paid out.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will represent Sweden at the meeting.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Social distancing and markedly reduced travel in Sweden

Published 18 June 2020 Updated 18 June 2020

Swedes are largely following the government agencies' advice and recommendations. This has been shown through surveys and data concerning movement patterns. Now travel within Sweden is permitted again – but if the guidelines are not followed, the Government is prepared to take measures.

More than eight in ten Swedes are keeping a greater distance from others than they normally would. Just as many are avoiding shaking hands and are washing their hands more often than usual. Over 60 per cent are taking part in social activities outside the home to a lesser extent and are avoiding public places where there are lots of people. This is clear from a survey on behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic conducted by analysis company Kantar Sifo on behalf of the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency. In other words, Swedes are largely following the advice and recommendations issued by the Public Health Agency of Sweden.

Travel decreased by over 40 per cent

The travel advice of the Public Health Agency of Sweden has also been heeded. When the Agency advised against non-essential domestic travel at the end of March, travel in the Stockholm region decreased by over 40 per cent. Data on movement patterns from telecom company Telia's mobile network shows that, in Sweden as a whole, travel decreased by more than 20 per cent. Since 13 May, when the advice was changed to permit travel corresponding to one to two hours by car from home, travel in the country has gradually increased again.

According to the Public Health Agency of Sweden, it is not travel per se that spreads the virus, it is personal hygiene and social contact. Now that fewer Swedes are receiving care in hospital and tracing and testing have got under way, as of 13 June it is permitted for people with no symptoms to travel freely within Sweden.

“Common sense, a large portion of responsibility and caution are required. The vast majority have demonstrated this so far, and it still applies,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

New restrictions may be issued

A number of restrictions remain in place. These include the ban on visits to homes for older people, the ban on gatherings of more than 50 people and the rules concerning crowding in restaurants, bars and cafés. Businesses that do not follow the regulations may be closed after an inspection; so far, this has happened on some ten occasions in Stockholm and Gothenburg. The tourism and hospitality industry is also covered by the guidelines on crowding. The situation remains serious and if the curve indicating the number of seriously ill people turns upwards again, new restrictions may be issued.

“Although some restrictions are lifted, this does not mean that life can return to normal. Important restrictions will remain. It is important to hang on, otherwise the spread of infection might take off. We all need to continue to take great personal responsibility,” Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin says.

“If it turns out that this doesn’t work, we’re prepared to take measures and tighten the recommendations,” says Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation Ibrahim Baylan.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on international collaboration to handle COVID-19

Published 18 June 2020

Sweden is a firm believer in international cooperation, the Swedish Prime Minister stated at a press briefing on May 15.

Life is not carrying on as normal in Sweden. Sweden has the same goals as all other countries: to save lives and to protect public health. In addition, the Government has provided 220 million SEK to specific international measures to handle COVID-19, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven said at the press briefing.

“This crisis clearly demonstrates the need to strengthen international collaboration as well as multilateral institutions, to invest in partnerships with civil society as well as in the private sector and to formulate a plan for recovering from this pandemic and coming back stronger, more resilient ahead of next crises,” Prime Minister Stefan Löfven stated.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment

Government to establish a Ministerial Working Group on Climate Policy

Published 12 June 2020

The Government's goal is for Sweden to be the world's first fossil-free welfare nation. To achieve this, all policy areas must pull in the same direction and the issue of climate change must be integrated into all relevant policy areas. For this reason, the Government has decided to form a ministerial working group on climate policy.

– Climate change is the defining issue of our time and it cannot be solved if we're stuck in a silo mentality. All relevant policy areas must contribute to the transition of society as a whole, says Minister for Environment and Climate Isabella Lövin.

The purpose of the ministerial working group is to strengthen the Government's work to achieve the climate objectives and to implement the climate policy action plan. The working group will hold regular meetings chaired by the Prime Minister. In addition to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Environment and Climate, the group will include six other ministers whose areas are crucial to the climate transition: the Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation, the Minister for Infrastructure, the Minister for Energy and Digital Development, the Minister for Rural Affairs and the Minister for Financial Markets and Housing.

The Ministerial Working Group on Climate Policy will have a central role in efforts to drive the transition and pursue the green recovery.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

EU leaders discussed economic recovery

Published 24 April 2020

The COVID-19 virus is primarily a risk to human life and health. But it has also had serious consequences for jobs and the economy, both globally and in Sweden. Economic recovery following the COVID-19 crisis was the theme when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met his EU colleagues via a videoconference on 23 April.

- The COVID-19 virus has seriously affected our continent, and cooperation and solidarity in the EU has been tested. For example, it is difficult to grant the use of intensive care beds when you do not know how many you need yourself, and EU cooperation was discounted at the beginning of the crisis. But Sweden needs a strong EU that stays together, for the economy and welfare – and with a strong EU we can also combat climate change, said Mr Löfven after the summit.

- We are now facing another challenge, and that is the recovery. At the summit today, we gave the European Commission the task of assessing the needs and proposing an EU recovery fund. Together with like-minded countries, we have presented a number of requirements for this fund. For example, it must concern loans, with strict repayment requirements.

The heads of state and government discussed what EU Member States can do together to strengthen the single market, how a financial aid fund could be designed and what the EU should do to support other affected countries, including in the EU neighbourhood and in Africa.

This was the fourth such videoconference since the COVID-19 outbreak. Previous videoconferences took place on 10, 17 and 25 March.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Strategy in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Published 06 April 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic is testing our society. In recent months, the Swedish government has presented a range of different measures. The government's overarching goal is to safeguard people's lives and health and to secure the health care capacity.

“This crisis will continue for a long time. It will be tough. But our society is strong. If everyone takes their responsibility, together we will overcome it,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

On 1 February, the Government classified COVID-19 as a disease that constitutes a danger to society, opening the possibility of extraordinary communicable disease control measures.

The overall objective of the Government's efforts is to reduce the pace of the COVID-19 virus's spread: to ‘flatten the curve’ so that large numbers of people do not become ill at the same time.

It is important to implement the right measure at the right time, to achieve the best possible impact. The Government will take every decision necessary to safeguard people's lives, health and jobs.

The measures taken by the Government and government agencies to reduce the pace of the virus's spread need to be weighed against their effects on society and public health in general. The measures taken are reviewed constantly as the situation develops.

An important starting point is careful consideration of the expert knowledge contributed by government agencies. These expert agencies can make

recommendations to the Government on the measures they consider should be taken, but they can also take decisions of their own.

“Our government agencies and our health care system are doing everything they can. But every person in Sweden needs to take individual responsibility. If everyone takes responsibility, we can keep the spread of the virus in check. Follow the authorities’ advice: if you have even the slightest symptoms, do not go to work and refrain from meeting other people,” says Mr Löfven.

People in Sweden have a high level of trust in government agencies. This means that a large proportion of people follow government agencies’ advice. In the current situation, people in Sweden are on the whole acting responsibly to reduce the spread of infection by, for example, restricting their social contacts.

This crisis may continue for a long time, and in order for the measures to work over time, people need to understand and accept them.

The efforts and decisions of the Government aim to:

1. Limit the spread of infection in the country

By limiting the spread of the virus, the Government aims to relieve pressure on the health care system and protect people’s lives, health and jobs.

2. Ensure that health and medical care resources are available

The Government aims to ensure that the municipalities and regions, which provide the health care, have all necessary resources. For this reason, central government will cover all extraordinary costs arising as a result of the pandemic, e.g. higher costs for additional staff and protective equipment.

3. Limit the impact on critical services

To ensure that society can continue to function, the Government monitors needs and takes the decisions required to ensure that the health care, police, energy supply, communications, transport and food supply systems, for example, can maintain their activities.

4. Alleviate the impact on people and businesses

The Government has presented crisis packages to mitigate the financial impact of the pandemic on Swedish businesses, organisations and agencies, and to save people's jobs and livings.

5. Ease concern

By continuously providing information, the Government aims to make it clear what measures are being taken, and why. The Government broadcasts important information live on its website, [regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se). Written information about the Government's efforts, measures and decisions is also available there.

6. Implement the right measures at the right time

The Government is monitoring developments in the COVID-19 pandemic closely. It is taking the decisions that are needed, when they are needed, to limit the spread of the virus and counter its impact on society.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Employment

The same power to shape society and their own lives – the work of Sweden's feminist government continues

Published 08 March 2020 Updated 08 March 2020

All government policy must redistribute power and resources for a more gender-equal society. The goal is to ensure that women and men have the same power to shape society and their own lives.

"I am proud to lead the world's first feminist government. International rankings show that we have come a long way in our gender equality efforts. But we are not finished yet – we will continue our work until women and men have the same power to shape society and their own lives. Today is International Women's Day. This is an important day that reminds us that we cannot rest on our laurels", says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

"So far during this electoral period we have conducted major initiatives to combat men's violence against women and honour-based violence and oppression. In 2019, more than SEK 460 million was invested, and for 2020 the Government has so far taken decisions on investments amounting to over SEK 300 million in this area. We also recently appointed a commission on gender-equal lifetime earnings. But at the same time, much remains to be done before we have achieved gender equality. Women generally have lower wages than men, take more sick leave and take greater responsibility for unpaid household and care work. Far too many are also subjected to violence by men with whom they have close relationships. This is why we must continue to move gender equality work forward", says Minister for Gender Equality Åsa Lindhagen.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

No agreement on long-term budget at EU summit

Published 25 February 2020

Heads of state and government from the 27 EU Member States met in Brussels on Thursday and Friday to try to agree on the EU's long-term budget for the period 2021 to 2027. The meeting ended without the EU leaders reaching an agreement.

“For us it has been important to keep Sweden's contribution to the EU budget in check. The proposals presented are not good enough. Some progress has been made but unfortunately our positions remain far apart,” said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven after the summit.

“The level of the budget is still too high and our rebates too low. We are in complete agreement on this with like-minded countries Denmark, the Netherlands and Austria.”

At a later date, the leaders will resume the discussions on how large the budget should be, how the money should be distributed in the various expenditure areas and where the money should come from.

Mr Löfven represented Sweden at the summit in Brussels.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Summit on the EU's long-term budget

Published 20 February 2020

On Thursday 20 February, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will be in Brussels to meet his colleagues in the European Council. They will try to agree on the EU's long-term budget for 2021–2027.

At the extraordinary summit of the European Council, the EU leaders will try to agree on the EU's next long-term budget. They will discuss how large the budget should be, how the money should be divided between different expenditure areas and where the money should come from. The long-term budget will apply for 2021–2027.

Negotiations on the EU's long-term budget have been under way since May 2018 and are now nearing their conclusion. To prepare for the summit, President of the European Council Charles Michel has held talks with all 27 EU leaders.

Sweden's priorities remain in place. Just like like-minded countries Austria, Denmark and the Netherlands, Sweden wants to limit the total volume to 1 per cent of the EU's total GNI. Sweden's contribution must be kept down and the Government wants to achieve this by ensuring an adequate rebate. The Government therefore considers that the proposals presented by the President of the European Council ahead of the summit are not good enough.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Infrastructure

Several Ministers participated in commemorating Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January

Published 30 January 2020

On Holocaust Remembrance Day January 27 several representatives from the Swedish Government participated in memorial services to honour the victims of the Holocaust and to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven attended a memorial ceremony at Auschwitz-Birkenau to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the liberation. The memorial service began in Auschwitz and ended with a candle lighting ceremony in Birkenau.

Minister for Education Anna Ekström spoke at a memorial service arranged by the Council of Roma representatives in Malmö and then at a memorial service arranged by the Jewish Community of Malmö in the Synagogue of Malmö.

Minister for Home Affairs Mikael Damberg spoke at a ceremony arranged by The Living History Forum at Raoul Wallenberg's Square and then at the memorial ceremony in the Great Synagogue of Stockholm. Minister for Environment and Deputy Prime and Climate Isabella Lövin, Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson and Minister for Financial Markets and Housing Per Bolund also participated at the ceremony in the Great Synagogue.

Minister for Culture and Democracy Amanda Lind visited the Jewish Community of Gothenburg and spoke at the memorial ceremony in the evening.

Minister for Gender Equality, with responsibility for anti-discrimination and anti-segregation Åsa Lindhagen spoke at the memorial ceremony at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

Further Minister for Energy and Digital Development Anders Ygeman and Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson participated in a memorial service at the The Royal Dramatic Theatre.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven visited Yad Vashem to participate in the World Holocaust Forum

Published 23 January 2020

On 22 January, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven visited Jerusalem to participate in the World Holocaust Forum to honour the victims of the Holocaust and commemorate the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The memorial ceremony took place at Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust remembrance centre.

"Of all the history and all the knowledge we have about the genocide perpetrated by the Nazis and their collaborators, it is the fate of the children that affects me the most. The children who had to flee without their parents before the war. The children who were forced out of their homes and who had to go with their parents to the ghettos and the concentration camps. The children who died of starvation and who were murdered in the camps and by the death squads. The children – around 1.5 million children – who were robbed of their lives and of their futures in what can only be described as humanity's darkest hour," says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

During his visit to Jerusalem, the Prime Minister also met representatives from Jewish civil society. Discussions centred on remembrance of the Holocaust and the work against antisemitism – issues that will be the focus of the forum to be hosted by the Prime Minister in Malmö in October 2020.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Climate, long-term budget and Brexit at EU summit

Published 12 December 2019

On 12–13 December, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will meet his European Council colleagues for the final summit of the year. EU leaders will discuss the EU's climate goals for 2050, the EU's long-term budget and external relations. Deepening Europe's Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and Brexit are on Friday's agenda.

EU climate goals for 2050

EU leaders will begin the summit by discussing the EU's climate goals and whether the EU can adopt the target of achieving climate neutrality by 2050.

The Government's view is that the EU should adopt an ambitious long-term climate strategy as soon as possible so that it can be communicated to the UN in early 2020.

EU's long-term budget for 2021–2027

The week before the summit, Finland's presidency presented a new proposal for the long-term budget with figures for the overall expenditure and the various expenditure areas. EU leaders will be discussing the quantified proposal for the first time at the summit.

The Government cannot accept this proposal, which involves an overall ceiling of 1.07% of EU gross national income (GNI). The Government considers that the budget should be capped at 1.00% of EU GNI.

The Government is pleased that the proposal contains a mechanism that creates conditionality between the EU budget and respect for the rule of law, and that at least 25% of the budget is for climate action.

EU leaders are not likely to conclude the long-term budget negotiations at the meeting.

Brexit

EU leaders will also discuss Brexit. The results of the UK general election on 12 December will be known during the summit and will shape the discussion.

EU climate goals for 2050

EU leaders will begin the summit by discussing the EU's climate goals and whether the EU can adopt the target of achieving climate neutrality by 2050.

The Government's view is that the EU should adopt an ambitious long-term climate strategy as soon as possible so that it can be communicated to the UN in early 2020.

EU's long-term budget for 2021–2027

The week before the summit, Finland's presidency presented a new proposal for the long-term budget with figures for the overall expenditure and the various expenditure areas. EU leaders will be discussing the quantified proposal for the first time at the summit.

The Government cannot accept this proposal, which involves an overall ceiling of 1.07% of EU gross national income (GNI). The Government considers that the budget should be capped at 1.00% of EU GNI.

The Government is pleased that the proposal contains a mechanism that creates conditionality between the EU budget and respect for the rule of law, and that at least 25% of the budget is for climate action.

EU leaders are not likely to conclude the long-term budget negotiations at the meeting.

Brexit

EU leaders will also discuss Brexit. The results of the UK general election on 12 December will be known during the summit and will shape the discussion.

Euro Summit

On 13 December, a meeting of the Euro Summit will be held and attended also by non-Euro countries. EU leaders will receive a report from the finance ministers on the work on a budgetary instrument for the euro area, the banking union and the European Stability Mechanism.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation,
Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Discussions, meetings and collaboration for developing Sweden

Published 06 November 2019

Interesting discussions and new perspectives characterised the National Innovation Council meeting and thematic day at Linnaeus University in Kalmar on 23 October. The aim of the Council's regional meetings is to learn from local and regional experiences and to develop the national policy. Alongside the meeting, various workshops were also organised as part of the Innovation Council's thematic day.

The National Innovation Council meeting, which was led by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, focused on how society can address complex social challenges through innovation and cooperation. The Council meets 6 times per year, of which two meetings are regional. The meeting and thematic workshops in Kalmar were jointly planned by the county administrative board and Region Kalmar and, in addition to the core issues of cooperation and innovation, focused on two themes: eHealth and sustainable water use, which are important issues for the region. Meeting participants discussed the problems associated with water scarcity and the challenges arising from a steadily aging population that put a strain on the health and welfare sector, particularly eHealth. A great deal of attention was given to the solutions and opportunities that innovation and technology can present.

Lena Miranda, CEO of Science Park Mjärdevi and member of the National Innovation Council, participated in the meeting in Kalmar.

Why is it important for the Innovation Council to have meetings in different regions of Sweden?

“The Government has expressed the desire to see more innovation – not just in the business sector but in all areas – throughout the country, and not limited to metropolitan areas. I think this is the right way to go. Innovation happens everywhere, and our job is to create the best possible conditions to contribute to this. We have to make sure that people feel they are involved and create an impact – inclusion is very important to also ensure the survival of democracy,” says Ms Miranda, and continues:

“Around our country, there are many good examples at local and regional level that are important for us to see and understand at national level when decisions on new initiatives are to be taken. From this perspective, the Innovation Council’s visits around the country are important.”

The Prime Minister, other government ministers and Council members, together with regional actors from academia, the business sector and society, took part in the meeting. One of the participants was Cecilia Schelin Seidegård, Deputy County Governor of Kalmar County.

What do you consider to be important lessons from today’s meeting and which are also relevant to the national policy?

“Innovation takes place throughout the country. We need to find forms to spread good ideas between different regions in order to benefit from what already exists. Kalmar County will gladly be part of various testbeds, both when it comes to water issues and eHealth. There is a strong commitment to work together to make a difference. We can take the initiative and conduct tests on a small scale, which can then be implemented on a large scale,” says Ms Schelin Seidegård.

High level of activity at Innovation Council workshops

Running alongside the meeting was the Innovation Council’s thematic day, with activities in workshops under the guidance of Vinnova and Hack for Sweden. Participants had the chance to test cooperation methods and find common goals and ways to solve social challenges. The theme here as well was sustainable water use and eHealth.

The day’s programme concluded with a meeting of participants from both the Innovation Council meeting and the workshops to jointly report on

experiences from the day. Many people spoke about the benefit of different actors meeting to discuss and provide different perspectives and solutions to complex social challenges. In conclusion, Mr Löfven highlighted the importance of regional cooperation for innovation, and also open dialogue between local, regional and national activities. The ambition now is to continue working on the ideas, comments and proposals that emerged during the activities of both groups.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Brexit and the EU's long-term budget at the EU Summit

Published 17 October 2019

On Thursday and Friday, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will meet his EU colleagues in Brussels. The meeting will be dominated by Brexit and discussions on the EU's long-term budget for 2021–2027. The heads of state and government will also discuss EU enlargement and climate change.

Brexit

The negotiations on a new agreement for the UK's withdrawal from the EU, Brexit, are continuing up to the last minute ahead of the meeting of the European Council. The heads of state and government will discuss Brexit at the meeting.

The EU's long-term budget for 2021–2027

Discussions on the EU's long-term budget have been under way at several levels since the second half of last year. The heads of state and government will discuss the continued work at the meeting.

EU climate strategy

The EU leaders will also discuss the EU's long-term climate strategy, and what long-term targets the EU should set.

The Paris Agreement from 2015 urges all signatories to formulate long-term climate strategies and communicate them to the UN by 2020.

Turkey

The heads of state and government will probably discuss Turkey's test drilling in the eastern Mediterranean, the migration situation and possibly the country's military action in Syria.

EU activities 2019–2024

At the previous meeting, the heads of state and government pointed to a number of areas the EU should work on during 2020–2024 in a strategic agenda. Examples of areas include climate change, migration, security and a strong economy. The strategic agenda can be likened to a guide for the work of the next European Commission when it takes office. At the meeting, the EU leaders will discuss the strategic agenda together with Ursula von der Leyen, the President-elect of the European Commission.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

The Innovation Council contributes to concrete initiatives for the future

Published 11 October 2019

On 16 September 2019, the National Innovation Council met to discuss climate change.

“The National Innovation Council helps us to raise our sights and find new solutions to the societal challenges we face as a country. The need for reforms to manage the climate transition and to ensure our competitiveness and our welfare is great, and innovation will be key if we are to succeed,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

Innovative power is needed in society and in politics. The societal challenges ahead of us are more complicated than previously and will demand collaboration, participation and engagement from all parts of society. It is a matter of readjusting society for new conditions, finding better courses of action and using new solutions.

The issues raised in the National Innovation Council are raised at the highest political level. During the previous electoral period, the work of the Council contributed to the reform of the State’s venture capital investment activities through the new company Saminvest AB, the innovative platform Testbed Sweden and the national approach to artificial intelligence.

At the core of the National Innovation Council are its members and the dialogues and discussions the Council has on societal development, with a focus on innovation. The members of the National Innovation Council are appointed for their personal expertise and experience, and because they represent various perspectives and sectors of society.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Top positions at special meeting of the European Council

Published 29 June 2019

On 30 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will meet the heads of state or government of the EU Member States. At the Special Europe Council, they will continue their talks on the EU's top positions, including who will become President of the European Commission for the next five years.

The EU leaders will meet in Brussels to discuss, and hopefully agree on, who will be the next President of the European Commission after Jean-Claude Juncker. They will also likely discuss other top positions, including who will be the next President of the European Council and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Later in the year, a new head of the European Central Bank will also be appointed. The newly elected European Parliament will appoint its President, most likely on 3 July.

According to the Treaty of Lisbon, the European Council should propose a new President of the European Commission taking into account the results of the European Parliament elections. This person must then be approved by the European Parliament. The European Council appoints its own President.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Climate and future issues at EU summit

Published 26 June 2019

Climate change, the long-term EU budget and the EU's strategic agenda for the coming institutional cycle were on the agenda when Stefan Löfven and other heads of state or government from EU Member States met in Brussels on 20–21 June. The EU leaders also discussed the EU's external relations and appointments to several top positions in the EU.

- I am pleased we pushed through many Swedish priorities regarding issues the EU should focus on in the next five years. This includes decent jobs, an ambitious climate policy, and a well-functioning migration policy, said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven after the first day ended.

The EU's climate strategy

Ahead of the United Nations Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit in September, the heads of state or government discussed the EU's long-term climate strategy. The discussion focused on the targets the EU should set. At the summit, the EU leaders agreed on raising climate ambitions and retaining the target of a rise in temperature of 1.5 degrees Celsius, consistent with the Paris Agreement. Most EU countries also supported the target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.

- I also note that more and more EU countries are taking climate change seriously. Even though we did not achieve complete consensus yesterday, it is important to remember that just a few months ago only a few countries supported the goal of climate neutrality by 2050. Now 24 out of 28 countries

do. So we're moving in the right direction and we will continue to push the issue, said Mr Löfven.

The EU's strategic agenda for 2019–2024

The heads of state or government adopted a strategic agenda for 2019–2024, for the new European Commission that takes office in a few months' time.

The strategic agenda focuses on four main priorities for the EU in the coming institutional cycle:

- protecting citizens and freedoms,
- developing a strong and vibrant economic base,
- building a climate-neutral, green, fair and social Europe, and
- promoting European interests and values on the global stage.

The long-term EU budget

Discussions on the long-term EU budget have been under way at several levels since the second half of last year. The heads of state or government discussed how the process should continue.

External relations

As usual, the EU leaders addressed the situation outside the EU, including relations between Turkey and Cyprus, the situation in Russia and relations with Ukraine. Disinformation and hybrid threats were also on the agenda. The EU leaders decided to extend the sanctions against Russia for an additional six months.

Top positions in the EU

The final point discussed by the EU leaders on Thursday was the allocation of the top positions in the EU.

- We will discuss candidates for the top positions this week and meet again on 30 June, said Mr Löfven.

The first positions to be filled are: President of the European Commission, President of the European Council and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Later in the year, the head of the

European Central Bank will be appointed. The European Parliament will appoint its President, most likely on 2 July.

The European Council will propose a new President of the European Commission, taking account of the election results. The new President must then be approved by the European Parliament. The European Council appoints its own President.

Euro Summit

On Friday, a Euro Summit took place in an extended format that also included countries outside the euro area. The heads of state or government discussed the euro area budget, reforms of the European Stability Mechanism and the banking union.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Top positions and future issues at EU summit

Published 20 June 2019

The EU's strategic agenda for the coming institutional cycle, the long-term budget, appointments to several top EU positions and external relations are on the agenda as the heads of state and government meet in Brussels on 20–21 June.

The EU's strategic agenda for 2019–2024

EU leaders will begin their meeting by discussing a proposal for the EU's strategic agenda for 2019–2024. The strategic agenda will guide the work of the next European Commission when it takes office in November.

The EU's climate strategy

Ahead of the United Nations Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit in September, the heads of state and government will also discuss the EU's long-term climate strategy. The discussion will involve what targets the EU will set.

The EU's long-term budget

Discussions on the EU's long-term budget, also called the multiannual financial framework, have been under way at several levels since the autumn. The heads of state and government will also discuss guidelines and a timeline for the remaining work.

The EU's external relations

As usual, the EU leaders will address the situation outside the EU, including the relations between Turkey and Cyprus, the situation in Russia and the relations between Ukraine and the Eastern Partnership. Disinformation and hybrid threats are also on the agenda.

Top positions in the EU

One agenda item that will receive a lot of attention is the discussion on the allocation of the top positions in the EU. The first positions to be filled are: President of the European Commission, President of the European Council and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Later in the autumn, the head of the European Central Bank will be appointed. The European Parliament will appoint its President.

Taking account of the election results, the European Council will nominate the President of the European Commission, who must then be approved by the European Parliament. The European Council appoints its own President.

Euro Summit

On Friday, a Euro Summit will take place in an extended format. This means that EU countries outside the euro area are welcome. At the Summit, the heads of state and government will discuss the euro area budget, reforms of the European Stability Mechanism and the banking union.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received the President of the Republic of Korea

Published 19 June 2019

In connection with the State Visit by President of the Republic of Korea Moon Jae-in, celebrating 60 years of diplomatic relations, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received President Moon for bilateral talks in Saltsjöbaden on 15 June.

President Moon is particularly interested in Sweden's work on labour market and welfare issues. During their talks, Mr Löfven therefore told him about the Saltsjöbaden Agreement – the labour market agreement concluded in 1938 – and the Swedish model based on social dialogue and gender equality.

They also discussed the potential to further strengthen trade, investment and cooperation on innovation, and oversaw the signing of cooperation agreements on economic development, innovation and start-ups.

Foreign and security policy was also on the agenda, including multilateral cooperation, climate issues, and democracy and human rights. The situation on the Korean Peninsula was discussed, with a particular focus on cooperation to bring about nuclear disarmament and a peaceful resolution.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Top positions important issue for EU national leaders

Published 28 May 2019

After the European Parliamentary elections, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will meet with other EU heads of state and government to begin talks on the allocation of top EU positions.

On 28 of May, EU leaders will meet in Brussels to discuss the top positions in the EU institutions after the elections to the European Parliament. They are also expected to ask the current President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, to begin the nomination process for the heads of the EU institutions.

The first positions to be filled in the autumn are: President of the European Commission, President of the European Council and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

Later in the autumn, the head of the European Central Bank will be appointed and the President of the European Parliament will be elected by the newly elected members of the Parliament.

Taking account of the election results, the European Council will nominate the President of the European Commission, who must then be approved by the European Parliament.

The European Council appoints its own President.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

EU leaders discuss EU's future in Sibiu

Published 09 May 2019

On 9 May, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will attend the informal meeting of heads of state or government in the Romanian city of Sibiu. The EU leaders will exchange views on the challenges and priorities for the EU for the years to come and discuss the next strategic agenda for the period 2019–2024.

Stefan Löfven will travel to Sibiu on Europe Day, 9 May, to discuss the future of the EU.

At the informal European Council, the heads of state or government will have an initial discussion of the EU's strategic agenda for the coming five years. The discussion will focus on the priorities for the new leadership of the European Commission, which will assume its five-year mandate in the autumn. The climate, migration, security and competitiveness are high on the strategic agenda.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister attended International Arctic Forum in St Petersburg

Published 11 April 2019

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven attended the International Arctic Forum in St Petersburg on 9 April and, in connection with the conference, held bilateral talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin. The theme of this year's Forum was sustainable growth in the Arctic region.

The Government pursues an active Arctic policy, particularly on issues linked to climate change. The conference in St Petersburg was an important opportunity for political dialogue with Russia and other participating countries, including Finland, Norway and Iceland, about these global challenges.

In connection with the conference, Mr Löfven had a bilateral meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin. The meeting was an opportunity to express Sweden's policy with respect to relations with Russia. The Government is seeking enhanced cooperation with Russia on issues of interest to Sweden, including trade, the environment and climate, and health.

There is also a strong interest in enhancing people-to-people contacts, particularly between civil society organisations. At the same time, Mr Löfven clearly communicated Sweden's position of principle with respect to Russia's aggression towards Ukraine and its conduct in our neighbourhood. Recent developments with respect to human rights and democracy were also raised at the meeting. During his visit to St Petersburg, Mr Löfven also met representatives of Russian civil society and Swedish businesses.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to Brussels for Brexit summit

Published 10 April 2019 Updated 10 April 2019

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will meet fellow heads of state and government at an extraordinary summit of the European Council on Wednesday 10 April. At the summit, EU leaders will discuss Brexit, the UK's withdrawal from the EU. UK Prime Minister Theresa May will attend the first part of the summit to give her view of the situation.

The UK is currently due to leave the EU on 12 April, but the British parliament has not yet approved the withdrawal agreement. In a letter to the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, Ms May has asked the EU to delay the UK's withdrawal until 30 June. EU leaders will discuss possible solutions to avoid the UK leaving the EU without an agreement ('hard Brexit').

One possibility could be to give the UK until 30 June to leave the EU, another is to give the country the option to leave the EU later, when it is ready. If possible, the EU wants to avoid the UK leaving without an agreement, and the Swedish Government supports this position.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received EU's chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier

Published 04 April 2019

On 4 April, the Prime Minister and the Minister for EU Affairs received the EU's chief negotiator for Brexit, Michel Barnier.

Talks centred on the troubling situation in the Brexit process in which the United Kingdom, eight days prior to its expected withdrawal, has still not approved the negotiated Withdrawal Agreement.

Mr Löfven and Mr Barnier confirmed the need for the EU to take the action possible within their parameters to avoid having the UK crash out of the EU without an agreement.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Brexit and the single market at EU-summit

Published 25 March 2019

At the EU summit on 21–22 March, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and his EU colleagues agreed to offer the United Kingdom an extension until 22 May on condition that the British Parliament approves the withdrawal agreement next week. The heads of state and government also addressed the EU's long-term climate strategy and the EU's relationship with China.

Brexit – the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU

On the first day of the summit, the EU leaders discussed the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU.

“I have just concluded a meeting of almost eight hours with the other heads of state and government about Brexit. We agreed to give the United Kingdom an extension until 22 May on condition that the withdrawal agreement is approved by the British House of Commons next week. If it is not approved, the British must present a plan for how they wish to take the process further by 12 April at the latest,” said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven after the meeting.

The Prime Minister emphasised the importance of continuing to work for an orderly British withdrawal from the EU.

“We have to understand what a no-deal withdrawal would actually mean for individual citizens. There are 100 000 Swedish citizens living in the United

Kingdom and approximately 20 000 British citizens living in Sweden. A no-deal withdrawal will create major problems for companies and thus for our exports. Large financial values are at stake – it involves medicines, flight clearance – in other words, many different issues need to be resolved,” said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The EU leaders repeated that there can be no question of renegotiating the withdrawal agreement that the EU and the United Kingdom agreed on in November 2018.

The EU's relationship with China

At the meeting, the EU leaders prepared for the approaching EU summit with China on 9 April. The heads of state and government held a broad discussion of the EU's relationship with China. The EU leaders emphasised the importance of partnership and of finding cooperation areas with China, while also needing to safeguard the EU's interests within trade and investment, for example by ensuring that rules are fair.

In the area of security too, the heads of state and government emphasised that the EU must protect its interests, for example as regards sensitive infrastructure.

Jobs, growth, competitiveness and climate change

On the second day of the meeting, the EU leaders and the heads of state and government of Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein marked the 25th anniversary of the single market.

The discussion then continued on the theme of jobs, growth and competitiveness. The EU leaders emphasised the importance of an efficient single market in which there are development opportunities for service companies and digitalisation, for example. They also emphasised the value of free and fair competition, a strong single market and an open, rules-based world trade system.

The EU's long-term climate strategy

The EU leaders expressed their strong support for the Paris Agreement of 2015. In the Paris Agreement, the EU Member States committed to developing a long-term climate strategy to reduce emissions of greenhouse

gases by 2020. The day's discussions formed the initial stage of this work.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Brexit and the single market at the EU Summit

Published 21 March 2019

When Prime Minister Stefan Löfven meets his colleagues in Brussels on 21–22 March, Brexit will dominate the meeting's first day. The EU heads of state and government will also address the EU's long-term climate strategy and discuss jobs, growth and competitiveness.

Brexit – the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU

The EU leaders will open the meeting by discussing the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU in the EU27 format, which is to say without the United Kingdom.

On 14 March, the British Parliament voted to postpone the date on which the United Kingdom must leave the EU. Without such an extension, the withdrawal will take place on 29 March. At the meeting, the heads of state and government will agree a position on a possible request for an extension.

The EU's relationship with China

At the meeting, the EU leaders will also prepare for the EU summit with China on 9 April. Trade, human rights and foreign affairs will be on the agenda for the meeting with China.

Jobs, growth, competitiveness and climate change

On the meeting's second day, the heads of state and government will discuss jobs, growth and competitiveness in the EU as they note that the single market is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

The EU leaders will also address the EU's long-term climate strategy and disinformation ahead of the elections to the European Parliament in May.

The meeting of the European Council on 21–22 March will be the first of four planned meetings in 2019.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will represent Sweden at the meeting in Brussels.

Produced by the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the European Union, Brussels



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Employment

Feminist policy must make a difference in people's daily lives and experiences

Published 07 March 2019

Since 21 January 2019, Sweden has a new feminist Government. "We will use our policies to build a society in which all people have equal value and equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities, and in which no one is limited by their gender," say Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Minister for Gender Equality Åsa Lindhagen.

A more gender-equal society

"We're now proudly and vigorously continuing to build a gender-equal society for everyone, a society where women and men, girls and boys can live their lives to their full potential, where no one is held back. This is how we build a stronger society and a safer Sweden," says Stefan Löfven.

The Government will take decisions and implement policies that offer new opportunities for those living in Sweden. The Government's overall policy will redistribute power and resources for a more gender-equal society; the aim is for women and men to have the same power to shape society and their own lives.

A matter of human rights

Gender equality is also a matter of human rights. With a clear gender perspective in its policies, the Government wants to achieve more in

developing all areas of society. Gender equality is part of the solution to the challenges Sweden is facing. To tackle the challenges in the labour market, integration, schools and health care, the Government has to understand and take into account the needs and prevailing circumstances of women, men, girls and boys.

“To achieve more and take new steps, the Government will continue to include the gender perspective in all our efforts and continue to implement a gender responsive budget. A feminist government allocates resources and takes decisions that result in gender equality,” say Stefan Löfven and Åsa Lindhagen.

All ministers are pursuing feminist policy

“I am proud to be Minister for Gender Equality in a feminist government, with overall responsibility for our gender equality policy. But the work is carried out by all my minister colleagues; Sweden actually has 22 gender equality ministers, not just one. All ministers in the Government pursue a feminist policy in their respective policy areas,” says Åsa Lindhagen.

Being a feminist government means that the Government wants to make a difference in people’s daily lives and experiences. The Government will redouble its efforts to combat violence and oppression, and will prevent and combat both men’s violence against women and honour-related violence and oppression. Children and young people must live secure lives, in school and at home. The Government will also continue to promote the economic empowerment of women, and combat women’s ill health. The integration of women and men who come to Sweden must work better. The Government want integration to be feminist, with a clear gender perspective.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Brexit and the long-term budget at the EU Summit

Published 17 December 2018

Discussions about Brexit and the long-term EU budget for the period 2021–2027 dominated the European Council on 13–14 December. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and other heads of state and government adopted a number of conclusions on migration, disinformation, climate change and internal market cooperation. The Council ended with a discussion of EMU cooperation.

Brexit

The United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU once again dominated the EU leaders' agenda. At their meeting, they discussed how the EU would move forward and support the UK without opening the withdrawal agreement for renegotiation.

The heads of state and government confirmed the conclusions on the withdrawal agreement and the political declaration from the Summit on 25 November. They stressed that the EU supports the agreement and that it is not open for renegotiation. At the same time, EU leaders underscored that the backstop solution for Ireland is an insurance policy that is not intended to be used. Instead, the intention is to quickly negotiate alternative solutions in the future relationship between the EU and the UK.

Long-term EU budget

The Austrian Presidency gave a status update of the ongoing negotiations on

the long-term EU budget for 2021–2027. The heads of state and government were given the opportunity to present their views concerning when the negotiations should be completed and what the priorities should be.

Conclusions on the internal market and migration

At the Summit, the heads of state and government adopted conclusions stating that the internal market needs to be developed and needs to address issues such as digitalisation and artificial intelligence.

The heads of state and government discussed the conclusions on migration and concluded that the ongoing work should be continued.

Foreign affairs and disinformation

EU leaders take a very serious view of the situation in the Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov, as well as the violations of international law committed by Russia. They call for the immediate release of the imprisoned Ukrainian sailors.

The heads of state and government agreed to extend the sanctions against Russia.

The heads of state and government also made preparations for the Summit between the EU and the Arab League on 24–25 February 2019.

EU leaders noted that the spread of widescale and systematic disinformation is a threat to our democratic systems. They believe that disinformation must be countered swiftly and effectively, and that public authorities and other actors must coordinate their efforts.

Climate change

The heads of state and government urged the Council of Ministers to continue working on the European Commission's proposal on a long-term climate strategy for the EU. Within the next six months, the European Council will provide overarching guidance on priorities so that the EU can present a long-term climate strategy in line with the Paris Agreement by 2020.

Euro Summit

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven also took part in the Euro Summit, a meeting of euro area countries, to which the other EU countries are also invited. EU leaders adopted conclusions on the deepening of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and gave a mandate to the finance ministers to continue work on a budget instrument for the euro area.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Brexit and EU budget on the agenda when EU leaders meet

Published 13 December 2018

Brexit, the EU budget for 2021–2027 (Multiannual Financial Framework), foreign policy and migration are some of the issues to be addressed when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and the other EU leaders meet in Brussels on 13–14 December.

Brexit

The United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU is an issue currently dominating the EU agenda. During the meeting, the EU leaders will discuss the continued process, which has been brought into sharp focus in light of the current uncertainty of political developments in the UK.

EU Budget

At the meeting, the Austrian Presidency will give the heads of state and government a status update of the ongoing negotiations on the EU budget for 2021–2027 (Multiannual Financial Framework). The EU leaders will have the opportunity to present their priorities in the negotiations and their view of when the negotiations should be concluded.

Single market

At the meeting, the heads of state and government will adopt the conclusions on the status of the single market, i.e. the cooperation on free movement of goods, people, services and capital.

Migration and foreign policy

Austria, which holds the Presidency, will report on the state of negotiations on migration issues. The heads of state and government will then adopt conclusions on the ongoing negotiations.

The EU leaders will also make preparations ahead of the EU-League of Arab States summit on 24–25 February 2019 and discuss the situation in the Sea of Azov.

Euro Summit

Mr Löfven will also take part in the Euro Summit, a meeting of countries using the euro as their currency, to which the other EU countries are also invited. They will discuss EMU deepening and how euro cooperation can be moved forward.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

EU leaders endorsed Brexit agreement

Published 26 November 2018 Updated 26 November 2018

On the Sunday of November 25, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and the other members of the European Council endorsed the Brexit agreement negotiated by the EU and the United Kingdom.

On the morning of 25 November, the 27 heads of state and government backed the political endorsement of the ‘Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community’.

The European Council also approved the ‘Political Declaration setting out the framework for the future relationship between the European Union and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland’.

Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration

The Withdrawal Agreement sets out the terms of the United Kingdom’s withdrawal from the EU that will help to ensure an orderly withdrawal. The agreement is almost 600 pages long and sets out the responsibilities and rights of the EU and the United Kingdom. It also clarifies what will apply during the ‘transition period’.

The Political Declaration sets out the broad framework for the future relationship between the EU and the United Kingdom after the withdrawal and transition period.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven represented Sweden at the meeting in Brussels.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to attend special meeting on Brexit

Published 23 November 2018

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will attend a special meeting of the European Council on Sunday, November 25. EU leaders will meet to take a position on the Brexit withdrawal agreement.

On November 25, EU heads of state and government will gather to take a position on the withdrawal agreement that has been negotiated between the EU and the UK. The leaders are also expected to approve a political declaration on future EU-UK relations.

Withdrawal agreement and political declaration

The withdrawal agreement sets out the terms of the UK's withdrawal from the EU that will help to ensure an orderly withdrawal. The agreement is more than 580 pages long and sets out the rights and responsibilities of the EU and the UK. It also clarifies what is meant by 'transition period'.

The political declaration sets out the framework for the future relationship between the EU and the UK after the withdrawal and transition period.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will represent Sweden at the European Council meeting in Brussels.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven took part in commemoration of end of the First World War

Published 11 November 2018 Updated 11 November 2018

On 11 November 2018, it was 100 hundred years since the ceasefire was concluded that led to the end of the First World War. This was commemorated in a major event in Paris on 10–11 November, attended by some 80 heads of state and government and heads of international organisations.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven was invited by French President Emmanuel Macron to attend the Memorial Ceremony and speak at the Paris Peace Forum.

During the Paris Peace Forum, Mr Löfven spoke about the importance of building societies together that allay people's concerns with development and confidence in the future – this is the basis for peace and security.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

OECD takes over as host of Global Deal

Published 09 November 2018

On 9 November 2018, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met Angel Gurría, Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), to hand over the Global Deal initiative.

Initiated by Mr Löfven, the Global Deal for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth is an initiative for social dialogue and better conditions in the global labour market. The initiative is about the advantages and gains of globalisation benefiting more people and addressing the challenges in the global labour market jointly. The initiative aims to promote better wages, better working conditions, increased gender equality and more equality for workers around the world. Social dialogue is central, which has so successfully helped Scandinavia, for example, to build robust societies.

In just a few years, the initiative has grown to include almost 100 actors from the whole world: governments, companies and organisations. The OECD, which, together with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Swedish Government, launched the Global Deal in 2016, will now be the host organisation for activities.

The new support unit will comprise six people, two of whom have been seconded from the ILO. Their duties will focus on providing support to Global Deal members and strengthening and sharing knowledge about social dialogue.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Brexit and migration at the European Council

Published 18 October 2018

The European Council discussed Brexit, migration and internal security on 17–18 October. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and his colleagues also addressed EU relations with the Arab League and the EU's negotiating mandate ahead of the COP24 climate conference.

Brexit

After an update from UK Prime Minister Theresa May, the EU leaders met in an EU27 format (i.e. without the UK) on Wednesday evening. The European Commission's Chief Negotiator Michel Barnier reported from the ongoing negotiations on the UK's withdrawal from the EU. The EU leaders discussed the state of the negotiations and reaffirmed their full confidence in Mr Barnier, but noted that sufficient progress had not yet been made to enable a meeting to be convened in November.

Migration and internal security

Migration and the control of the EU's external borders were among the main agenda points. The EU leaders discussed efforts to combat human smuggling, cooperation with countries of origin and transit, work on the common asylum system, returns and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency.

They also discussed how to improve internal EU security. The European Council conclusions state that the EU will strengthen its efforts to combat disinformation, for example in EU elections, and cyber threats.

External relations and COP24

The EU's external relations, for example with the Arab League, and the upcoming climate negotiations ahead of COP24 in Katowice, Poland, were also discussed.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven represented Sweden at the European Council meeting in Brussels.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Brexit and migration on the agenda when the European Council meets

Published 17 October 2018 Updated 17 October 2018

Brexit, migration and internal security will be on the agenda when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven meets his European Council colleagues on 18 October. The EU leaders will also address external relations.

Brexit on Wednesday evening

On Wednesday evening, EU leaders will meet in an EU 27 format (i.e.) without the UK). They will receive a report on the ongoing negotiations on the UK's withdrawal from the EU and will have the opportunity to review the state of the negotiations.

Migration and internal security

The European Council will address migration and control of the EU's external borders. Discussions will also be held on efforts to combat human smuggling, cooperation with countries of origin and transit, and work on the common asylum system. Returns and the European border and coast guard are other issues that may be addressed.

The EU leaders will also follow up on an earlier discussion on internal security by discussing disinformation and influence campaigns ahead of the European Parliament elections in May 2019.

External relations

The European Council will also discuss the EU's external relations, including with Africa and the Arab League.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to lead a transitional government

Published 25 September 2018

Today, in accordance with the provisions of the Swedish Constitution, a vote of confidence in the Prime Minister was held in the Riksdag. Because Prime Minister Stefan Löfven did not secure adequate support in the Riksdag, the Speaker of the Riksdag has relieved the Prime Minister and the other ministers of their duties.

“The work of the Speaker now begins. I am at the Speaker’s disposal to form a new government with broad support in the Swedish Riksdag,” says Mr Löfven.

Once the Speaker has relieved the Prime Minister and the other ministers of their duties, they remain in office until the process of forming a new government has been concluded and the new government takes office. During this process of forming a new government, the Prime Minister leads a transitional government. The task of the Government Offices is to assist the transitional government until a new government has taken office.

A transitional government primarily takes decisions on ongoing or urgent matters. The only explicit restriction on the powers of the transitional government is that it may not decide to hold extraordinary elections.

The Speaker now begins the work of producing a proposal for a new prime minister by inviting all party leaders for talks on how a government may be formed. The Riksdag will then once again hold a vote of confidence in the incoming Prime Minister.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Justice

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the car fires: "Society will always respond strongly to such acts"

Published 14 August 2018

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Minister for Justice and Home Affairs Morgan Johansson met police in Västra Frölunda today to learn about their work following the car fires in western Sweden on 13 August. Chairman of the Municipal Executive Board of the City of Gothenburg Ann-Sofie Hermansson was also at the meeting.

"Society will always respond strongly to such acts. We have made the penalty for gross vandalism much tougher. In the autumn we will also present a bill on attacks against emergency services staff that may follow in the wake of such incidents," says Mr Löfven.

Last year the Government increased the penalty for gross vandalism, which can now lead to six years' imprisonment.

"We now hope that these thugs can be caught so that they can receive the punishment they deserve," says Mr Johansson.

Since the current electoral period began in the autumn of 2014, the Government has proposed more than 30 stricter penalties related to organised crime.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at mini-summit on migration

Published 25 June 2018

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven took part in a mini-summit on migration in Brussels on June 24.

The purpose of the summit was to discuss migration issues.

- It was good to meet today to prepare for next week's discussions on migration. It is important for us to continue working for a common asylum system in Europe – focusing on cooperation with countries that migrants come from, strengthening borders and achieving a fairer distribution within the EU, said Mr Löfven after the meeting.

Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, Spain, Luxembourg, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Netherlands, Finland, Denmark, Greece, Slovenia, Austria, Malta and Sweden took part in the meeting, hosted by President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker.

The European Council, that is all heads of state and government, will meet on 28–29 June, when they will further discuss migration policy issues.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Both incentives and motivation needed to ensure learning becomes reality in the workplace

Published 11 June 2018

Supplying skills to the labour market, and to society at large, has been a recurring issue since the Government's National Innovation Council started meeting in 2015. When the Council met on 28 May at Harpsund, the meeting opened with the issue of lifelong learning in the workplace.

Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson summarises the discussions from the meeting: "Sweden has a strong starting position. The Swedish model means that we encourage and facilitate labour market adjustment. Both central government and the social partners take considerable responsibility in this. However, digitalisation and globalisation place major demands on skills development and learning in the workplace."

What is important to consider in the work going forward?

"The discussion emphasised the importance of business managers giving skills issues greater weight and of strengthening cooperation between working life and education providers. Both incentives and motivation are needed to ensure learning becomes reality in the workplace," says Ms Johansson.

What will the workplaces of the future look like?

"New opportunities to acquire new skills must be available to more people, for example through using online courses or other flexible means of

customising and making education accessible for concrete needs. But to ensure that these new skills benefit both the individual and the workplace, a good, supportive learning environment is important," says Ms Johansson.

In the current public debate, there is considerable engagement and interest in the issue of learning, lifelong learning and skills supply. Increasingly greater demands are being made today on continuous learning throughout one's entire working life, but how is this need being addressed in the labour market and at individual workplaces? What characterises a learning workplace?

Minister for Higher Education and Research Helene Hellmark Knutsson, one of the government members of the National Innovation Council, explains more from the meeting.

Could you give a brief summary of what the meeting concluded on this particular point? A concrete example to think about in the work going forward?

"It was an exciting discussion, including many well-informed contributions and good, concrete proposals. Technological developments in digitalisation and automation are resulting in new demands on knowledge and skills in working life. The days when it sufficed to acquire an education at the start of one's career are gone," says Ms Hellmark Knutsson.

"It's clear that we need a holistic approach to education and learning, where every part is needed to ensure a good overall outcome. Continuous learning in the workplace needs to be developed and regarded more as the strategic issue it actually is.

What is most important to ensure the success of lifelong learning?

"From the perspective of higher education, I believe that collaboration between educational institutions and companies must improve. Close cooperation is required to develop the courses the business sector needs and help increase access to the courses currently offered. The development of courses for professionals, digital learning and skills validation opportunities are important parts of the overall picture. More people will need to change their career path or acquire new skills and knowledge throughout their working life. This is why opportunities to study at higher education institutions later in life must increase. We are now working in a coordinated way on a number of education-based reforms throughout the country and through all stages of life. One major reform is expanding higher education

throughout the country through resources equivalent to almost 25 000 new places by 2021.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Foreign and security policy and 5G the focus as Nordic prime ministers meet in Örnköldsvik

Published 21 May 2018

Nordic cooperation, current foreign and security policy issues and 5G are on the agenda as the Nordic prime ministers meet in Örnköldsvik on 22–23 May. The informal prime ministers meeting is held annually as part of the extensive Nordic cooperation.

Sweden is currently chair of Nordic cooperation and is hosting the meeting in Örnköldsvik on 22–23 May, to which Prime Minister Stefan Löfven has invited his colleagues Erna Solberg from Norway, Lars Løkke Rasmussen from Denmark, Juha Sipilä from Finland and Katrín Jakobsdóttir from Iceland. The prime ministers' spouses will also be present, and will have their own programme.

The prime ministers will have three different meetings. Nordic cooperation and foreign and security policy will dominate the meeting on 22 May. The meeting on 23 May will primarily be devoted to digital development and 5G.

Wednesday's activities will conclude with a working lunch with the autonomous Nordic territories, as well as the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Nordic Council.

About Nordic cooperation

Cooperation between the Nordic countries is one of the oldest and most extensive regional cooperation programmes in the world, and is pursued through a number of bodies and in various areas. The prime ministers are

ultimately responsible for Nordic intergovernmental cooperation. The Nordic Council of Ministers is the official cooperation body of the Nordic governments, with a rotating Presidency – held this year by Sweden. The Nordic Council is the forum for cooperation between members of the national parliaments.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

UN Secretary-General and Security Council visit Sweden

Published 23 April 2018

UN Secretary-General António Guterres visited Sweden on 21–23 April. During the visit, he met Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, gave the Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture in Uppsala and led an informal working meeting with the Security Council at Dag Hammarskjöld's farm, Backåkra, in Skåne.

“Following the developments in Syria in recent weeks, much of the discussion has been about the conflict there, which has been going on for more than seven years. The UN must lead efforts to bring an end to the suffering and start to build a lasting peace,” said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven after his bilateral meeting with António Guterres.

The talks between the Prime Minister and the Secretary-General were held at the National Library of Sweden in Stockholm. They were preceded by a private viewing of parts of the Dag Hammarskjöld archive. As UN Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld took the initiative to form the first armed UN peacekeeping mission. Still today, more effective conflict prevention remains one of Sweden's most important priorities in its work on the Security Council.

“Sweden is a close and staunch friend of the UN, but we also see the need for reforms. The UN must function more effectively and its activities on the ground must be better coordinated. The UN could also play a greater role in efforts to deal with the refugee flows and get more countries to share this responsibility. We have also discussed how the UN's peacekeeping missions can be strengthened and streamlined,” said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven after the bilateral meeting.

This was also the theme of the UN Security Council's retreat, which for the first time was convened outside the United States, at Dag Hammarskjöld's farm, Backåkra, in Skåne.

The UN Security Council also visited one of Europe's largest research infrastructure projects, European Spallation Source (ESS) in Lund, in the company of Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström. A discussion was held there on the interplay between technological development and global challenges, and how research and innovation can be used to address current problems and crises.

During his visit to Sweden, the Secretary-General also travelled to Uppsala, where he met Crown Princess Victoria and gave the Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture. In Uppsala, he also took part in a wreath-laying ceremony at Dag Hammarskjöld's grave.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Note to members of the media: Programme for UN Secretary- General and Security Council working meeting and visit in Sweden 20–23 April 2018

Published 20 April 2018

The annual informal working meeting with the UN Secretary-General and the Security Council will be held at Dag Hammarskjöld's farm Backåkra in Skåne on 21–23 April 2018. Afterwards, UN Secretary-General António Guterres will continue to Uppsala and Stockholm.

Media programme

Friday 20 April

Visit to the European Spallation Source (ESS), Lund

Members of the Security Council visit the European Spallation Source (ESS) in Lund. This is a unique material research facility based on the world's most powerful neutron source. Sweden and Denmark are the host countries of the ESS, which is one of Europe's largest infrastructure projects for research. The visit provides an opportunity to examine the interplay between technological development and global challenges, and how research and development can be used to meet current problems and crises.

The media will have the opportunity to cover the beginning of the visit.

Saturday 21 April

Secretary-General and Security Council informal working meeting at Backåkra

Besides the Secretary-General and members of the Security Council, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström will be on hand in connection with the informal working meeting.

Photo opportunity on arrival.

Press briefing/doorstep with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, UN Secretary-General António Guterres, Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström and President of the UN Security Council, Peru's UN Ambassador Gustavo Meza-Cuadra.

Sunday 22 April

Secretary-General visits Uppsala

Secretary-General António Guterres delivers the Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture at Uppsala Castle. Since 1998, the Lecture has been an annual event held in memory of Dag Hammarskjöld and the values he stood for in his deeds and actions. Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström and Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate and Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin will attend on behalf of the Government. In addition to the Lecture, the Secretary-General will take part in a wreath-laying ceremony at Dag Hammarskjöld's grave and have a meeting with Crown Princess Victoria.

A separate press invitation will be sent by the co-organisers, the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and Uppsala University.

Monday 23 April

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Secretary-General António Guterres in Stockholm

Press invitation



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Webcast: (Translated to English) Prime Ministers Stefan Löfven and Narendra Modi

Published 17 April 2018

Prime Ministers Stefan Löfven and Narendra Modi each made a statement regarding today's discussions.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Webcast: (Translated to Hindi) Prime Ministers Stefan Löfven and Narendra Modi

Published 17 April 2018

Prime Ministers Stefan Löfven and Narendra Modi each made a statement regarding today's discussions.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Webcast: (Not translated) Prime Ministers Stefan Löfven and Narendra Modi

Published 17 April 2018

Prime Ministers Stefan Löfven and Narendra Modi each made a statement regarding today's discussions.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Innovation and sustainable development the focus of Indian official visit

Published 17 April 2018

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Sweden on 16–17 April. India is currently the world's fastest growing major economy, and the Swedish Government is working to strengthen Sweden's role as a key partner in the areas of sustainability and innovation.

Global economic growth is predominantly happening in Asia, not least in India. Swedish companies have a significant presence in India, and Indian companies are making substantial investments in Sweden. Increased trade and investment between the two countries creates more jobs and higher growth.

Areas of expertise including the environment, renewable energy, health, research and innovation are at the heart of the discussions on Sweden and India's continued bilateral cooperation.

During the official visit, Prime Ministers Stefan Löfven and Narendra Modi will hold talks at Sager House and Rosenbad. At 13.20 they will each make a statement on the discussions in the entrance to Rosenbad.

Prime Ministers Löfven and Modi and Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg will meet Swedish business leaders at round-table discussions at Stockholm City Hall. There will be an outdoor photo opportunity on Tuesday 17 April from 13.15, as the participants arrive. It will then be possible to take photographs indoors during the introductory talks, and a group photograph will be offered at the close.

The official visit also includes an India-Nordic Summit, during which Prime Ministers Löfven and Modi will host a dinner at Grand Hôtel in Stockholm attended by the Prime Ministers of all the Nordic countries. On Tuesday 17 April from 16.45 there will be an opportunity to take group photographs of the Prime Ministers at the India-Nordic Summit.

On the evening of 17 April, Prime Ministers Löfven and Modi will visit Stockholm University, where Mr Modi will give a speech in Hindi to the Indian diaspora.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Nerve gas attack in Salisbury and Brexit in focus when Stefan Löfven received Theresa May

Published 10 April 2018

On Monday 9 April, UK Prime Minister Theresa May visited Stockholm for a meeting with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

One important subject of the talks was the aftermath of the nerve gas attack in Salisbury against the Russian former agent Sergei Skripal and his daughter. At the EU summit on 22 March it was decided there would be a coordinated reaction. The EU has recalled its Ambassador from Moscow and 14 EU Member States, including Sweden, have decided to expel Russian diplomats.

During the meeting, Ms May also informed Mr Löfven about the UK's view of its withdrawal from the EU and the upcoming future-oriented talks between the EU and the UK. Sweden and the other EU countries will be represented by the European Commission in these negotiations.

Mr Löfven and Ms May also discussed bilateral cooperation between Sweden and the UK.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Government marks anniversary of terror attack on Drottninggatan

Published 05 April 2018

On 7 April, the City of Stockholm and the Government will mark the anniversary of the terror attack on Drottninggatan. Several members of the Government will attend a memorial service and Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will deliver a speech at a memorial concert in Kungsträdgården.

The commemoration will begin at 12.00 with a memorial service at Adolf Fredrik's Church for relatives, people particularly affected, police officers, emergency services staff, medical staff and others who made important contributions on 7 April last year. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and many other government ministers will attend. The memorial service will be led by Vicar Annika Millde. Archbishop Antje Jackelén, Bishop Eva Brunne and representatives of Stockholm's interreligious council IRIS will also take part.

At around 14.15–15.00 there will be a memorial concert in Kungsträdgården organised by the City of Stockholm to honour the victims and their families, and to remind us all that Stockholm is and should be an open and democratic city. Stefan Löfven will deliver a speech during the concert.

Government's work to combat terrorism

Since the terror attack on Drottninggatan on 7 April 2017, the Government's work to combat terrorism has intensified. Here are a few examples of measures taken over the past year.

- In June 2017, cross-party agreements were reached on additional anti-terrorism measures.

- Criminal anti-terrorism legislation will be further tightened and made more comprehensive. Tightened regulations will make it possible to intervene earlier against people who intend to commit terrorist offences.
- The Government has proposed total reinforcements for the period 2017–2020 of SEK 9.8 billion to the Swedish Police Authority and SEK 213 million to the Swedish Security Service.

All information about the Government's work to combat terrorism is available at:

Combating terrorism



Article from Prime Minister's Office

EU leaders discuss steel tariffs and Brexit

Published 26 March 2018

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met his head of state and government colleagues at the European Council on Thursday and Friday 22–23 March. Trade and the threat of steel tariffs were among the issues on the agenda. Brexit and the EU's reactions to the nerve agent attack in Salisbury were other important issues.

Trade and the United States

Following US President Donald Trump's statement that he intended to introduce import tariffs on steel and aluminium products, the EU's relations with the United States and trade with the country have become one of the most important subjects for discussions between the heads of state and government.

At the meeting, the EU leaders regretted the United States' decision to introduce import tariffs on steel and aluminium. They consider that the decision cannot be justified for reasons of national security. The EU was eventually given an exemption from the tariffs, but the heads of state and government are urging the US to make the exemption permanent. They also expressed their full support for the measures taken by the European Commission to protect the EU's interests, in line with WTO rules. EU leaders value transatlantic relations and stress the importance of dialogue on trade issues.

Nerve agent attack in Salisbury

Another current issue dealt with by EU leaders was reactions to the nerve agent attack in Salisbury, in which two people were seriously injured. They strongly condemned the attack, expressed their support for those affected and said that they share the United Kingdom's assessment that Russia was behind the attack.

Turkey and the Western Balkans

At the meeting, the heads of state and government condemned Turkey's continued unlawful actions in the eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea, and urged Turkey to immediately cease these.

The heads of state and government also established that they hope the summit in Sofia on 17 May will deepen the EU's relations with the Western Balkans. They confirmed that the European Council summit in June will deal with enlargement issues.

Single market, climate and growth

At the meeting, the EU leaders also discussed the single market and stated that decisions on changes to the single market should be implemented in an efficient manner. The EU has to adapt the single market to the digital economy and will promote competition, innovation and sustainability.

The European Council also urges the European Commission to present a long-term strategy for reducing the EU's greenhouse gas emissions, in line with the Paris Agreement.

The heads of state and government also adopted conclusions on meeting the objectives of the European Pillar of Social Rights. They support the priorities in the Commission's annual growth review and urge Member States to use them as the basis of their own reform programmes.

Brexit

On Friday, the heads of state and government discussed the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU in the EU27 constellation, i.e. without the UK.

The heads of state and government approved new guidelines for the European Commission so that the Commission can now begin negotiations on future relations between the EU and the UK after Brexit.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Trade, Brexit and the nerve agent attack in Salisbury on the European Council agenda

Published 21 March 2018

Trade with countries outside the EU and the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU are two of the issues Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will raise with his heads of state and government colleagues when they meet on Thursday and Friday, 22–23 March. They will also discuss the nerve agent attack in Salisbury

Trade and relations with the United States

One important issue at the meeting will be the EU's relations with the United States, including trade, as President Donald Trump has announced his intention to introduce import tariffs on steel and aluminium products.

Nerve agent attack in Salisbury

The heads of state and government will also discuss the consequences of the nerve agent attack in Salisbury on 4 March. At the meeting they will adopt conclusions condemning the attack.

Single market, the European Semester and social issues

The heads of state and government will discuss how the EU single market could facilitate competition, sustainability and innovation. Discussions on the 'European Semester' for economic policy coordination and on social issues are also planned.

Taxes and Turkey

The dinner discussions will focus on various tax issues and relations with Turkey ahead of a high-level meeting in Varna, Bulgaria on 26 March.

Brexit

On Friday, the heads of state and government will discuss the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU in the EU27 constellation, i.e. the UK will not take part in the discussion.

The heads of state and government are likely to approve new guidelines for the European Commission so that the Commission can begin negotiations on future relations between the EU and the UK after Brexit.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Regions and innovation important for Sweden's growth

Published 14 March 2018

"The more we can do together, the better the results we can achieve," said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven when he opened the meeting of the National Innovation Council and invited regional actors in Skellefteå on 20 February. The focus of the meeting was the northern region's strengths and challenges, and its interaction with the national level.

For Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, regional meetings with the National Innovation Council play an important part in developing national innovation policy. This is the second time in the past six months that Mr Löfven and the Council have held meetings around the country. In October, the Council was in Västra Götaland County speaking with stakeholders in the region. This time a meeting and subsequent seminar were held in Västerbotten County. It is important for national innovation policy to identify the diverse opportunities and circumstances that exist in the different regions.

"It's about creating good conditions to advance society as a whole. An open, inviting approach and constructive discussions will enable us to create a platform for developing ideas and policies that will generate growth throughout the country," said Mr Löfven.

Mr Löfven led the meeting. Also on site in Skellefteå were Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg, Minister for Higher Education and Research Helene Hellmark Knutsson, State Secretary to Isabella Lövin Eva Svedling and Council members Darja Isaksson, Jane Walerud and Ola Asplund. County Governor Magdalena Andersson, Regional Council member Erik Bergkvist, chair of the municipal executive board Lorents

Burman, and other regional actors from industry, academia and the public sector also took part in the meeting, the focus of the which was the northern region's strengths and challenges, and its interaction with the national level. The extraction and processing of resources for a sustainable society were discussed, along with how innovation can help communities outside the major cities to grow.

"There were many interesting comments and discussions that we in the Government will take back with us. All conditions are in place here; we have the people, the environment and the natural resources. Northern Sweden can lead the way, for example, in digitising health care. There are obvious challenges here in terms of an ageing population and the need for better nationwide medical care that is closer to the community. But there are also ideas and solutions here," said Mr Löfven after the meeting.

Following a meeting of the National Innovation Council, work on harnessing the views and ideas addressed continues at the Government Offices. This is the job of the National Innovation Council Secretariat, which follows up issues in cooperation with the relevant state secretaries and ministries. Follow-up and feedback also take place at future Council meetings.

"This helps to develop more policy areas to ensure that they better promote innovation, which in turn leads to improved innovation policy and to Sweden becoming more competitive. That's the whole point," concluded Mr Löfven.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Jobs and security in focus when Stefan Löfven visited the United States

Published 07 March 2018

Growth, innovation, job creation and security were on the agenda when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and US President Donald Trump held talks at the White House in Washington DC.

The aim of the meeting on 6 March was to further deepen relations between Sweden and the United States. Another important area of discussion was Sweden–US cooperation in external relations, defence and security.

Following the talks, Mr Löfven and Mr Trump held a joint press conference at the White House. "As we celebrate 200 years of diplomatic relations, we are also planning for shared prosperity and security for many, many years to come," said Mr Löfven, who also stated that Sweden builds security by building ties.

"Sweden is a great country"

Mr Trump said that Sweden is a great country that the US has cooperated with for about 200 years. "Our relations have never been better," said Mr Trump, who also said that Swedes are terrific people.

Mr Löfven is the first European head of government to meet the US President since he announced his intention to impose tariffs on steel and aluminium. "I am convinced that increased tariffs will hurt us all in the long run, and as a Swede I of course support the efforts of the European Union to achieve trade with as few obstacles as possible," said Mr Löfven.

Following the press conference, the Swedish Embassy in Washington hosted a reception to celebrate 200 years of diplomatic relations between Sweden and the United States.

Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg, who also took part in the visit, had a meeting with US Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross on 6 March.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

A secure EU in a secure world

Published 02 March 2018 Updated 02 March 2018

As part of the EU's global strategy for foreign and security policy its common policy is being developed to contribute to security both in and outside the EU. The European security order is still being challenged by Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Important progress has been made to lay the foundation for inclusive and ambitiously structured defence cooperation (PESCO), and work is continuing to highlight this broad view of security.

An active neighbourhood policy is the best guarantee for democracy, welfare and stability in our neighbouring region. Within the framework of the EU's new development policy the overall objective of EU development cooperation is still poverty reduction, but the policy also points the way to how EU development cooperation will contribute to the sustainability goals of the 2030 Agenda.

The Government will work to ensure that:

- Both the civilian and the military priorities of the EU's global strategy are implemented, including the permanent structured cooperation, PESCO, and the further development of civilian crisis management;
- The EU's dialogue with Russia is clear and principled, and that support for Ukraine and the other countries in the Eastern Partnership is strong; The EU's sanctions against Russia are upheld for as long as the reasons for their introduction remain;
- The EU contributes to conflict prevention, crisis management and conflict resolution in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, in close cooperation with the UN and regional actors;

- The EU integration processes for the Western Balkans are maintained based on the qualification of each country.

The EU's internal security

Responding to the threats from terrorism, IT crime and other cross-border criminal activity requires preventive action based on close and effective cooperation. We see how, in addition to its many advantages and possibilities, an ever more digitised world also leads to vulnerabilities and security challenges. The threats to the EU's internal security are often linked to conditions beyond the borders of the EU and the most effective measures for the EU's internal security may therefore be operations outside the EU, for example the EU's civilian and military crisis management operations.

The Government will work to ensure that:

- The control of the EU's external borders is strengthened, thereby improving the possibilities of detecting and preventing crime and the import of illegal goods. This is essential for a secure and well-functioning Schengen area.
- Law enforcement agencies' access to information and possibilities of exchanging information match up to what is essential for effective and legally certain cooperation to combat threats including those from terrorism;
- EU cooperation in the area of cybersecurity is promoted, particularly within the framework of the Information Security Directive and the Framework for a Joint EU Diplomatic Response to Malicious Cyber Activities.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

A social Europe for jobs and inclusive growth

Published 02 March 2018 Updated 02 March 2018

Even though the economic situation in the EU has improved, we see high long-term unemployment, growing gaps and unacceptably high youth unemployment in many parts of Europe. Well managed public finances at both national and EU level lays the foundation for greater confidence in the policy being pursued and stable economic growth shared by everyone.

A modern long-term budget

In spring 2018 the Commission will propose a new long-term budget for the period after 2020. The Government will work intensively to influence that proposal as much as possible, mainly along with other like-minded Member States. Negotiations on the new proposal are expected to start in mid-2018.

When the UK leaves the EU, a large contribution to the EU budget will disappear, as will an important ally for Sweden in the budget negotiations.

The Government will work to ensure that:

- The total expenditure in the EU's multiannual financial framework does not exceed 1 per cent of the EU's GNI, that the Swedish contribution is kept down and that the use of EU funds is controlled more effectively.
- The EU has a modern budget with refocused priorities benefitting security, migration, competitiveness, research and actions against climate change. This means less funding for agricultural support and

structural funds. At the same time the Government will protect the relative return of funds to Sweden.

- All Member States stand up for our common values and decisions made. EU membership brings both rights and obligations. There must be a cost for not taking responsibility.

Inclusive growth through open trade and a competitive Single Market
More than 70 per cent of Swedish exports go to the Single Market and our export industry employs more than 1.4 million people in Sweden. In the past twenty years over 80 per cent of all the new jobs have been created in the services sector. Disproportionate barriers to trade must be removed to facilitate the development of the services sector. Market surveillance of goods on the Single Market also needs to be modernised to enable consumers to feel secure that products are safe and environmentally sustainable and to enable companies to compete on equal terms.

The EU needs to increase its ability to generate and attract highly qualified activities in global value chains. The innovative capacity of European industry needs to be enhanced.

The Government will work to ensure that:

- Disproportionate barriers to the movement of goods and services disappear, especially through the implementation of the Single Market Strategy for goods and services;
- An ambitious free trade agenda with more free trade agreements between the EU and other parties;
- Action in the EU's coming framework programme for research and innovation makes more of a contribution to increased competitiveness and more jobs.

A digitalised Europe

Digitalisation is driving the development of society, promoting competitiveness and creating new jobs. If the EU is to be able to retain a leading position in the digital economy, investment is needed in infrastructure, education and skills development.

One important step on that path is to complete the Digital Single Market strategy. Since most businesses depend on free, cross-border flows of data in their activities, the development of the Digital Single Market must support the free movement of data across national borders both within and beyond

the EU.

The Government will work to ensure that:

- The proposals in the EU's Digital Single Market strategy are implemented in 2018.
- The proposal concerning free flows of data is adopted speedily and the flows of data to and from third countries are facilitated, for example by international agreements.

Fair jobs and working conditions

Conditions in the European labour market must be fair and decent. To protect workers' conditions, companies' competitiveness and the legitimacy of free movement, cross-border work must be combined with the principle of equal pay for equal work and conducted in line with good working conditions and a good work environment. The Government's starting point continues to be that the competence of Member States; national labour market models and the autonomy of social partners; and the standing of collective agreements must be respected.

The Government will work to ensure that:

- The revision of the Posting of Workers Directive is completed so as to confirm the principle of equal pay for equal work in posting situations.
- The coordination of social security systems is developed and promotes the dialogue between Member States and mobility for persons in the EU, especially workers.
- Clear rules and fair competition for a well-functioning Single Market steer legislation in the area of transport and lead to better working conditions in the whole of the EU as well as that the protection of social rights is strengthened.

Stronger gender equality and flexibility

A Europe for jobs and inclusive growth builds on a synergy between growth, competitiveness and social progress. The implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights will make a positive contribution to women's and men's quality of life at the same time as the division of competence between the EU and its Member States is retained.

Stronger gender equality is both a rights issue and needed to increase Europe's growth and global competitiveness. When women are outside the

labour market, potential for growth goes to waste.

Access to life-long education contributes to a flexible labour market. The need for further education throughout life is increasing, especially as a result of the digitisation and robotisation of society. People's skills need to develop in pace with the technological development and to be matched to new types of jobs.

The Government will work to ensure that:

- The principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights are monitored in a structured way within the European Semester;
- The Directive on Work-Life Balance is designed in a way that contributes to a more gender equal working life and enables high labour force participation among both women and men irrespective of their family situation.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister discussed long-term EU budget with European colleagues

Published 26 February 2018

The priorities for the long-term budget of the European Union were discussed when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met with his EU colleagues on Friday 23 February. The composition of the European Parliament following the 2019 elections and the lead candidate process were also on the agenda.

The EU's long-term budget

"The EU budget must go to the right things and be allocated equitably. We want to see a modern budget with money going to growth, security and handling migration," said Mr Löfven after the meeting. He also emphasised the need to shift priorities rather than increase resources.

This was the first time the heads of state and government had discussed the priorities for the next multiannual financial framework – the EU's long-term budget – for the period 2021 to 2027.

Ahead of European Parliament elections

Ahead of the European elections in the first half of 2019, the heads of state and government discussed how many members of the European Parliament each country should have. They also debated the lead candidate process, whereby the European Parliament nominates the candidates for the next European Commission President.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven represented Sweden at the meeting in Brussels.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister congratulates Estonia's Prime Minister on 100th anniversary

Published 19 February 2018

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received Estonia's Prime Minister Jüri Ratas for a breakfast meeting at Sager House on Sunday 18 February.

Mr Löfven opened the meeting by congratulating Estonia, which celebrates 100 years as an independent state on 24 February. Both prime ministers noted that 100 years of good bilateral relations have benefited both Estonia and Sweden. Cooperation can be deepened in several areas, including digital transformation and cyber security.

Mr Löfven and Mr Ratas devoted much of their time to talking about regional cooperation and security issues. Sweden chairs five different regional cooperation organisations and is working to find synergies between them. This benefits cooperation and security in our region. Security in the Baltic Sea region and cyber security efforts are important to Sweden and Estonia.

Mr Löfven and Mr Ratas also discussed the EU, focusing mainly on the EU's next financial framework, Brexit, digital issues, migration and work on issues concerning the future of the EU.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to open an international high-level conference on violence against children

Published 01 February 2018

The Swedish Government is hosting the high-level conference Agenda 2030 for Children, End Violence Solutions Summit in Stockholm on 14–15 February 2018. The participants include Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, HM Queen Silvia and UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohamed. The co-organisers of the conference are the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children and WePROTECT Global Alliance.

At least 1 of every 2 of the world's children have experienced violence and 18 million girls aged between 15 and 19 have experienced sexual abuse. As part of Agenda 2030 world leaders have pledged to attain 17 global goals, one aim being to realise human rights for all. Target 16.2 is about preventing and ending violence against and exploitation of girls and boys.

As part of action to attain this target an international high-level conference – **Agenda 2030 for Children, End Violence Solutions Summit** – is being held in Stockholm on 14–15 February 2018.

– I am proud and pleased that Sweden is the first country to host this extremely important conference. At present human rights are being questioned in many places around the world, and by hosting this summit we want to stress that it is possible to make progress in assuring the right of

children to grow up free from violence. Governments, the UN and the EU have a responsibility for achieving this, as do civil society and the private sector. I hope that the meeting can result in concrete examples of solutions, legislation, collaboration and action that lead to a reduction in violence against girls and boys, says Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

The purpose of the conference is to share good experience and new solutions in work to end violence against children. Government ministers from 75 countries, youth delegates and high-level representatives of UN bodies, civil society, the academic world and the private sector have been invited to attend the meeting.

The list of participants includes Prime Minister Stefan Löfven; Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér; HM Queen Silvia; Director-General of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus; Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Henrietta H Fore; UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohamed; the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Yury Fedotov; and, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, Marta Santos Pais.

During the conference several workshops will be held at which participants will be able to discuss and exchange knowledge and expertise on various themes concerning violence against children.

Sweden is a pathfinding country

Sweden was the first country to join the Global Partnership as a "pathfinding country". These countries identify successful solutions to eliminate violence against children in various settings, from the family to the community as a whole.

– Sweden aims to be the best country in the world for a child to grow up in. As part of this, all children must be safe from violence, abuse and violations. This also means that children must themselves be aware of their rights. Then we will see more children daring to speak out, and to tell adults close to them when and if they are victims of offences. One important step in achieving this is to make the Convention on the Rights of the Child law in Sweden, says Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

About the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children

The Global Partnership to End Violence against Children was launched in July 2016 and is a joint initiative by a number of governments, Unicef, the WHO and others for international collaboration between governments, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders to bring about change. The initiative is linked to the global goals in Agenda 2030, especially target 16.2 about preventing and ending violence against and exploitation of children.

Read more at end-violence.org/summit

Follow the conference and join the conversation on Twitter:

#EndViolenceSWE



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister in talks with President of Iceland

Published 17 January 2018

In connection with the Icelandic State Visit to Sweden, the Prime Minister welcomed Iceland's President Guðni Thorlacius Jóhannesson for talks at Rosenbad on 17 January.

During their talks, they discussed gender equality, Nordic cooperation, transatlantic issues and climate change. The Prime Minister informed the President about the five chairs Sweden is currently holding in the regional organisations the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Council of the Baltic Sea States, as well as the Nordic and Nordic-Baltic cooperation forums. They also discussed Sweden's work as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Investing in youth is the theme of the EU-AU Summit

Published 29 November 2017

Future relations between Europe and Africa are the subject of discussion as leaders from the European Union and the African Union, AU, meet in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on 29–30 November. The Summit, which is the fifth between the EU and the AU, will particularly focus on investing in youth.

The Summit is an important opportunity to strengthen the political and economic ties between the European and African continents. The agenda includes migration, peace and security, democracy and economic development, but the main theme is investing in youth. Some 60 per cent of the African population is under the age of 25.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven is representing Sweden. He will deliver a speech focusing on the importance of combating forced displacement, and how jobs and development can contribute to this.

Mr Löfven will also meet with African representatives, not least to follow up on the EU-Africa Summit on Migration held in Malta in November 2015.

It is ten years since the adoption of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The fifth summit called for a stronger EU Eastern Partnership

Published 27 November 2017

When Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and other EU Heads of State and Government met their counterparts from the Eastern Partnership countries in Brussels 24 November, reforms, deepened and broadened cooperation were on the agenda. Prime Minister Löfven particularly stressed the importance of democracy and human rights, gender equality and a strong civil society.

- Sweden's commitment to the Eastern Partnership remains strong. The Partnership is a strategic priority in support of stability and development in our Eastern neighbourhood and a sign of mutual solidarity. Our goal is to support the development of open and sustainable societies with responsible institutions that citizens can rely on, said Prime Minister Löfven and continued:

- We must remain focused, be patient, set clear goals and work consistently. We must understand that transformation takes time. I believe that the door for deeper relations between partner countries and the EU must remain open for those that are willing to work hard to transform their societies. That is good for both partner countries and the European Union.

20 goals to the benefit of people

At the Summit, Heads of State or Government discussed developments since they last met in Riga 2015, and ways to increase reform momentum and strengthen cooperation.

They agreed to cooperate to meet 20 goals to achieve concrete results to the

benefit of people. These areas include public administration, trade and economic development, gender equality, mobility, energy issues, the environment and climate change. They also underlined the important role of civil society implementing reforms and developing resilient societies. Common challenges facing both EU Members States and partner countries such as disinformation and cyber issues were also discussed.

Free trade agreements and visa freedom

The association and free trade agreements with Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine mean that these countries will gain access to the EU's single market. Since early 2017, citizens from Georgia and Ukraine can travel to the Schengen area without a visa. Moldova was granted visa-free travel in 2014.

In the margins of the Summit, EU and Armenia signed a Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement. Negotiations on a renewed agreement with Azerbaijan are underway, and with Belarus Partnership Priorities will be signed.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Fifth summit of the Eastern Partnership

Published 24 November 2017

When Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and other EU heads of state and government meet their counterparts in the Eastern Partnership countries, the agenda will include reforms and deepened cooperation. The Government will particularly highlight the importance of democracy and a strong civil society.

A strong civil society and democracy are important for Sweden

The Government is strongly committed to the Eastern Partnership. The aim is to ensure resilient, prosperous, peaceful and democratic societies with responsible institutions that have the confidence of citizens. The key to this is a strong civil society.

Developing closer ties with the EU requires engagement and hard work and for the Government, the priority is for countries that implement reforms to be offered more cooperation.

The Eastern Partnership involves strengthening the respect for human rights, promoting democratic development, increasing gender equality and promoting a strong civil society and independent media.

Citizens' trust and popular support are essential for the success of the comprehensive reforms and to achieve long-term sustainable development in the partnership countries. These reforms must yield tangible results for the population and it is particularly important to reach the young generation.

Deeper and more focused relations within the Eastern Partnership

At the summit, heads of state and government are discussing the latest developments, and how to increase the momentum of reform and strengthen cooperation.

The objective is to agree on 20 deliverables by 2020 in a number of areas: public administration, trade and economic development, gender equality, energy issues, environment and climate change. Civil society also needs to be stronger.

The three association and free trade agreements with Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine mean that partnership countries will gain access to the EU's single market. Since early 2017, citizens from Georgia and Ukraine can travel to the Schengen area without a visa. Moldova was granted visa-free travel in 2014.

In addition to these three countries, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus are also involved in the EU's Eastern Partnership.

The summit takes place on 24 November in Brussels.



Article from Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

French-Swedish cooperation on green innovation

Published 17 November 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and the French President Emmanuel Macron have signed a strategic partnership for innovation, digital transformation and green solutions. The partnership will help address social challenges, create new jobs and maintain social cohesion.

The threat of climate change, an ageing population and digital transformation place new demands on cross-border cooperation. By harnessing each other's strengths and working together to promote innovations and new technology, France and Sweden will be better prepared to meet these challenges. Both countries are strongly committed to fight climate change, which is why areas of cooperation include green transport solutions, clean energy, smart cities and green financing for climate-resilient economies. Both countries are also home to world-leading companies at the forefront of the digital transformation that we are witnessing. The partnership makes it possible to tap into the world-class expertise of these digital companies and startups. Pharmaceutical and environmental innovations promote a healthier lifestyle choice for our countries' citizens.

The partnership is based on the innovative capacity of public sector stakeholders, academia and the business sector, and covers four areas:

1. green solutions for transport, clean energy and smart cities,
2. green financing for climate-resilient economies,
3. digital transformation, smart industries and startups, and
4. health and life sciences innovation.

Each area contains subprojects linked, for example, to solutions for a fossil-free transport sector and knowledge exchange on smart cities.

Sweden and France are world leaders in the area of green innovation and can contribute to the transition to a more sustainable society. The partnership is expected to enable the two countries to advance developments together in a number of areas of mutual interest, both at EU level and in international forums. The agreement opens the way for continued and enhanced cooperation between Swedish and French companies and deepens existing relations.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth to be webcast

Published 14 November 2017

On Friday 17 November, you will be able to follow the Social Summit live via webcasts in English, French, German and Swedish. You can also follow the meeting on social media [#SocialSummit17](#).

The webcasts will allow people throughout Europe to follow the discussions on issues that affect their everyday lives, such as new job opportunities, guaranteeing decent work and access to skills development.

The first live session starts at 9.30 on Friday 17 November: [socialsummit17.se](#).

The webcasts will be available on demand after the Summit.

Follow [#SocialSummit17](#)

You can also follow the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth on social media: [#SocialSummit17](#).

Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on Twitter: [@SwedishPM](#)

The EU Commission on Twitter: [@EU_Commission](#)

The Facebook event (by the EU Commission)

The Swedish Government on Instagram: [@sverigesregering](#)

[#SocialSummit17](#)



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Sweden's centenary gift to Finland – 'Free Fall'

Published 01 November 2017

At a reception on 31 October at Hanaholmen, the Swedish-Finnish Cultural Centre on the outskirts of Helsinki, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Finnish Prime Minister Juha Sipilä unveiled 'Free Fall', a sculpture by artist Anna Uddenberg.

The sculpture is one of the centenary gifts to Finland from the Swedish state. The gift was announced by HM the King of Sweden on 1 June in connection with the official celebration of Finland's centenary by the Nordic heads of state and government.

'Free Fall' is a bronze sculpture set four metres up in the air with a water jet fountain – a contemporary statue of liberty.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Regional perspectives essential for innovation policy

Published 27 October 2017

For the first time, the National Innovation Council is hosting a regional meeting, to take place in Trollhättan on 25 October. Below, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven tells us more about the Council's work and the importance of developing innovation policy that benefits all of Sweden. The Council is also hosting an open seminar to discuss the Government's policy with those most closely affected by it.

What are your expectations of the meeting?

– By meeting in a region and having a dialogue with regional actors, I hope to gain even more perspectives, ideas and suggestions for developing innovation policy that benefits the entire country. In Trollhättan, five members of the National Innovation Council – Isabella Lövin, Helene Hellmark Knutsson, Carola Öberg, Sigbritt Karlsson and Charles Edquist – and I are meeting regional and local actors from the county administrative board, the region, municipalities, academia, business and cooperation arenas, such as Lindholmen Science Park and Innovatum. The Council's work is important for gaining new knowledge and new ideas to develop national policy. It is a matter of creating good conditions for innovation, strengthening our international competitiveness and improving our ability to resolve social challenges together.

Why is it important for the National Innovation Council to have a regional meeting?

– As I travel around the world and meet other heads of government, business

leaders, academics and innovators, considerable interest is often shown in Sweden's capacity for innovation and its transition to a sustainable society. This attracts knowledge cooperation and investment, which in turn enables Swedish exports to grow, with new products on new markets. All this is taking place in various locations across Sweden, and new products, services and companies are constantly being developed. This is why regional collaboration is so important and why national policy must provide the best possible conditions for innovation throughout the country. During the visit to Trollhättan, a seminar is also being held on how various actors can collaborate to advance society through innovation.

What is the purpose of a seminar?

– I want the Government's approach to be open and inviting. This is necessary for a constructive discussion and development of government policy based on dialogue with those most closely affected by it. The seminar aims to enable more people to participate in this discussion and contribute their ideas and suggestions.

What are the Council's most important results to date?

– Close and frequent cooperation between several ministers and external members of the business sector and academia has enabled us to establish a good platform for developing ideas and policy. The Council has helped ensure that important processes and decisions, such as the government bill on public venture capital, the research policy bill, the innovation partnership programmes, the procurement strategy, the digital transformation boost, the focus on open data in the Budget Bill and the issue of employee stock options, have been given priority and discussed at strategic level. This has helped advance several policy areas to ensure they better promote innovation which, taken together, means that the Government is pursuing a better innovation policy. Dialogues with other actors in society are also developing well. I particularly want to call attention to the high level of interest the National Innovation Council has generated in China, France, Germany and India, for example.

What else is taking place in the Council now?

– Extensive work on the five strategic innovation partnership programmes is under way. It is very gratifying that this initiative from the National Innovation Council brings together so many actors from different sectors and parts of the country. The various groups set important priorities and generate

new ideas for collaborations and projects. With regard the Council's upcoming meetings this autumn and spring, I am looking forward to addressing issues such as Sweden's contribution to the global transition towards sustainable societies, skills supply and development of the labour market, the role of the public sector in promoting innovation, and several initiatives aimed at strengthening companies' innovative capacity, growth, expansion and participation in global innovation environments. Another aim of the Council is to help increase and enhance cooperation between ministries and with government agencies. The innovation partnership programmes contribute to this. I am also seeing more cross-ministerial collaboration at the Government Offices and many government-led initiatives based on close collaboration between various ministries. This is a welcome development that I would like to see even more of in the future.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

The Prime Minister speaks about the future of Europe in Uppsala

Published 27 October 2017

Today, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven held a speech titled 'Our Europe – our shared responsibility' at Uppsala University. The speech was a contribution to the debate on the future of Europe that is currently under way.

Financial and migration crises, increased unemployment and security concerns have led to more people losing confidence in the EU and the ability of policy to solve real problems when they arise. In today's speech, the Prime Minister indicated what future developments he would like to see, and why.

"The EU is beginning to lose its leading position in the global competition. We are no longer the largest market, and we are not always the leading foreign policy actor that we could be either. We must change this by focusing on delivering solutions to the challenges we face today. This is about more and better jobs, a sustainable migration policy, security for the citizens and leading climate efforts," says Mr Löfven.

In his speech, Mr Löfven particularly highlighted the importance of the EU being at the forefront of creating new jobs and increasing growth, for example by deepening the single market and negotiating more trade agreements. He also emphasised that the EU must also ensure that working conditions are favourable and that competition is healthy and fair.

These are issues that will be discussed at the upcoming summit in Gothenburg on 17 November, where EU leaders will discuss how to create new jobs, how to create fairer competition in the EU and how adjustment

possibilities for EU citizens can be improved. The question of how the European labour market can be more efficient and fair is central to the future of the EU and it is a great achievement for Sweden that these issues are now being discussed at the highest EU level.

The Prime Minister also said that the EU must lead climate efforts, do more to guarantee the safety of its citizens and that much still remains to be done to achieve a sustainable and responsible migration system. The efforts to reduce the number of displaced people has had an impact, but this must be combined with every country taking its responsibility for refugees.

The Prime Minister also stressed that all countries in the EU must live up to the values that the EU stands for, abide by decisions taken jointly and not shirk from our common responsibility.

“When we do the right things and focus on delivering solutions to the problems that people see, there is great strength and potential in EU cooperation,” says Mr Löfven.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Migration, digitalisation and Brexit at European Council

Published 25 October 2017

When Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met his colleagues at the European Council meeting of 19–20 October, the heads of state or government adopted conclusions on migration, a Digital Europe, security and defence, and external relations. Afterwards, they discussed Brexit, without the participation of the UK. When Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met his colleagues at the European Council meeting of 19–20 October, the heads of state or government adopted conclusions on migration, a Digital Europe, security and defence, and external relations. Afterwards, they discussed Brexit, without the participation of the UK.

Migration

The heads of state or government began the meeting by discussing migration. They agreed to continue the work on migration carried out so far in the EU, and to provide the proper support to Member States as necessary. In their conclusions from the meeting, the EU leaders also pointed out the importance of cooperation with countries of origin and transit, and called for further efforts to increase returns.

The European Council also reiterated the importance of vigilance on all migration routes and readiness to react to new trends. The Council undertook to ensure funding, including through the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa.

The EU leaders also said that they would return to the reform of the Dublin system and the issue of responsibility and solidarity at the European Council meeting in December, and seek to reach a consensus during the first half of 2018.

Digital Europe

The EU leaders followed up on the Tallinn Digital Summit and emphasised that digitalisation offers immense opportunities for more jobs, growth, and global competitiveness. To build a Digital Europe, the EU needs a future-oriented regulatory framework, a first rate e-infrastructure, a common approach to cybersecurity, and training and education systems that are fit for the digital age. It is also important that funding opportunities are available for research and innovation that support a Digital Europe.

Security and defence

The EU leaders welcomed the progress made to reach agreement on enhanced security and defence cooperation, and look forward to the launch of a Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) in the area of defence at the European Council meeting in December.

North Korea, Iran and Turkey

The European Council held a debate on relations with Turkey. It also reaffirmed its commitment to the nuclear deal between the EU and Iran. The Council also urged North Korea to abandon its missile programmes and stressed that lasting peace must be achieved through peaceful means.

Brexit

The European Council welcomed the progress made in the negotiations. This applies to the first phase, regarding citizens' rights, and how concerned citizens and their family members can be guaranteed the rights they currently enjoy as EU citizens, even after Brexit.

The Council also acknowledged that the EU and the UK have made progress on convergence on objectives and principles concerning Ireland, primarily as regards protecting the Good Friday Agreement and maintaining the Common Travel Area. With regard to the UK's financial obligations, the European Council noted that it was waiting for greater clarity from the UK.

At its next session in December, the European Council will reassess the state of progress in the negotiations. If sufficient progress has been achieved, the Council will adopt additional guidelines on the EU's future relationship with the UK and possible transitional arrangements. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven represented Sweden at the meeting in Brussels.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Migration, a digital Europe, security and defence on European Council agenda

Published 18 October 2017

Migration, digital issues, security and defence will be on the agenda as Prime Minister Stefan Löfven meets his European colleagues in the European Council on 19–20 October. On the second day of the Council the heads of state and government will discuss the negotiations on the UK's exit from the EU.

Migration

The European Council will look at the migration situation in Europe and evaluate measures aimed at controlling irregular migration flows. The EU leaders are expected to raise the issue of enhanced cooperation with humanitarian organisations such as the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

A digital Europe

Taking the Tallinn Digital Summit held on 29 September as a starting point, the European Council will consider how the EU can take advantage of the opportunities offered by digital transformation.

It will also assess the work on the digital single market.

Security and defence

A discussion on permanent structured defence cooperation is also on the agenda, as the EU leaders agreed to such cooperation in June.

The EU's external relations

In light of recent developments, the EU leaders will review certain foreign policy matters, including relations with Turkey.

Brexit negotiations

On 22 June the European Council met in the EU 27 format, that is, without the UK. The Council will review the results of the fifth and latest round of negotiations. The European Council meets in Brussels. This is the third of four meetings this year.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven met India's Minister of Commerce and Industry

Published 11 October 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met today with India's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Mr Suresh Prabhu, and his delegation.

Sweden and India have a close economic and trade collaboration, not least in the areas of renewable energy, smart cities, transportation, innovation and health.

In 2016, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi issued a Joint Statement on intensified cooperation in a broad range of sectors.

This visit is a key follow-up to the two countries' commitment of last year. Prime Minister Löfven and Minister Prabhu will also participate at the annual meeting of the India-Sweden Business Leaders Round Table.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Greater focus on the link between innovation and globalisation

Published 29 August 2017

Innovation and globalisation – two areas that go hand in hand for Sweden's continued national growth and development. Since Prime Minister Stefan Löfven established the National Innovation Council in February 2015, several initiatives have been taken aimed at promoting Sweden's exchanges with leading innovation communities. There is greater focus today on the link between innovation and globalisation, and this was discussed at the National Innovation Council's meeting on 28 August.

Moving from idea to innovation requires learning and collaboration between countries. This is why the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation has taken over responsibility for innovation and research councils at Sweden's embassies in important regions such as the United States, China, India, Japan and Brazil.

The aim is to promote more effective networking with people and communities of interest to Swedish innovation, research and higher education. Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg and Sweden's newly appointed Ambassador to the United States Karin Olofsdotter described how this policy can be developed to increase synergies between various promotion initiatives and foster Sweden's exchanges with leading innovation communities.

Several international comparisons, including the Global Innovation Index, the European Innovation Scoreboard and the Bloomberg Innovation Index,

identify Sweden as a global leader in innovation. The Government is working to ensure Sweden continues at the forefront. The National Innovation Council, including representatives of the Government, business, trade unions and the research community, can serve as a contact point to strengthen Sweden's innovation capacity, thereby attracting the interest of other countries.

"Sweden is a global leader in innovation, and doors are opening in many countries for both the Government and the businesses accompanying the many promotional trips we carry out," says Mr Damberg.

In 2017, the Government has made several international visits and trips focusing on innovation, globalisation and new inter-country cooperation. On 31 July, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Mr Damberg travelled to Paris for meetings with President Emmanuel Macron and Prime Minister Edouard Philippe. Discussion topics included jobs and growth, Swedish-French cooperation, the future of the EU, migration and security.

Press release: Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to meet President Emmanuel Macron

On 26–28 June, Prime Minister Löfven visited China, accompanied by Ministers Mikael Damberg, Ann Linde and Karolina Skog, and a business delegation within the framework of the Government's Team Sweden initiative. The visit focused on green innovation and sustainability, an area in which Sweden leads the world. Several agreements were signed in connection with the visit to promote bilateral trade and continued cooperation between Sweden and China.

Press release: Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit China

On 31 January, Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel visited Sweden. In connection with her visit, Germany and Sweden agreed on extensive innovation cooperation in digitalisation, eHealth and future mobility. A new innovation partnership was forged between the two countries involving a unique agreement on cooperation to promote innovative social solutions, new export products and stronger competitiveness.

Article: Innovation, digitalisation and asylum cooperation on the agenda as Löfven meets Merkel

Press release: Sweden and Germany in unique innovation partnership



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Festive celebration of Finland's 100th anniversary as an independent state

Published 25 August 2017

On Friday 25 August, Finnish Prime Minister Juha Sipilä visited Stockholm. The visit was part of the celebrations commemorating Finland's 100th anniversary as an independent state. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Prime Minister Juha Sipilä marked the occasion by attending a commemorative festival in Kungsträdgården, the largest centenary celebration held outside of Finland.

As part of Finland's 100th anniversary festivities, Mr Sipilä and Mr Löfven also took part in an event where Finnish artist Marja Kanervo's sculpture ÅRTAL (YEARS) was unveiled at Engelbrektsplan in Stockholm. The work is part of an art project entitled 'Two countries – one future'. Swedish artist Eva Lange's work will be unveiled later in Helsinki.

Discussions and a press conference were subsequently held at Rosenbad. Bilateral cooperation, regional security, the bioeconomy and EU affairs such as migration, social growth and security were the main subjects discussed during the meeting.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Facts about the Global Commission on the Future of Work

Published 24 August 2017

In 2015, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) launched the Future of Work Initiative, a comprehensive endeavour to deepen understanding of the challenges facing the labour market of the future and equip the ILO to tackle them. The initiative's conclusions will be presented in conjunction with the ILO's centenary in 2019.

ILO Director-General Guy Ryder has written the following about the initiative: “In 1919, the founders of the ILO stated that they were ‘moved by sentiments of justice and humanity as well as by the desire to secure the permanent peace of the world’. In 1944, the Declaration of Philadelphia stated that ‘the war against want requires to be carried on with unrelenting vigour’. The initiative that will culminate in 2019 should give expression to those same sentiments and point the way to how that war can be carried on, with the same vigour, but also performing the tasks and applying the methods required by radically changed circumstances in the world of work.”

The Future of Work Initiative is a three-stage process. During the first stage (2016–2017), ILO Member States and other interested actors are invited to contribute input via national or regional conferences to the reflection on the future of work. The second stage involves establishing a High-level Global Commission on the Future of Work, including experts and companies, employers and trade unions, which will produce a report on the labour market of the future. In the third stage, Member States will be encouraged to

mark the ILO centenary in various ways.

The Commission, which was launched on 21 August 2017, will work until early 2019 to produce its report, which will be presented at the centenary session of the International Labour Conference in June 2019.

The work of the Commission will be organised around four ‘centenary conversations’, as ILO Director-General Guy Ryder has called them, which are the foundation of the Future of Work Initiative:

1. Work and society
2. Decent jobs for all
3. The organisation of work and production
4. The governance of work

Members

The ILO Governing Body agreed earlier this year on the following criteria for the Commission’s composition:

“Its members will be eminent individuals with outstanding personal achievements and vision, participating in their individual capacity. They will need to represent a balance of geographical regions and the realities of developing, emerging and industrialised countries. Gender balance will be a basic consideration. The ILO’s tripartite constituency should find their interests represented in the Commission which should also bring together multidisciplinary perspectives and knowledge to ensure that the exercise is well rounded and relevant to the entirety of the ILO’s constituency and mandate.”

A list of the Commission’s members is available at ILO.org

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President of the Republic of Mauritius Ameenah Gurib-Fakim have agreed to co-chair the Commission.

ILO Director-General Guy Ryder is the principal secretary of the Commission, which together with the two co-chairs will comprise a total of 28 people.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister leading UN efforts on tomorrow's jobs – new ILO Commission presented today

Published 21 August 2017

What will we work with in the future? How will we ensure that adapting to climate change, an increasingly digital world and an ageing population lead to new jobs with better conditions? And that more people benefit from the advantages of globalisation than at present? These are questions that the ILO Commission, which was launched in Geneva today, will address. The co-chairs of the Commission, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President of Mauritius Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, were present in Geneva.

The Commission brings together some 20 experts from different parts of the world to analyse what the impacts of the revolutionary and long-term changes that factors such as digitalisation, climate change and demographic shifts will mean for tomorrow's working life and labour market.

“It is time to make globalisation work for everyone. And it is by addressing the problems in the global labour market that we can build social cohesion and confidence, and shape a globalisation that represses no one and benefits everyone”, said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

“The future of work is not decided in advance, we must make it according to the values and preferences that we choose for societies and true policies that we design and implement. This is precisely where the commission's work comes in: To identify the key work of challenging of our time and what we

must do to meet them,” said ILO Director-General Guy Ryder.

When we look to the future we must do so from a range of perspectives and situations. We must “place the wellbeing of people at the front and center of the agenda,” said Ameenah Gurib-Fakim.

The Global Commission on the Future of Work was established as part of the International Labour Organisation’s Future of Work initiative. More than one hundred countries have taken part in preparatory work by holding national dialogues on the perceived opportunities and challenges facing working life of the future. The Commission will present its report in spring 2019. The Commission will also help implement the 2030 Agenda, and in particular goal 8 on work and economic growth.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) is the UN specialised agency for employment and working life issues. The ILO was set up in 1919 and is the UN’s only tripartite organisation, of which countries, trade unions and employers are members.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Free trade agreement and export issues on agenda as Prime Minister met Japanese counterpart

Published 09 July 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met for dinner and talks on 8–9 July. The subjects discussed included the new free trade agreement between the EU and Japan, and prospects of increasing trade with Japan, which is Sweden's second largest export market in Asia.

The leaders specifically discussed how the two countries can enhance their cooperation in the area of innovation.

Mr Löfven and Mr Abe also discussed current issues on the UN Security Council agenda, including the situation on the Korean Peninsula, and agreed on continued cooperation to celebrate the 150th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Sweden and Japan in 2018.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

EU leaders discuss migration, security and defence in Brussels

Published 28 June 2017

At the meeting of the European Council on 22–23 June, EU heads of state and government adopted conclusions on security and defence, and the Paris Agreement on climate change. They also agreed to extend the sanctions against Russia but did not succeed in reaching agreement on the reform of the Common European Asylum System. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven represented Sweden.

On the first day of the meeting, EU leaders adopted conclusions on security and defence, and the Paris Agreement. They also discussed foreign policy issues.

They reaffirmed the commitment of the EU to swiftly and fully implement the Paris Agreement and to lead the global transition to clean energy.

They emphasised the EU's enhanced cooperation with international partners that demonstrate solidarity with future generations.

Brexit

Brexit was discussed on Thursday evening. UK Prime Minister Theresa May began by reporting on the situation following the recent parliamentary elections and announced that she would be presenting a proposal next week on the rights of EU citizens in the UK.

"The remaining 27 EU Member States do not want the situation to differ

from what it is today," said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

Sanctions against Russia

The heads of state and government held a long discussion on Russia on Friday morning. They agreed to send a political signal to the Council of the European Union that the economic sanctions should be extended for another six months.

Mr Löfven underlined the importance of maintaining sanctions until the Minsk Agreements are implemented.

Migration

Migration was the other major issue on Friday. The EU leaders did not succeed in reaching an agreement on the reform of the Common European Asylum System.

"I am naturally disappointed that we did not manage to reach an agreement, as we had undertaken to do under the Maltese Presidency," says Mr Löfven.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven visited Poland

Published 20 June 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven visited Poland on 19–20 June for talks with Polish Prime Minister Beata Szydło. The meeting focused primarily on common challenges within the EU, such as migration, unemployment and security.

Mr Löfven emphasised the importance of shared responsibility in the EU in order to move forwards on migration. He also highlighted the need for decent work and raised the efforts under way ahead of the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth to be held in Sweden on 17 November. The two prime ministers also discussed Brexit and the importance of constructive negotiations with the UK. Mr Löfven also highlighted the importance of fundamental EU values such as democracy and the rule of law.

Other topics of discussion at the meeting included bilateral issues, the Eastern Partnership (where Sweden and Poland enjoy excellent cooperation), security in our neighbourhood and Russia (where Sweden and Poland have similar interests).

During his visit, Mr Löfven gave a speech to students at the University of Warsaw on the EU of the future.

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at the University of Warsaw, 19 June 2017



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister in talks with President of Botswana

Published 19 June 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received President of Botswana Ian Khama for bilateral talks today. The talks were characterised by the good relations that have existed between the two countries since Botswana gained its independence fifty years ago.

Botswana and Sweden share many values with respect to democracy and human rights, and the two countries are likeminded in many ways on international issues. The issues under discussion included regional development in the countries' neighbourhoods, and global issues such as the UN, migration, climate and the upcoming Africa-EU Summit. Opportunities to further reinforce and deepen bilateral relations through increased trade, for example, were also discussed.

During his visit from 19 to 21 June, President Khama will also meet the King and Queen of Sweden and a number of representatives of the Swedish Government. His programme will also include a visit to Linköping.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister of Bangladesh visited Sweden

Published 16 June 2017

On 15–16 June, Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited Sweden on the first official visit at heads of government level between the countries. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received Ms Hasina for bilateral talks on the Global Deal, broader cooperation between the countries and human rights.

Ms Hasina also had talks with Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin and Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson. She also held talks with First Deputy Speaker of the Riksdag Tobias Billström and took part in a business seminar attended by by representatives of Swedish and Bangladeshi companies and Swedish trade unions.

[Joint Statement between Sweden and the People's Republic of Bangladesh \(pdf\)](#)



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister met President of Mauritius

Published 13 June 2017 Updated 19 June 2017

Opportunities to develop bilateral cooperation and relations were the focus as Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received President of Mauritius Ameenha Gurib-Fakim at Sager House on 13 June.

Sweden enjoys close cooperation on climate and environmental issues with a group of island nations that includes Mauritius. Mauritius was also actively involved in the recent Ocean Conference in New York. Mr Löfven and Dr Gurib-Fakim both emphasised the importance of increased trade between African countries, and spoke of the potential for increased business exchange between Mauritius and Sweden.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received Kailash Satyarthi, 2014 Nobel Peace Prize laureate

Published 08 May 2017

Kailash Satyarthi, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to end the oppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education, described new initiatives aimed at the more than one hundred million children around the world who are trapped in child labour.

The '100 Million for 100 Million' campaign gives children and young people the opportunity to learn about their rights, and to meet children who have been subjected to oppression. Mr Satyarthi has gathered over fifty previous Nobel laureates to lead the initiative. The campaign is supported by UN organisations such as UNICEF and global companies such as Google.

Kailash Satyarthi, who has been championing children's rights since 1980, works to prevent child labour and promote the right of children to education both through global campaigns and direct measures locally in India to help children who have been exploited. During his visit to Sweden, he also met Swedish students and teachers, as well as Swedish civil society representatives.

Sweden is one of the world's major donors in the area of children's rights. In its development cooperation, a child's rights perspective is to be applied to initiatives that affect children. Sweden is one of the largest donors to UNICEF. In 2016, Swedish support to UNICEF exceeded SEK 2 billion.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Agreement on guidelines for Brexit negotiations

Published 02 May 2017

EU heads of state and government agreed on 29 April on the guidelines for negotiations on the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU. The meeting was an extraordinary European Council due to the UK's decision to leave the EU.

EU heads of state and government met on 29 April to adopt the guidelines for Brexit negotiations.

"I regret that the United Kingdom is leaving the EU. But it is positive that we can now get started on the negotiations, 10 months after the UK referendum," said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven after the meeting.

The guidelines set the framework for the negotiations and the EU's general standpoints and principles. The European Council stressed the importance of a united EU in the negotiations with the UK.

"The most important thing is that we in the EU stick together and place the interests of our citizens, companies and Member States first. We must have a firm and fair stance in the negotiations," emphasised Mr Löfven.

On 29 March, the UK submitted the formal notification to the European Council of its intention to leave the EU. A draft of the guidelines was presented on 31 March and has since been negotiated so as to be adopted at the extraordinary Council meeting on 29 April.

The meeting took place in Brussels.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

EU leaders support joint future for Europe

Published 28 March 2017

On the 60th anniversary of the foundation of European cooperation, the EU leaders met in Rome. This was an occasion for reflecting on the history of the EU and for highlighting the EU's many successes, but above all for looking to the future. The EU leaders adopted a declaration on a shared vision for EU cooperation in the coming years.

"Sixty years of peace, security and growth are worth celebrating", said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven after taking part in the anniversary celebrations in Rome.

On 25 March 1957, government representatives from Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, France, Germany and Italy met in Rome to sign the Treaties of Rome. This was the start of the cooperation that has given the now over 500 million EU citizens the longest period of peace in Europe's modern history.

In spite of the many benefits of cooperation, the EU currently faces major challenges. Immediately after the referendum in the United Kingdom in June 2016, resulting in a vote to leave the EU, the EU leaders began a discussion on the future of the EU. In Rome, they expressed their support for a declaration on a shared vision for the future of the EU.

The declaration takes its cue from the ravaged Europe at the end of the Second World War and expresses pride in all that our cooperation has achieved; it affirms that the Member States must address challenges together.

"Now we have to look to the future. We need to create more jobs, combat climate change and find a way to deal with migration so that fewer people are forced to flee and so that all countries take their responsibility. We can and must do more in all of these areas", said Mr Löfven.

Mr Löfven began the visit in Rome by meeting the social partners, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Council Donald Tusk and Estonia's Prime Minister Jüri Ratas, President of the European Council of Ministers in the second half of 2017.

The purpose of the meeting was to prepare the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth to which Mr Löfven and Mr Juncker will invite EU leaders and the social partners in November 2017.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi discuss excellent and growing bilateral relations

Published 24 March 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven spoke today with the Prime Minister of India, Mr Narendra Modi. Mr Löfven congratulated Mr Modi on his party's recent successes in four important state elections and commended the Indian Government's economic and development reform programme.

Both leaders recalled their meeting at the successful Make in India Week in Mumbai last year. Mr Löfven also invited Mr Modi to undertake an official visit to Sweden.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister met WTO Director-General

Published 24 March 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received the Director-General of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Roberto Azevêdo, for talks on current trade issues, including how Sweden and the WTO can work together to ensure continued strong support for free trade around the world.

They also discussed social aspects of globalisation, including the labour market.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven met UN Special Envoy for Syria

Published 21 March 2017

On 21 March, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura. During their meeting they discussed the serious situation in Syria and efforts to reach a political solution.

The discussions between Mr Löfven and Mr de Mistura focused on the UN-led intra-Syrian talks in Geneva, the fragile ceasefire and the ongoing restricted humanitarian access in Syria.

Mr Löfven underscored Sweden's wholehearted support for Mr de Mistura's efforts and the UN-led political process. He also emphasised the importance of women's participation in the peace process, accountability and the guarantors of the ceasefire meeting their commitments with respect to adhering to the ceasefire and providing humanitarian access.

In conclusion, he pointed out that the UN-led political process has a clear voice in the UN Security Council through Sweden.



Article

Economy and migration at European Council

Published 13 March 2017

When EU leaders gathered at a meeting of the European Council on 9 March, the economic situation in the EU was discussed. The agenda also included the situation in the western Balkans and migration issues with a focus on the situation in Libya. The European Council re-elected Donald Tusk to the position of President. Sweden was represented by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

Economy at European Council's March meeting

Traditionally, Europe's economic situation is in focus at the Council's March meeting. The EU leaders discussed jobs, growth, competitiveness and the European Semester. Attention was also focused on EU trade agreements and the work to deepen the internal market.

"We can note that all EU countries are enjoying economic growth, even if it is at different rates. There is still a lot to do with regard to unemployment and the internal market, but development is going in the right direction," said Mr Löfven.

Migration and follow up of Malta meeting

When EU leaders met informally in Malta on 3 February, a joint declaration on strengthening cooperation with Libya was adopted. The aim is to stabilise the fragile political process in the country, prevent human smuggling and the loss of more lives in the Mediterranean. The declaration has now been

followed up with a review of the now intensified cooperation with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) as well as training support to the Libyan coast guard.

Security and EU's external relations

The EU leaders considered the vulnerable political situation in the western Balkans and followed up conclusions adopted in December last year to strengthen cooperation in the defence area.

Election of President and anniversary of Treaty of Rome

Donald Tusk was re-elected as President of the European Council for the period 1 June this year until 30 November 2019.

"Donald Tusk has done a good job in a difficult and challenging time, and continuity is a good idea in the situation in which we find ourselves," said Mr Löfven.

On 10 March, the EU leaders held an informal discussion without the UK to prepare for the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome and to follow up on the discussion of the EU's future held in Malta on 3 February.

"We will now look forward to see which issues we need to focus on more closely to create a united and dynamic EU that serves our citizens. The EU's future is more important than ever in times of increased political tensions around the world," said Mr Löfven at the end of the meeting.

Caption:

Migration issues with a focus on the Central Mediterranean route and the situation in the western Balkans were on EU leaders' agenda when the European Council met in Brussels on 9 March. The Council also held an annual review of the economic situation in the EU. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven represented Sweden.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister in talks with Lithuania's Prime Minister

Published 06 March 2017

Today, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received Lithuania's new Prime Minister Saulius Skvernelis. During talks, the heads of government discussed bilateral, regional and EU issues, including trade, security, migration and energy.

Social issues in the EU and the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth were also discussed during the meeting. The Summit is being arranged by Sweden in cooperation with the European Commission and will be held in Gothenburg on 17 November this year.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Malta's Prime Minister Joseph Muscat visited Prime Minister Löfven

Published 28 February 2017

Earlier today, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven welcomed Joseph Muscat, Prime Minister of Malta, the current holder of the EU Presidency. The visit began with a joint wreath-laying ceremony at Olof Palme's grave.

This was followed by talks, primarily concerning current EU issues such as migration, social and growth issues in the EU and the UK's withdrawal from the EU. Mr Löfven also provided information about the summit on fair jobs and growth that he will be co-hosting with President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker in Gothenburg on 17 November.

Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth

The visit concluded with a joint press conference.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister in meeting with Canada's Governor General during State Visit

Published 21 February 2017 Updated 21 February 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met Canada's Governor General David Johnston in Stockholm in connection with the Canadian State Visit taking place on 20–23 February.

Bilateral relations between Sweden and Canada are excellent and there is great potential for closer cooperation in a range of areas.

During their talks, innovation, research and migration were discussed. Both Sweden and Canada have gender-equal governments and actively promote gender equality.

Mr Löfven and Mr Johnston also discussed opportunities to develop bilateral economic relations in light of the implementation of the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).

Interest in Canada has increased in Sweden. In 2016, several Swedish ministers and government delegations visited Canada with the aim of developing Swedish-Canadian relations.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven visited Iran

Published 14 February 2017 Updated 14 February 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven visited Iran on 11–12 February at the invitation of President Hassan Rouhani. A business delegation led by Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde accompanied Mr Löfven on the trip. The delegation included Business Sweden and a number of other government agencies. Anders Ferbe, Chairman of IF Metall (metalworkers union), also took part.

Mr Löfven had bilateral discussions with President Rouhani as well as meetings with Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and Speaker of the Parliament Ali Larijani. Discussions at the political meetings dealt mainly with bilateral relations, regional issues focusing primarily on the crises in Syria, Iraq and Yemen, and human rights. It is particularly important to discuss these issues with Iran now, when Sweden is a member of the UN Security Council. Mr Löfven presented a clear message on the importance of Iran contributing to the achievement of political solutions to the region's conflicts. He emphasised Sweden's deep concern over the human rights situation in Iran, not least the use of the death penalty, limitations to freedom of expression and the press, and discrimination of women and minorities.

How to strengthen women's participation in the labour market

Mr Löfven also met Vice-President for Women and Family Affairs Shahindokht Molaverdi. The meeting was followed by a round-table discussion at which Mr Löfven, Ms Molaverdi and Iranian and Swedish

representatives discussed how to strengthen women's participation in the labour market and participation in society. Iranian representatives included women active in the parliament, business and civil society. Also taking part in these discussions were IF Metall Chairman Anders Ferbe and Swedish Institute Director-General Annika Rembe.

Several bilateral cooperation agreements were signed during the visit in areas such as higher education and research, transportation, technology and innovation, information technology, and strengthening women's participation in the labour force and entrepreneurship.

A number of commercial agreements were also signed between Swedish and Iranian companies.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

EU leaders agree to strengthen cooperation with Libya

Published 09 February 2017 Updated 09 February 2017

Preventing the loss of lives in the Mediterranean was a top priority when EU leaders met at an informal summit in Valetta on 3 February.

EU leaders met in Valetta on 3 February to strengthen cooperation with Libya. The aim is to support the country's development and prevent human smuggling, which has already taken the lives of thousands of people in the Mediterranean. Future European cooperation was also discussed at the meeting. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven represented Sweden.

The photo is from President of the European Council Donald Tusk's visit to Sweden last year. Photo: Government Offices/Martina Huber

"I welcome the fact that the EU has agreed on measures to combat human smuggling and save lives in the Mediterranean. This work will be done with respect for international law and in close cooperation with the UN bodies for refugees and migration."

Mr Löfven made this statement when representing Sweden at the informal EU summit on Malta.

Libya is the main country of departure to the EU for migrants along the Central Mediterranean route and is a base for human smugglers. The joint Declaration adopted by EU leaders on Malta means that the EU is strengthening cooperation with Libya. This will include operations and development assistance to stabilise the country's fragile political process.

The EU leaders also discussed the future of European cooperation. This discussion is a continuation of their reflections at the informal summit held in

Bratislava last September. The UK did not take part in the discussion due to the country's impending exit from the EU.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Migration and future of EU on agenda as EU leaders meet in Malta

Published 02 February 2017 Updated 02 February 2017

Migration, particularly the central Mediterranean route and Libya, will be the focus as EU leaders gather in the Maltese capital, Valletta, on 3 February for an informal meeting of heads of state or government.

Stefan Löfven will attend the informal meeting of heads of state or government in Valletta on 3 February. The agenda includes issues related to migration and the future of the European project. Image from President of the European Council Donald Tusk's visit to Stockholm last year. Photo: Government Offices/Martina Huber

Leaders of all 28 EU Member States will take part in a discussion on migration in the morning. The aim is for the EU to become more effective at combating human smuggling, thereby preventing the loss of more lives in the Mediterranean. EU leaders are expected to agree on concrete and immediate measures. Cooperation and relations with the Libyan authorities are a priority, as the situation in Libya is a key factor in combating human smuggling in the central Mediterranean.

Later in the day, EU leaders will discuss the future of the European project. The discussion is a continuation of their reflections at the informal meeting held in Bratislava last September. The UK will not take part in this discussion due to the country's impending exit from the EU.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will represent Sweden at the meeting in Malta.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Innovation, digitalisation and asylum cooperation on the agenda as Löfven meets Merkel

Published 01 February 2017 Updated 01 February 2017

Together with Germany's Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received media representatives.

"I value your leadership. I value your friendship. Sweden and Germany have strong ties and we share the same values," began Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

Mr Löfven then talked about how deeply regrettable it is that the United States has decided to stop entry of people from seven countries. Mr Löfven said that this would increase tensions and suspicion and went on to stress that the EU has an important role to play in defending the equal worth and rights of all people.

"The Chancellor and I are agreed that we must work together for greater EU cooperation in these uncertain times. An EU that stands up for democratic values. An EU that is strong, cohesive and principled."

Chancellor Merkel stressed the importance of cooperation on digitalisation and innovation, and close relations between the countries around the Baltic Sea, which she chose to call the 'sea of freedom'.

Partnership on innovation

During the press conference, a 'partnership on innovation' was presented – a broad German-Swedish collaboration programme involving government agencies, the business sector and academia.

"The partnership will help us to address issues such as urbanisation, health and climate," stressed Mr Löfven, who said he was very enthusiastic about presenting the programme.

Common asylum system for the EU

Both Prime Minister Löfven and Chancellor Merkel spoke about the importance of negotiating common principles for asylum reception in the EU.

"We will work together for an EU reception system characterised by solidarity. We have great expectations of Malta's Presidency," said Chancellor Merkel.

Both heads of government also emphasised the importance of expanding cooperation with countries in North Africa.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Hopes of stronger EU cooperation on security, climate and migration

Published 26 January 2017 Updated 26 January 2017

In the midst of an extremely important time for the EU, Germany's Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel will visit Stockholm on 31 January for a meeting with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. Brexit negotiations are due to begin, and a new asylum system will be put into place. Germany has a key role in both of these processes. Hans Dahlgren is State Secretary to Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, and he tells us more about the visit.

How are Sweden's relations with Germany?

We have good and close relations. This is evident from the large number of regular contacts between us at various levels. Here at the Prime Minister's Office we speak pretty much every week with our German counterparts at Angela Merkel's Federal Chancellery.

What are the most important issues in your contacts?

We are in agreement on the acute need for the EU to agree on a functioning refugee policy. We are working together to achieve an agreement on this in the first half of the year, with all countries taking their share of the responsibility. It is also important to us to find good negotiating positions with a view to the UK's withdrawal from the EU. We need to safeguard the future of the EU, but also ensure good relations with the UK.

Why are good relations and cooperation with Germany in particular so important?

Germany is the largest EU Member State. The Germans play a key role when most decisions are to be taken. Considering that we also have considerable trade with Germany, this is very significant for Swedish industry and Swedish jobs. We share a fundamental interest in a strong, functioning EU based on democratic values.

What is the reason for the meeting with Angela Merkel?

This is an extremely important time for the EU, so we are particularly delighted that she has chosen to come and visit Stefan Löfven now. The Brexit negotiations will get under way soon, and a new asylum system will be put into place. Germany has a key role in both of these processes.

What do you hope the meeting will result in?

We need a strong EU in an increasingly insecure world. We therefore need to strengthen our cooperation on issues concerning security, climate and migration. A Europe with its citizens in focus, that strengthens jobs and growth but also decent working conditions and good wage development, is also on our agenda.

I hope that the meeting will ultimately lead to a number of concrete cooperation initiatives for more jobs, in which innovations and ways to strengthen exchange between Sweden and Germany will be discussed further. And I also think that Stefan Löfven and Angela Merkel will strengthen our joint positions in our work for the future of the EU.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Migration policy and EU future in focus during Prime Minister Stefan Löfven's past meetings with Chancellor Angela Merkel

Published 26 January 2017 Updated 26 January 2017

Sweden and Germany enjoy close cooperation both in the EU and bilaterally. Since becoming Prime Minister in 2014, Stefan Löfven has visited Germany several times for talks with Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Reforming EU migration policy has been high on the agenda since the Government took office and was also the focus of Mr Löfven's visit to Berlin in September 2015.

25 February 2015

Stefan Löfven's first visit to Germany as Prime Minister took place on 25 February 2015. The purpose of the visit was to meet Chancellor Angela Merkel and Vice Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel in Berlin.

Press release: Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to meet German Chancellor Angela Merkel

8 September 2015

In the autumn of 2015, the international refugee crisis was in focus. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Chancellor Angela Merkel met in Berlin on 8 September 2015.

Press release: Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to meet with Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel

26 August 2016

At the invitation of Chancellor Angela Merkel, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven visited Berlin on 26 August 2016, together with Danish Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen, Finnish Prime Minister Juha Sipilä and Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, to discuss the EU's future and challenges in the wake of the UK referendum on 23 June 2016. The meeting took place ahead of the informal European Council meeting in Bratislava in September 2016.

Press release: Prime Minister to meet with Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Estonian president visited the prime minister

Published 25 January 2017 Updated 25 January 2017

Estonia's new president, Kersti Kaljulaid, visited Sweden today. In the morning she met Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. Their talks focused on Estonia's upcoming presidency of the EU in autumn 2017 and issues that will be dealt with then, including digitalisation and the social agenda. They also discussed the Eastern Partnership, energy issues, and Russia and Ukraine.

During the course of the morning, President Kaljulaid also met Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström, His Majesty the King and Speaker of the Riksdag Urban Ahlin.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Estonian president visited the prime minister

Published 24 January 2017 Updated 26 January 2017

Estonia's new president, Kersti Kaljulaid, visited Sweden today. In the morning she met Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. Their talks focused on Estonia's upcoming presidency of the EU in autumn 2017 and issues that will be dealt with then, including digitalisation and the social agenda. They also discussed the Eastern Partnership, energy issues, and Russia and Ukraine.

During the course of the morning, President Kaljulaid also met Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström, His Majesty the King and Speaker of the Riksdag Urban Ahlin.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

The humanitarian catastrophe in Aleppo dominated the EU leaders' summit

Published 19 December 2016 Updated 19 December 2016

The war in Syria and the terrible humanitarian situation in the city of Aleppo was one of the main issues when the EU's 28 heads of state and government met in Brussels on 15 December. The European Council decided to increase pressure to try and ensure the evacuation of civilians and the protection of hospitals and ambulances. The EU leaders also reached an agreement that will enable the Netherlands to approve the Union's trade agreement with Ukraine. Migration, defence, economic and social issues, and future negotiations with the United Kingdom were also discussed.

Syria

In a joint statement, the EU heads of state and government condemned the continuing attacks against Aleppo carried out by the Syrian regime and its allies, in particular Russia and Iran. The statement urges Syria, Russia and others involved to allow the evacuation of the inhabitants of eastern Aleppo, to offer immediate and unconditional help and protection to all inhabitants of eastern Aleppo, and protection for all medical staff and all medical facilities throughout the country.

"We must do all we can to save lives and work to ensure humanitarian

access to all areas in Syria," says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

Ukraine

The EU leaders reached an agreement that will ensure that the Netherlands can sign the EU's cooperation agreement with Ukraine. The statement confirms what the agreement does not deal with; for example, that it does not mean Ukraine becoming a candidate country or that the EU countries are to provide it with military support.

Migration

The heads of state and government confirmed that they still support the EU's refugee agreement with Turkey. Moreover, they welcomed the migration packages with five African countries that will reduce the number of migrants coming to Europe. More similar agreements may be reached with other countries. The Member States' migration ministers are urged to agree on a new asylum policy by June 2017.

Security and defence

The heads of state and government also agreed that the EU must take a greater responsibility for its security. This means that they want to see more cooperation on defence materiel and an annual review of defence in the Member States.

Economic and social issues

The conclusions welcome the extension of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) and the continuing efforts to remove obstacles from the common internal market. The EU's Youth Guarantee should be extended. The banking union should be completed.

Brexit

When the United Kingdom has submitted its application to leave the EU, the European Council will adopt guidelines and standpoints ahead of the negotiations. These will be discussed and updated at regular intervals. Michel Barnier was confirmed as the EU's chief negotiator.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister met Nobel Peace Prize Laureate President Juan Manuel Santos

Published 12 December 2016 Updated 12 December 2016

On Monday 12 December, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos in Stockholm. The visit took place in connection with President Santos being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to bring about a peace agreement between the Colombian Government and FARC guerrillas. The award should be seen as a tribute to all those involved in the peace process, the Colombian people and the victims of the war.

During his visit to Stockholm, President Santos attended a seminar at the Riksdag. The purpose of the seminar was to discuss the lessons that can be learned from the Colombian peace process and how they can be applied to other conflicts.

Colombia's peace agreement

After 52 years of armed conflict, four years of peace talks and a defeated peace agreement, the two sides have now concluded a new peace agreement, signed on 24 November. This agreement is referred to as the first peace agreement in history to offer equal social rights since a gender perspective permeates the text of the agreement.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

“Digitalisation will spread to all professions and jobs in working life, so there is no reason to waste time”

Published 02 December 2016 Updated 02 December 2016

At the National Innovation Council meeting on 24 November, the Government presented the focus of the new digital strategy, which is intended to benefit citizens and businesses, and support the business sector and social development.

Ola Asplund, member of the National Innovation Council, how are industry and the business sector changed by digitalisation?

The capacity to collect, store and process large quantities of data makes it possible to optimise processes and use of materials on a completely different scale than before. New manufacturing techniques and automated processes are emerging at a rapid pace. This alters the logic of many operations and also creates a basis for entirely new products and services. This affects value chains, and creates new actors that traditional industrial companies must learn to cooperate with.

For many businesses, this is a threat to their existence. If they don't have their own resources to understand and use the possibilities of digital technologies, the rug can quickly be pulled out from under them. Smaller businesses, and probably some medium-sized ones, are at risk, because they react too slowly to technological developments.

Sweden cannot afford to stand back and watch if a large proportion of businesses do not keep pace with developments. For example, smaller enterprises are an important basis for our large, world-leading businesses, including as subcontractors. This is also where job growth takes place.

In your view, what are the responsibilities of central government and of the business sector in the transition?

Interesting and groundbreaking developments are under way in industry, and central government can really play a part there. In particular by facilitating cooperation, and making the research and laboratory resources of institutions and the research world available.

It is extremely important that central government takes the lead for a joint national strategy. Sweden is a small country with limited resources. It is therefore important to be able to set smart priorities. Someone has to take the lead, so that different stakeholders don't all pull in different directions at the same time. Industry is responsible for the focus and innovation, and central government is responsible for joint programmes and skills supply.

Sweden needs to reinforce education and transition systems to make it easier for individuals to adapt to these developments. Otherwise it will be devastating for the person concerned, and highly costly for everyone.

Considerable work is needed in the education system, both in terms of reviewing and supplementing the content of education programmes at all levels, but also to increase accessibility and methodology so that everyone really can benefit from the education boost. This is not just about the right skills for the work, but rather also utilising society's functions and possibilities, which are rapidly changing.

Do you have any good examples from industry of businesses that are taking on the challenge and want to lead the way in applying the possibilities of new technologies?

Sandvik is at the forefront of the development of technological systems to utilise data that can be collected directly from tools when materials are processed. The automotive industry has come a long way in the development

of self-driving vehicles, and is looking increasingly at how transport can be made more efficient. Boliden is working with others, including Ericsson, on how 5G technology can be used for more efficient mining. There are also smaller enterprises developing interesting technologies, for example robots that can be used in smaller-scale industrial production; this is becoming an increasingly interesting niche for Swedish enterprises looking to keep production in Sweden.

How is the labour market affected by the fact that digitalisation is changing jobs, and does it pose a risk to welfare or society?

For people working in industry it is, on the one hand, a 'normal' structural transformation, but on the other hand it is a challenge to acquire the right skills to maintain their employability. Digitalisation will spread to all professions and jobs in working life, so there is no reason to waste time. The pace of technological development and fluctuations in market demand place pressure on people and businesses in a way that is not always compatible with decent working conditions, family life and leisure.

We want new jobs to be developed here in Sweden, but competition with countries where there is not the same focus on people's needs tempts businesses to take liberties with the regulations. We must not undermine the conditions for welfare and our economic prosperity. The way to do this is using creative and joint solutions. Sometimes it can be an advantage to be a small country where we enjoy proximity to each other and can cooperate easily. If you understand the needs of your counterpart, it is easier in the long term to meet your own needs, because you seek more realistic solutions.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Poland's president visited Sweden's prime minister

Published 01 December 2016 Updated 02 December 2016

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received Poland's President Andrzej Duda on Thursday 1 December at a breakfast meeting. The meeting's agenda included issues concerning relations between Sweden and Poland, and in particular how to further develop the countries' strategic partnership.

Among other issues discussed were the security situation in the Baltic Sea region and the countries' involvement in the Eastern Partnership. The meeting was held in connection with President Duda's visit to Sweden on 29 November–1 December.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of the Environment

A forum for shaping the future of the Baltic Sea region

Published 16 November 2016 Updated 16 November 2016

Creating a common future based on trust and dialogue is necessary for the prosperity and security of the Baltic Sea region. This was Prime Minister Stefan Löfven's message when he delivered the opening speech at the 7th Strategy Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

The overarching purpose of this year's Forum was to encourage a discussion about how the Baltic Sea region should equip itself ahead of future challenges and opportunities from a 2030 perspective and within the framework of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The Strategy Forum was held at The Brewery Conference Centre in Stockholm on 8–9 November and brought together a record number of participants – over 1 300 people from all over the Baltic Sea region. The participants represented the political level, the business sector, academia and civil society.

From social entrepreneurship to EU-Russian cooperation

During two intensive days, some 40 political seminars, workshops and other activities were held focusing on digital and social entrepreneurship, EU-Russian cooperation, bioeconomy, circular economy and sustainable seas.

This was the seventh Strategy Forum in a row, and the first to be held in Sweden. The Forum was hosted by the Swedish Government together with the Nordic Council of Ministers, in close cooperation with the European

Commission. In addition to the Prime Minister, participants from the Government included Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke, Minister for Rural Affairs Sven-Erik Bucht, Minister for Infrastructure Anna Johansson and Minister for the Environment Karolina Skoog.

Common security

In his opening speech, Mr Löfven stressed the importance of cooperation that is both a driving force and forward-looking.

"We are here because we want to have our own hands on the rudder, and not simply be steered by events elsewhere. We are here to shape the future of the Baltic Sea. So welcome to Sweden, welcome to Stockholm, and welcome to the incredibly important work we have ahead of us.

"I am a firm believer in the idea of common security. Common security is a term coined by one of my predecessors, Olof Palme, and is based on the idea that we must cooperate across national borders and create a common future built on trust and dialogue. Which is exactly what we are doing here today," said Mr Löfven.

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at the Strategy Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven received Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko

Published 14 November 2016 Updated 14 November 2016

Today, 14 November, the Prime Minister of Sweden Stefan Löfven welcomed the President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko on his first official visit to Stockholm. Later today, the President will meet the Speaker of the Riksdag Urban Ahlin.

President Poroshenko's visit is part of an intensive series of bilateral meetings and encounters between Sweden and Ukraine.

At a press conference following the talks, the Prime Minister recalled that the EU has agreed on a firm response to Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, and its aggression in Eastern Ukraine. Sweden follows with grave concern the worsening human rights situation in illegally annexed Crimea. The President emphasized that the security situation in the temporarily occupied territories in certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk must be solved and called for Sweden within the EU to use all means to achieve full implementation of the Minsk agreements. The two leaders discussed the way forward to bring peace to Eastern Ukraine and to secure full Ukrainian control of its border.

The Prime Minister confirmed that in these difficult and challenging times, Sweden continues to stand by Ukraine's side, and to provide all the support it can offer. Sweden recognizes and welcomes the reforms that have already been introduced in Ukraine. Over the last two years, Ukraine has achieved more than in the two decades following the country's independence. The two leaders agreed that important reforms remain to be implemented.

They discussed how Sweden can best continue to support Ukraine in its

reform efforts and in forging closer links with the European Union. They talked about continued efforts to fight corruption, strengthen the rule of law, and pursue the decentralization and energy efficiency reforms already under way. Sweden's considerable support for reforms in these areas will continue.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Education and Research,
Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice

Summary: National strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women

Published 14 November 2016 Updated 14 November 2016

Stopping men's violence against women is a priority issue for Sweden's feminist government. The Government is therefore now presenting a national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women.

The strategy contains measures that strengthen protection for and support to women subjected to violence, measures to combat violence in same-sex relationships as well as measures that counteract destructive masculinity and notions of honour. The strategy also emphasises the participation and responsibility of men in stopping the violence.

With a long-term strategy and a targeted action plan, the Government is laying the foundation for increasingly goal-oriented and coordinated action on men's violence against women. Developing violence prevention measures is particularly important. These measures must reach all groups in society and be developed in a variety of arenas. The national strategy is included in the Government's gender equality policy communication to the Riksdag (2016/17:10). The strategy spans a ten-year period and will come into force on 1 January 2017.

The strategy's four objectives

- Increased and effective preventive work to combat violence.
- Improved detection of violence and stronger protection for and support

to women and children subjected to violence.

- More effective crime-fighting.
- Improved knowledge and methodological development.

Special emphasis on preventive measures and men's participation

To date, measures have tended to deal with the consequences of violence rather than the causes. The Government's ambition is to shift the perspective and focus on preventing violence. This requires effective measures to prevent both the use and reoccurrence of violence. It also requires broader and more constructive involvement of men and boys than previously, and breaking with the norms that justify violence, the purchase of sexual services and other restrictions on the freedom of action and life choices of women and girls.

There are major challenges with regard to men's violence against women, honour-related violence and oppression, and action to combat prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes. Society must become better at detecting violence, and knowledge about the extent of the violence and effective practices needs to improve. Action to prevent violence must be well coordinated between relevant actors at all levels. Therefore, the control, coordination and follow-up of the measures to stop men's violence against women will be strengthened.

Long-term action plan for goal-oriented, coordinated and effective action

As a part of the strategy's implementation, the Government is allocating SEK 600 million to an action plan containing new measures for 2017–2020, in addition to SEK 300 million in development funds to municipalities and county councils. The role of the county administrative boards as regional coordinators will be clarified. The gender equality agency to be established by the Government will eventually be given overall responsibility for the work to end men's violence against women. Within the framework of the action plan, the Government intends to:

For *increased and effective preventive work to combat violence*

- support the development and spread of universal violence preventive efforts with the objective of reaching all young people,

- conduct a review of sex and relationship education in schools,
- counteract demand for the purchase of sexual services,
- strengthen professional treatment of men who have been violent and investigate the ability of municipalities to work with perpetrators of violence early on, and
- further strengthen prevention of reoffending by convicted perpetrators of violence, both within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service and with other stakeholders.

For improved detection of violence and stronger protection of and support to women and children subjected to violence

- provide training to professionals, in social services and health and medical care for example, and on routines for asking about exposure to violence,
- strengthen protection of and support to children who have witnessed or been exposed to violence,
- strengthen expertise in the field of honour-related violence and oppression,
- continue the development of knowledge support on prostitution targeted at health and medical care and social services.

For more effective crime-fighting

- develop police methods and practices for preventing repeated violence,
- evaluate the 2014 legislative amendments on forced marriages and child marriages,
- prevent online threats and abuse.

For improved knowledge and methodological development

- survey the extent of honour-related violence and oppression,
- develop national statistics on measures in social services and health and medical care, and provide guidance to municipalities on calculating the cost of violence,
- strengthen knowledge about effective violence prevention,
- amend the degree descriptions in the Higher Education Ordinance so that men's violence against women and domestic violence are included in education and training for professional groups who may encounter victims of violence,
- allocate funds for skills development for relevant professional groups.

Extensive initiative since Government took office in 2014

Since taking office, the Government has decided on a long list of measures to counter men's violence against women and domestic violence (these measures are presented on the Government website). For instance, the Government has provided increased support to local women's shelters for 2015–2019 totalling SEK 425 million. In addition, the Government has decided decided on, or in other ways taken, more than 20 measures directly related to proposals from the National Coordinator on Domestic Violence.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Meeting between the Prime Minister of Sweden, Stefan Löfven, and the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Bohuslav Sobotka

Published 03 November 2016 Updated 03 November 2016

At the meeting, both Prime Ministers stressed the importance of effective EU cooperation. Sweden and the Czech Republic are committed to the effective functioning of the EU, which remains the best guarantee for stability, prosperity, economic and social convergence, and security in Europe. To achieve this, the expectations of Europe's citizens must be met and their concerns must be placed at the centre of common efforts. The fact that the UK is set to leave the Union makes cooperation – both bilateral and at EU level – even more important.

The Prime Ministers agreed to strengthen the partnership between the two countries in a number of key areas:

- In fostering sustainable economic growth and the creation of new jobs, there was agreement to increase strategic thinking, show leadership and push for a single market that delivers fairness, jobs and growth. Ambitious and concrete legislative proposals are needed to strengthen the Single Market, in particular the Digital Single Market.

- Furthermore, the Prime Ministers shared the view that open and free trade, in combination with structural reform and strong public finances, is fundamental for jobs and growth in Europe. Efforts will be stepped up to safeguard an open and progressive EU trade policy, free of protectionism and barriers to trade.

- Social and economic progress must go hand in hand to deliver to the fullest potential. Bearing this in mind, the social dimension of the EU agenda, including the development of a social pillar for Europe, is significant for long-term prosperity – delivering jobs and growth for all. In this context, the Prime Ministers agreed to work together towards making a summit to be held on these issues in Sweden in 2017 a success.

- There was consensus that efforts to improve the situation of young people in the EU merit particular focus.

- In addition, the Prime Ministers share the view that the EU enlargement process remains a powerful instrument, driving reforms for democratic and economic development.

- As founders of the Eastern Partnership, Sweden and the Czech Republic will continue working for the further development of the partnership.

Based on the priorities above, Sweden and the Czech Republic will proceed in a close and long-term partnership.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Syria, Russia, migration and trade in focus at European Council

Published 28 October 2016 Updated 28 October 2016

When the EU heads of state and government gathered for the European Council meeting in Brussels on 20 and 21 October, four issues were in focus: migration, the EU's relations with Russia, the escalating humanitarian and security crisis in Syria, and trade. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven participated in the meeting, which incidentally was the first such meeting attended by the new UK prime minister Theresa May.

Syria

The leaders also discussed Syria. Mr Löfven and several others wanted the EU to discuss sanctions against Russia in light of bomb attacks on the Syrian civilian population in pursuit of IS terrorists.

EU relations with Russia

The 28 EU leaders also had a long strategic discussion on the EU's relationship with Russia. They noted that, thanks to purposeful work in recent years, the Member States had successfully formulated and maintained consensus on a clear policy towards Russia. Mr Löfven again raised Russian actions in Ukraine as unacceptable.

Trade

Global and economic issues were also raised in the Council conclusions. The

EU's ratification of the Paris Agreement on climate change was welcomed and previous conclusions on the importance of implementation of initiatives on the single market were reiterated.

Migration

EU progress in managing the migration crisis was discussed on the Thursday. The EU leaders noted that cooperation had moved forward and that the influx of irregular migrants had now reduced. New forms of cooperation between EU and African countries on development in countries of origin and transit, as well as the return of economic migrants, were also in focus during the discussions. The objective of cooperation is that fewer people are ultimately forced to flee.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met Estonian Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas

Published 12 October 2016 Updated 12 October 2016

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met Estonian Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas today. The two heads of government noted the very good bilateral and regional cooperation between Sweden and Estonia.

Their discussions concerned EU issues including migration, a social Europe, digitalisation and energy. Security and Baltic issues were also on the agenda, and Prime Minister Rõivas reported on the preparations ahead of the Estonian Presidency of the EU in the second half of 2017.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Meeting with High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini

Published 11 October 2016 Updated 11 October 2016

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven today received High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini.

The central point on the agenda was the war in Syria. Discussions focused on the situation in Aleppo and the recent bombings, and how the EU can take a more active role in the Syrian conflict. Other agenda items included regional security and migration.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Visit by Portugal's Prime Minister

Published 03 October 2016 Updated 03 October 2016

On Monday 3 October, Portugal's Prime Minister António Costa visited Sweden at the invitation of Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. The future of the EU and consequences of the UK's decision to leave the EU were on the agenda for the meeting.

Talks focused on migration and increased cooperation concerning decent working conditions and a more social Europe, ahead of the summit Mr Löfven will host in 2017.

The meeting was followed by a joint press conference.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, along with OECD and ILO, launches Global Deal in New York

Published 21 September 2016 Updated 21 September 2016

On Wednesday 21 September 2016, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven is launching the Global Deal, a global initiative for social dialogue and better conditions in the labour market.

The Global Deal was initiated by Mr Löfven and designed in collaboration with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Participating in the launch are OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría, ILO Director-General Guy Ryder, Chilean President Michelle Bachelet, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, World Bank President Jim Yong Kim, International Trade Union Confederation General-Secretary Sharan Burrow and African business leader Bob Collymore.

Improve the dialogue

The aim of the Global Deal is to improve the dialogue between the social partners and countries' governments so as to improve employment conditions and productivity. Effective labour relations and decent work contribute to greater equality and inclusive economic development, benefiting workers, companies and societies (win-win-win).

The Global Deal concept does not aim to develop a new framework or agreement to be implemented in a uniform manner in all countries, or to create a new international organisation. Instead, the Global Deal aims to develop a platform for highlighting the issue of cooperation between parties

and strengthen existing cooperation structures. The Global Deal will build on already established initiatives and projects, but will contribute by providing political direction and impetus to overall development, and by systematising and scaling up existing processes.

Contribution to the 2030 Agenda

The global sustainability agenda, the 2030 Agenda, contains a specific goal on decent working conditions and inclusive growth. The Global Deal is a contribution to this.

"The Global Deal is about ensuring that more people around the world have secure and good jobs, and about a more equal distribution of our economic resources. Globalisation presents opportunities, but requires a more equal distribution. More people need jobs with decent conditions and a salary they can live on. This is a prerequisite for globalisation to be a positive force," says Mr Löfven.

A declaration of support forms the basis of the Global Deal, with which countries, companies, trade unions and other organisations are invited to become associated. A number of partners are already associated. In connection with the launch, a new website will be opened with more information about the initiative.

The Global Deal



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister at the opening of the UN General Assembly

Published 20 September 2016 Updated 20 September 2016

The opening of United Nations General assembly took place on 19 September. The opening session was followed by a summit on the refugee crisis. Tomorrow, President Obama and co-hosts including Sweden will hold the Leaders' Summit on Refugees to increase global commitments to those who are forced to flee.

The challenges are many. While a record number of people sought refuge in Europe last year, most fled to neighbouring areas.

"The message the Government has brought to New York is that more states need to take responsibility to manage the huge refugee flows. This refugee crisis is a global crisis and can only be solved together," says Stefan Löfven.

"The United Nations must become more effective in the area of migration and we must focus on improving conditions for peace and development by giving refugees a future through education and jobs."



Article from Prime Minister's Office

EU leaders agreed on a European roadmap

Published 19 September 2016 Updated 29 September 2016

For the first time, EU heads of state and government met without a UK representative. At the Summit, a joint declaration – the Bratislava Declaration – was adopted, focusing on measures to tackle the major challenges that the EU must deliver on in the near future.

In discussions with the media after the Summit, Mr Löfven emphasised that European cooperation is vital to Sweden.

In the Bratislava Declaration, the 27 heads of state and government endorse the importance of European cooperation and adopt the Bratislava Roadmap, listing the objectives and concrete measures within priority areas. These mainly deal with ensuring full control over external borders, guaranteeing internal security and fighting terrorism, strengthening EU cooperation on external security and defence, and promoting the Single Market and young people's opportunities.

The EU leaders also agreed at the Summit to increase assistance to strengthen the protection of Bulgaria's border with Turkey.

The Summit between the 27 EU leaders was held in Bratislava on 16 September. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven represented Sweden.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister visited Montreal

Published 19 September 2016 Updated 19 September 2016

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on 17 September in connection with the Global Fund Replenishment Conference in Montreal.

Sweden and Canada enjoy good relations and during their meeting the two heads of government discussed how the countries can cooperate more, particularly on global issues. One such issue is migration. Sweden and Canada are co-hosting President Obama's migration summit in New York next week, and Mr Löfven and Mr Trudeau agreed to continue efforts to get other countries to take greater responsibility for the world's refugees.

Jobs and growth were also on the agenda, and trade issues were of particular interest. It is important to get the CETA free trade agreement between Canada and the EU into place as soon as possible. Gender equality was raised as an important issue for both governments to continue pursuing.

At the Global Fund Replenishment Conference, Mr Löfven spoke about Sweden's engagement in the Global Fund's crucial work to combat illnesses such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Sweden's support to the Global Fund totals SEK 2.5 billion for the period 2017–2019.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven today received Jin Liqun, President of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

Published 12 September 2016 Updated 12 September 2016

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) was established in January this year, and Sweden became a member at its first Annual Meeting in June. Mr Löfven and Mr Jin discussed the bank's strategic focus for the future.

Mr Löfven expressed the hope that the AIIB will be an institution with a clear focus on environmental and climate-resilient investments. Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde also took part in the meeting. During his visit to Sweden, Mr Jin will also meet Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson, representatives of Swedish companies at Business Sweden, and take part in a seminar at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister meets with UN Deputy Secretary-General

Published 02 September 2016 Updated 02 September 2016

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven had a meeting today with Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Jan Eliasson. Among the topics discussed was the upcoming summits on migration in mid-September in New York, which will be attended by Mr Löfven.

The meeting was an opportunity for Mr Löfven and Mr Eliasson to discuss the UN's work on the right of asylum, refugees and migration issues. The conflict in Syria and Sweden's humanitarian assistance were also on the agenda.

This was also an opportunity to discuss current issues on the Security Council agenda. On 1 January 2017, Sweden will take a seat on the Security Council for a two-year period.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

“Everything that is fossil-based today can be made from wood in the future”

Published 02 September 2016 Updated 05 December 2016

A circular bio-based economy was on the agenda of the National Innovation Council when it met on 1 September 2016. The Government is working on several processes linked to this area. Karl-Henrik Sundström, CEO and Managing Director of Stora Enso, is a member of the Council and spoke at the meeting about how a circular bio-based economy affects Sweden's development and competitiveness.

How would you describe a circular bio-based economy?

The bioeconomy is renewable and fossil-free. It is based on biomass, such as timber, which is refined and turned into bio-based products and commodities. Circular ecocycles are stimulated by bio-based products where there are economic and environmental benefits. Cardboard and paper made from recycled materials are examples of this. All recycling starts with fresh biomass or fibre.

What potential do you see in this area, and above all, how can it be developed?

The potential of the bioeconomy is enormous. It is important, not least for dealing with climate problems. I normally say that everything that is fossil-

based today can be made from wood in the future. Forests grow constantly and are a good basis for innovation. Intensive research is currently under way to devise new areas of use based on renewable materials and long-term sustainable products with less of an environmental impact. The forestry industry can and wants to play an important role. Development of the forest-based part of the bioeconomy is based on the products, material and solid fuels that we are already producing today – this is where the transformation and upscaling begins.

How does a circular bio-based economy affect Sweden's development and competitiveness?

The forest-based part of the bioeconomy is already Sweden's largest net earner of export currency, with a 90 per cent share of exports for the forestry industry and a 70 per cent share of exports for the sawmill industry. This is a cornerstone of prosperity. The bioeconomy is also linked to land area and provides revenue for all of Sweden; forests are everywhere, and the sawmill and pulp/paper industry are often the only industry in small rural municipalities.

In your view, what are currently the biggest obstacles to transitioning to a more circular bio-based economy?

We need greater understanding of the forest's role as an industry. Forests must be used in a sustainable way, applying freedom with responsibility. Regulatory frameworks in Sweden and the EU must not jeopardise this. We also need functioning transport systems throughout Sweden to distribute timber and products. The railway and road networks have to be modernised. We cannot afford to jeopardise the bioeconomy with SEK 2 billion per year in road wear costs, equivalent to more than 20 000 jobs and SEK 20 billion in investments.

How can the Government's National Innovation Council contribute to work on the transition?

It can contribute to a greater understanding of the major importance of forests in the transition to a fossil-free society. But also through a focus on research in biorefining and biomaterial. Research into the construction of

wooden buildings and facilitating the construction of wooden buildings are other key areas.

What was the most important message you communicated at the Council's meeting?

The potential for Stora Enso and the forestry industry to contribute to a green and better future! But also the threats – the most tangible one right now being the costs of road wear.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister met OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría

Published 30 August 2016 Updated 30 August 2016

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven today received Angel Gurría, Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Mr Löfven and Mr Gurría discussed the joint work on the Global Deal initiative, which focuses on cooperation in the labour market for improved working conditions and inclusive growth. They also discussed Sweden's economic development and the OECD's work on the Global Goals and the 2030 Agenda on sustainable development. Mr Gurría is in Stockholm for World Water Week.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Global responsibility on common agenda

Published 25 August 2016 Updated 25 August 2016

When Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received US Vice President Joe Biden on 25 August, their meeting focused on global challenges. Special attention was given to the refugee situation and how to create sustainable conditions for peace and prosperity around the world.

At a press conference at Rosenbad, Mr Löfven and Mr Biden spoke about how close and good the relations between Sweden and the United States are.

“The relations between our countries are stronger than ever. We will continue to deepen our close cooperation and we have many common interests, as well as the ambition to show leadership in global challenges,” said Mr Löfven.

The US Vice President began with a historical retrospective of the good relations enjoyed by Sweden and the US, which go far back in time. He expressed gratitude for the visit to Sweden and spoke about the strong ties that exist between the countries, including when it comes to values. He also said that Sweden was one of the leading countries in the EU.

“Sweden is a close friend and an important partner to the US. Sweden has shown great leadership and human decency in the refugee issue,” said Mr Biden.

Mr Löfven also said that he was pleased that Sweden and the US had reached an agreement on increased cooperation in cancer research.

“This is an area in which the US and Sweden are at the forefront, and there is every reason to cooperate and exchange knowledge,” he said.

Summit on global refugee responsibility

The US Government has invited Sweden to co-host the Leaders’ Summit on the Global Refugee Crisis, along with Canada, Ethiopia, Germany, Jordan and Mexico. The initiative for the Summit, which will be held on 20 September in New York, was taken by President Barack Obama. The aim of the Summit is to get more countries to take greater responsibility for the world’s refugees.

“To help the refugees, more countries must provide increased support. We must of course share the responsibility in the European Union, but also around the world. No country, continent or organisation can deal with this on their own. The global refugee crisis can only be solved with global solutions. We are determined to work together for peace and security, not least as Sweden will soon take a seat on the United Nations Security Council,” said Mr Löfven.

Mr Biden emphasised that Sweden has shown great leadership and human decency in the refugee issue. He brought up Sweden’s assistance to war-torn countries and the importance of other countries also taking responsibility for refugees.

“We hope that more countries will follow your example – Sweden is doing much more than can be expected of a country of your size,” said Mr Biden.

Press release: Stefan Löfven to host refugee summit with President Obama

The Prime Minister stated that both countries are firmly committed to fighting terrorism and extremism, and that they will continue the work in the coalition against Daesh.

During the meeting, they also spoke about energy security, and specifically about the gas pipeline Nord Stream 2 in the Baltic Sea.

“The transatlantic link is more important than ever, not least for addressing the challenges to European and global security,” said Mr Löfven.

Discussion on the Global Deal

During the meeting, Mr Biden and Mr Löfven also spoke about the Global Deal initiative. This is the Government's initiative to spread a model, similar to the Swedish model, for cooperation in the global labour market.

“We are pleased that the Vice President has assured us that the US will take part in the Global Deal. The Global Deal is a vision for how we can create win-win-win situations in a globalised world by governments, employers, companies and trade unions jointly tackling the problems in the global labour market. Decent work is not just a right. It also encourages productivity and growth,” said Mr Löfven.

Article: Global deal a win-win-win situation



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received the Director-General of the International Labour Organisation

Published 25 August 2016 Updated 25 August 2016

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven today received Director-General of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Guy Ryder.

Mr Löfven and Mr Ryder discussed their joint work on the Global Deal initiative, which focuses on cooperation in the labour market for improved working conditions and inclusive growth. Issues concerning the future of the labour market were also raised. Mr Ryder is in Stockholm for World Water Week in his capacity as Chair of UN Water. During his stay in Sweden, he will also meet Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson and State Secretary Ulrika Modéer.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

US Vice President Joe Biden to visit Sweden

Published 24 August 2016 Updated 24 August 2016

On Thursday 25 August, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Vice President of the United States Joe Biden. Sweden and the United States enjoy close and good relations. Vice President Biden's visit is an expression of this, with a view to continuing to deepen the already broad cooperation with the US. This cooperation was manifested earlier this year in the US-Nordic Leaders' Summit held in Washington in May.

Global responsibility for migration and refugees is another key point on the agenda. The Swedish Government takes the position that the global refugee situation is a global responsibility, not the responsibility of a few individual countries.

Press release: Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive US Vice President Joe Biden

Sweden to co-host Leaders' Summit on the Global Refugee Crisis

The US Government has also invited Sweden to co-host the Leaders' Summit on the Global Refugee Crisis, along with Canada, Ethiopia, Germany, Jordan and Mexico. The initiative for the Summit, which will be held on 20 September in New York, was taken by President Obama.

Press release: Stefan Löfven to host refugee summit with President Obama



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met Serbia's Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić

Published 17 August 2016 Updated 17 August 2016

On Tuesday 16 August Prime Minister Stefan Löfven had talks with Serbia's Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić to discuss issues including Serbia's cooperation with the EU and common security issues.

Mr Vučić, who is currently pursuing a range of reforms aimed at bringing Serbia closer to the EU and promoting jobs and growth, stressed that these measures were important for ensuring security and stability in the region.

"Serbia is engaged in a modernisation programme that is important for its future development. Both Sweden and Serbia are very keen to expand trade between our countries," said Mr Löfven.

The Prime Minister also highlighted the fact that Serbia is one of the countries that has taken responsibility in the refugee crisis, and stressed the need for efficient, sustainable arrangements for the reception of refugees.

During his visit to Belgrade on 15–16 August, Mr Löfven also met a number of Swedish companies operating in Serbia. Representatives of AstraZeneca, Ericsson, Ikea and Securitas discussed opportunities for Swedish investments in the region and in Serbia. The visit concluded with a meeting with President Tomislav Nikolić.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven visited Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan

Published 15 August 2016 Updated 15 August 2016

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven today visited Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan, a temporary home to 80 000 Syrian refugees. During his visit Mr Löfven met those living in the camp and visited a recreation centre for children and young people. He also met with UNHCR staff and management in Zaatari.

"Whilst it is very distressing to see so many people affected by the war, I am at the same time proud to see how Swedish support is being put to use to provide so many people with security, food, health care and education", says Prime Minister Löfven.

Refugee camps are constantly grappling with the risk of inadequate funding and on this point the Prime Minister had a clear message.

"Most of the refugees are to be found in the regions not far from the war, relocating them all is simply not a realistic option and just as all the countries in the world have to do their bit with taking in asylum seekers, we must also share responsibility for the refugees living in camps. That is both a matter of common humanity and a global security issue. Quite simply, more people must do more", says Prime Minister Löfven.

The Prime Minister's visit to Jordan is part of the preparations ahead of the upcoming refugee summit that US President Barack Obama is staging together with Sweden and Jordan. The purpose of the meeting is to encourage more countries to share responsibility for the international refugee crisis.

On Monday, Prime Minister Löfven also had a meeting with Jordan's King

Abdullah which focused not only on the refugee situation but also on the war in Syria, the Middle East peace process and the international fight against terrorism.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven met with Jordanian Prime Minister Hani Mulki

Published 15 August 2016 Updated 15 August 2016

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven is in Jordan for a two-day visit focusing on global responsibility-sharing for refugees. On 14 August Stefan Löfven met with Jordanian Prime Minister Hani Mulki for talks on issues including the consequences of the war in Syria, the countries' bilateral relations and the Middle East peace process. They also exchanged experiences on UN Security Council work.

"This is the first visit to Jordan by a Swedish Prime Minister in a very long time and I appreciate that Jordan would like closer cooperation with Sweden on issues that concern our countries. Jordan is an important partner for our Government and wants to contribute to stability in the region and a global solution to the refugee crisis," said Mr Löfven.

Sweden and Jordan are partners within the framework of President Obama's Leaders' Summit on Refugees in September, and both countries will be co-hosts of the US initiative. The aim of the summit is to adopt a global compact on responsibility-sharing for refugees. Talks between the prime ministers therefore revolved very much around the refugee situation.

"We are experiencing the worst refugee crisis since the Second World War, but too few countries are doing their part in refugee reception and support to the millions of refugees in neighbouring conflict areas. I am proud that Sweden is contributing help on the ground and impressed by the huge efforts that Jordan is making to provide protection to Syrian refugees. But Prime Minister Mulki and I are both frustrated about the fact that responsibility

rests so heavily on only a few countries," said Mr Löfven.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister met Italian's Prime Minister Matteo Renzi

Published 07 July 2016 Updated 07 July 2016

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven was in Rome on 6 July for bilateral talks with Prime Minister Matteo Renzi.

The agenda focused on future issues for the EU, including how – in light of the British referendum – the EU can create a citizens' Europe that stands up for European values and solves challenges together.

Two issues were discussed in particular concerning future EU work. The first was migration policy; both Sweden and Italy believe that the EU must work towards a more structured division of responsibility for asylum seekers. The second was working towards a more social Europe. Mr Löfven has taken the initiative to convene a social summit in 2017, where discussions will focus on how more people can find work and how the EU together can create a more equitable labour market.

Current issues related to Russia, Syria and Libya were also discussed.



Article from Ministry of Education and Research

Research facility MAX IV in Lund inaugurated

Published 21 June 2016 Updated 21 June 2016

On 21 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven together with HM The King inaugurated synchrotron light source MAX IV in Lund.

MAX IV is a sort of microscope for studying the make-up, qualities and functions of various materials by means of intense X-rays (synchrotron light). The light used has an energy and intensity that is greater than at any other similar facility in the world. The laboratory is currently the world's most modern facility for synchrotron light. It is expected that 2 000 international researchers will come to MAX IV every year to conduct experiments in material and life sciences, which will benefit international research. In the laboratory, you can study atoms and molecules that are only a few tenths of a nanometre in diameter, which will provide completely new knowledge of the make-up and functioning of our world. The facility is expected to be used as a powerful research tool in biology, chemistry, physics, medicine and more. This research can later be used to produce new medicines, new smart materials, etc.

"Research ventures such as MAX IV are very important for Sweden and for the Government's ambition for Sweden to be one of the world's foremost research countries and a leading knowledge nation. Looking ahead, Max IV will provide a unique top-class research environment that can attract international researchers and also benefit Swedish research and innovation," says Minister for Higher Education and Research Helene Hellmark Knutsson.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Latvia's Prime Minister Māris Kučinskis visited Sweden

Published 17 June 2016 Updated 17 June 2016

Today, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received Latvia's Prime Minister Māris Kučinskis for talks. Much of their time was dedicated to current issues on the EU agenda, not least the imminent referendum in the UK, fair conditions in the labour market and proposals for joint EU solutions in the migration area.

The two heads of government also discussed the increasingly close Nordic-Baltic cooperation and security in the Baltic Sea region. During his visit to Sweden, the Latvian Prime Minister also visited the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences and the KTH Royal Institute of Technology, and took part in a business seminar. This is Mr Kučinskis' first visit to Sweden since taking up his post as Prime Minister on 11 February this year.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister met Samoa's Prime Minister

Published 17 June 2016 Updated 17 June 2016

On 13 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received Samoa's Prime Minister Tuila'epa Aiono Sailele Malielegaoi. During the visit, discussions were held on bilateral exchanges and global challenges such as climate change and the new Global Goals.

Climate change poses a concrete threat to small island states such as Samoa, which is why it is important that the United Nations make this issue a priority, not least in the work of the Security Council. Mr Löfven invited Samoa to work together on preparations ahead of next year's UN Conference on Oceans and Seas, which Sweden is co-hosting with Fiji.

During his visit to Sweden, Prime Minister Tuila'epa also took part in the EAT Stockholm Food Forum.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment

Agreement on Swedish energy policy

Published 16 June 2016 Updated 16 June 2016

The Government, the Moderate Party, the Centre Party and the Christian Democrats have concluded an agreement on Sweden's long-term energy policy. The agreement consists of a common road map for a controlled transition to an entirely renewable electricity system, with a target of 100 per cent renewable electricity production by 2040.

The Government and the parties agree that Sweden must have a robust electricity system with high security of supply and low environmental impact, and offer electricity at competitive prices. This creates a long-term perspective and clarity for actors in the market and helps generate new jobs and investment in Sweden.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs met American Jewish Committee

Published 08 June 2016 Updated 09 June 2016

Today, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström met representatives of the American Jewish Committee (AJC).

The AJC is one of the oldest Jewish organisations in the United States. Aron Verständig, chairman of the Jewish Community in Stockholm, also took part in the meeting. The meeting was an opportunity to discuss antisemitism in Sweden and globally, as well as the Government's work to combat antisemitism and other types of racism, intolerance and discrimination. The Government is currently preparing an action plan to combat racism and hate crime.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received Iran's Foreign Minister

Published 01 June 2016 Updated 01 June 2016

The Prime Minister received a visit today from the Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. The ties between Sweden and Iran are deep, not least thanks to the large Iranian diaspora in Sweden. The Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister discussed bilateral issues such as trade and cooperation between Iran and Sweden. Human rights were also addressed. The Government is confident that international exchange and increased trade will contribute to positive developments in Iran.

Iran is an important country in a region of considerable significance to Sweden. Mr Zarif's personal commitment was an important reason why the nuclear deal between Iran and the rest of the world could be agreed last year. The agreement was a positive step in a region otherwise characterised by extensive challenges. For Sweden, the agreement also means opportunities to develop Sweden's political and economic relations with Iran. Since the agreement was concluded, Ministers Mikael Damberg and Ibrahim Baylan have visited Iran.

Mr Zarif's visit to Sweden is taking place in connection with visits to Poland, Finland and Latvia. He has also recently visited the UK, France and Italy.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met Namibia's President Hage Geingob

Published 26 May 2016 Updated 27 May 2016

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven held talks today with Namibia's President Hage Geingob. Mr Geingob is visiting Sweden to speak at a conference on education issues.

At the meeting between Mr Löfven and Mr Geingob, discussions included trade and investments, and global issues such as climate change and the United Nations.

Sweden has long enjoyed good relations with Namibia dating back to Sweden's support to Namibia's independence.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

“Global Deal a win-win-win situation”

Published 14 May 2016 Updated 14 May 2016

In an increasingly globalised labour market, a Global Deal between the social partners can benefit everyone. This was the message when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Chilean President Michelle Bachelet together hosted a seminar on the Global Deal in Stockholm on 11 May.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister attends summit with President Obama

Published 13 May 2016 Updated 13 May 2016

Today, 13 May, President Obama hosted the US-Nordic Leaders Summit in Washington DC. Talks were held at the White House with the Prime Ministers of Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Iceland, and Finland's President. The talks resulted in a joint declaration that addresses a number of issues that are important for Sweden, ranging from security policy to climate change.

"I would like to emphasise in particular that the meeting established the importance of working together for global responsibility on the refugee issue. We also agreed to cooperate to increase trade, growth that creates jobs, and equality," says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The close cooperation between the Nordic countries and the US was the starting point for the talks. The declaration will be followed up and translated into concrete cooperation for future work between the countries.

"President Obama is clearly interested in what we call the 'Nordic model' – in which justice and social security go hand in hand with technological development and growth," says Mr Stefan Löfven.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

State Visit from Chile under way

Published 12 May 2016 Updated 12 May 2016

On 10 May, Chile's President Michelle Bachelet began her State Visit to Sweden. The President is visiting Sweden at the invitation of HM the King. The Visit will last from 10 to 12 May and is the first incoming State Visit from Chile to Sweden.

The purpose of the visit is to broaden and deepen bilateral relations between Chile and Sweden. Swedish companies have long had a strong presence in Chile.

The first day of the State Visit began with an official welcoming ceremony at the Inner Courtyard of the Royal Palace, as is tradition. Following an inspection of the guard of honour of the Life Guards, the President, the King and the Queen greeted the Speakers of the Riksdag, the Prime Minister and the ministers present.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven then received the President at Rosenbad for talks.

Several memorandums of understanding were signed during the visit to Rosenbad.

Following a visit to Olof Palme's grave at Adolf Fredrik's Cemetery, President Bachelet travelled to Fryshuset where she and the King and Queen were met by the managing director of Fryshuset, Johan Oljeqvist. This part of the visit was also attended by Anja Frey, head of Fryshuset in Stockholm, and Camila Salazar Atias, responsible for social projects, as well as Stockholm City Commissioner Emilia Bjuggren.

The day ended with a state banquet at the Royal Palace.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

The Prime Minister received Chile's President

Published 10 May 2016 Updated 10 May 2016

Chilean President Michelle Bachelet is visiting Sweden on 10–12 May at the invitation of His Majesty the King. This is the first State Visit by a Chilean president to Sweden. Talks were held today, on 10 May, between Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President Michelle Bachelet.

Chile and Sweden have a common view on many foreign policy issues, not least with regard to UN cooperation, gender equality, marine issues and free trade. These questions were at the centre of the talks. During the visit, they also discussed the Prime Minister's Global Deal initiative – an international approach to support dialogue between social partners with the aim of improving working conditions while also increasing productivity and growth.

The purpose of the visit was to broaden and deepen bilateral relations between Chile and Sweden. Swedish companies have long had a strong presence in Chile. Bilateral trade has increased over the past 15 years. Cooperation has been developed in various areas, such as mining, forestry, environment and CSR, and through the President's visit, further steps were taken to enhance cooperation.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister in talks with Werner Faymann and Sigmar Gabriel

Published 08 May 2016 Updated 08 May 2016

On 8 May, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received Austria's Federal Chancellor Werner Faymann and Germany's Vice Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel for talks on current European issues.

The agenda included a sustainable and equitable asylum system, decent conditions in the labour market, and jobs and growth. During their meeting, they also discussed in particular the European Commission's new proposal for a reformed asylum system.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Sweden is a role model concerning efforts to protect refugees

Published 31 March 2016 Updated 31 March 2016

On Wednesday 30 March, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at Rosenbad for discussions. The agenda included the conflict in Syria, the refugee situation, the implementation of the Global Goals, gender equality and women's participation in peace processes.

After the talks, Mr Ban and Mr Löfven held a joint press conference at Rosenbad, where they said that they had talked about the need for an asylum and refugee policy based on solidarity in both Europe and the rest of the world. They both stressed the importance of more countries needing to do more to help people in need and maintain the right to asylum. They agreed that the conflict in Syria must come to an end and that this can only be achieved through political means.

– We agree that Syria's women must have more influence in the peace talks. Sweden has taken the lead in enabling this through our support to several women's organisations in Syria, said Mr Löfven.

Global responsibility for refugee reception

Mr Ban pointed out Sweden as a role model in the efforts to protect refugees who have been forced to leave their homes due to war and terrorism. He urged more countries to help ensure a shared and fair reception of refugees. Mr Ban emphasised that responsibility for refugee reception lies not only

with European countries – it is a global responsibility. Mr Ban also highlighted the Swedish Government's feminist commitment.

Later tonight, Mr Ban and Mr Löfven will continue to talk about the important work of implementing the 2030 Agenda and the Global Goals for Sustainable Development.

–The 2030 Agenda is an opportunity to make the world more sustainable, equitable and fair. Sweden wants to lead the way in this respect. For example, we have set a goal to be the world's first fossil-free welfare nation, said Mr Löfven.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

The EU and Turkey agree on cooperation on migration issues

Published 21 March 2016 Updated 21 March 2016

On the first day of the European Council on Thursday 17 March, the EU leaders agreed on a joint position on cooperation with Turkey. Friday's talks with Turkey's Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu resulted in an agreement on migration issues aimed at stopping the irregular flow of refugees and ending human smuggling. Sweden was represented by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

"Managed in the right way with functioning border controls – and as long as the EU Member States manage to put in place a system in which all countries take part and take their share of responsibility in a spirit of solidarity for people who are fleeing – this could be the first step towards a sustainable system for legal routes for refugees into the EU," said Mr Löfven following the meeting of the European Council and the agreement with Turkey.

The agreement includes the return of migrants in Greece to Turkey, increased support to the approximately 2.5 million refugees who are currently in Turkey and increased support to Greece so that it can manage the legally secure reception and return of refugees.

Mr Löfven held a press conference directly after the EU's agreement with Turkey.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Equal pay a means of fighting poverty

Published 16 March 2016 Updated 16 March 2016

Equal pay is an important issue for the Government. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven emphasised this in his message to UN Women in conjunction with the sixtieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York.

The Prime Minister pointed out that women and men must have the same opportunities in society and in life. Gender equality and equal pay promote social development and are essential to enable people to lift themselves out of poverty.

"We must fight discrimination and myths claiming that women's work is less advanced, that women's work is of less value, or even that women don't want to have careers. Because this is simply not true," said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

The Government to commemorate the anniversary of Olof Palme's death

Published 27 February 2016 Updated 27 February 2016

On 28 February, 30 years will have passed since former Prime Minister Olof Palme was murdered on a street in central Stockholm. The Government will commemorate the anniversary in various ways. In the afternoon, a memorial service will be held at Kulturhuset in Stockholm, where Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will deliver a speech.

The memorial day will begin with a wreath-laying ceremony at Adolf Fredrik's Cemetery, in which Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will take part.

"Thirty years have passed since Olof Palme was murdered. During these thirty years, we have continued to discuss his ideas. This shows that he was a very influential politician. In foreign policy, he displayed a degree of energy and self-confidence that continues to inspire us today. In Sweden, he fought for everyone's right to take part in higher education regardless of class background, and his time saw an expansion of preschools and parental insurance. Today, the heritage left by Olof Palme is self-evident in various parts of the Swedish model," says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

In the afternoon, a memorial service will be held at Kulturhuset in Stockholm, which will focus on the future. Mr Löfven will open the service and deliver a speech. Also participating on behalf of the Government will be Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström. Former Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson will participate as well. Others taking part in the memorial service will be Mona Sahlin, national coordinator for protecting democracy

against violent extremism, Pierre Schori, Chairperson of the Olof Palme Memorial Fund, and Philip Botström, Chair of the Swedish Social Democratic Youth League (SSU). The memorial ceremony will be moderated by Jens Orback, Secretary-General of the Olof Palme International Centre. The memorial ceremony is being organised by the Swedish Social Democratic Party in cooperation with Tankesmedjan Tiden, the Olof Palme International Centre and others.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Life sciences and policy innovations in focus at National Innovation Council meeting

Published 26 February 2016 Updated 05 December 2016

The Government's efforts to strengthen Sweden's life sciences and the significance of policy innovations in developing the reception and introduction system for newly arrived immigrants were two of the topics discussed when the National Innovation Council held its first meeting of the year on Thursday 25 February.

The National Innovation Council is tasked with advancing Sweden as a country of innovation and strengthening Sweden's competitiveness. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven chairs the Government's National Innovation Council, which was founded one year ago.

"The National Innovation Council's first year has been very valuable for the Government's efforts to strengthen the innovation climate in Sweden. Innovation is about the 'new' – about how Sweden as a country can become a winner in global competition and how we as a country can jointly tackle the major challenges facing society. Together in the Council we have highlighted major broad themes, such as digitalisation, life sciences, and climate and environmental policy, and we have strengthened our policy in these and other areas as a result. The Council is a clear example of the power of collaboration. I am looking forward to the Council's strong commitment in 2016, too, to ensure a more competitive Sweden," says Mr Löfven.

Life sciences – a priority for the Government

Anders Lönnberg, the Government's national life sciences coordinator, was invited to the meeting to discuss the work on the life sciences action plan that started in 2015. Minister for Health Care, Public Health and Sport Gabriel Wikström attended the meeting and explained why the life sciences are a priority for the Government.

"Modern health and medical care demands that we also invest in innovation and life sciences. These investments also contribute to human health, welfare and quality of life. Through collaboration and development work we can strengthen entrepreneurship, create more jobs and improve health care at the same time. This is why the life sciences are a natural priority for the Government. It is a perspective we have with us in our work, linked to pharmaceutical products, eHealth and much more," says Mr Wikström.

Innovations for developing the system of reception and introduction of newly arrived immigrants was another topic on the agenda. Lisa Lindström, CEO of Doberman and member of the Minister for Enterprise and Innovation's advisory board, was invited to the meeting to talk about how policy innovations can create opportunities for developing the system of reception and introduction of newly arrived immigrants.

Can you explain what policy innovations means?

"There are many definitions of this. As I see it, it is regulatory frameworks, projects and new services that solve societal challenges in new or better ways. I think the quality of policymaking increases when policies are created jointly with citizens, companies, public sector actors, associations and others who are affected by the specific regulatory framework or policy in question," Ms Lindström says.

Can you give a specific example of a policy innovation?

"That Laholm Municipality has now chosen to let users order their own time for using companion services is a fantastic example. They quickly arrived at a good solution through creative and multidisciplinary participation within the framework of the service innovation project Förändra radikalt (Radical change)."

What benefits can policy innovations have in the

reception and establishment of newly arrived immigrants?

"Making use of the capacity and skills of new arrivals and combining these with the resources and the driving force of wanting to join in and contribute that is found in the business and non-profit sectors. And that in this way we are able to more quickly and concretely create new regulatory frameworks, new services and new ways of working. We don't have time to work in a linear fashion. We need ways to quickly understand problems, jointly create new solutions and test them at an early stage in order to more effectively and efficiently tackle the societal challenges we face and with a higher level of quality," Ms Lindström says.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

EU and UK reach deal

Published 18 February 2016 Updated 25 February 2016

The first Summit of the European Council this year was marked by tough negotiations between the EU and the United Kingdom. Late on Friday evening, an agreement was presented on the four overall areas in which the UK had specific demands. Sweden was represented by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The four overall areas that were the focus of the negotiations were:

- 1) sovereignty;
- 2) economic governance;
- 3) EU competitiveness; and
- 4) the 'emergency brake', whereby the UK wanted to require that non-British nationals work for a number of years before enjoying the same benefits as citizens.

Migration, Syria and Libya were also discussed at the meeting.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven held a special press briefing once the agreement had been struck.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven attended World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos

Published 27 January 2016 Updated 27 January 2016

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven attended the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum on 20–21 January 2016 in Davos, Switzerland.

Mr Löfven took part in seminars, panel debates and high-level meetings, and met a number of other heads of government, as well as heads of international organisations.

He was the keynote speaker at a seminar on working conditions and corporate social responsibility, and at a round-table discussion on the implementation of the new Global Goals for sustainable development.

In a panel debate on migration and integration, Mr Löfven highlighted the need for a new system to deal with the large number of refugees arriving in the EU.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Migration once again focus for European Council

Published 19 December 2015 Updated 25 February 2016

At the last European Council Summit of the year, EU leaders discussed migration issues and the fight against terrorism. Also on the agenda were economic issues and the upcoming UK referendum on EU membership. Sweden was represented by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. The meeting took place on 17 and 18 December.

The European Council looked at migration and the EU's external borders, and followed up previous summits on these issues.

The EU leaders welcomed the agreement signed at the COP21 climate change conference in Paris.

EMU and measures to strengthen the EU internal market, and the planned referendum in the UK on the country's membership of the EU were also on the agenda.

The EU leaders discussed the need to exchange information in the fight against terrorism and reiterated their support for a peace process in Syria.

The Government recently sent a request to the European Commission to enable asylum seekers in Sweden to be relocated to other countries in the EU. In connection with the European Council Summit, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven was told that the Commission intends to present a proposal on the issue in January.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met Nobel Peace Prize laureates in Stockholm

Published 14 December 2015 Updated 14 December 2015

This year's Nobel Peace Prize laureates, the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet, will be visiting Stockholm on 12–15 December. The Quartet comprises the Tunisian General Labour Union, the Tunisian Confederation of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts, the Tunisian Order of Lawyers and the Tunisian Human Rights League.

On 14 December Stefan Löfven hosted the traditional Peace Prize dinner for laureates Houcine Abassi, Ouided Bouchamaoui, Mohamed Fadhel Mahfoudh and Abdessattar Ben Moussa.

The Quartet played a leading role in Tunisia's democratisation process following the 2011 revolution. Through peaceful means and dialogue, the Quartet helped to unite a Tunisia that was being torn apart by tension and instability in mid-2013. The Quartet was a strong driving force behind the adoption of a new constitution and free and democratic parliamentary and presidential elections. This resulted in the formation of an inclusive coalition government.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani visits Sweden

Published 04 December 2015 Updated 08 December 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven today met Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani. In connection with the meeting, it was announced that negotiations will begin on an agreement concerning migration issues and readmission of those Afghans whose asylum applications in Sweden have been rejected. More than 30 000 Afghans have come to Sweden this year, of whom more than 20 000 are unaccompanied minors.

The Swedish measures in Afghanistan are long-term and have focused on political, diplomatic, police, military and aid-related areas, covering both humanitarian support and development cooperation. Afghanistan is one of the largest recipients of Swedish aid. Sweden has announced an aid package of up to SEK 8.5 billion for the period 2015–2024. A significant part of our aid focuses on improving the situation of women and children.

During the visit, Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin and President Ghani signed a cooperation agreement on aid. This is the first time that Sweden has signed an agreement of this kind with Afghanistan. The agreement affirms Sweden's aid commitments and deepens the countries' relations. It means that there will be regular, structured follow-up meetings at political level on aid and development in the country, which will complement the ongoing dialogue. Swedish aid is long-term and contributes to creating jobs, helping more children attend school, strengthening women's rights, fighting corruption and strengthening democratic institutions.

The difficult security situation in Afghanistan was also discussed. Since 2002, close to 10 000 Swedes have helped try to improve the security situation in the provinces that were part of the Swedish military area of responsibility in Northern Afghanistan. Today, the Afghan security forces have assumed responsibility for security throughout the country, which is an important step towards Afghan ownership and leadership. The Government recently presented a bill on an extension of the Swedish training mission in 2016.

President Ghani also held bilateral talks with Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström. The talks were followed by a lunch hosted by Ms Wallström. Ms Wallström began by thanking Mr Ghani for coming to Stockholm and pointed out that this year marks 75 years of diplomatic relations between Sweden and Afghanistan. Topics discussed during the lunch included foreign, security and defence issues. The agenda also included development policy, economy and social issues, and the topical migration issues.

Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér also took part on behalf of the Government.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Cooperation on reception of refugees theme for meeting of foreign ambassadors in Stockholm

Published 30 November 2015 Updated 30 November 2015

The EU needs a new system for the reception of refugees. This was the message from Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, as he, Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström and Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson met the foreign ambassadors in Stockholm on 26 November. He also spoke about the importance of climate change and cited increasing employment as the Government's top priority.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven began by expressing the Swedish Government's sympathy and solidarity with those affected by terrorist attacks. Mr Löfven stated that the refugee crisis could be handled better by the EU. Sweden, which has taken in 80 000 refugees in the last two months alone, has reached a point where it is necessary for refugees to seek asylum in other European countries. "We should start to discuss a new, sustainable system for refugee reception in the EU, based on a permanent distribution system," he said.

One of the world's first fossil-free welfare countries

There is also a great deal that is positive happening in the world, Mr Löfven pointed out. Extreme poverty has been more than halved worldwide, for example.

"In just four days we will meet in Paris to discuss climate change. Sweden's

aim is a global, fair and legally binding agreement that keeps global warming below two degrees. He stressed that this is a job that begins at home.

“Sweden will be one of the world’s first fossil-free welfare nations. This is morally right, but also economically smart. Countries at the forefront will be the winners – not those who wait until the last moment.” Mr Löfven emphasised Sweden’s continued strong commitment to international cooperation, and the fact that Sweden will continue to be a strong voice for democracy, equality and solidarity.

Increased employment priority goal

The Prime Minister concluded his speech with a few words about the Government’s first year in power.

“We have put more and new jobs at the top of our agenda. The key components are investments in housing and infrastructure, increased cooperation for more and growing companies, and improved job matching and skills. The objective of increased employment becomes even more important in light of the ongoing refugee crisis, Mr Löfven said.

“Everyone who can work should work. Together, we will work Sweden out of the crisis and into the future.” Looking back at the Government’s first year, the Prime Minister also said that he sees greater willingness to cooperate across party lines.

“The Government has been clear from the start in our desire to gather cross-party majorities. I welcome a new era in Swedish politics – guided by responsibility and determination,” he said.

Sweden will continue to take responsibility, but cannot stand alone

Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström took the floor after the Prime Minister. She began by quoting writer Stig Dagerman.

“He wrote: ‘In times of no hope there is no worse prison than the future’. We must therefore not lose hope.” She noted that the world is facing a range of challenges and that, as the world’s sixth largest aid donor in absolute terms and the largest per capita recipient of refugees, Sweden is continuing to take great responsibility for global development.

“Our objective of giving one per cent of our GNI in aid remains in place.” Regarding the reception of refugees, she echoed Mr Löfven’s view that Sweden cannot stand alone. She also emphasised that Sweden’s reception of refugees must enable children seeking asylum to have the same opportunities as Swedish children.

“The Government has now agreed that no more than thirty per cent of the aid budget will go to migration costs. “Sweden will continue to be an active and generous member of the international community,” she said.

Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson also attended the meeting.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven met UN Special Envoy for Syria

Published 27 November 2015 Updated 27 November 2015

On 27 November, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura. During their meeting they discussed the serious situation in Syria and efforts to support a political solution.

The discussions between Mr Löfven and Mr de Mistura focused on the talks held recently between key international and regional actors in Vienna and efforts to reach a political solution to the conflict in Syria.

They also talked about what Sweden can do to support the work of the UN and Mr de Mistura. They both agreed that a political solution in Syria is necessary to effectively combat terrorism and also give the Syrian people hope for the rebuilding of their country.

Today, Friday, Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström is also welcoming Mr de Mistura for a meeting at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Government proposes measures to create respite for Swedish refugee reception

Published 24 November 2015 Updated 24 November 2015

In the worst refugee situation since the Second World War, Sweden has taken greater responsibility than any other country in the west. We are a small country that is making an enormous contribution and the Swedish people are showing great solidarity in a difficult time. We stand up for the international right of asylum.

Since the summer, the number of refugees arriving in Sweden has increased dramatically and in the last two months alone, 80 000 people have sought asylum in Sweden. Of these, there are so many children and young people that it is equivalent to more than 100 new school classes each week. Public authorities and municipalities are now finding it difficult to cope with the pressure. Municipalities report themselves for irregularities (Lex Sarah reports) since they can no longer manage reception in a secure manner. The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency has raised the alarm that important public services cannot cope with the strain. Sweden can no longer guarantee a roof over the head of those who make their way to our country and in the last week people have had to sleep outdoors.

Therefore, the Government now proposes measures to create a respite for Swedish refugee reception. This requires a dramatic reduction in the number of people who seek asylum and are granted a residence permit in Sweden. The Government therefore wants to temporarily adjust the asylum regulations to the minimum level in the EU so that more people choose to seek asylum in other EU countries.

At the same time, capacity in reception must be improved. Many municipal services are under severe strain or face major challenges. These include social services, schools and trauma care. Another major challenge is to meet the rapidly growing population's need for housing. There is still much to do in this regard.

The measures that the Government now proposes are necessary in the current acute situation, but are not in themselves a long-term way forward. The refugee situation must be handled in a concerted manner within the EU. The Government will therefore continue to advocate a system where all countries, without compromising on individual asylum examination, take a shared responsibility for refugee reception. The Government wants the Dublin Regulation to be revised and replaced by a new, permanent relocation scheme in the EU.

Measures proposed by the Government

The Swedish legislation will be temporarily brought into line with the minimum requirements in international conventions and EU law.

With the exceptions indicated below, the legislation will apply to asylum decisions taken in the period during which the legislation is in force. It is temporary legislation, which will be in force for three years and will entail the following temporary exceptions to the provisions of the Aliens Act.

Temporary residence permits for all persons in need of protection except quota refugees.

Refugees and persons eligible for subsidiary protection who are granted protection in Sweden will be granted temporary residence permits. Refugees will be granted a residence permit for three years when their case is first examined, and persons eligible for subsidiary protection for one year. These permits will be renewable. In the case of extension, the general rule will also be that a temporary permit will be granted.

Exceptions will apply for children and their families who registered their applications before the agreement was presented and who are still in Sweden. The current rules will apply in their case, provided that the child is still under the age of 18 when the decision is taken. In addition, a permanent residence permit may be granted when the first temporary residence permit expires if the applicant can show that they have an assessed income that is sufficient to support themselves.

Quota refugees will continue to receive permanent residence permits.

Limited right to family member immigration for persons in need of protection with temporary residence permits.

Refugees with temporary residence permits will only have the right to be reunited with immediate family members. In the case of married couples, both parties will have to be at least 21 years of age to be granted the right to family reunification. Persons eligible for subsidiary protection who have temporary residence permits will not have a right to family reunification.

Tougher maintenance requirements.

A maintenance requirement will apply to all family member immigration except when refugees apply for family reunification during the first three months after having been granted refugee status.

The maintenance requirement will be broadened to include a requirement that the sponsor must be able to support family members who come to Sweden.

Persons otherwise in need of protection will not be entitled to a residence permit.

Persons in the category 'otherwise in need of protection' will not be entitled to a residence permit.

The provision on residence permits on grounds of exceptionally/particularly distressing circumstances will be replaced by a provision allowing a residence permit to be granted on humanitarian grounds in certain very limited exceptional cases.

There will not be any special provision on residence permits for children, but the fundamental provision on the best interests of the child will continue to apply.

The Government wants to introduce medical age determination of asylum seekers

The question of whether an asylum seeker is under the age of 18 is important for housing and care as well as for the issue of a residence permit. It is important to find a system that allows medical age determination of asylum seekers to be used in cases where there is a lack of reliable documents that

can verify a person's exact age and when doubts remain about the age that has been given.

Sweden will soon introduce ID checks on all modes of public transport to Sweden

This will mean the ID checks already in place will be supplemented by ID checks on the ferry between Helsingör and Helsingborg as well as on trains and bus traffic across the Öresund Bridge.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

More measures to combat terrorism

Published 19 November 2015 Updated 19 November 2015

On 19 November, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven presented more measures to combat terrorism in Sweden. These measures focus on giving government agencies a new tool for information gathering, biometric passport controls and considering camera surveillance for buildings where there is a general threat and for particularly vulnerable places.

Secret data interception

The Government will task an inquiry with producing proposals for how the Swedish Prosecution Authority, the Swedish Security Service and the Swedish Police Authority can be given a new tool for information gathering that is adapted to modern communications technology.

The tool referred to is known as secret data interception and involves the possibility of also intercepting information that is sent via encrypted channels.

Encrypted communications are currently being used to an ever greater extent in the form of various internet-based services, such as Skype or Viber. Law enforcement authorities already have legal support following a decision by a court to intercept these conversations, but as the communications are often encrypted the content cannot be accessed through interception. This shortcoming will be remedied with the tool the Government is proposing.

Biometric passport control

Ahead of tomorrow's meeting of EU interior ministers, Sweden will push for the introduction of biometric passport controls at the borders to the Schengen area.

The new national counter-terrorism strategy states that the Government is to work to combat the misuse of Swedish passports.

The Passport Inquiry, which was referred for consultation until September this year, proposes several measures to address passport misuse.

One of the most effective measures proposed is the introduction of biometric information controls at the external borders to the Schengen area. This information is contained in the passports of all EU citizens and those of most other countries.

Camera surveillance

In today's society, there are places and buildings where there is a general threat, even though they are not often subjected to crime.

Such places can include editorial offices, premises used by religious communities and asylum centres. Camera surveillance can be one way of protecting these places and buildings. It therefore needs to be guaranteed that there are no unnecessary obstacles to this kind of technology use.

There is reason, therefore, to investigate whether there are adequate opportunities for camera surveillance in places that are particularly vulnerable to crime and other places with an increased need for protection.

From a personal privacy perspective it is important to ensure that camera surveillance is not used as a matter of routine. The Government has appointed an inquiry to consider how a greater degree of overall personal privacy protection can be brought together at one agency.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven welcomed the Chairperson of the Ukrainian Parliament

Published 19 November 2015 Updated 19 November 2015

On 17 November, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven welcomed the Chairperson of the Ukrainian Parliament, Volodymyr Groysman, who is in Stockholm on the invitation of the Speaker of the Riksdag. Discussions during the meeting covered bilateral relations and Ukrainian reform efforts.

Sweden is the fourth largest donor to Ukraine and reform efforts are the focus of this support. Sweden has also led the way in condemning Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its unlawful annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, and in providing support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the country's right to make its own foreign policy choices.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Gender equality part of the solution to challenges in society

Published 11 November 2015 Updated 22 December 2017

“The world’s first feminist government is now implementing a policy to increase gender equality”, the Prime Minister established in the Statement of Government Policy.

Sweden has a feminist government. We place gender equality at the heart of both national and international work. Economic policy will be used to increase economic equality and help increase gender equality in society. The overall objective of the Government’s gender equality policy is equal power for women and men to shape society and their own lives. This is ultimately a question of democracy and social justice. At the same time, gender equality is part of the solution to creating jobs and growth. It contributes to economic development by making use of both women’s and men’s potential.

Gender equality policy aims to provide girls and boys, women and men with conditions to develop without being held back by structures, prejudices or stereotypical conceptions. Here it is important to note that also other identities, factors and power structures affect living conditions and circumstances for different groups of women and men.

Gender equality perspective from the start

A feminist government carries out a gender equality analysis early in the decision-making process, before the decisions are taken, to ensure that the gender equality perspective is present from the outset as a natural part of the solution to the problem. This strategy – gender mainstreaming – contributes not only to gender equality, but also to more effective measures.

One of many examples of inequality in Sweden is that women often take greater responsibility for care of relatives and children. Many women reduce their working hours to do so. According to Statistics Sweden's labour force survey, 170 000 people work part time to take care of children and/or an adult relative. The majority of these, 88 per cent, are women, who pay a high price for their efforts in the form of lower incomes and future pensions. To promote a more even distribution of unpaid household and care work, the Government has submitted a proposal to the Riksdag to introduce a third reserved month of parental insurance for each parent. Currently, two months of the parental insurance are earmarked for each parent, and cannot be transferred to the other parent. The Government wants to see a more gender-equal division of parental benefits days, and a third earmarked month will be introduced to promote gender-equal parenting. Gender-equal parenting is important in terms of a child's right to both parents, but it also contributes to increased gender equality in the labour market.

The Government has also announced funding for increased staffing levels in elderly care and targeted resources to stimulate access to childcare during unsocial working hours.

Internal work at the Government Offices increases pressure for gender equality perspective

The Minister for Gender Equality has convened a special ministerial group to develop gender equality policy and all ministers and state secretaries have taken part in gender equality training. This work is reflected in the Budget Bill, where the Government, as a first step and on the basis of the gender equality policy objectives, is now presenting concrete objectives for gender equality in a number of key policy areas and measurement criteria to follow up the work.

So far, it has been mainly women pursuing gender equality efforts. In recent years, however, there has been a growing awareness, both globally and in Sweden, of the role of men and boys in gender equality work. Participation by men and boys is an important part of the Government's strategic gender equality efforts, for instance through our commitment to the UN campaign HeForShe.

Gender equality is not just a question of social justice; it also helps establish growth and development.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Successful State Visit from Tunisia

Published 06 November 2015 Updated 09 November 2015

Tunisia's President Béji Caïd Essebsi concluded his three-day State Visit to Sweden today. The President and his wife were here at the invitation of the King and Queen. Tunisia's Minister for Foreign Affairs also took part in the visit and was received by Margot Wallström at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. It was announced during the visit that Sweden would open an embassy in Tunisia, and a number of bilateral cooperation agreements were signed.

Following a welcoming ceremony for the President and his delegation at the Royal Palace on the first day of the State Visit, the two foreign ministers met to discuss Swedish–Tunisian relations. Democratic development in the country, anti-terrorism efforts, gender issues and trade were the topics discussed between the two ministers.

On day two of the visit, President Essebsi met Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. It was announced following the meeting that Sweden would open an embassy in Tunisia. A broad cooperation agreement was signed between Sweden and Tunisia. The President, the King and Minister for Infrastructure Anna Johansson also took part during the day in a trade forum organised by the Tunisian Embassy and Business Sweden.

On Friday, the President visited Ericsson in Kista. The visit then continued to Uppsala, where the President laid a wreath on Dag Hammarskjöld's grave in the presence of the King, Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Information Technology Mehmet Kaplan and Minister for Public Administration Ardalan Shekarabi. A cooperation agreement concerning decentralisation was also signed during the day between the Swedish

Association of Local Authorities and Regions and their Tunisian counterparts.

Press release: Sweden to open Embassy in Tunisia



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Continued discussions on migration issues in the European Council

Published 20 October 2015 Updated 20 October 2015

Migration issues were once again in focus when EU heads of state and government met for the European Council meeting in Brussels on 15 October.

Discussions concerned both the reception centres (hotspots) to be established in the EU and EU common return policy. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven took part in the meeting.

EU heads of state and government adopted conclusions on increased cooperation in the area of migration, including cooperation with third countries, external border control and ensuring returns. Political and military developments in Syria and Libya were discussed, including their impact on migration flows.

In addition to migration issues, the European Council also addressed the EMU and the UK's plans for an in-out referendum.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Implementing the 2030 Agenda for sustainable Development, A call to action

Published 26 September 2015 Updated 14 October 2016

The world must get off to a flying start in realizing the new ambitious and transformative sustainable development agenda.

We, the presidents and prime ministers of Brazil, Colombia, Germany, Liberia, South Africa, Sweden, Tanzania, Timor-Leste and Tunisia, have come together today in an initiative aimed at supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We believe that the effective and universal implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires efforts at all levels, and across all sectors. Government's efforts alone will not suffice. But we are committed to lead by example and we pledge to do our share.

We will work actively during the coming months to rally support for the implementation of the Agenda. We will promote the sharing of experiences and best practices and a continuous engagement at the highest political level around the world.

The 2030 Agenda is an agenda of the people, by the people and for the people. We therefore invite all stakeholders, governments, parliamentarians, civil society, business sector, labor unions and academia to join us in calling for action. We need sustained engagement, dedication and leadership at all levels to achieve poverty eradication and sustainable development in all its dimensions by 2030.

We will make it our joint mission to ensure that no one is left behind!



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Meeting with African Union Commission

Published 25 September 2015 Updated 25 September 2015

On 20–23 September, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven hosted a visit by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma. The purpose of the visit was to further strengthen Sweden's relations with Africa and confirm support for the African Union as a central regional actor and strategic partner for the EU.

Mr Löfven and Dr Dlamini-Zuma discussed migration issues as part of the preparations for the EU-Africa summit on migration in Malta on 11–12 November.

The visit comes at a time when the Government is intending to instruct the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the Folke Bernadotte Academy to submit material for a new regional strategy for support to sub-Saharan Africa.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

EU leaders agreed on further measures to help resolve the migration crisis

Published 25 September 2015 Updated 25 September 2015

At the informal meeting of the European Council in Brussels on 23 September, the EU heads of state and government agreed on further measures to help bring about a resolution to the acute migration crisis in Europe and its neighbourhood. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven attended the meeting.

The EU leaders agreed to respond to the urgent needs of refugees in the region by helping the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme and other agencies with at least an additional EUR 1 billion. Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and other countries will receive increasing support for dealing with the Syrian crisis.

Reinforced EU dialogue with Turkey and further support to the Western Balkan countries were further measures that were discussed at the meeting.

Member States requesting assistance to ensure identification and registration of migrants will receive help from the EU institutions and other Member States no later than November 2015. This will be done in front-line 'hotspots'.

The EU heads of state and government also reiterated their support for the UN-led international efforts to bring an end to the war in Syria that has forced an estimated 12 million people to leave their homes.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden taking responsibility to implement the UN global goals for sustainability

Published 25 September 2015 Updated 25 September 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström, Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson and Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin are attending the UN Sustainable Development Summit in New York. On 25–27 September, the new global Sustainable Development Goals will be adopted by all UN Member States.

“Sweden will take a leading role also in implementing the new UN Sustainable Development Goals. Poverty reduction, environmental and climate action, and peacebuilding go hand-in-hand. Sweden will lead the way with a coherent policy that takes into account the perspective of poor people, human rights and planetary boundaries. Efforts to achieve the global Sustainable Development Goals in Sweden are starting now,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

During the summit, the Prime Minister will deliver a speech, attend meetings, seminars and roundtable discussions, and have bilateral talks with the heads of government of other countries.

“These global goals are needed for the countries of the world to work together to stop and prevent conflicts and refugee crises. Sustainable development cannot be achieved without peace, security and respect for

human rights. The global goals give us fifteen years of opportunities for a better world,” says Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström.

“It is extremely positive that the world is now agreed on the importance of sustainable development. An ambitious climate agreement in Paris this December is our first opportunity to show what this means in practice. All countries have a responsibility to contribute to climate change adaptation. By taking responsibility at home, Sweden is taking the lead and showing that adaptation is both possible and profitable,” says Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson.

From a Swedish perspective, it is important to underline three dimensions of sustainability – economic, social and environmental. The rights perspective, including freedom from discrimination, and gender equality in particular, is a top priority, as are employment and the goal of decent work for all.

“In unsettled times in which the challenges faced by the world can sometimes seem insurmountable, the fact that the countries of the world have now come together and shown that change in a positive direction is possible inspires hope and confidence, as does the fact that we stand united in the battle against poverty, repression and climate change,” says Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin.

In connection with the summit, a large number of charity events and a music gala – the Global Citizen Festival – will take place in Central Park in New York. The festival will focus on inequalities in the world and access to clean water and sanitation.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Deepened cooperation between France and Sweden following meeting with Prime Minister Manuel Valls

Published 18 September 2015 Updated 18 September 2015

On Thursday 17 September, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received French Prime Minister Manuel Valls.

The agenda included several current issues. The migration crisis, the growing refugee flows in Europe, job and growth promoting measures, decent conditions in the labour market and climate change were particularly important.

“In these areas, Sweden and France face similar challenges. The declaration which we have agreed on today marks the beginning of deepened cooperation between France and Sweden on these issues,” said Mr Löfven.

Joint France-Sweden statement



Article from Prime Minister's Office

The Government's ten standpoints to reform the EU's refugee policy

Published 08 September 2015 Updated 08 September 2015

In September 2015, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven presented the Government's policy for reforming the EU's refugee system. The most important thing now is that all countries take responsibility, that we create an orderly reception system and that we tackle the causes of the international refugee crisis. Sweden will pursue these ten standpoints to reform the EU's refugee policy:

1. The EU must establish a permanent and obligatory redistribution mechanism in the event of disasters.
2. The EU must continue to prioritise the saving of lives.
3. All EU Member States must take their responsibility to maintain the EU's external border and live up to the asylum rules.
4. The EU's asylum and border agencies must be strengthened.
5. The EU must continue to combat the people smugglers.
6. The EU must ensure the efficient and humane return of refugees and agree on a returnee programme.
7. The EU must quickly agree on a system of safe countries of origin.
8. The EU must drastically increase the number of quota refugees to approximately 100 000.
9. The European Commission must propose more legal routes into the EU.
10. The EU needs a more active foreign and aid policy to help people on the ground.

Today, Mr Löfven will meet Germany's Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel and Austria's Federal Chancellor Walter Faymann to discuss these issues. Reforming the EU's migration policy has been high on the Government's agenda since it entered office.

In the same way that all countries in the EU should share the responsibility, Sweden's reception of refugees is a responsibility for all of Sweden. For this reason, all municipalities must receive refugees. The Government is now preparing a legislative proposal on the elimination of the municipal veto in refugee policy. For this reason, we will increase support to the municipalities that receive refugees.

The Government will shortly be presenting more measures in the budget for next year to improve the establishment of refugees coming to Sweden.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister speaks with Ukrainian President

Published 26 August 2015 Updated 26 August 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven spoke by telephone today with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko to congratulate him on his country's independence day, which was on Monday, and to get Mr Poroshenko's views on the recent increased violence in eastern Ukraine.

During the call, Mr Löfven encouraged Mr Poroshenko to continue the ambitious reform measures that Ukraine has initiated and emphasised how important it is that the process can demonstrate tangible results to the public, not least as regards the fight against corruption. Continued reforms are also an important signal to Russia that it cannot influence the political choices of its neighbours.

Mr Löfven and Mr Poroshenko also discussed the local elections that will be held in Ukraine on 25 October and the importance of being able to conduct them throughout the country, in true democratic fashion and in accordance with Ukrainian law. Mr Löfven assured Mr Poroshenko of Sweden's continued political support in the implementation of the Minsk agreements and in achieving a peaceful solution to the conflict.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands

Published 25 August 2015 Updated 25 August 2015

On 25 August, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Mr Christopher J. Loeak.

Prime Minister Löfven and President Loeak discussed issues related to climate change and sustainable development and how to deal with the challenges ahead, with a particular focus on the situation of small island states. Prime Minister Löfven and President Loeak also had the opportunity to discuss developments in Sweden and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

During his visit to Sweden, President Loeak participated in the World Water Week, organized by the Stockholm International Water Institute, where he delivered a keynote speech and participated in several high-level events.

Article: Stefan Löfven opened the World Water Week



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met the Jordanian Prime Minister

Published 25 August 2015 Updated 25 August 2015

On 25 August, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met Jordanian Prime Minister Abdalla Ensour for bilateral talks on Palestine and the peace process in the Middle East, Syria and the fight against violent extremism and terrorism.

Jordan is in the midst of protracted conflicts in the region and the country is under particularly severe pressure from the consequences of the Syrian crisis. The ministers discussed Sweden's support and the support of the international community.

Mr Ensour is taking part in World Water Week in Stockholm. Jordan is one of the countries in the world with the greatest water scarcity per capita. Mr Ensour will also meet Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström and Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin.

Article: Stefan Löfven opened the World Water Week



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven opened the World Water Week

Published 24 August 2015 Updated 24 August 2015

Today Prime Minister Stefan Löfven opened the World Water Week, the world's most important annual meeting for water and development issues, taking place in Stockholm. This year's theme "Water for Development – Charting a Water Wise Path" raise awareness to the importance of the implementation of the new Development Agenda.

Together with the Mr. Christopher J. Loeak, President Marshall Islands, and Dr. Abdulla Ensour, Prime Minister, Jordan, Stefan Löfven will showcase the highest level of political commitment to push ahead a global agenda for water and development.

The impact of global climate change will also add to the water scarcity. The Swedish Governments continue to support the global development of water management. Nationally, Sweden foster policy coherence and encourage cooperation between ministries and stakeholders.

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at World Water Week



Gender equality in health

Published 21 July 2015 Updated 21 July 2015

Avoidable health inequalities will be eliminated in a generation. The long-term goal is to eliminate the disparities between women's and men's sick leave, while reducing sick leave rates in general to a low and stable level. Men's violence against women must stop.

Current challenge

Sick leave

Sick leave in Sweden, as in many other countries, exhibits a considerable bias in its gender distribution. Women are off sick to a far greater extent than men; two out of three people on sick leave are women. This is a historic pattern that has persisted over time.

Psychiatric diagnoses are now the most common cause of sick leave and are increasing among both women and men; however, the increase is greater among women.

Mental ill health

The risk of a young woman attempting to take her own life is three times as high as the risk of a young man doing so. Self-reported mental and somatic problems are increasing, particularly among girls aged 13 to 15. In addition, the difference between girls' and boys' perceived health increases with age.

Men's violence against women

Many women are still subjected to abuse. In 2014, a total of 28 200 cases of

abuse of women were reported to the police. This is an increase of 5 per cent compared with 2013. The number of reported rapes increased by 13 per cent between 2013 and 2014, to 6 620 reported offences. Around 17 women are killed each year by a man they have or have had a close relationship with.

HeForShe goals

Avoidable health inequalities will be eliminated in a generation. The long-term goal is to eliminate the disparities between women's and men's sick leave, while reducing sick leave rates in general to a low and stable level. Men's violence against women must stop.

HeForShe initiatives

- The Government has appointed a national commission for health equity. Consistent attention will be given to gender health disparities in this work.
- To respond to women's higher sick leave rates, all relevant stakeholders in society need to be mobilised. This includes public authorities, employers, and health and medical care, as well as measures for women's work environment.
- The Government is considering a future long-term initiative to strengthen preventive work in the area of mental health and improve early action for young people suffering from mental health problems.
- The Government is investing in sport and expects the sports movement, at all levels, to redouble its efforts to achieve gender equality in sports to give those who are actively involved the same opportunities to realise their interest in participating, regardless of gender.
- A national strategy will be drawn up for work on men's violence against women. The Government will strengthen its support to women's shelters that support and protect women subjected to violence. The rape legislation will be reviewed so that more sexual offences are cleared up. Sentences for aggravated sexual offences will be made tougher. More will be done to promote increased participation by men in these efforts to promote change. The Government has extended support to a national telephone line which people, primarily men, who risk committing sexual assaults can call for advice and assistance in obtaining treatment. Work will be stepped up on changing gender stereotypes surrounding masculinity, violence and destructive masculine behaviour.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

HeForShe launched in Sweden

Published 18 June 2015 Updated 18 June 2015

On 18 June, the United Nations global HeForShe campaign for gender equality was launched in Sweden. The objective is to show that gender equality is not a women's issue, but an issue for women and men alike. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven's message was that more men need to take a stand for gender equality and that he will personally take the lead and implement a broad agenda for greater gender equality in Sweden.

The Government is now focusing on three measures in gender equality work: gender-equal working conditions, more women at the top in business and the public sector, and gender-equal health.

“Few areas in society have such great potential for development as gender equality. A vital part of Sweden's success story, its growing economy and Swedes' personal freedom has been that regardless of gender, people can increasingly work, get an education and make their voices heard. Now it is important for this success story to continue,” says Mr Löfven.

Leading representatives of the UN, the business sector, trade unions, civil society and responsible ministers discussed the topic ‘What responsibility do men have in promoting greater equality between women and men?’.

Those participating in the launch included Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Executive Director of UN Women Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér and Dr Denis Mukwege.

“We have ensured that the Government Offices is gender-equal in terms of the politically appointed positions and we are now moving forward to build

the world's first gender-equal government administration," says Mr Löfven.

The Prime Minister emphasised that gender equality is first and foremost a matter of the equal worth and rights of all people. But it is also a means of increasing growth, productivity and employment.

"Increased gender equality is a tool in the Government's employment agenda to achieve the lowest unemployment rate in the EU. Gender equality is as ethically right as it is economically smart. For this reason it is the way forward for Sweden," says Mr Löfven.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Summit with Latin America and the Caribbean

Published 16 June 2015 Updated 16 June 2015

Heads of state and government from the EU Member States and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) met in Brussels on 10-11 June. The EU-CELAC Summit is the major forum for cooperation between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven represented Sweden.

Both regional and global issues were discussed at the Summit. Mr Löfven emphasised that Latin America and the Caribbean are stable, growth-friendly regions, and that relations between the EU and CELAC are constantly growing. The heads of state and government agreed, among other things, to maintain a high level of ambition ahead of the Climate Summit in Paris.

Appreciation for Swedish engagement

Mr Löfven observed after the Summit that there was firm appreciation for Sweden's engagement in the region, and that use is being made of the opportunities offered by relations between the regions.

This was the second EU-CELAC Summit, and the eighth between the EU and Latin America/the Caribbean.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received the President of Tanzania

Published 04 June 2015 Updated 04 June 2015

On 4 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received President of the United Republic of Tanzania Jakaya Kikwete at Rosenbad. The agenda included issues such as bilateral cooperation, development aid and the growing trade relations between Sweden and Tanzania, and cooperation between the African Union and the European Union.

Prime Minister Löfven and President Kikwete also had the opportunity to discuss developments in Sweden and Tanzania, with a view to the events in the African Great Lakes region.

The Prime Minister hosted a reception where representatives from the Swedish business community, civil society and authorities had been invited to meet the Tanzanian delegation and the African ambassadors based in Stockholm.

President Kikwete took office in 2005. He currently chairs the East African Community (EAC) and was recently elected Chair of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Global Response to Health Crises, tasked with making recommendations to manage future health crises, on the basis of lessons learned from the Ebola crisis.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Indian State Visit concluded

Published 04 June 2015 Updated 04 June 2015

On the evening of 2 June, India's President Shri Pranab Mukherjee left Sweden following a State Visit of three days. The President was in Sweden at the invitation of HM the King. The Government was represented, with the majority of ministers participating. The main themes of the visit were innovations and sustainable development, with a focus on urban development, science and research.

India is one of the leading countries in Asia, the world's fourth largest economy and an emerging global actor. The State Visit by the Indian President – the first ever – was therefore an important milestone in our bilateral relations.

The State Visit began on Sunday with the traditional welcoming ceremony at the Inner Courtyard of the Royal Palace. The King and the President inspected a guard of honour from the Life Guards and many members of the Government, as well as other Swedish public representatives, were present to welcome the President.

Monday began with a visit to the Riksdag, where the President was received by the Speaker of the Riksdag and met with Members of the Riksdag.

In the morning, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven also received the President for talks at Rosenbad. Mr Mukherjee and Mr Löfven discussed issues such as growing trade between Sweden and India and broad bilateral cooperation covering such areas as the environment, renewable energy and health. Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson, Minister for Foreign

Affairs Margot Wallström, Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg, Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist and Minister for Housing and Urban Development Mehmet Kaplan also took part in the talks.

In connection with the meeting at Rosenbad, a number of agreements between India and Sweden were signed, including a memorandum of understanding on sustainable urban development. The aim of the memorandum of understanding is to promote cooperation on matters concerning sustainable and integrated urban planning and land use, waste management, sustainable transport systems, water and sanitation.

Minister for Housing and Urban Development Mehmet Kaplan joined the President and the King later in the afternoon for a boat tour of Hammarby Sjöstad. During the boat tour, a roundtable discussion was held with business representatives on how cities can be built in more sustainable and environmentally friendly ways.

Sustainable cities in focus during the Indian State Visit

Helene Hellmark Knutsson, Minister for Higher Education and Research, was present at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, when a number of cooperation agreements were signed between Indian and Swedish higher education institutions.

On Monday evening, the King and Queen hosted a gala dinner for the President.

Visit to Karolinska Institutet and Uppsala University

The theme on Tuesday, the final day of the visit, was mainly research and science. Minister Helene Hellmark Knutsson was in attendance when the President and the King and Queen visited Karolinska Institutet. The focus lay on scientific cooperation, and included visits to Nobel Forum and Aula Medica. The President was also given a presentation of Nya Karolinska Solna (NKS) and Hagastaden.

Before lunch, Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg took part in a roundtable discussion between representatives of the Swedish and Indian business sectors. The President and the King were also present.

Mr Damberg gave a speech entitled *India-Sweden Partnership – Co-creating a Brighter Future*.

In connection with the business forum, the President announced that Swedish passport holders will now be granted an 'eTourist visa' when visiting India, leading to more expedient visa handling for Swedish citizens.

In the afternoon, the President visited Uppsala University together with Crown Princess Victoria, Prince Daniel and Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström. Ms Wallström gave the opening address and the President held a lecture on the theme 'Tagore and Gandhi: Do they have contemporary relevance for Global Peace?'.

Speech by Margot Wallström at Uppsala University

On Tuesday evening, Ms Wallström was in attendance when Crown Princess Victoria and Prince Daniel bid farewell to the President at Arlanda airport.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sustainable cities in focus during the Indian State Visit

Published 02 June 2015 Updated 02 June 2015

India's President Shri Pranab Mukherjee continued his State Visit in Sweden on Monday. The day's agenda included a meeting with the Prime Minister at Rosenbad.

On Monday morning, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received the President for official talks at Rosenbad. Mr Mukherjee and Mr Löfven discussed issues such as growing trade between Sweden and India and broad bilateral cooperation covering such areas as the environment, renewable energy and health.

In connection with the meeting at Rosenbad, a number of agreements between India and Sweden were signed, including a memorandum of understanding on sustainable urban development. The aim of the memorandum of understanding is to promote cooperation on matters concerning sustainable and integrated urban planning and land use, waste management, sustainable transport systems, water and sanitation.

Visit to Stockholm City Hall and tour of Hammarby Sjöstad

During the afternoon, the President was received by representatives of Stockholm City at Stockholm City Hall. Together with the King and Queen, Crown Princess Victoria and Prince Daniel, the President attended a presentation there on the topic of sustainable urban development.

Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Information Technology

Mehmet Kaplan joined the President and the King later in the afternoon for a boat tour of Hammarby Sjöstad. During the boat tour, a roundtable discussion was held on how homes can be built in more sustainable and environmentally friendly ways.

The second day of the State Visit concluded with the King and Queen hosting a traditional gala dinner for the President at the Royal Palace.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Historic State Visit from India

Published 28 May 2015 Updated 28 May 2015

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, will pay a State Visit to Sweden from 31 May to 2 June 2015 at the invitation of His Majesty the King. The Government will be represented, with the majority of ministers participating. The main themes of the visit are innovations and sustainable development, with a focus on urban development, science and research.

India is one of the leading countries in Asia, the world's fourth largest economy and an emerging global actor. The State Visit by the Indian President – the first ever – is an important milestone in our bilateral relations.

Focus of the State Visit

The focus of the State Visit will be on creating conditions for greater exchange in the areas of trade and science, and strengthening Sweden's presence in the Indian market.

There is growing demand in India concerning issues such as innovation, urban development and sustainable development. The State Visit will provide the opportunity to promote potential business opportunities in these areas in both directions.

Sweden already has broad cooperation with India in a number of areas: environment, renewable energy, research, health, etc. This cooperation will be deepened further in connection with the visit, which will include the signing of a number of cooperation agreements.

Programme points

India's President will land in Stockholm on Sunday afternoon and will be welcomed at Arlanda Airport by Crown Princess Victoria and Prince Daniel. The King and Queen will receive the President at the Royal Mews for a horse-drawn cortège to the Royal Palace, where the traditional welcoming ceremony will take place. Representatives of the Riksdag and the Government will be present.

Monday's programme will begin with a visit to the Riksdag and a meeting with Speaker of the Riksdag Urban Ahlin. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will then welcome the President at Rosenbad. Stockholm City will host a lunch at Stockholm City Hall, during which sustainable urban development will be the focus of discussions. The afternoon programme will continue along the same theme with a visit to Hammarby Sjöstad. Minister for Housing and Urban Development Mehmet Kaplan will take part. In the evening, the King and Queen will host a banquet at the Palace.

The theme for Tuesday will be research and science, with a visit to Karolinska Institutet, with Minister for Higher Education and Research Helène Hellmark Knutsson in attendance. This will be followed by seminars and meetings with Swedish and Indian business representatives. Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg will also take part in the programme.

The programme will continue in the afternoon in Uppsala, where the President will deliver a speech at Uppsala University. Crown Princess Victoria, Prince Daniel and Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström will be present.

The State Visit will conclude late on Tuesday afternoon.

Follow the visit on social media: use #sweindia2015



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Visit by Syrian Orthodox Patriarch

Published 27 May 2015 Updated 27 May 2015

On 26 May, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met a delegation from the Damascus-based Syriac Orthodox Church under the leadership of His Holiness Patriarch Moran Mor Ignatius Aphrem II.

The Prime Minister congratulated His Holiness, who will complete his first year as Patriarch in a few days.

The meeting agenda included the issue of residence permits for refugees from Syria.

His Holiness stated that Sweden plays an important proactive role in a political resolution of the internal conflict in Syria. He also emphasised the need for continued support to civil society's humanitarian work in Syria and Iraq.

On 27 May, His Holiness met Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström. He will conclude his visit to Sweden on 30 May.

His Holiness Patriarch Moran Mor Ignatius Aphrem II has visited Sweden and Södertälje once before, when he came in his role as Archbishop of the Syriac Orthodox Church 18 years ago.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister met ambassadors from Latin America and the Caribbean

Published 07 April 2015 Updated 18 May 2015

On 7 April, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven invited all the ambassadors from Latin America and the Caribbean to a lunch at Rosenbad. The lunch was a way to confirm the Government's prioritisation of Latin America and the Caribbean in foreign policy, and an opportunity for Mr Löfven to hear the ambassadors' views of the region's relations with Sweden and how they can be strengthened.

Mr Löfven highlighted the historical ties between Sweden and Latin America/the Caribbean. The Swedish business sector has had a presence in the region for over a century. During the 1970s and 1980s, many people from Latin America fled from military dictatorships to Sweden, and today they represent a dynamic and well-integrated group that contributes to our multicultural society. Through political commitment and development cooperation, Sweden has endeavoured to support peace, democracy, gender equality and human rights in the region.

Today, democracy and economic stability is the norm in the region, which affects Sweden's relations with the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, according to Mr Löfven. The free trade agenda is now of greater relevance and Sweden supports the EU's vision of a free trade agreement with the entire region.

Mr Löfven also highlighted common interests in the multilateral arena, such

as the climate negotiations, the post-2015 development agenda, disarmament issues and human rights.

On behalf of all the ambassadors, Bolivia's Ambassador Milton Soto expressed great appreciation for the opportunity to exchange ideas on relations between Sweden and the region. This was the first time in over ten years that the ambassadors from Latin America and the Caribbean were given the opportunity to meet with a Swedish Prime Minister, and it was Ambassador Soto's hope that it will not be quite so long until the next occasion.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven to visit New York and Washington

Published 31 March 2015 Updated 18 May 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven is to visit the United States on 29-31 March. The visit will begin in New York and will focus on issues concerning decent working conditions as part of the work on the global sustainable development goals. In Washington, the Prime Minister will meet US Vice President Joe Biden and give an address at the Brookings Institution think tank on the challenges and opportunities presented by globalisation.

Stefan Löfven will be one of the keynote speakers when the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) discusses decent working conditions on 30 March. The Prime Minister will particularly highlight the importance of the right to decent work as part of the work on the global sustainable development goals. The right to decent work is one of the Government's priority issues in the work to develop new global sustainable development goals, to which the ECOSOC meeting is to contribute.

The Prime Minister will also meet with UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson in New York. The purpose is to discuss and present Sweden's view of the new development goals and UN reforms, and to discuss current conflicts and crises such as those in Ukraine, Syria, Mali and the Middle East.

In Washington, the Prime Minister will have talks with Vice President Joe Biden. They will discuss Swedish-US cooperation on the climate and energy, the economy and trade, and gender equality. Mr Löfven and Mr Biden will

also discuss current foreign policy issues such as Ukraine/Russia and the Middle East, as well as the negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the EU and the US.

The challenges and opportunities presented by globalisation are the themes of an address by the Prime Minister at the Brookings Institution think tank. How can the challenges of globalisation be transformed into opportunities - for everyone? The importance of sustainable and inclusive growth that is based on free and fair trade, encompasses green transition and systematically works on gender equality and social equality, is one issue that the Prime Minister will raise in his address.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Focus on trade, human rights and diplomatic relations

Published 27 March 2015 Updated 18 May 2015

On 27-28 March, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven is visiting China. Mr Löfven has been invited to participate in Boao Forum for Asia in Hainan and he will also visit Beijing. Talks with President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang are important elements of the visit.

Bilateral relations between Sweden and China stretch far back in time. Sweden was the first Western country to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, in 1950. During his visit Mr Löfven will take up all aspects of our countries' bilateral relations, including trade, cooperation in research and development, and human rights. Mr Löfven will take part in a ceremony to mark 65 years of diplomatic relations between China and Sweden.

Human rights will be an important theme during the visit. Mr Löfven will meet professors and students from the Human Rights Master Programme at Peking University at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law.

In addition, Mr Löfven will meet representatives of Swedish companies to learn about their experience of the Chinese market.

On the second day of his visit, Mr Löfven will attend the opening ceremony of Boao Forum for Asia, in Hainan. Boao Forum for Asia is an annual conference that attracts a large number of heads of government, ministers, business representatives, researchers and journalists from all around the world. Numerous topics will be discussed, such as economic reforms, trade issues, security policy and social issues. Only a few countries from outside

the region are invited to attend, and Mr Löfven's participation this year is a unique opportunity to turn the spotlight on Sweden and Swedish business, but also an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing the emerging Asian economies.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

European Council meeting on energy union and external relations

Published 20 March 2015 Updated 30 April 2015

EU heads of state and government met in Brussels on 19-20 March. They agreed to align the sanctions against Russia to the implementation of the Minsk agreements and approved the proposal to establish an energy union. They also discussed the crisis in Libya. Sweden was represented by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

EU heads of state and government agreed to align the sanctions against Russia to the implementation of the Minsk agreements on a ceasefire in Ukraine. If the agreements are not fully implemented by 31 December 2015, the sanctions will be extended.

EU leaders approved the proposal to create an energy union with a forward-looking climate policy. The proposal covers five mutually reinforcing areas: energy security, a fully integrated European energy market, energy efficiency, decarbonising the economy, and research and innovation. The Council of Ministers will report on its work on the energy union to the European Council before December.

The Council also discussed the situation in Libya and called for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire.



Article

"We will never allow hatred to rule our lives"

Published 11 March 2015 Updated 11 March 2015

Stefan Löfven was one of the many participants who created a human ring around the Great Synagogue of Stockholm on 27 February at Raoul Wallenbergs torg. In his speech, the Prime Minister expressed deep sympathy for the victims of the Paris and Copenhagen attacks and their families. "Today we stand up for a righteous cause, for freedom of religion, for democracy - and we will never capitulate!" declared Mr Löfven.

Mr Löfven said that the Government is introducing major initiatives to create security for everyone in Sweden. The Government has instructed the police to focus on hate crimes, and is strengthening educational measures in school and society as a whole. The Government is also working with the faith communities to increase security.

In his speech, Mr Löfven stressed the importance of everyone in Sweden standing up for democratic principles.

"Now it is up to us to choose which society we want to have. Now it is up to us to stand up for freedom of religion and freedom of expression. Now it is up to us to show that Sweden is the strongest bastion of solidarity; we will never allow hatred to rule our lives here!" asserted Mr Löfven.

The demonstration for the equal worth of all people attracted hundreds of supporters. The event was organised by the network Gränslöst mänskligt (Boundlessly human), with other organisations including Young Muslims against Anti-Semitism and Xenophobia, and Young Roma.



Article

Climate change in focus when President Tong visited Sweden

Published 11 March 2015 Updated 11 March 2015

On 9 March, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received Kiribati's President Anote Tong at Rosenbad. It was President Tong's first visit to Sweden, and the first ever by a head of state from Kiribati. Mr Tong has an international reputation as a strong voice in the fight against climate change and has won a number of awards and accolades for his contributions and leadership regarding climate and marine issues.

Mr Löfven and Mr Tong discussed climate change and preparations ahead of the climate negotiations in Paris in December 2015. Mr Tong spoke about the existential threat that climate change poses to Kiribati and stated that it is absolutely crucial that the negotiations in Paris result in a universal and legally binding climate agreement.

Mr Löfven emphasised that Sweden and Kiribati hold similar positions regarding climate change and that Sweden attaches great importance to close dialogue with Small Island Developing States (SIDS) ahead of and during the negotiations, as well as in other international forums. Mr Löfven and Mr Tong also agreed to examine the possibilities of closer cooperation between their two countries. Access to climate finance was discussed as a possible cooperation area.

During his visit to Sweden, Mr Tong also met Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin and Crown Princess Victoria.



Article

Jobs in focus at summit between Merkel and Löfven

Published 26 February 2015 Updated 02 March 2015

How would you describe relations between Germany and Sweden?

"Very good. Germany is Sweden's largest trading partner, a close friend and a strategic partner for Sweden."

What was said at the summit about jobs and developments in the EU?

"We spoke about the fact that Europe must return to growth. We agreed that Europe must sign free trade agreements with large and growing economies, and that innovation and knowledge are the key to strengthened competitiveness. We also discussed how we can help more young people to find work, and the importance of good working conditions in the internal market."

One important issue was the situation in Ukraine at the moment. How would you describe it and Russia's actions?

"Our meeting dealt with the challenges we are facing, one of which is the security situation in Europe. Russian aggression in Ukraine is the gravest security situation since the Cold War. What we are seeing in Ukraine is a major problem. It is obvious that the Russians are supporting the separatists and destabilising Ukraine. We welcome the fact that Chancellor Merkel and Germany have shouldered a leading role to resolve this problem using diplomacy."

You and Chancellor Merkel also discussed our countries' reception of refugees, and stated at the press conference that more EU countries should take responsibility for displaced people. Why did you address this issue?

"For many years it has been discussed that all EU countries should take responsibility for displaced people. But despite this, it is not happening. When people are fleeing for their lives and are in need of a safe refuge, they must be able to find one throughout the EU. Germany and Sweden will work together to take concrete steps in this direction."



Article

Major educational project against racism

Published 27 January 2015 Updated 27 February 2015

Holocaust Remembrance Day was 27 January. In cities in Europe and around the world, the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau was commemorated. Throughout Sweden, demonstrations and seminars were arranged to commemorate one of the darkest chapters of human history.

At the same time, we must acknowledge that anti-Semitism, racism and intolerance still exist today. There are representatives of Sweden's Riksdag who question whether it is possible to be both a Jew and Swedish. Around Sweden and Europe, the Jewish minority often lives in fear of putting on a yarmulke or in some other way showing their religious affiliation. At the Government's meeting with the Jewish minority, Jewish representatives spoke about parents who choose not to allow their children to take part in Jewish school activities out of fear for their safety.

"We see how racism and intolerance are increasing in society, and the dire consequences this has. For this reason, the Government will carry out a national education campaign, targeted towards pupils in compulsory school and upper secondary school, about different forms of racism and intolerance throughout history and today," says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

This Thursday, the Government will instruct the Living History Forum to carry out an educational project called *Detta behöver vi förstå* (This we must understand) during the period 2015-2017.

To carry out this task, an additional SEK 5 million will be allocated to the Living History Forum in 2015. In 2016 and 2017, the Forum will receive an

additional SEK 10 million annually.

"Anti-Semitism spreads hate and fear, and limits people's personal freedom and their opportunities to express their beliefs and their opinions. The fact that it exists in our society today is nothing less than a failure, but also a reminder that we must step up our efforts against racism and intolerance," says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

HeForShe Ambassador Stefan Löfven

Published 26 January 2015 Updated 26 May 2015

On 23 January at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven was appointed an IMPACT World Champion Leader for the United Nations HeForShe solidarity movement. Its campaign aims to get men involved in the fight for gender equality. Now all of Sweden's male ministers have joined the movement, making the Swedish Government the first government in the world to get involved collectively in HeForShe.

"Gender equality benefits us all. It is morally right because it creates freedom for both women and men to decide for themselves how they want to live their lives, and gender equality also contributes to growth and increased prosperity," says Stefan Löfven.

There is still a difference of SEK 3.5 million in lifetime earnings between women and men in Sweden. The business elite is dominated by men, and women still do the majority of unpaid work and bear the main responsibility for children and family.

As Prime Minister, Stefan Löfven wants to do his bit in the drive for greater gender equality. He is the head of the world's first feminist government. This means that gender equality is an integral part of all of the Government's work, at both national and international level.

The Government is working to ensure that employment levels are as high among women as among men. Women should be in gainful employment to the same extent as men, with a good working environment and career

opportunities. The pay gap between the sexes must be reduced, full-time work must be the norm, abuse of fixed-term contracts must be stopped - everyone must have the right to economic independence. As a step towards an equal take-up of parental insurance, the Government wants to reserve a third month for each parent.

Sweden's aid to other countries must help combat the subordination of women and girls in society. The absence of all forms of violence against women and girls is key to this. The Government is prioritising work to promote sexual and reproductive health.

"For a long time the fight for gender equality has primarily been driven by women. It is time for more men to step forward and get involved in moving efforts for gender equality forward. I therefore want to urge all men to join in and take their share of responsibility - at work, in their home life and among their friends. All of us who live in Sweden shape our country together. Together we can create a gender-equal society," says Stefan Löfven.



Article

EU climate and energy framework successfully concluded

Published 23 October 2014 Updated 27 February 2015

On 23 October, EU heads of state and government agreed on a climate and energy framework up to 2030. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven took part in the EU summit in Brussels.

The agreement means that the EU has a unified position ahead of the coming international climate negotiations in Paris in 2015, when a global climate agreement is to be reached.

The targets in the agreement mean that the EU is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40 per cent by 2030 compared with 1990 levels. The targets also mean that energy efficiency measures are to total 27 per cent and that the percentage of renewable energy is to be 27 per cent by 2030. The target for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions is binding.

"This is historic. It also means that the countries are making a commitment, not just expressing a general intention; this is a clear commitment," said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at a press conference after the negotiations.

Additional resources to fight Ebola

The European Council welcomed the fact that Member States have made commitments to increase economic support to stop the ongoing Ebola epidemic in western Africa. Total funding now amounts to EUR 1 billion.

The European Council appointed Christos Stylianides, incoming Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, as the EU Ebola coordinator. His task will be to work and coordinate with EU

institutions, Member States, the UN and other international organisations in the fight against the epidemic.

New Commission approved

The European Council approved the new European Commission under the leadership of President-elect Jean-Claude Juncker. Cecilia Malmström, the Swedish Commissioner, was given responsibility for trade issues.

Economic situation and employment

The Council expressed its approval of the incoming Commission's plans to launch an initiative to mobilise EUR 300 billion in extra investments between 2015 and 2017.



Government Offices of Sweden

Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office

Reinvigorating Multilateralism

Published 28 September 2021

Opinion piece published in Project Syndicate 28 September, by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Carlos Alvarado Quesada, President of Costa Rica, Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand, Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa, Macky Sall, President of Senegal and Pedro Sánchez, Prime Minister of Spain.

Last year, the United Nations conducted a worldwide consultation involving more than one million people from 193 countries. The feedback pointed to some important facts. And this year's UN General Assembly must respond by bolstering rules-based multilateralism.

For starters, the consultation found that the expectations and hopes of the world's women, men, girls, and boys are strikingly similar. People want better access to basic health care, sanitation, and education. They also want to see more solidarity with those hit hardest by the pandemic and with those living in poverty. Respondents' top concern over the longer term is the twin crisis of climate change and accelerating biodiversity loss. Almost 90% of participants agree that global cooperation is vital to deal with today's challenges, and a majority believe that the pandemic has made international cooperation even more urgent. Especially encouraging is that young people worldwide clearly want more international cooperation.

Last year's consultation was a call to action. Now, UN Secretary-General António Guterres has released Our Common Agenda, which follows on the UN75 Political Declaration adopted by all UN member Heads of State and Government one year ago. The new agenda sets out a bold plan for how we can tackle the challenges of today and tomorrow.

The threat of breakdown must be viewed as an opportunity for a breakthrough. That is why we are committing to step up our countries' support for the secretary-general's efforts to translate the UN's ambitious agenda into reality.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which we are still battling at the global level, has driven home the message that we live in an interconnected and interdependent world. Moreover, in the last few months, we have seen record numbers of people affected by heat waves, devastating floods, and some of the largest wildfires in recent history, confirming once again the unparalleled threat posed by our changing climate.

The UN is the heart of the international system. The fact that the world came together 76 years ago to create an organization to “achieve international cooperation in solving international problems” is extraordinary in itself. But even more striking is that this organization, despite its challenges and shortcomings, has endured. It has shown that the path to a better, more peaceful, and sustainable future is paved with cooperation, not zero-sum competition.

However, the world's international organizations were built primarily to resolve inter-state challenges, not problems that transcend borders, such as financial crises, pandemics, terrorism, crime networks, threats to our oceans, or climate change. We therefore must modernize our multilateral institutions, making them fit for purpose and better equipped to deal with the global and cross-generational challenges we face.

Having observed the stark differences between the world of the UN's founding generation and the world of today, we decided last year to revive the debate about reforming the UN Security Council, and to continue the work of revitalizing the General Assembly and strengthening the Economic and Social Council. In line with the Joint Statement that we signed on November 10, 2020, in Madrid, we see three areas of action that should be emphasized in order to advance our common goal of reinforcing multilateralism.

First, we need a renewed commitment to international cooperation. Multilateral organizations must be furnished with the means and the mandate to make a difference on the ground. Cooperation among the UN, regional organizations, and international financial institutions must improve at both the policy and the operational level. The multilateral system needs to be more open and inclusive to give young people, civil society, the private

sector, academia, and others a spot at the table.

We are already putting this into practice. On the margins of this year's General Assembly, we have organized the virtual event "Delivering the UN Common Agenda: Action to Achieve Equality and Inclusion" in collaboration with the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just, and Inclusive Societies initiative. We intend to ensure that all voices are heard.

Second, we must act on the secretary-general's agenda of bold steps to revive and strengthen our capacity to tackle poverty and inequality; ensure inclusion, equal participation, and justice; address the climate crisis and accelerating biodiversity loss; and equip ourselves for future threats of pandemics.

We have learned from the COVID-19 crisis that we need to strengthen our collective ability to anticipate, prevent, and manage complex risks such as disease outbreaks, new wars, massive cyberattacks, environmental disasters, or other unforeseen events. We therefore welcome the secretary-general's suggestions for how to strengthen global foresight and risk-management capacity, including the proposal for a new global "Emergency Platform."

Lastly, we welcome the proposal for a Summit of the Future in 2023, and we should use that opportunity to step up our efforts to strengthen international cooperation. In today's world, with so many issues reverberating across borders and generations, we must seize this moment to create a more agile, effective, and accountable multilateral system that delivers for all citizens and enables us to tackle the global challenges we face.

We want to be at the forefront of this endeavor. Together, we can and must reinvigorate rules-based multilateralism, with a stronger and more inclusive UN at its core. This is the great political task of our times.



Government Offices of Sweden

Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office

The 'frugal four' advocate a responsible EU budget

Published 17 February 2020

Opinion Piece by Sebastian Kurz, chancellor of Austria, Mark Rutte, prime minister of the Netherlands, Mette Frederiksen, prime minister of Denmark, and Stefan Löfven, prime minister of Sweden, co-wrote this article, which was published in Financial Times on 17 February 2020.

On February 20, the leaders of the 27 EU countries will come together in an extraordinary European Council meeting to discuss the bloc's next long-term budget.

Our group of four countries, Austria, Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands, stand ready to enter the final negotiations over the multiannual financial framework for 2021-2027.

We have been dubbed the "frugal four" and I and my fellow leaders want to set the record straight. Being "frugal" does not mean that we are any less committed to the EU than those member states who are arguing for an expanded budget. On the contrary, our commitment to the EU is as strong as ever. The success of the European project is measured by our ability to deliver on our political ambitions and achieve tangible results for our citizens not by the size of the budget.

Standing up for common values does not have a price tag, and the single market, a considerable driver of European competitiveness, is not a costly endeavour. We must also consider that the UK, a large contributor to the EU budget, has left the bloc. Now that we have a smaller union of 27 member states, we simply have to cut our coat according to our cloth. The

responsible approach in this situation is to prioritise in the interest of our taxpayers.

Our four countries will engage in the negotiations based on a set of priorities. Above all, our budget contribution must remain stable, taking into account inflation and economic growth. This requires the budget to remain at 1 per cent of EU gross national income and a system of permanent corrections to protect individual states from having to shoulder excessive budgetary burdens.

Let us be clear: a budget of 1 per cent means more money, in nominal terms, than the current financial framework. It would allow the EU budget to keep growing with the economy, thereby providing room for higher ambition in key policy areas. This cannot mean, however, that we continue with business as usual. It is crucial for the EU's legitimacy that we focus a significantly higher share of the budget on meeting today's challenges: fostering an innovative and competitive economy, the fight against climate change, migration and security. We therefore need to spend a smaller share on established policies and we must also truly contain administrative spending by aligning it to national realities.

A budget of 1 per cent will lead to an increase in the contributions of all member states. Currently, more than two-thirds of the budget is redistributed. That means the financial burden of the union is increasingly being put on the shoulders of a small number of member states, including ours.

For decades, Brussels has recognised that some countries foot a disproportionate share of the EU's financing. But the European Commission is proposing to let this system of rebates run out. That means our four countries plus Germany would end up financing 75 per cent of net payments to the EU budget. We are ready to pay significantly more to the EU than we get back. We benefit greatly from being a member of the EU and the single market. However, there are limits. We insist on permanent net corrections to prevent excessive budgetary imbalances and achieve a fair, sustainable outcome.

We are confident that it is possible to reach an agreement on an ambitious and modern budget that devotes at least 25 per cent of its spending to climate action. It must also tie spending to conditions supporting the effective implementation of EU-wide policy objectives and the upholding of the rule of law. We trust that the new council president Charles Michel will

help us achieve such an agreement in a timely manner.

Sebastian Kurz, chancellor of Austria. Mark Rutte, prime minister of the Netherlands, Mette Frederiksen, prime minister of Denmark, and Stefan Löfven, prime minister of Sweden, co-wrote this article.



Government Offices of Sweden

Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office

Swedish Prime Minister calls on world to fight for memory of the Holocaust

Published 22 January 2020

Opinion Piece by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, published in Yedioth Ahronoth on 21 January 2020.

On 27 January, it will be exactly 75 years since the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and extermination camp was liberated by Soviet troops. To commemorate the liberation, and participate in the Fifth World Holocaust Forum 2020, I am visiting Jerusalem and Yad Vashem this week.

The Holocaust (Shoah) fundamentally challenged the foundations of civilisation. The unprecedented character of the Holocaust will always hold universal meaning. Soon, the survivors will no longer be with us; at the same time antisemitism is growing around the world.

Antisemitism exists in many parts of society in many countries, including in my home country. In extreme right-wing groups, in parts of the left and in Islamist environments. It appears in the form of conspiracy theories on social media and in the denial and distortion of the Holocaust. We see antisemitism among adults and children who fled to Sweden from countries where hatred of Jews is fed by schools and state propaganda. I am deeply angry and concerned about this.

The Government I lead has taken a number of measures on Holocaust remembrance and for the safety of Jews in Sweden:

- The Government has appointed an all-party committee to consider the introduction of specific criminal liability for participation in a racist organisation and a ban on racist organisations.

- We have contributed funding to enable more young people to travel to Holocaust memorial sites in Europe, and more teachers and other public sector employees to receive education about the Holocaust. We will open a Holocaust museum in Sweden.
- We have increased resources to Jewish communities and other organisations to ensure their safety.
- The Living History Forum – a Swedish public authority tasked with educating people about antisemitism and racism using the Holocaust as a starting point – and The Segerstedt Institute at the University of Gothenburg have begun an educational cooperation project with Yad Vashem.

I have invited heads of state and government, researchers, experts and civil society representatives from around 50 countries to the city of Malmö, Sweden, on 26–27 October to jointly take concrete steps forward in the fight for Holocaust remembrance and against antisemitism.

This event is called the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism. The choice of Malmö as the venue is important: Jews who fled across the Öresund strait and were saved from the concentration camps in the final stages of the war came to Malmö. But the situation concerning antisemitism in Malmö today is serious. We do not close our eyes to this fact. It is something we are tackling with determination.

Two of the starting points of the Malmö Forum 2020 are the Stockholm Declaration on education, remembrance and research about the Holocaust from January 2000, and the working definition of antisemitism adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). Sweden endorses the working definition and the list of examples of antisemitism that serve as illustrations.

Antisemitism is not a Jewish problem; it is a problem for all of us. We are working to make the Malmö Forum 2020 an international mobilisation for Holocaust remembrance and combating antisemitism.



Government Offices of Sweden

Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office

Working for a brighter future: We stand at a crossroads as seismic shifts take place in the world of work

Published 25 January 2019

Opinion piece published in The Times of India 25 January, by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa.

Technological advances are changing the nature of many jobs, and leading to the need for new skills. The urgently required greening of economies to meet the challenge of climate change should bring further employment possibilities. Expanding youth populations in some parts of the world, ageing populations in others, may affect labour markets and social security systems.

On one path, countless opportunities lie ahead, not only to create jobs but also to improve the quality of our working lives. This requires that we reinvigorate the social contract that gives all partners a fair stake in the global economy.

On the other path, if we fail to prepare adequately for the coming challenges, we could be heading into a world that widens inequalities and leads to greater uncertainty.

The issues are complex. As co-chairs of the Global Commission on the Future of Work we, and our fellow members of the Commission – leading figures from business and labour, thinktanks, government and non-governmental organisations – have been examining the choices we need to make if we are to meet the challenges resulting from these transformations in the world of work and achieve social justice.

We call for a new, human-centred approach that allows everyone to thrive in a carbon neutral, digital age and affords them dignity, security and equal opportunity. It must also meet the changing needs and challenges facing businesses and secure sustainable economic growth.

The opportunities are there to improve working lives, expand choice, close the gender gap and reverse the damage that has been wreaked by global inequality.

But it will need committed action on the part of governments and social partners to turn those opportunities into reality.

So how do we achieve this? Three areas of increased investment are needed:

First, we have to invest more in people's capabilities: This means establishing an effective lifelong learning system that enables people to skill, reskill and upskill – a system that spans early childhood and basic education through to adult learning. It also means investing in the institutions that will support people as they go through transitions in their working lives – from school leavers to older workers.

Making gender equality a reality and providing social protection from birth to old age are also critical. These social investments will not only increase productivity, they will also allow for a more inclusive growth, where informal workers and business can both benefit from and contribute to a sound formal economy.

Second, we must invest more in the institutions of work –including the establishment and implementation of a universal labour guarantee. This will ensure that all workers enjoy fundamental rights, an “adequate living wage”, limits on their hours of work and safe and healthy workplaces.

Linked to this, people need to have more control over their working time – while meeting the needs of enterprises – so that they can fulfil the full range of their responsibilities and develop their capabilities. Collective representation through social dialogue between workers and employers needs to be actively promoted.

Workers in the informal economy have often improved their working conditions by organising. Unions need to expand membership to informal workers, whether they work in the rural economy, on the city streets of an emerging economy, or on a digital platform. This is a critical step towards

formalisation and a tool for inclusion.

We're also calling for governance systems for digital labour platforms that will require these platforms and their clients to respect certain minimum standards.

Finally, we need to invest more in decent and sustainable work. This includes incentives to promote investments in key areas, such as the care economy, the green economy, and the rural economy, as well as high-quality physical and digital infrastructure.

We must also reshape private sector incentive structures to encourage a long-term, human-centred approach to business. That includes fair tax policies and improved corporate accounting standards. We need to explore new measures of country progress to track important aspects of economic and social advancement.

Beyond these critical investments, there is a further opportunity: to place discussions about the future of work at the heart of the economic and social debates taking place at the high table of international policy-making. This could revitalise the multilateral system at a time when many are questioning its legitimacy and effectiveness.

Yet none of this will happen by itself. If change is the opportunity, we must seize the moment to renew the social contract and create a brighter future by delivering economic security, equal opportunity and social justice – and ultimately reinforce the fabric of our societies.

Stefan Löfven, Swedish Prime Minister

Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa



Government Offices of Sweden

Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office

France and Sweden will cooperate on green innovation

Published 17 November 2017

Opinion piece published in Dagens Nyheter 16 November, by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and French President Emmanuel Macron.

Following the challenges of recent years, we are now seeing a much-needed debate about the kind of Europe we should have in the future. We welcome this debate, and have each laid out our visions in speeches delivered at two of the oldest and greatest European universities, the Sorbonne in Paris and the University of Uppsala.

We both believe in a strong and united Europe, and in the possibility of the EU leading the world forward in a time of great transition and uncertainty. We know that when we work together as Europeans, we can deliver better solutions to reduce unemployment, increase growth, improve working conditions and gender equality, fight climate change, achieve a sustainable and equitable migration policy, and increase security for our citizens.

One key area on which we are committed to doing more is the social dimension: how we can create more jobs, how we ensure that people obtain the knowledge and skills needed to do the new jobs that are emerging, and how we can achieve fair working conditions that foster mobility without leading to lower wages and unfair competition. These themes will be discussed at the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth in Gothenburg.

We have both worked hard to bring about an improved Posting of Workers Directive that guarantees equal pay for work of equal value, regardless of where workers come from. It should no longer be possible to compete on the basis of unfair conditions or wage-dumping. But this is not enough – we want to continue to pursue efforts for a fair labour market, and the Social Summit

in Gothenburg is an important step towards fulfilling the European promise of shared prosperity.

We will also discuss how to achieve increased growth in Europe. The Single Market is one of our greatest assets, but it needs to be developed. We must set the bar high – the EU must become the most dynamic market, where we compete with the sharpest skills, the best products, the smartest innovations, and the greenest technologies.

We are convinced that the judicious management of one of the most crucial issues of our time – climate change – can bring new opportunities for jobs and growth for France, for Sweden and for Europe.

Both our countries have set ambitious targets to live up to the Paris Agreement. The One Planet climate summit to be held in Paris on 12 December will focus on promoting concrete and innovative solutions to increase the pace. France has drawn up a Climate Plan that includes ending sales of fossil-fuel cars by 2040 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. In Sweden, the Government is guided by a target of becoming one of the world's first fossil-free welfare nations, with a sub-target of reducing emissions from the transport sector by at least 70 per cent by 2030. Sweden also aims to be carbon-neutral by 2045. These are ambitious targets, and show that we are prepared to shoulder our responsibilities. This is not just an act of altruism; these targets are also a means of securing the long-term competitiveness of our economies.

Now we want to take our cooperation further. Sweden and France are world leaders in the area of green innovation and will contribute to the transition to a more sustainable society. The countries and companies that are first to showcase their solutions will not only increase their competitiveness, they will also lay the foundations for the export successes and new jobs of tomorrow. To this end, France and Sweden will today sign a strategic partnership for innovation and green solutions.

This partnership will build on the innovative capacities of our industries, start-ups, academic communities and public sectors in four areas: developing green solutions to power our transport and our cities; boosting 'green finance' mechanisms; promoting healthier lifestyle choices for our citizens through medical and environmental innovations; and leveraging the world-class expertise of our digital companies and start-ups in this transition.

Public and private stakeholders will be fully involved and mobilised to

implement the actions and projects set out in the operational roadmap of the partnership. Our ambition is to present concrete progress in two years.

We are convinced that our French-Swedish innovation partnership will create considerable value for our citizens, and contribute to a more innovative, greener European Union.

Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

French President Emmanuel Macron



Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office

Important step towards a more social Europe

Published 17 November 2017

Opinion piece published in Svenska Dagbladet 17 November, by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker.

On Friday 17 November 2017, the Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth will be held in Gothenburg, Sweden. As hosts, we have both long argued that the European Union should put greater emphasis on improving the living and working conditions of our citizens. This is the first Social Summit in 20 years and a meeting unique in its kind, as it brings together Heads of State or Government from EU Member States, leaders of the EU institutions as well as social partners and civil society.

Europe has faced many challenges over the last decade. The financial crisis had a major impact on our economies and our social fabric. Unemployment, poverty and inequality had reached unacceptably high levels across Europe, and we have seen growing concern among individuals and rising distrust of political solutions, paving the way for xenophobia and populism. At the same time, digitalisation and globalisation, as well as new lifestyles and an ageing population, are changing the very way we live and work.

To put all this into perspective, there are now more adults over the age of 65 than children younger than 14. Most kids starting school today are likely to end up working in jobs that do not yet even exist. Some 40 per cent of employers already report that they are unable to find people with the skills they need. This shows that new opportunities are being created, but that new challenges are also emerging.

Thanks to determined action, Europe is now slowly but steadily turning the

page: average growth in the EU is back above 2 per cent, more than 8 million jobs have been created over the last three years, unemployment is down to a nine-year low and employment levels are reaching an all-time high.

To further restore trust and hope in the future, EU Member States and institutions need to show resolve and commitment. We have to deliver concrete results and improve people's everyday lives. We are engaged in a sincere debate on the future of the EU, launched at the Bratislava Summit last year and shaped by the European Commission's White Paper earlier this year. Throughout the course of this debate, we have made it crystal clear that a fairer and more social Europe must be the lifeblood of our Union.

The responsibility for this starts locally, regionally and nationally – and should include social partners at all levels in Europe. The EU has an important part to play to support these efforts, as shown by the European Commission's determination to put social priorities and social fairness at the core of everything it does.

The momentum is clearly there. We are pleased to see that a first agreement could be reached on the revision of the Posting of Workers Directive, constituting an important step in enforcing the principle of equal pay for equal work.

And a few weeks ago, the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council agreed on the European Pillar of Social Rights. The Pillar sets out 20 principles for better living and working conditions for Europe's citizens. It is a shared commitment to the values and rights we all stand for – from equality to social protection, from fair working conditions to lifelong learning. The proclamation of the Pillar at the Gothenburg Summit will be an important step towards a more social Europe.

The Summit will be a key moment for the debate on the future of Europe. We will focus on how to improve access to the labour market and get more people into work – especially women, where progress is too slow. We will discuss how to ensure fair jobs and decent working conditions – also for new forms of work – across our continent. We will look at how to ensure that transitions and mobility are better managed in our Union, including by equipping people with the right skills so that they can succeed in successive jobs throughout a career. At the end of the Summit, EU leaders will also discuss the future of education and culture in the EU.

The Europe we are working for is a Europe that puts peoples' concerns and

interests first. In Gothenburg, we will aim to anchor essential values and priorities – such as inclusive growth, fair working conditions and a strong social dialogue – firmly to the future of our European Union. This is what the citizens of Europe expect from us.

Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker



Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office

Why a Global Commission on the Future of Work?

Published 21 August 2017

Opinion piece, published in *The Independent*, by Stefan Löfven, Prime Minister of Sweden and Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, President of the Republic of Mauritius.

It is our belief that work is the foundation for people and societies to grow. With a decent income, work can pave the way for broader social and economic advancement, strengthening individuals, their families and communities. Yet technology, demography, climate change and globalization are transforming work more quickly, more profoundly and on a greater scale than ever before. These changes have great potential, but we also face many uncertainties about the future of work. The fear that while some may benefit greatly from these sweeping changes, many will not, has become a major concern, not least at a time when so many countries are facing high unemployment.

And if too many people worry that they are being left behind and that our societies are no longer capable of delivering positive change, there is a strong chance that disruptive forces will undermine growth and destabilize social and political harmony. Indeed, the tendency that we are witnessing of a shift towards populist thinking is one of the key challenges of our time.

Therefore, we need to support the job-creating potential of the shift to environmental sustainability and a fair and open world trading system, founded on strong values of rights, freedom and solidarity. Globalisation must benefit all. Only people who feel safe in the present can welcome an uncertain future.

Rather than adopting a wait and see approach, we must think seriously about the future of work that we want and how to get there. The future is not pre-

determined and can be influenced by the societal choices and policies that we make today.

To generate ideas and solutions for addressing these fundamental work-related challenges, we have agreed to co-chair the new Global Commission on the Future of Work launched [today] by the International Labour Organization (ILO). This Commission, which is part of the ILO's Future of Work initiative, brings together eminent thinkers and practitioners from around the world. It will report to the ILO's member states in 2019.

This initiative is, indeed, a truly global effort - over 100 countries have held national dialogues, with governments, employers and workers, to elaborate on approaches to meet the future challenges in the labour market. The contribution of the Commission will also be an important part of the follow-up to the landmark 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. Goal eight, in particular, entails promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.

For almost a century, the ILO has made a significant contribution to making the world of work a much better place. It has done this by bringing together representatives of governments, workers and employers to promote social justice.

By recognizing that the future of work is ours to create, rather than one imposed by forces which we are powerless to control, we are convinced that the future holds a powerful message of hope. We are committed to leading this Global Commission in that spirit, and to focus on concrete solutions, policy advice and best practises, with the goal of making the future of work, a future that includes everyone.

Stefan Löfven
Prime Minister of Sweden

Ameenah Gurib-Fakim
President of the Republic of Mauritius



Government Offices of Sweden

Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture

Opinion piece by Stefan Löfven, Prime Minister and Alice Bah Kuhnke, Minister for Culture and Democracy

Published 27 January 2017 Updated 27 January 2017

Opinion piece in Svenska Dagbladet on International Holocaust Remembrance Day by Stefan Löfven, Prime Minister (S) and Alice Bah Kuhnke, Minister for Culture and Democracy (MP)

Hédi Fried, author and Auschwitz survivor, wrote: "Can anyone say when something begins? Grains of sand are added to grains of sand, and before you know it there is a pile of sand in front of you."

Today is International Holocaust Remembrance Day, when we remember one of humanity's greatest crimes against itself. But knowing the terrible things that humanity is capable of compels us to do more than just remember. Racism, anti-Semitism, antiziganism, hate against LGBTQ people and prejudice against people with disabilities are still an ongoing scourge. This misanthropy limits freedom for the individual and cohesion among us all. It finds expression in everything from physical violence on our streets, to threats and conspiracy theories on social media.

It also exists in Swedish politics. There are members of the Swedish Riksdag who openly question whether Jews can be regarded as Swedish. Proposals, motivated by anti-Semitic notions, have been submitted to limit the freedom of the media. On an almost daily basis, political actors are exposed for spreading racist ideas, openly or in secret. Grains of sand are added to grains of sand.

The principle of the equal value of all people must never be compromised. Democratic values in Sweden must be defended, deepened and strengthened for the future. The Government is therefore implementing a national plan to combat racism, as well as similar forms of hostility and hate crime. The Living History Forum is rolling out an extensive educational initiative to reach Swedish schools and professional groups, such as employment agents, social workers and police employees. The Swedish Research Council has begun a survey of racism in the Swedish labour market. The Research Bill outlines major investments in research involving racism and xenophobia, and faith communities are receiving increased support for interfaith dialogues around the country.

At the same time, more work is required to strengthen security for vulnerable groups and people. Everyone must be able display their religious affiliation or identity openly and proudly in public. This is the duty of democratic society. Religious communities will therefore receive extra funds for security-enhancing measures to strengthen security around religious and cultural activities. The Swedish Police Authority has also been tasked with strengthening efforts against hate crime, and now has the capacity to investigate and combat hate crime in all regions of Sweden, with special hate crime groups in the three metropolitan regions.

This work must never stop. Therefore, we are today presenting three further measures:

1. Greater security at schools. School must be a secure place for all pupils and staff, regardless of religious affiliation. Children should never have to worry about hate crime or intolerance at their school. The Government will therefore further support security at schools identified as having a threat situation.
2. More effective measures against anti-Semitic hate crime. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention is being tasked with conducting an in-depth study of anti-Semitic hate crime. Using this as a base, efforts against anti-Semitic hate crime will be strengthened and made more effective.
3. New international forum. Two decades will soon have passed since the major Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust which, in the Stockholm Declaration, set out the basis for international cooperation on remembering the Holocaust. Never forgetting means always reminding ourselves. The Government therefore intends to host a second international forum in 2020, 20 years after the first, to honour the victims, follow up the work and, together with other countries and

organisations, continue to develop the initiatives to prevent new crimes against humanity.

Finally, we want to underline that your efforts are also needed. Never tolerate hate or threats, regardless of who is targeted, question conspiracy theories and false rumours, seek understanding where others try to spread contempt. The defence of democracy is a responsibility shared by all democratic citizens.

Those of us who live in Sweden must be able to feel secure and free, regardless of which culture we are part of, which god we believe in, or who we love. We must therefore see every grain of hate and intolerance in Sweden, and prevent them from ever gaining a foothold. Today, and every day, those of us who defend democracy have a duty to remember the Holocaust and through our actions say: "Never again."

Stefan Löfven, Prime Minister (S)

Alice Bah Kuhnke, Minister for Culture and Democracy (MP)



Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office

Sweden's security must be seen in a broader perspective

Published 10 January 2017 Updated 10 January 2017

Opinion piece by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven in Dagens Nyheter, 8 January 2017. Sweden's peace, freedom and security must be safeguarded. There is no more important task for the State than this.

The new security situation, the growing political power rivalries and the broader security policy developments place new demands on the State's capacity to safeguard the security of Sweden's inhabitants. They also place new demands on strategic thinking over longer periods, and a better understanding of security developments, around the world as well as in our own country.

The security policy situation in our region has deteriorated over the past few years, particular following Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea. We have received reports of foreign underwater activities in Sweden's territorial waters, and we have seen a significant increase in military activity around the Baltic Sea. International terrorism affects an increasing number of innocent civilians. Climate change is becoming increasingly tangible, with more dramatic weather events and more regional conflicts that force people to flee. We are more susceptible to disruptions in vital public services – electricity grids, railways, water supply. Information technology, which has improved most people's lives, has also created new vulnerabilities that can be exploited by both States and individuals.

In addition, security issues must now be viewed from a broader perspective than previously. This has shaped the work of the Government's security policy council that I established after taking up my post as prime minister. The broad concept of security also forms the basis of the national security

strategy that the Government will present today when the Folk och Försvar Annual National Conference convenes in Sälen.

For the first time, a Swedish Government is now systematising its view of Sweden's security in a broad sense. The security strategy proceeds from our security objectives, determines the direction and sets the framework for the work needed to safeguard our security and to place the common resources where they do the most good. In the strategy, the Government defines the national interests that guide our security efforts. The strategy also takes up the fundamental – and inalienable – values that underpin our security. Based on these interests and values, the strategy analyses eight primary threats that challenge our capacity to protect our population and our country.

Military threats

It remains unlikely that a single armed military attack will directly target Sweden. But crises and incidents that include military force can never be ruled out. Our non-participation in military alliances serves us well and contributes to stability and security in northern Europe. At the same time, we are deepening our various defence and security policy cooperation forums. Sweden is now strengthening its defence after many years of cut backs, and creating modern and coherent total defence planning, including a psychological defence tailored to the current situation.

Information and cyber security

The cyber threat is serious and tangible. US authorities recently reported that they have evidence that the latest presidential election was unduly influenced by operations directed from Russia. Sweden too can be subjected to such attempts to exert influence. At the same time as we continue to develop our capacity to make use of all the possibilities that digitalisation provides, we must also develop our capacity to reduce vulnerability, resist efforts to exert influence and strengthen our information and cyber security.

Terrorism and violent extremism

Most terrorist attacks are committed outside of Europe's borders, but developments show that Europe is increasingly being subjected to terrorism. Several of our neighbouring countries have been severely affected, and terrorism is an imminent threat in Sweden as well. The Swedish strategy against terrorism is based on preventing, averting and impeding. Individuals

at risk must be identified before they are radicalised. The police and other public authorities must have proper resources and capabilities to avert terrorism.

Organised crime

Organised crime is becoming more malicious, more extensive and more menacing. Trafficking in human beings, weapons and drugs are everyday activities for professional criminals. Some networks have both the intention and the ability to disrupt fundamental democratic processes. There is a need for preventive measures at an early age and an increased police presence. Work to combat illegal weapons and explosives will continue. Especially sustained measures are needed in areas particularly prone to crime.

Threats to energy supply

Disruptions in the supply of electricity, fuel, gas and heat may result in serious consequences for people's lives and health, and also to the functioning of society. A secure and robust energy system must be based on a diverse energy mix, safe transportation and efficient energy markets. Reduced dependence on fossil fuels will improve the security of supply.

Threats to transportation and infrastructure

Disruptions and loss of resources such as fuels, electricity supply, vehicle provision and IT/telecommunications are associated with particular risks. Ensuring that transportation vital to society is robust and replaceable is of utmost importance. This particularly applies to our food security. The perimeter security concerning key parts of the transport infrastructure must be improved.

Health threats

Communicable diseases pose threats to the health of the population, as do other types of biological and chemical threats. These could be in the form of bacteria, viruses and other microorganisms, but also radioactive, biological and chemical weapons. One particularly severe threat to modern medical care is the increased resistance to antibiotics. Sweden must have contingency plans that involve regular training, and resources for managing various kinds of health threats, such as influenza pandemics.

Climate change

Even today, climate change threatens the population and existence of certain States. In no other area is the need for preventive measures more apparent. Sweden will strengthen its leading role in international cooperation to curb climate change. This is reinforced by our national policy for reduced fossil emissions, and our development aid focus on reducing the global greenhouse gas emissions.

Implementation of the national security strategy requires the involvement of Swedish society as a whole. Therefore, active participation by public authorities, private individuals, the business community and civil society is of crucial importance to preventing and managing crises.

However, the overall responsibility rests with the Government, and all ministries will base their work on the strategy as the next step is taken and work on various initiatives is pursued. We must be better able to safeguard total defence interests in various areas of society. Therefore, a regulatory review will be carried out to ensure that strategic security decisions do not become municipal or private standpoints, but national decisions. At the same time, there is reason to consider how to best carry out the business sector's security work focusing on crucial social technology and services of strategic interest to Sweden.

Most issues related to Sweden's security have attracted broad majorities in the Riksdag. I feel that it should also be possible to achieve a broad consensus in the work to realise the content of this strategy. Stronger Swedish security is not created by political games and tactical manoeuvring, but rather through the pursuit of consensus and cooperation in the best interests of the country.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven



Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

We in Sweden are not alone in our frustration at violations in the Middle East

Published 16 October 2016 Updated 16 October 2016

Opinion piece in SvD 16 October 2016 by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Margot Wallström, Minister for Foreign Affairs. The images of human suffering in Syria are heart-rending. Hospitals are bombed, and small children are dug out of the ruins. Humanitarian assistance is not getting through. It is unbearable to behold. The UN Secretary-General has likened Syria's largest city, Aleppo, to a slaughterhouse and the bombs continue to fall.

In recent weeks, an aid convoy was attacked in an act of barbarity targeting the most vulnerable. It is an outrage that this is being permitted to continue. But without a political solution to the conflict, we cannot begin to work for peace. Together with the other European prime ministers and foreign ministers, we need to put pressure on the Syrian regime and on Russia.

Firstly, what is needed is an immediate ceasefire. Since the ceasefire was broken, the bombs have continued to fall and the chasm between the parties is considerable. Last weekend, Russia once again blocked the UN Security Council from approving a resolution to bring an immediate end to the fighting. A clear signal needs to be sent to the Syrian regime and to Russia. Russia is not only responsible for its actions on the ground in Syria, it is also the country with the greatest influence over the Syrian regime.

Secondly, the suffering of the Syrian people must be alleviated. In their

efforts to defeat the opposition, the Syrian regime and Russia are exposing tens of thousands of civilians in Aleppo to indiscriminate violence, motivated by the fight against terrorism. As long as the bombs keep falling, people cannot access the humanitarian assistance – food, supplies and medical care – that the UN stands ready to provide. Since the crisis erupted, Sweden has been a staunch contributor to the UN-led humanitarian operations in Syria and its neighbouring countries. Over the last five years we have contributed a total of SEK 2.2 billion in addition to our substantial core support to the UN.

Last week, the EU launched an initiative for humanitarian access to Aleppo to ensure that aid convoys can reach those in need. The regime in Damascus must allow aid to reach all of the areas they have besieged and desist from removing medical equipment and medicines from the few aid convoys that are allowed in.

Thirdly, the issue must be raised of responsibility for the violations of international humanitarian law – the laws of war – and human rights. Both the UN's Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights have stated that it is likely that war crimes, and possibly also crimes against humanity, have been committed. Chemical weapons and other prohibited, indiscriminate weapons have been used, entire cities have been besieged and starved into surrender, a UN aid convoy has been bombed, tens of thousands of people have been arbitrarily detained, and the systematic and extensive use of torture and sexual violence has reached almost industrial proportions. Responsibility for these disgusting acts must be investigated and international justice must be done.

Next week, two important meetings will be held in Brussels: first a foreign ministers meeting, then a summit of EU leaders. It is crucial that the EU agrees on a way forward. We also made this point when the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs, Federica Mogherini, visited Stockholm last Monday. We in Sweden are not alone in our frustration at the violations currently taking place in the Middle East. But our long-term aim must be for the UN Security Council once again to be able to do its job, and our support for the UN Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura remains firm.

Since 1 October, Sweden has held an observer seat on the UN Security Council, and we are therefore following the discussions on Syria closely. On 1 January 2017 we will take a seat as a member of the Security Council for two years. The Security Council's scope for action on the war in Syria is

restricted by the fact that one of the combatants – Russia – is a permanent member that therefore has the right of veto. This limits what can be achieved through the Security Council. Sweden will nonetheless try to exert an influence. In the long term, it is in the interests of every member of the international community to uphold the humanitarian law standards that have formed a part of the international security order since the Second World War. Ending the war in Syria and other conflicts will thus be the most important – and the most difficult – task of our term on the Security Council.

We will therefore seek alliances with countries both in the EU and on the Security Council to find ways of bringing about meaningful peace negotiations – with both women and men at the negotiating table – and, in the longer term, the reconstruction of a ravaged Syria. We have a frighteningly long way to go. But the images that are emerging from eastern Aleppo demand immediate and unwavering efforts from us, and from the rest of the world.



Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The time has come for the EU to deliver

Published 10 September 2016 Updated 10 September 2016

Opinion piece in Svenska Dagbladet 10 September 2016 by Stefan Löfven and Ann Linde. Europe is currently facing what may be the greatest challenges since the European project emerged out of the ruins of two devastating world wars. The refugee crisis, the widening gaps and the unemployment that have characterised the last few years have also mobilised powers for less cooperation and more isolationism.

We share the frustration that many feel. Not everyone has benefited from the increasing globalisation and world trade that have lifted many people out of poverty and increased prosperity around the world. Far too many people link globalisation with widening gaps and increased vulnerability.

But we do not share the conclusion that less cooperation is the solution. On the contrary. More and more of our social challenges are of a cross-border nature and can only be solved by means of cross-border cooperation. One clear and frightening example is the fight against terrorist organisations, which move between countries and continents and which no single country can fight on its own.

The European project also provides opportunities that are vital to Sweden's prosperity. The opportunity that, together, we can be a strong voice in all decisions that affect us in international forums. The opportunity to ensure healthier air, cleaner water and joint efforts against climate change. The opportunity for you, as a citizen, to study, work or run a company in any EU country you wish.

On Friday, the heads of state and government of the 27 Member States will meet in Bratislava to discuss how the EU will manage the British exit.

The Government is ready to begin negotiations with the UK and has set up a group at the Government Offices with special responsibility for monitoring Swedish interests. We want to see close cooperation even after the UK leaves the EU. At the same time, it is important to make clear that access to the single market entails rights as well as obligations. Cherry-picking must not be allowed, such as by implementing the free movement of services but not of people.

The meeting in Bratislava also has an even more important agenda item: defining the path the EU will take in the future. Sweden's position is that this path does not go through major new projects that require amendments to the Treaties. On the other hand, it is high time that the Member States actually implement the decisions taken by common accord. In this work, the Swedish Government will give priority to three areas: more and better jobs, a more ambitious environment and climate policy, and a long-term, sustainable migration policy that safeguards the right of asylum.

1. More and better jobs

It is time to create a more far-reaching and fairer single market. The single market stimulates competition and trade, enhances quality, increases the supply of goods and services – and represents 70 per cent of Swedish exports. We must therefore continue to remove unnecessary barriers to trade and deepen the digital single market so that more Swedish companies can increase their exports and employ more people.

Economic and social developments must also keep pace so as to be sustainable. Social issues, such as the way welfare is designed, are usually national in nature and must remain so. But considering that different countries have different social systems, we need to identify bottlenecks and find solutions that can, for example, make the step between education and the labour market easier to navigate, make it easier for parents to combine work with family life, and increase women's access to the labour market. The Swedish Government is also very active in efforts to improve the Posting of Workers Directive and to ensure that the principle of equal pay for equal work applies regardless of where you come from.

This means that it is of the utmost importance to further develop the European Pillar of Social Rights that was launched by the European

Commission. The Government will therefore organise an EU summit on social issues in Sweden in 2017 to move this work forward and put these issues on the agenda.

2. Ambitious environment and climate policy

Climate is a global issue – and the EU is a pivotal actor in ensuring that we succeed in the transition. We are convinced that there would not have been a globally binding climate agreement in Paris without influence from the EU.

We want to continue our leadership in this momentous issue. The Government will work actively to ensure that the climate agreement is ratified by the entire EU as quickly as possible. We will push for a high level of ambition in the proposals now being negotiated in the EU and which form the basis of the EU's implementation of the agreement. We will also be a strong driving force in the EU for cleaner air and the reduced use of hazardous chemicals.

3. All countries must take their responsibility in the refugee crisis

The Government wants to see a Union that provides security for its citizens and takes responsibility for refugees. It is positive that progress is being made in the negotiations on reinforcing the EU's external borders and that the EU is now placing greater focus on how we can make use of the common foreign, trade and aid policies to improve efforts aimed at stopping people being forced to flee.

But to prevent the EU from again becoming as paralysed as it was during the most acute stage of the refugee crisis last year, it is also necessary for more countries to be involved and contribute.

Sweden has been one of the most proactive Member States for a more even distribution of asylum seekers in the EU, and we will continue working for a more uniform asylum system in the EU, where all the Member States take their share of the responsibility for the reception of asylum seekers. One prerequisite for this is that all Member States have reception systems with sufficient capacity, a legally secure asylum process, an equivalent assessment of the need for protection and certain basic rights linked to the need for protection.

The time has come for the EU to deliver. The Government will also encourage increased participation in EU issues at home in Sweden. By doing so we not only create increased legitimacy for EU decisions that are taken, we also get suggestions as to what the EU could do better.

Europe's citizens have every right to be horrified over terror, war and oppression, and angered over poverty, widening gaps and climate threats. But there is one thing that Europe's history has taught us: solving these problems requires more cooperation – not less.

Stefan Löfven
Prime Minister

Ann Linde
Minister for EU Affairs and Trade



Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office

Long-term perspective in foreign and security policy creates stability

Published 20 January 2016 Updated 20 January 2016

Opinion piece by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Prime Minister Juha Sipilä, published on Sunday the 10th of January 2016 in Swedish in the Dagens Nyheter newspaper and in Finnish in the newspapers of Lännen Media.

Today, it is more obvious than ever how dependent our countries – Finland and Sweden – and our citizens are on the developments in the world surrounding us.

Right now, the most pressing issue is the refugee crisis. The war in Syria, the tensions in Iraq as well as instability in Afghanistan and many African countries have prompted millions to flee, many of them to Europe. Finland and Sweden belong to those EU countries that have lately admitted the most asylum seekers per capita.

The events in Paris were shocking testimony of the need to further strengthen the fight against international terrorism. Both Finland and Sweden have had to step up preparedness for possible threats and incidents against our own countries, too.

The cruel bombings of civilians by Assad's regime continue to claim innumerable human lives while at the same time also ISIL continues its heinous attacks.

In our own neighbouring areas, the security situation has worsened due to Russia's reprehensible actions against Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea. Military activity in and around the Baltic Sea Region has increased.

In the light of all these events, we are faced with the most serious threat against European security since the end of the Cold War.

Against this background, we both want to highlight the importance of following a long-term strategy for peace and stability in Northern Europe and the Baltic Sea Region.

Both Finland and Sweden are outside military alliances. We believe military non-alignment serves us well. This experience should also be taken into account when assessing today's challenges. Military non-alignment also contributes to stability and security in Northern Europe on the whole.

However, this does not mean that we have adopted a policy of isolation. We are active members in the European Union. Collaboration with other Nordic countries as well as the Baltic countries is particularly important to us. And while we are not members in Nato, we work in close collaboration with the Alliance. We also have a strong transatlantic link.

Finland and Sweden have recently made further significant advances in defence cooperation, such as joint exercises, increased exchange of information and mutual use of airfields and ports in both countries. Provided the political decisions necessary are taken in both countries, Finland and Sweden will in the future be able to act together also in the event of a crisis or armed conflict. As the President of the Republic of Finland said in his New Year's speech, it would be logical to continue extending the foreign and security policy cooperation between Finland and Sweden.

We stand united in defending the respect for international law and the right of each country to make their own choices in security policy. Dialogue, diplomacy, confidence-building and prevention of conflicts are important tools in our efforts to strengthen our common security together with others.

Both Finland and Sweden are active in the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). We joined the EU at the same time and often promote the same policies in the Union. Following the terrorist attacks in Paris, both Finland and Sweden - along with the rest of the EU countries, in line with the EU treaties - decided to contribute strongly to the joint fight against ISIL.

We are living in times where our existing world order, our fundamental values and our open societies are being challenged from many directions. In times like these, it is imperative to act responsibly and from a long-term

perspective.

The military non-alignment of Finland and Sweden enjoys high credibility. We do not believe in rapid policy changes in security policy – they are especially poorly suited to matters that concern our countries' security. Finland and Sweden drive their security policy with a long-term perspective, in good cooperation and in ever closer contact with each other.

Stefan Löfven
Prime Minister of Sweden

Juha Sipilä
Prime Minister of Finland



Government Offices of Sweden

Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of the Environment

Establishment of new arrivals to Sweden to be reformed

Published 19 February 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Dagens Nyheter 19 februari 2015

Events in the rest of the world affect us all. Terrorist organisation IS hunting down fleeing families, children being abducted by Boko Haram, repressive states persecuting journalists. These events provoke abhorrence against the perpetrators, but they also arouse empathy with the victims.

Questions are raised around every breakfast table: What if it was our family under threat? What if it was our children hearing the shelling at night? Many people in Sweden bear personal memories of repression that are now being reawakened.

Today almost 50 million people in the world are displaced. This is the most serious refugee situation since the Second World War. Conflicts around the world are forcing people to leave behind everything they own to seek security in another country. They are fleeing in desperation from war, torture, repression, abuses and rape.

One or two of every thousand refugees in the world seek asylum in Sweden. We bear a small part of the global responsibility, but in the short term it is still a major challenge, even for a rich country such as Sweden. Our values and our respect for human dignity mean that we have a collective duty to help people in distress. This Government will always stand up for a humane asylum policy and unwaveringly defend the right of asylum.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres, recently praised Germany and Sweden for setting a good example in taking responsibility for the reception of refugees and providing extensive support to the UNHCR. At present, just a few EU Member States take in the vast

majority of those seeking asylum in the EU. Sweden will seek international cooperation to enable more EU countries to increase their responsibility for displaced people. In addition, Sweden will take steps in the EU to create more legal channels for people to seek asylum in the EU and to increase the reception of quota refugees in other countries.

Immigration in Sweden is regulated and asylum legislation is based on international conventions and EU law. Those granted asylum begin a journey to build a new life in Sweden. People have a strong drive to create a home, get a job and a secure income, use their skills and find their place in society. The Government's policy for getting immigrants established builds on this drive.

Handled properly, the reception of immigrants offers a massive opportunity. For many years, public debate has been characterised by concern over the demographic challenge whereby young people of the future will have to provide for an increasing number of elderly people.

The increased number of immigrants arriving in Sweden helps create better prospects of tackling this challenge.

Many of those who come to Sweden are of working age and have an education – often a higher education – and professional experience. Just as it did with the waves of immigration from Latin America, the Middle East and the Balkans in the 1980s and 1990s, Sweden's reception of refugees will bring new colleagues, neighbours, friends and family members who will help to build Sweden's prosperity. In the global economy, having good knowledge of regions, cultures and languages brings a competitive advantage, not least for an export-dependent country such as Sweden.

But there are significant shortcomings in the current policy concerning the establishment of new arrivals in the labour market and in society. This has been the case for a long time, under both centre-right and Social Democratic governments.

It takes far too long for new arrivals to find work. When not all municipalities take a share of the responsibility for receiving refugees, those who have recently arrived are forced into long stays in accommodation centres instead of being allowed to begin the process of getting settled. The measures offered to new arrivals are not sufficiently well tailored to the circumstances and needs of the target group. Finding the right path, and getting academic certificates assessed and skills validated can take several

years. In some cases there is a lack of opportunities for supplementary education to allow those with vocational training and graduates to find jobs that match their skills. Many people with foreign backgrounds also encounter discrimination.

The Government's focus is on creating more jobs, closing gaps and increasing cohesion in Sweden. For this reason, as soon as this Government came into office we launched a serious project to reform the establishment of new arrivals. In recent weeks, the debate has featured cobbled-together symbolic proposals – which for the most part risk delaying the establishment of immigrants rather than accelerating it. Making life worse for new arrivals, weakening job security or reducing remuneration and wages will not help them become established or increase cohesion in Sweden.

The Government is currently drafting an establishment package of well-founded reforms in four areas. The individual reforms in these four areas will be presented as and when the details are completed in the Government Offices. The first will be presented today.

1. Quickly into work through language, training, validation and housing. Work is key to establishing adults in Swedish society. More people establishing themselves in the labour market requires better Swedish language training, a more efficient validation process and greater opportunities for supplementary education, combined with work placements and jobs. It also requires active anti-discrimination measures in working life. The Government considers that the social partners have an important role to play in ensuring more rapid establishment in the labour market.

The Government will also present measures to ensure that more housing is built, in both the short and long term. More housing is needed for young people and students as well as new arrivals in parts of the country where the labour market is strong.

2. Every child and young person must receive a good education in preschools and schools. Municipalities will be given increased support to be able to offer newly arrived children and young people a good education in preschools and schools, and the social support needed for young people to get a good start in life. Children and young people should learn Swedish quickly, alongside continuing to develop their mother tongue and subject knowledge.

3. All municipalities must take in refugees. The reception of refugees is a

national concern. All municipalities must play their part to ensure that new arrivals can establish themselves as quickly as possible. At the same time, the municipalities should be allowed better planning opportunities when new arrivals are allocated, and be given reasonable and stable economic conditions.

4. Civil society has a key role to play. Civil society already does a great deal throughout the country to help new arrivals establish themselves. Many people do what they can to give new arrivals a warm reception. This is our country at its best, and it is a way for us to stand united. For this reason, support will be given to efforts by civil society organisations to facilitate their contribution to dignified reception of refugees. This includes a wide range of activities, from contact families and sports for children to mentors from similar professional backgrounds and language cafés.

These are the starting points for the reforms that the Government will present. This also means choosing a way forward for Sweden. We will not present symbolic proposals that worsen the establishment of refugees. Instead, we will implement well-founded reforms as part of a broad establishment package, so that people who come to Sweden can use their skills and benefit from their professional experience. Together we will develop our country.



Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

“Worrying that Swedish exports are losing market shares”

Published 06 February 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Dagens Nyheter 6 februari 2015

Four challenges. Swedish exports are too EU-oriented. Too few small companies export their goods and services, and exports are too low in the value chain. In addition, we are threatened by a growing protectionism, write Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg.

Globalisation means that the economies in countries throughout the world are becoming increasingly closely interwoven. For a small, export-dependent country such as Sweden, this creates major opportunities. Exports are a linchpin of our economy; they create growth, employment and greater prosperity.

The Government’s overarching objective is to increase the number of people in employment and the number of hours worked to such an extent that we achieve the lowest unemployment in the EU by 2020. Sweden’s exports of goods and services will play a key role in how well we succeed in this.

Exports of goods are currently worth SEK 1 127 billion and exports of services are worth approximately SEK 500 billion. This corresponds to almost half of Sweden’s gross domestic product. In simple terms, we can say that around half of what we produce in Sweden is exported.

However, in view of the fact that trade is so important for Sweden’s welfare, it is worrying that it has shown weak growth. In recent years, Sweden’s GDP has been driven by consumption, not exports. Between 2000 and 2013, Sweden’s export growth was 93 per cent measured in US dollars. This can be compared with global export growth of 166 per cent.

The state of Swedish exports worries us. The figures may show a certain rise over time, but compared with other countries' export growth and looking at the prospects in the longer term, the situation is troubling. Put simply, Sweden finds itself in the foreign trade 'comfort zone'. Of Sweden's exports, 70 per cent go to the EU internal market. Trade with our closest neighbours is very significant in this regard, and it is important for our economy. But we consider that trade in the internal market needs to be supplemented so that Sweden as an export nation does not lose market shares.

We have identified four challenges for Sweden's foreign trade:

- Swedish exports do not focus enough on the new growth markets in Asia.
- Far too few small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) export their goods and services.
- Swedish exports must, to a greater extent, comprise downstream goods and services, to help create growth and jobs in Sweden.
- Protectionist tendencies in other parts of the world, not least the G20 countries, risk having a negative impact on Swedish exports.

1.

The first challenge is that Swedish exports do not focus enough on new growth markets in Asia, Africa and South America. A large proportion of current exports of goods and services go to the EU. It is natural that we export most to our neighbouring countries, but the fact that Sweden does not have much trade with other parts of the world means that we have not been able to make full use of the growth generated in the new growth countries, especially in Asia.

The fact that the economies in the EU have not picked up speed has direct consequences for Swedish export companies. Sweden would gain from increased exports to parts of the world where economies are actually growing. Up to 2020, Asia is expected to account for almost half of the world's combined economic growth.

New development trends are emerging on the horizon, with a number of growth markets growing strong and starting to pave the way for a new world order. This is not about a strict shift from west to east or from north to south; rather, it means that we will be living and working in a global economy, with more economic centres around the world. This, of course, brings with it both challenges and opportunities for Swedish companies.

2.

The second challenge is that by far too few SMEs export their goods and services. Small companies now enjoy entirely new opportunities for exports. Thanks to technological developments and internationalisation, even a small company can, with the right product, make sales on the international market. However, when it comes to the level of internationalisation among small and medium-sized enterprises in the form of foreign trade, our SMEs perform relatively well compared with the EU average, but compared with countries in our immediate neighbourhood we see that we perform less well than Germany, and substantially worse than Denmark.

Since many new jobs are created in small and medium-sized enterprises, it is extremely important that SMEs also increase their exports. Studies suggest that SMEs that start to export also increase their number of employees.

3.

The third challenge lies in the fact that too small a proportion of Swedish exports consists of goods and services high up the value chain that help create jobs and growth and thereby ensure our prosperity. The higher up the value chain our exports are, the more profitable they are. The service industries have become increasingly important for manufacturing, and help create value in processing. To ensure growth and jobs, goods and services higher up the value chain need to constitute a larger proportion of exports.

4.

The fourth challenge to Swedish exports is the increasing protectionism that we are seeing in the aftermath of the financial crisis. Sweden is a country that supports free trade and stands up for free and fair global trade. The Swedish Government believes that it is important to dismantle trade barriers, while at the same time standing up for the environment, employees' interests and people's health. The current negotiations between the EU and the United States on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) could create the world's largest regional free trade area. Together, the EU and the US account for approximately half of the world's GDP and a third of global trade flows. Once negotiated, the TTIP will serve as a model for future free trade agreements around the world. The Government's goal is to achieve as ambitious a result as possible to support growth and employment – without impairing protection of the environment, the interests of wage earners and the health of people and animals. For this reason, it is important that the TTIP is a deep and comprehensive agreement that respects democratic decisions.

Developing trade relations with other parts of the world is high on this Government's agenda. Our international visits therefore have a clear focus on increasing Sweden's exports.

Sweden cannot afford to let exports take a back seat. They are far too important for jobs and growth in our country. For this reason we are now launching a project for a new export strategy that will tackle the increasingly exciting challenges facing Swedish foreign trade. However, we do not think that a national export strategy is a matter only for politicians and officials at the Government Offices. Sweden's new export strategy will therefore be drafted in collaboration with the country's entrepreneurs. The work is now beginning, and we will be inviting representatives of all of the different business sectors to work with us to produce a strategy that will provide a boost for Swedish exports.



Government Offices of Sweden

Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the attack on Mariupol

Published 24 January 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

I condemn today's attack on the Ukrainian city of Mariupol. I extend my condolences to the families of those who were killed and to Ukraine.

This attack by the Russia-backed separatists, together with their announcement of a renewed offensive in eastern Ukraine, is highly concerning. They run counter to all commitments made and undermine efforts to find a solution to the crisis.

Together with its European Union partners, Sweden expects Russia to immediately stop its support to the separatists and use all its influence to prevent continued fighting. Further escalation would lead to a further grave deterioration of relations between the EU and Russia.



Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

“Gender equality will be a priority in the amending budget”

Published 22 January 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Dagens Nyheter 22 januari 2015

The World Economic Forum is currently taking place in Davos. One of the key issues Sweden will highlight there is the importance of greater gender equality between women and men. Sweden is, and must be, a leading country in the area of gender equality.

The Swedish Government is a feminist government. We place gender equality at the core of both national and international work. Gender equality is ultimately a question of democracy and social justice. Everyone should be free to be the person they are without being locked into gender norms. This is also part of the Government's idea of the modern welfare state. Gender equality contributes to economic growth.

Employment levels should therefore be equally high among women as they are among men. Women should be in gainful employment to the same extent as men, with a good working environment and career opportunities. The pay gap between the genders must be reduced. Everyone must have the right to work full-time and be financially independent.

But we have a long way to go. There is still a difference of SEK 3.5 million in lifetime earnings between women and men in Sweden. Women still account for the majority of unpaid work and men only take a quarter of parental insurance days. We are currently seeing a situation in which many women are forced to reduce their working hours because welfare provision is not up to standard, because staffing levels in elderly care are too low or because preschool opening hours are too inflexible.

In its budget, the Government planned major investments to reduce the

gender equality gap. We proposed major investments in increased staffing levels in elderly care so that people do not have to reduce their working hours to care for their elderly relatives, a responsibility that women often shoulder. We planned major investments in maternity care and women's health. We also raised maintenance support for single parents and we wanted to extend preschool opening times to cover unsocial working hours, so that single parents – often mothers – are able to accept the jobs that are offered and support their children. Unfortunately, the Alliance – together with the Sweden Democrats – voted against the Government's budget.

We now want to make parental insurance more gender-equal by introducing a third insurance month that is reserved for the other parent. The centre-right parties and the Sweden Democrats have so far chosen instead to continue supporting the strongly criticised child-raising allowance, despite the fact that evaluations have shown that this allowance keeps the most financially vulnerable women out of the labour market. This is a reactionary policy that is leading Sweden in completely the wrong direction.

Sweden's new Government is now moving forward in building up the world's first gender-equal central government administration, and we are attaching much greater weight to gender equality policy in the Government Offices as well. It is already clear that the new Government Offices is completely gender-equal in terms of women and men in politically appointed positions. Thanks to a conscious appointment and recruitment process, we have an equal number of women and men as ministers, state secretaries and political advisers.

A feminist government is not content merely having analysed the consequences of its political decisions; it also ensures that they lead to greater gender equality. Feminism must be a central theme running through all of the Government's policies, through all of its priorities and decisions. For this reason, we have taken the initiative to create a steering group within the Government Offices to provide all ministers with tools to ensure that a gender equality focus is reflected in all of the Government's work. We are also starting work on gender equality budgeting.

In addition, all ministries will be instructed to work on gender mainstreaming in all of their activities. This means that decisions in all policy areas must have a clear gender perspective.

A development programme for gender mainstreaming is currently under way in 18 government agencies. The lessons from this programme will now be

shared with more agencies. The Government will therefore expand this initiative to cover 41 agencies, including the Swedish Social Insurance Agency and the Swedish Tax Agency. In their appropriation directions, the agencies will report on how they plan to work on gender mainstreaming during the period 2015–2018 to help achieve the gender equality policy objectives. Each agency will describe how gender equality can be embedded in the mainstream of its regular activities, such as the agency's management processes.

Swedish gender equality efforts have served our country well. Besides being morally right, gender equality has contributed to Sweden's high levels of employment and growth. But it has not happened by itself; it is largely the result of political decisions, such as reserving the first and second months of parental benefit for fathers, and removing joint taxation.

A feminist government's ambitions for greater gender equality apply both nationally and in terms of our international cooperation. Developments in the world are moving forward. Today, we have as many girls as boys starting primary school throughout the world, the proportion of women in the world's parliaments has grown, and more women are working in sectors other than agriculture in a global perspective. This is a positive trend, but much remains to be done.

Swedish aid is to help combat the systematic subordination of women and girls in society. The absence of all forms of violence against women and girls is key to this. The Government is prioritising work to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights.

So far, it has been mainly women pursuing gender equality efforts. In recent years, however, there has been a growing awareness, both globally and in Sweden, of the role of men and boys in gender equality work. The participation of men and boys is an important part of the Government's strategic gender equality work. This is clear, for example, through our commitment to the UN campaign HeForShe.

It is our strongly held conviction that politics must continue to advance gender equality work. We want a gender equality policy that reflects the Sweden of today and everyone who lives in our country. This is not an issue that will resolve itself. The Government will therefore prioritise reforms that lead to greater gender equality in the coming Budget Bill and in the amending budget we will be presenting this spring.

Current and future generations must be met by a gender-equal society in which every individual can reach their full potential. Gender equality is not just right; it is a smart policy that creates growth and development. Half of the world's talent must have the opportunity to blossom.

Stefan Löfven, Prime Minister

Åsa Regnér, Minister for Gender Equality



Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Children come first - in Sweden and around the world

Published 20 November 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

Aftonbladet 20 november 2014 Today we are in New York, attending the 25th anniversary celebrations of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. A quarter of a century has passed since the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Since then, almost every country in the world has signed the CRC and it has become the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history.

Our new cooperation Government declared in the Statement of Government Policy that we want to make the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child law in Sweden. The rights and living conditions of children in Sweden must satisfy the requirements of the CRC and other international agreements. We are not there yet. While Swedish legislation is generally adequate, much still needs to be done to guarantee the rights enshrined in the Convention.

The new cooperation Government has therefore begun the detailed work to incorporate the CRC into Swedish law. The Convention will thereby act as a safety net for the decisions and activities affecting children. Work is already under way and we are very hopeful that there will be broad collaboration between many positive forces. Most of the parliamentary parties are very interested in being involved in the work and engagement among civil society actors is strong. It goes without saying that the work will also require the voice of children to be heard.

Children's rights are high on the agenda of the new cooperation Government. We intend to protect children's rights at local, national and global level. As children cannot choose their parents, we have a shared responsibility for all children. This gives children's rights issues a moral dimension that is far stronger than for many other issues.

This is why the Government's Budget Bill contains investments to improve conditions for the most vulnerable children. We are raising maintenance support for single parents with children, the standard for income support for parents with children between 7 and 18 years of age, and the basic level of parental insurance. Medicines for children will also be free of charge. No parent should need to choose between buying food or buying medicine.

To give every child a better childhood, we are investing heavily in preschools and schools. We are investing in more staff and smaller groups in preschools. In schools we are investing in smaller primary school classes, more special needs teachers and remedial teachers, and more resources for the schools with the greatest needs.

Children are also a priority on Sweden's international agenda. Our country is one of the largest core donors to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and reducing child mortality is an important priority in our development assistance. In the context of the negotiations on the new global sustainable development goals, the post-2015 development agenda, Sweden is pushing to ensure it will contain a child and young people's perspective.

Olof Palme once said: "As I see it, the only tangible link that we really have with the future is our children. Because it is through them that we see the future take shape. This is where our shared responsibility for the children in our society comes from. It's not a matter of my children and your children, but our children – all children. And that's why children have to come first."

If we look at children's rights through his eyes, we can see that it is not just about having a duty here and now to ensure that all children have a good upbringing. It is also about securing our common future.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment,
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ahead of UN Climate Change Conference COP26: Government intends to double climate aid by 2025

Published 13 October 2021

The world is in an acute climate crisis. The world's poorest are the least to blame but are the hardest hit. The richer countries have a special responsibility to contribute to the developing countries' climate transition. The Government therefore intends to double Swedish climate aid to SEK 15 billion by 2025.

In less than three weeks, negotiations will begin at the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow. The Conference is taking place at a critical time in world history. We are in the midst of a climate crisis, where catastrophes such as protracted droughts, violent fires and devastating floods are becoming more common. The world's poorest are the least to blame for climate change, but they are hit the hardest by its consequences. All countries must reduce their climate impact to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement, but the richer countries have a special responsibility to take the lead and contribute to the developing countries' climate transition. Sweden continues to take responsibility and the Government intends to double Swedish climate aid to SEK 15 billion by 2025.

“With today's decision on doubled climate aid, Sweden not only contributes to greater opportunities for the world's developing countries to implement the green transition, but it also sends an important message ahead of the climate negotiations in Glasgow. The developed countries must live up to

their commitments if we are to have a chance to jointly limit global emissions at the necessary pace,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The trend can be reversed, but not if we wait to take action. That is why the world must now join together to raise climate ambitions.

“By doubling its climate aid, Sweden is showing even stronger leadership on climate change. We make it possible for poor countries to reduce their emissions and make necessary climate adjustments. A doubling of Sweden’s climate aid puts pressure on other countries to contribute more. It increases the chance of achieving a breakthrough in the climate negotiations in Glasgow and thus a faster climate transition worldwide,” says Per Bolund, Minister for Environment and Climate and Deputy Prime Minister.

Swedish climate aid contributes to important investments in both reduced emissions and more climate-friendly and resilient societies in poorer parts of the world. Sweden’s increased climate aid also increases pressure on other rich countries to help fulfil the promise from 2009 of USD 100 billion per year in climate finance. More countries increasing their climate aid would improve the chances of achieving real results in the climate negotiations in Glasgow and thus increasing the pace of global climate transition.

The Government is now making a broad international effort to mobilise additional capital for climate finance and to encourage countries to adopt ambitious climate plans to reduce emissions.

“The world is in a climate crisis with major consequences for human life, health and security. Climate change affects us all, but hits those who are already vulnerable the hardest. Thanks to the Government standing by the 1 per cent goal, we can keep raising ambitions and increasing support to poor countries for climate transition and expansion of renewable energy. Sweden will be part of the solution for the world to meet the 1.5 degree Celsius goal,” says Per Olsson Fridh, Minister for International Development Cooperation.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde to attend UN General Assembly

Published 20 September 2021

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde are travelling to New York for the opening of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on 21 September 2021.

In connection with UNGA, Mr Löfven will take part in meetings on the climate crisis, work to address the global pandemic, child labour and youth issues. Mr Löfven will also meet representatives from Jewish organisations ahead of the Malmö Forum, discuss the green transition with representatives from the business sector, meet with civil society representatives and have bilateral meetings with the UN Secretary-General and other heads of state and government who are present in New York.

Ms Linde's participation will focus on Sweden's role in conflicts and crises, such as those in Yemen and Afghanistan, as well as disarmament and humanitarian issues. Ms Linde will take part in or host meetings on the women, peace and security agenda, Sweden's feminist foreign policy, democracy and gender equality/HBTQI issues. She will also have bilateral meetings with her visiting counterparts and UN representatives.

Mr Löfven and Ms Linde will also honour the victims of the terror attack on 11 September 2001.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Education and Research

Accreditation to the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism, Remember ReAct

Published 13 September 2021

On 13th of October Prime Minister Stefan Löfven is hosting the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism, Remember ReAct.

Heads of State or Government from around 50 countries, researchers, experts, representatives of civil society and social media companies have been invited to the Malmö Forum. The aim of the Malmö Forum is to jointly take concrete steps forward in the work on Holocaust remembrance and the fight against antisemitism. The programme will focus on four main themes:

- Holocaust remembrance
- Holocaust education
- Antisemitism on social media
- Combating antisemitism and other forms of racism in all spheres of life

To editorial offices

A Media Advisory is published at Media Advisory. It offers useful information about the Malmö Forum events, the services that will be available, practical information about Malmö and important programme times to consider in your planning.

Accreditation to cover the Malmö Forum is required. The deadline to apply for accreditation is on Friday 1 October 2021 and can be done at Media Accreditation.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Defence

Sweden's new Government

Published 09 July 2021

Today in the Riksdag, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven announced the ministers who will serve in the Government. The change of government will take place at a Council of State at the Royal Palace presided over by His Majesty The King. The Council of State will begin at 14.15.

Sweden's new Government consists of the Prime Minister and 21 ministers.

Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister

Stefan Löfven

Minister for EU Affairs

Hans Dahlgren

Ministry of Employment

Minister for Employment

Eva Nordmark

Minister for Gender Equality and Housing, with responsibility for urban development, anti-segregation and anti-discrimination

Märta Stenevi

Ministry of Finance

Minister for Finance

Magdalena Andersson

Minister for Public Administration

Lena Micko

Minister for Financial Markets and Deputy Minister for Finance

Åsa Lindhagen

Ministry of Defence

Minister for Defence

Peter Hultqvist

Ministry of Infrastructure

Minister for Infrastructure

Tomas Eneroth

Minister for Energy and Digital Development

Anders Ygeman

Ministry of Justice

Minister for Justice and Migration

Morgan Johansson

Minister for Home Affairs

Mikael Damberg

Ministry of Culture

Minister for Culture and Democracy, with responsibility for sport

Amanda Lind

Ministry of the Environment

Minister for Environment and Climate, and Deputy Prime Minister

Per Bolund

Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation

Ibrahim Baylan

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Minister for Health and Social Affairs

Lena Hallengren

Minister for Social Security

Ardalan Shekarabi

Ministry of Education and Research

Minister for Education

Anna Ekström

Minister for Higher Education and Research

Matilda Ernkrans

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Ann Linde

Minister for International Development Cooperation

Per Olsson Fridh

Minister for Foreign Trade and Nordic Affairs

Anna Hallberg



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive Latvian President Egils Levits

Published 18 June 2021

On Tuesday 22 June 2021, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Latvian President Egils Levits. They will discuss matters including relations between the two countries, the security situation in the neighbourhood, management of the COVID-19 pandemic and EU matters such as the rule of law.

Mr Levits is visiting Sweden in recognition of the 100th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Sweden and Latvia and to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations.

During his visit, Mr Levits will also be received at an audience with HM The King, and meet Speaker of the Riksdag Andreas Norlén.

Mr Levits will then move on to Uppsala, where he will visit Uppsala University and meet County Governor Göran Enander.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda

Published 15 June 2021

On Wednesday 16 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda. Mr Löfven and Mr Nausėda will discuss regional security and defence , current EU issues, the situation in Belarus and the Eastern Neighborhood, and relations between Sweden and Lithuania, for example with regard to investments, the business climate and people to people contacts.

Mr Nausėda is paying an official visit to Sweden to mark the 100th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Sweden and Lithuania and the 30th anniversary of their re-establishment.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive European Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius

Published 11 June 2021

On Monday 14 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive European Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries Virginijus Sinkevičius.

Mr Löfven and Commissioner Sinkevičius will discuss the European Green Deal, including forest-related issues.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive President of the Swiss Confederation Guy Parmelin

Published 11 June 2021

On Monday 14 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive President of the Swiss Confederation Guy Parmelin in Stockholm. Mr Löfven and Mr Parmelin will discuss relations between their countries, including in trade and innovation. They will also discuss relations between the EU and Switzerland and they can work even more closely together in multilateral organisations such as the UN and the OSCE.

Mr Parmelin's visit to Sweden will also include an audience with HM The King. In addition, he will meet Speaker of the Riksdag Andreas Norlén, take part in an innovation seminar at the Riksdag, and meet with Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation Ibrahim Baylan and Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans.

In connection with the meeting with the Prime Minister, a Memorandum of Understanding on innovation collaboration will be signed between Sweden's innovation agency Vinnova and its Swiss counterpart, InnoSuisse.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven in WHO meeting on strengthening global health efforts

Published 05 May 2021

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven participated in a round-table discussion on Tuesday with the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response (IPPPR).

“I expressed Sweden’s strong support for multilateral cooperation, the UN and above all the WHO in the coordination of global health efforts. We need to give the UN and the WHO a stronger mandate so that we can be better prepared for future crises. Sweden welcomes an international pandemic treaty that builds on the International Health Regulations (IHR),” says Mr Löfven.

The IPPPR had invited a number of heads of state and government to provide some insight into its upcoming final report on how the WHO has coordinated global efforts during the pandemic and how the international system for health security can be improved in order to be better prepared for future crises.

The report will be presented at the end of the month.

IPPPR Co-Chairs Helen Clark and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf led the discussion. In addition to Mr Löfven, heads of state and government from New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, Ethiopia and Rwanda, as well as Spain’s foreign minister, also participated.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to participate in WHO's independent pandemic panel on 4 May

Published 03 May 2021

On Tuesday, 4 May, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will participate in a round-table discussion with the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response (IPPPR), which was established by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The IPPPR has invited a number of heads of state and government to provide some insight into its upcoming final report into how the WHO has coordinated global efforts during the pandemic and how the international system for health security can be improved in order to stand better prepared for future crises.

The discussion will be led by Helen Clark and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in their roles as co-chairs of the IPPPR. In addition to Mr Löfven, heads of state and government from New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Ghana will also participate.

The WHO's final report will be presented at the World Health Assembly (WHA) on 24 May–1 June 2021.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

The Riksdag and the Government congratulated HM The King on his 75th birthday

Published 03 May 2021

On 30 April, First Deputy Speaker Åsa Lindestam and Prime Minister Stefan Löfven congratulated HM The King on his 75th birthday. At a reception at the Royal Palace, a gift from the Riksdag and the Government – a medallion of the King to be hung in the Riksdag Building – was presented.

“The King has not only reached the respectable age of 75, but he has also sat on the throne longer than any other Swedish monarch. It therefore feels natural that the Riksdag and the Government give a gift that is linked to his becoming King in 1973 and the close relations that exist between the Head of State and the Riksdag,” said Ms Lindestam when presenting the gift.

“On behalf of the Government, I would like to thank the King for his long and dedicated work for our country. As the Head of State now turns 75, may I say that he has successfully lived up to the motto he chose in 1973: For Sweden – With the times,” said Mr Löfven.

The gift

The gift from the Riksdag and the Government to King Carl XVI Gustaf is a plaster medallion of the King by artist Ernst Nordin (1934–). The medallion has a diameter of 65 centimetres and is edged with classic beading.

The medallion was made by Herman Bergman Konstgjuteri AB in cooperation with Ernst Nordin. It is to hang together with the medallion of

King Gustaf VI Adolf already hanging in the Riksdag. When this medallion needed to be moved following renovations, the idea arose of complementing it with one representing King Carl XVI Gustaf.

For more information

Pernilla Eldblom, Press Secretary to the Speaker,
telephone +46 72 209 59 14,
email pernilla.eldblom@riksdagen.se

Maria Soläng, Press Secretary to Prime Minister Stefan Löfven,
telephone +46 72 206 19 47,
email maria.solang@regeringskansliet.se



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on virtual visit to Singapore

Published 29 March 2021

On Monday 29 March, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven is on a virtual visit to Singapore.

The visit includes talks with Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Hsien Loong, an event to promote international sustainable investments in Sweden and a meeting with world-leading Swedish enterprises in Singapore and South-East Asia.

The aim is to strengthen bilateral trade and investment exchange between Sweden and Singapore as part of building more sustainable and resilient societies after the pandemic. Cooperation areas such as smart cities, 5G, technical solutions for financial services, health and medical care of the future, and artificial intelligence are some of the topics up for discussion.

“I look forward to my virtual visit to Singapore and discussions with Prime Minister Lee, the world-leading enterprises on the ground and various investors. An important part of building sustainable and resilient societies after the pandemic is strengthening the green trade and investment exchange. Sweden and Singapore have strong common interests in this area,” says Mr Löfven.

Singapore is an important financial and commercial hub in South-East Asia. There are currently more than 200 Swedish enterprises in the country. In addition to the close collaboration between industry and trade, Singapore’s importance as an investor in Sweden in both enterprises and through funds has grown in recent years. The exchange is of great importance for jobs, enterprises and growth in Sweden, such as 5G contracts for Ericsson and purchases of buses and transport vehicles from Volvo and Scania.

Regional developments, including the very troubling situation in Myanmar, democracy issues, joint support for free trade and multilateralism – including in the framework of the collaboration between the EU and the regional organisation ASEAN – will also be discussed.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Congratulations from the Prime Minister

Published 26 March 2021 Updated 29 March 2021

“My warmest congratulations to Princess Sofia, Prince Carl Philip and their sons Prince Alexander and Prince Gabriel on the addition of their newest family member today. I am delighted that everything went well and wish the family all the best,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Digital summit between Swedish Prime Minister Löfven and Indian Prime Minister Modi

Published 05 March 2021

On Friday 5 March, Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will participate in a digital summit with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

“I look forward to tomorrow’s summit with India – not least the discussions on how we can strengthen cooperation to combat the pandemic and build more resilient, sustainable and gender equal societies after COVID-19. We will present a series of initiatives on themes such as climate change, innovation and coordinated health efforts,” says Mr Löfven.

The summit will therefore focus particularly on innovation, environmental technologies and coordinated health efforts, in addition to a range of new joint initiatives that will be presented. Swedish-Indian cooperation in these areas will be deepened within the scope of the action plan and innovation partnership established at the 2018 summit, when Mr Modi visited Stockholm.

Climate cooperation will be strengthened within the Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT) that Mr Löfven and Mr Modi launched during the UN summit in New York in 2019. LeadIT pushes for climate transition in heavy and energy-intensive industries – a collaboration that an increasing number of countries and businesses are joining.

India plays an important role in the global arena. Regional development and our cooperation in support of international peace, security and multilateralism – including within the UN and together with the EU – will be discussed during the meeting.

India is also an important economic partner for Sweden and opportunities to strengthen trade, exports and investments will be discussed further. India is one of the world's fastest-growing economies and the exchange between our countries is very important for jobs, businesses and growth in Sweden.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Finance, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government reshuffle, 5 February 2021

Published 05 February 2021

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven today announced a government reshuffle. Two new ministers have been appointed, and two ministers have been given revised areas of responsibility. Minister Isabella Lövin is leaving her post.

Newly appointed ministers

Ministry of Employment

Minister for Gender Equality and Housing, with responsibility for urban development, anti-segregation and anti-discrimination: Märta Stenevi

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for International Development Cooperation: Per Olsson Fridh

Ministers with revised areas of responsibility

Ministry of Finance

Minister for Financial Markets and Deputy Minister for Finance: Åsa Lindhagen

Ministry of the Environment

Minister for Environment and Climate: Per Bolund



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Research

Swedish Holocaust Museum to be established

Published 27 January 2021

Today, 27 January, on Holocaust Remembrance Day, the Government has announced that a Swedish Holocaust museum is to be established in July 2022 and will be located in Stockholm.

The Statement of Government Policy presented by Stefan Löfven in the Riksdag in January 2019 announced that a new museum would be established to preserve and perpetuate the memory of the Holocaust. The museum will be established in 2022 and it will be located in Stockholm to make it easier for school pupils and the general public from around the country to visit.

“I have promised survivors to do what I can as Prime Minister for Holocaust remembrance and combating antisemitism today. The Swedish Holocaust museum and the international forum in Malmö later this year are part of those efforts,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

“Collecting testimonies and accounts of historical events is part of remembering and honouring those who died and ensuring that the Holocaust is never forgotten. A museum that compiles the names and accounts of survivors will become part of the cultural heritage that we preserve together for the future,” says Minister for Culture and Democracy Amanda Lind.

“This museum will fulfil so many important aims. It is a place for remembrance, but also a place where future generations can learn about what undemocratic forces and phenomena such as antisemitism, conspiracy theories and polarisation can lead to. We must all learn from history,” says Minister for Education Anna Ekström.

The Government will soon task the relevant museums agency with establishing the museum. Integrating it into an existing agency should ensure a streamlined process while maintaining a high standard.

The Holocaust museum should collaborate with many key actors, such as county museums and local museums, both to facilitate involvement of the country's entire population in the activities and because the accounts, testimonies, objects and places connected to the Holocaust are found throughout the country.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Central role for environment and climate in this year's Human Development Report

Published 16 December 2020

Today, Sweden will co-host the global launch of the UN flagship project, the Human Development Report. This year's report highlights how economic and human development can occur and be promoted in a way that does not come at the expense of the planet's resources.

In addition, an upgraded version of the widely recognised Human Development Index will be presented, which this year also includes environmental and climate indicators in its calculation of countries' prosperity. Sweden is ranked 6th in the updated index and 7th in the traditional index.

The report will be launched virtually this year, which means everyone will have the opportunity to follow it live at 18.30.

You can register [here](#).

“I am delighted to launch the UN's 30th Human Development Report. The report not only reflects countries' actions to create prosperity for their citizens but also their actions in relation to the strain on our planet. It is right and courageous of the UN and I welcome it,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The Prime Minister will participate in the launch ceremony, as will HRH Crown Princess Victoria via a pre-recorded video message.

Minister for International Development Cooperation Peter Eriksson will speak at the launch.

“The UN is now taking an important step by including the climate and the environment in the report’s index. It is gratifying that Sweden has achieved such a high ranking, but we all have much more to do. A green transition is needed and Sweden is proud to support developing countries in making this transition,” says Mr Eriksson.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Research

Sweden to lead the work of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

Published 04 December 2020

Sweden has been entrusted with holding the Presidency of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) – an intergovernmental organisation to promote Holocaust education, research and remembrance – from 1 March 2022 until 28 February 2023. The decision was taken at the IHRA's digital plenary meeting in Leipzig on 3 December 2020.

“I have promised survivors to do what I can as Prime Minister – and as a human being – for Holocaust remembrance and combating antisemitism today. I intend to keep that promise. The Presidency of the IHRA, the Malmö Forum and the coming museum about Sweden and the Holocaust are all important parts of these efforts,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

“Even though history has shown us what the ultimate consequences of antisemitism, antiziganism and racism can be, they still exist in all parts of society. Sweden must set an example and do all it can to prevent something similar from happening again. Remembering is also about learning from history,” says Minister for Culture and Democracy Amanda Lind.

The IHRA, which Sweden helped found in 2000 through the Stockholm Declaration, consists of 34 member countries and a number of organisations.

One central priority of the Swedish Presidency will be to follow up on the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating

Antisemitism on 13–14 October 2021, which Mr Löfven will host.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Media invitation: Prime Minister Löfven to receive Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez at Harpsund on 14–15 July 2020

Published 15 July 2020 Updated 15 July 2020

On 14–15 July, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez for talks at Harpsund. Prime Minister Löfven and Prime Minister Sánchez will discuss issues of mutual concern and current EU affairs (updated).

Media programme Wednesday 15 July

Approx. 8.30

Photo opportunity

10.10 (confirmed time) Brief press conference with the two prime ministers. Language: English.

Due to the prevailing circumstances, the number of journalists and photographers will be limited. Please note that no press centre facilities will be available and technical equipment will be limited.

The press conference will be webcast live on [government.se](https://www.government.se)

Advanced registration with media contact person Frédérique Claise is required by 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday 14 July.

More detailed information will be sent to the journalists and photographers who are granted admission.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

New date for the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism

Published 26 June 2020

The Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism will take place in Malmö on 13–14 October 2021. The Forum has been postponed one year due to the unfortunate circumstances of the current pandemic.

In January 2020 Prime Minister Stefan Löfven extended an invitation to heads of state and government, researchers, experts and civil society representatives from around 50 countries to participate in the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism in October 2020. Due to the unfortunate circumstances of the current pandemic the Forum was postponed one year and will take place in Malmö on 13–14 October 2021 instead. Recent developments have made it evident that the work on Holocaust remembrance and combating antisemitism and other forms of racism is as important as ever and must be strengthened. The purpose of the Forum is to jointly take concrete steps forward in the work on Holocaust remembrance and the fight against antisemitism.

For more information please visit:

<https://www.government.se/rememberreact>



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Education and Research

The Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven postpones the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism

Published 06 May 2020

The world is facing a new, and severe, challenge. The spread of the new coronavirus and COVID-19 is challenging our countries. We are all working to fight the pandemic and its effects. Due to this, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven has announced that the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism 2020 has been postponed.

In January 2020 Prime Minister Stefan Löfven extended an invitation to heads of state and government, researchers, experts and civil society representatives from around 50 countries to participate in the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism in October 2020. The purpose of the Forum is to jointly take concrete steps forward in the work on Holocaust remembrance and the fight against antisemitism.

Due to the unfortunate circumstances of the current pandemic Prime Minister Stefan Löfven has announced that the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism 2020 has been postponed. The invitation still stands and the Forum in Malmö will take place

in the autumn of 2021. The exact date will be communicated in the near future.

– The commitment of the Swedish Government to strengthening the work on Holocaust remembrance, to combating antisemitism and other forms of racism and to international cooperation in this field remains as strong as ever. In order for us to give full focus to these issues we see a need for postponing the Malmö Forum, says Stefan Löfven.

– In the wake of this global crisis we are seeing signs of increased antisemitism and other forms of racism, the spread of conspiracy theories and misinformation. This is very unfortunate and shows that the work against antisemitism and other forms of racism must continue, says Minister for Education Anna Ekström.

Planning of the Forum will continue, and the Swedish Government is looking forward to welcoming the invitees to Malmö next year. More information on the programme, as well as practical information will be shared with all invitees at a later date.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Postponed: Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Minister for Foreign Trade and Nordic Affairs Anna Hallberg to visit South Africa

Published 26 February 2020

The Prime Minister's visit to South Africa on 8–10 March has been postponed because he needs to remain in Sweden to effectively and closely lead the Government's work concerning COVID-19. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will visit South Africa on 8–10 March. Minister for Foreign Trade and Nordic Affairs Anna Hallberg and a Swedish business delegation will also take part in the visit.

During the visit, Mr Löfven will meet South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa for bilateral talks. Mr Löfven and Mr Ramaphosa will take part in the tenth Binational Commission (BNC) between South Africa and Sweden. The BNC was established in 1999 as a forum for dialogue on common issues within politics, the economy, education, research, the environment, the climate and water, as well as human rights and culture.

Sweden and South Africa have a close relationship and the country is Sweden's largest trade partner in southern Africa. South Africa is a key regional actor and an important partner in the work to address global challenges, not least in the United Nations and this year when the country is Chair of the African Union. Topics for discussion during the visit include cooperation in trade and investment, global challenges, the labour market, the environment and climate, energy, research and culture.

For more information about the programme, please contact Press Secretary Gösta Brunnander.

Please send the mandatory notification of attendance to Press Assistant Frédérique Claise.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven to attend commemoration of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau

Published 16 January 2020

On Monday 27 January 2020, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will attend a memorial ceremony at Auschwitz-Birkenau to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the concentration and extermination camp.

The memorial will begin at 15.30 at Auschwitz and conclude with a candle lighting ceremony at 17.30 at Birkenau.

In addition to Mr Löfven, Swedish participation will include Crown Princess Victoria, Speaker of the Riksdag Andreas Norlén and survivors of the Holocaust.

Special media accreditation is required.

More information and an accreditation form is available [here](#)

Please note that the last day for registration is Sunday 19 January 2020. Please contact Frédérique Claise at the Press Department at the Prime Minister's Office, who will be happy to answer any questions about the accreditation process before you submit the accreditation form.

For more information about the programme, please contact Press Secretary Maria Soläng.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven to receive Estonian Prime Minister Jüri Ratas

Published 16 January 2020

On Friday 17 January, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Estonian Prime Minister Jüri Ratas. The two heads of government will discuss current issues of concern to our countries. These include bilateral issues between Estonia and Sweden as well as topical issues and EU issues, such as Brexit and the Eastern Partnership. Since Estonia is coordinating Nordic-Baltic cooperation this year, these matters will also be taken up.

Media programme

15.30 Photo opportunity when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Prime Minister Jüri Ratas at the entrance of Adelcrantz House.

Talks begin in the meeting room. Photo opportunity.

Photographers enter via the Kopparporten entrance, Rödbodgatan 6, 14.45–15.15.

Please present your press credentials.

Registration is required. Please contact Nina Kefi.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven in telephone call with Iraq's acting Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi

Published 13 January 2020

On Monday evening, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven spoke with Iraq's acting Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi about the latest developments in the region. Prime Minister Löfven conveyed Sweden's full support for Iraq's sovereignty and stability.

Prime Minister Löfven underscored the importance of the Global Coalition against Daesh and the common fight against terrorism. He particularly emphasised the importance of the Global Coalition's efforts to prevent Daesh regaining strength and to ensure international peace and security.

Prime Minister Löfven expressed his deep concern over the missile attacks against military bases in Iraq, where Swedish military personnel are also based, and underscored that all attacks against international troops must be condemned.

Lastly, Prime Minister Löfven emphasised the need for regional dialogue to support de-escalation and political solutions.

For more information



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to participate in memorial ceremony in Jerusalem to honour the victims of the Holocaust

Published 13 January 2020

On 22–23 January, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will visit Jerusalem to participate in the World Holocaust Forum to honour the victims of the Holocaust and commemorate the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The memorial ceremony will take place on 23 January at Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust remembrance centre.

During his visit to Jerusalem, the Prime Minister will also meet representatives from Jewish civil society. Discussions will centre on remembrance of the Holocaust and the work against antisemitism – issues that will be the focus of the forum to be hosted by the Prime Minister in Malmö in October 2020.

Please note that the World Holocaust Forum will not be open to the media, but the event may be followed from the press centre. Yad Vashem will hold a tour for journalists ahead of the event. Special media accreditation is required. Registration must be completed by 15 January.

More on the Yad Vashem website

For more information about the programme, please contact Press Secretary Maria Soläng.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Trade to visit South Korea

Published 12 December 2019 Updated 13 December 2019

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will visit the Republic of Korea (South Korea) on 18–20 December. Minister for Foreign Trade and Nordic Affairs Anna Hallberg and a large Swedish business delegation will also take part in the visit.

During the visit, Mr Löfven will meet President of the Republic of Korea Moon Jae-in and Prime Minister Lee Nak-yeon. During their talks, they will discuss issues including trade and investment, social dialogue and gender equality, and nuclear disarmament. They will also discuss how efforts to promote a peaceful solution to the situation on the Korean Peninsula can be moved forward.

Sweden has a long-standing engagement on the Korean Peninsula, and discussions will also focus on how ties between Sweden and the Republic of Korea can be further strengthened. The Republic of Korea is Asia's fourth largest economy and Sweden's third largest trading partner in Asia. Increased trade and investments in both directions will strengthen jobs and growth in Sweden.

On 18 December, Mr Löfven will take part in the Sweden-Korea Business Summit. He will also speak at the National Assembly and meet National Assembly Speaker Moon Hee-sang. In addition, Mr Löfven will highlight Sweden's humanitarian support during the Korean War.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

The Prime Minister receives Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali

Published 09 December 2019 Updated 09 December 2019

On Monday 9 December, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali. They will discuss Ethiopia's reform efforts and enhanced cooperation between Sweden and Ethiopia on bilateral and multilateral issues.

Tid: 9 december 2019 at 12.00

Plats: Adelcrantzska House

Prime Minister Abiy has been awarded the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize for “his efforts to achieve peace and international cooperation, and in particular for his decisive initiative to resolve the border conflict with neighbouring Eritrea.” Following the visit to Stockholm, Prime Minister Abiy will continue to Oslo for the Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony.

Media programme

12.00 Photo opportunity when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali at the entrance of Adelcrantzska House.

Talks begin in the meeting room.

Photo opportunity.

Photographers enter via Kopparporten, Rödbodgatan 6, between **11.15 and 11.45**.

Please present your press credentials.

Registration is required. Please contact Nina Kefi.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to receive North Macedonian Prime Minister Zoran Zaev

Published 14 November 2019 Updated 14 November 2019

On Friday 15 November, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive North Macedonian Prime Minister Zoran Zaev. Mr Löfven and Mr Zaev will discuss matters including North Macedonia's reform efforts and negotiations with the EU.

Media programme

10.00 Photo opportunity when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Prime Minister Zoran Zaev at the entrance of Adelcrantz House.

Photographers enter via Kopparporten, Rödbodgatan 6, between 09.15 and 09.45.

Please present your press credentials.

Registration is required. Please contact Nina Kefi.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to receive Portuguese Prime Minister António Costa

Published 14 November 2019

On Thursday 14 November, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Portugal's Prime Minister Antonio Costa. Mr Löfven and Mr Costa will primarily discuss current EU issues, including the EU's long-term budget, social issues and the preparations for the Portuguese Presidency of the EU.

Media programme

19.30 Photo opportunity when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Prime Minister António Costa at the entrance of Sager House.

Photographers enter via Kopparporten, Rödbodgatan 6, between 18.30 and 19.00.

Please present your press credentials.

Registration is required. Please contact Nina Kefi.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to receive Finnish Prime Minister Antti Rinne

Published 14 November 2019 Updated 14 November 2019

On Friday 15 November, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Finnish Prime Minister Antti Rinne. The two prime ministers will discuss current EU issues, including the negotiations on the EU's long-term budget. New version – please note the change of time.

Media programme

18.45 Photo opportunity when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Prime Minister Antti Rinne at the entrance of Sager House.

Photographers enter via Kopparporten, Rödbodgatan 6, between 17.45 and 18.15.

Please present your press credentials.

Registration is required. Please contact Nina Kefi.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive President-elect of the European Council Charles Michel

Published 06 November 2019 Updated 06 November 2019

On Thursday 7 November, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive President-elect of the European Council Charles Michel. Mr Löfven and Mr Michel will discuss current issues on the European Council's agenda, such as Brexit, the multiannual budget and migration.

Media programme

14.45 Photo opportunity when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives President-elect of the European Council Charles Michel at the entrance of Adelcrantzska House.

Talks begin in the meeting room.
Photo pool.

Photographers enter via the Kopparporten entrance, Rödbodgatan 6, 14.00-14.30.

15.50 Press conference with Prime Minister Löfven and President-elect of the European Council Charles Michel.
Language: English.

Enter via the Kopparporten entrance, Rödbodgatan 6, 15.00–15.30.

Please present your press credentials.

Registration is required. Please contact Nina Kefi.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to receive Ireland's Taoiseach Leo Varadkar

Published 02 October 2019 Updated 02 October 2019

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Ireland's Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Leo Varadkar on Thursday 3 October. Mr Löfven and Mr Varadkar will discuss issues surrounding Brexit, as well as current bilateral and EU issues.

Media programme

13.00: Photo opportunity as Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Taoiseach Leo Varadkar at the entrance of Adelcrantz House.

Photographers enter via Kopparporten, Rödbodgatan 6, between 12.15 and 12.45.

14.30: Press conference with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Taoiseach Leo Varadkar.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rödbodgatan 6, between 13.45 and 14.15.

Please present your press credentials.

Registration is required. Please contact Nina Kefi.



Press release from Ministry of the Environment

Sweden launches global leadership group to reduce industry emissions

Published 24 September 2019

Sweden and India have launched a global leadership group to push the climate transition in heavy industry. The initiative was presented by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven during the UN Climate Action Summit in New York.

- Substantially reducing emissions from heavy industry is crucial if we are to be able to attain the goals of the Paris Agreement. In Sweden, we have come a long way in our industry transition, and co-leading this work gives us the opportunity to share our experiences and help accelerate the transition, says Mr Löfven.

The leadership group has been developed in cooperation with the World Economic Forum and will gather both private and public actors. The countries and companies that join the group must be ready to substantially raise and pursue efforts to reach net-zero carbon emissions by mid-century. This will be guaranteed through a series of ambitious commitments that the members of the leadership group must support. The leadership group will also work to promote innovation and technology exchange, and share experiences of how governments, academic institutions and businesses can cooperate to push the transition. The group will have regular meetings to report on progress and share experiences, including in connection with the UN's climate negotiations.

- Only by working together can we solve the climate challenge. This is how we are working on industry transition in Sweden, and this is an opportunity

to share this cooperation throughout the world. Industry transition is crucial to stopping climate change, says Minister for Environment and Climate, and Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin.

In addition to Sweden and India, Argentina, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, South Korea and the United Kingdom have joined the group. Several international companies have also joined, including Indian Dalmia Cement and the German steel group ThyssenKrupp. Among the Swedish companies in the leadership group are Scania, which is conducting a project to develop fossil-free heavy goods vehicle transports and SSAB, LKAB and Vattenfall, which, through their jointly owned company HYBRIT, are conducting a project to make steel without using coking coal.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment,
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government to take part in opening of UN General Assembly 17–30 September

Published 20 September 2019

Next week, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Minister for Environment and Climate, and Deputy Prime Minister, Isabella Lövin, Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde and Minister for International Development Cooperation Peter Eriksson will travel to New York for the opening of the UN General Assembly.

Sweden's priorities during the week are to stand up for international cooperation with focus on the UN, work to tackle the challenge of climate change, intensify implementation of the 2030 Agenda and contribute to finding solutions to conflicts and humanitarian crises, such as those in Yemen, Venezuela and Syria. The week is also an opportunity to highlight democracy and gender equality issues, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, and to continue work on disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Prime Minister Löfven will attend the opening of the General Assembly, take part in the Climate Action Summit where Sweden is co-chair of the industry track, and take part in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Summit. He will also attend an event celebrating the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In addition, Mr Löfven will take part in a roundtable discussion with US business executives and a conference entitled 'The Future of Work'.

Ms Lövin will take part in the Climate Action Summit, the Sustainable

Development Goals (SDG) Summit and the high-level meeting on universal health coverage. Ms Lövin will be in New York on 20–25 September.

Ms Linde will take part in the opening of the General Assembly, a high -level event on climate and security and a high-level meeting on the elimination of nuclear weapons (Article IV, Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty). Ms Linde will also co-host a meeting on the situation in Yemen. In addition, she will host a meeting on women, peace and leadership and, together with South Korea, co-organise the annual dinner for female foreign ministers. Ms Linde will deliver Sweden's address in the General Assembly. Ms Linde will be in New York on 22–28 September.

Mr Eriksson will take part in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Summit, the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development and the High-level Review of the SAMOA Pathway, as well as meetings on Afghanistan, Somalia and Syria. In addition, his programme will focus on humanitarian issues, climate financing, women's rights, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. Mr Eriksson will be in New York on 23–27 September.

All the ministers will also take part in a number of bilateral meetings with counterparts from other countries and UN representatives.

For more information and detailed programmes, please contact the relevant minister's press secretary.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive Polish Prime Minister

Published 26 August 2019 Updated 28 August 2019

(New version) On Thursday 29 August, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki. The two heads of government will discuss bilateral cooperation between Sweden and Poland, current EU issues, the future of the EU and the security situation in the Baltic Sea region.

They will also discuss the EU's Eastern Partnership, democracy issues and global challenges including environment and climate change.

Media programme

14.30 Photo opportunity as Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki at the entrance of Adelcrantz House.

Talks begin in the meeting room.

Photo pool.

Photographers enter via the Kopparporten entrance, Rödbodgatan 6, 13.30–14.00.

15.50 Press conference with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki.

Languages: English, Polish

Enter via Kopparporten, Rödbodgatan 6, 15.00–15.30.

Please present your press credentials.

Registration is required. Please contact Nina Kefi.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Employment

Sweden nominates Ylva Johansson as new European Commissioner

Published 09 August 2019

The Government has decided to nominate Ylva Johansson, Minister for Employment and one of Sweden's most experienced ministers, as the new Swedish European Commissioner.

“Ylva Johansson is highly competent and has extensive experience of government, EU work in the Council of the European Union and dealings with the European Commission. She has a strong sense of commitment and will contribute to an effective Commission,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven in a comment.

Mr Löfven will discuss the policy issues Ms Johansson will be responsible for in the European Commission with President-elect Ursula von der Leyen, who will take the decision in the near future.

The new Commission will take office on 1 November. Mr Löfven will announce when Ms Johansson will leave her post as Minister for Employment in the Swedish Government at a later date.

“I am very pleased and honoured by the confidence the Government has shown in me through this nomination as European Commissioner for Sweden. The new European Commission has a major task in moving the EU's work forward on climate issues and for more jobs, fundamental European values and security. The role of European Commissioner involves considering the interests of the entire EU, at the same time as I will contribute my experience from Swedish politics,” says Ms Johansson.

Ylva Johansson has a background as a mathematics and physics teacher, and has been Minister for Employment since 2014. In all, Ms Johansson has held ministerial posts for 11 years under three different prime ministers since 1994. She was born in 1964, is married and has three children.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive Latvian Prime Minister Krisjanis Karins

Published 25 June 2019

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven is scheduled to receive Latvian Prime Minister Krišjānis Kariņš on Thursday 27 June.

The two heads of government will discuss current EU issues such as high-level appointments to EU institutions, the next long-term EU budget and the future of the European Union.

Press programme

15.00 Photo opportunity when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Prime Minister Krišjānis Kariņš at the entrance of Adelcrantzska House.

Photographers enter via Kopparporten, Rödbodgatan 6, between 14.15 and 14.45.

16.00 Press conference with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Prime Minister Krišjānis Kariņš.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rödbodgatan 6, between 15.15 and 15.45.

Please present your press credentials. Registration is required. Please contact Nina Kefi.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive the President of the Republic of Korea

Published 07 June 2019

As part of the State Visit of the Republic of Korea on 14–15 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive President Moon Jae-in for talks in Saltsjöbaden.

Tid: 15 juni 2019 at 08:55 to 11:00

Plats: Grand Hôtel, Saltsjöbaden

The Republic of Korea is Asia's fourth largest economy and one of the world's most innovative countries. It is also Sweden's third largest export market in the region. Sweden and the Republic of Korea enjoy excellent relations and there is great potential for deeper cooperation, including in innovation, research, digital transformation and the creative industries. There is also potential for expanded cooperation on social welfare and labour market issues. President Moon's social reform agenda is guided by a vision that resembles the Swedish welfare model, and Sweden's experiences in the areas of social insurance, family policy and gender equality will be discussed.

Foreign and security policy issues and cooperation in multilateral forums will also be discussed. In conjunction with the visit, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President Moon will also take part in the Sweden-Korea Business Summit.

Invitation to photo opportunities and press

conference

Date and time: Saturday 15 June, 8.55–11.00

Venue: Grand Hôtel Saltsjöbaden

Please note: All journalists and photographers are required to pass through a security check at Kopparporten, Rosenbad, before group transfer to Saltsjöbaden. No individual transfers are permitted.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rödbodgatan 6, 6.50–07.20,
for group transfer by bus to Saltsjöbaden.

Programme

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives President Moon Jae-in at Grand Hôtel Saltsjöbaden.

Photo opportunity on arrival

Tête-à-tête (outdoors, weather permitting).

Photo pool

Talks begin.

Photo pool – meeting room

Press conference

Participation requires accreditation from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs International Press Centre. Applications close on Wednesday 12 June at 12.00.

Accreditation application



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Malmö to host conference on combating antisemitism and remembrance of the Holocaust

Published 24 May 2019

(New version) Prime Minister Stefan Löfven announced today that the Government will hold the conference in Malmö on 26–27 October 2020. The aim of the conference is to counter and combat antisemitism, and pass on the memory of the Holocaust.

The basis of the conference is the Holocaust and its remembrance. It will be a meeting place for experts and decision-makers from all over the world. The Stockholm Declaration, which was adopted at the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust in 2000 – a conference on education, remembrance and research – is an important source of inspiration for the conference.

“With this conference, we continue our important work to combat antisemitism. Wherever antisemitism exists, and whatever form it takes, it must be exposed and combated. I am pleased that the City of Malmö wants to take on this task together with the Government,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

Malmö and Skåne have a special historical link to the Holocaust. Jews who fled across the Öresund strait during the Second World War came to Malmö. This was where Folke Bernadotte’s White Buses of survivors from the concentration camps were received. Many of them stayed in Malmö for the rest of their lives.

In the Statement of Government Policy on 21 January, Mr Löfven stated that Swedish young people would be given the opportunity to visit Holocaust

memorial sites in Europe. Work is under way on a new museum to preserve and pass on the memory of the Holocaust.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive Vietnam's Prime Minister

Published 22 May 2019

On Monday 27 May, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Vietnam's Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc in Stockholm.

On Monday 27 May, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Vietnam's Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc in Stockholm.

Vietnam's Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc is visiting Sweden to mark 50 years of diplomatic relations between Sweden and Vietnam. The delegation led by Prime Minister Phuc includes political representatives and representatives of the Vietnamese business sector.

Discussions will focus on bilateral cooperation between Sweden and Vietnam. There is great potential to further develop these relations. Vietnam's rapid economic development, major investment needs and strategic location in South-East Asia mean that trade and investment have become key elements of the relations. There are good prospects of further deepening the commercial exchange between the countries when the free trade agreement between the EU and Vietnam enters into force. Cooperation in multilateral forums will be discussed, including free trade, the rules-based international order and the 2030 Agenda. Issues concerning working conditions, gender equality and human rights will also be discussed.

During his visit to Sweden, Prime Minister Phuc will attend the Sweden-Vietnam Business Forum, together with Prime Minister Löfven, and also visit companies in Södertälje, Märsta and Kista. Prime Minister Phuc will have an audience with HM The King and meet the Speaker of the Riksdag in connection with a lunch at the Riksdag.

Invitation to photo opportunities

Date and time: Monday 27 May at 11.00

Place: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs torg 1

Photographers may enter via the Kopparporten entrance at Rödbodgatan 6 between 10.10 and 10.30

Prime Minister Löfven receives Prime Minister Phuc outside the entrance to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Photo opportunity on arrival.

Greetings in the entrance to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Photo pool

Tête-à-tête

Photo pool

Discussions begin.

Photo pool – meeting room.

Lunch will follow the discussions.

Advance registration and/or application for a place in the photo pool is required. Please contact Nina Kefi by 14.00 Thursday 23 May.

Other programme points

Monday 27 May

Sweden-Vietnam Business Forum

Prime Minister Phuc and Prime Minister Löfven attend the Sweden-Vietnam Business Forum, where Prime Minister Löfven will give the opening address followed by a speech by Prime Minister Phuc.

Visit to Astra Zeneca

Prime Minister Phuc visits Astra Zeneca in Södertälje in the afternoon.

Audience at the Royal Palace

Prime Minister Phuc has an audience with HM The King.

Tuesday 28 May

Visit to Ericsson

Prime Minister Phuc visits Ericsson in Kista in the morning.

Lunch with the Speaker of the Riksdag

Speaker of the Riksdag Andreas Norlén hosts a lunch.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to attend International Arctic Forum in St Petersburg

Published 27 March 2019

On 9 April, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will take part in the International Arctic Forum in St Petersburg. The theme of this year's Forum is sustainable growth in the Arctic region.

The Government is pursuing an active policy in this region, particularly on issues linked to climate change, and the Forum provides an important opportunity for political dialogue with Russia and other participating countries on environmental issues and other Arctic issues. Several Nordic countries will have high-level representatives at the Forum, including Norway's Prime Minister Erna Solberg.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will have a bilateral meeting with President Vladimir Putin in connection with the Forum.

Accreditation is required.

If you require more information or have questions about accreditation, please contact Press Secretary Gösta Brunnander.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release

The ministers' press contacts

Published 22 January 2019

Here are the contact details for the ministers' press secretaries.

Prime Minister's Office

Press secretaries to Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

Ingela Nilsson

Mobile telephone: +46 72 551 41 16

Jonatan Holst

Mobile telephone: +46 72 227 85 35

Press Secretary to Minister for EU Affairs Hans Dahlgren

Dan Lundqvist Dahlin

Mobile telephone: +46 72 553 66 29

Ministry of Employment

Press Secretary to Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson

Natalie Sial

Mobile telephone: +46 72 520 54 49

Press Secretary to Minister for Gender Equality, with responsibility for anti-discrimination and anti-segregation, Åsa Lindhagen

Martin Kling

Mobile telephone: +46 70 539 57 29

Ministry of Finance

Press Secretary to Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson

Gösta Brunnander

Mobile telephone: +46 72 544 28 66

Press Secretary to Minister for Financial Markets and Housing, Deputy Minister for Finance, Per Bolund

Hanna Hessling

Mobile telephone: +46 72 557 38 01

Press Secretary to Minister for Public Administration Ardalan Shekarabi

Matilda Malmqvist Glas

Mobile telephone: +46 70 367 03 64

Ministry of Defence

Press Secretary to Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist

Maja Zachrisson

Mobile telephone: +46 70 219 81 64

Ministry of Infrastructure

Press Secretary to Minister for Infrastructure Tomas Eneroth

Karin Röding Boman

Mobile telephone: +46 76 116 65 62

Press Secretary to Minister for Energy and Digital

Development Anders Ygeman

Fredrik Persson

Mobile telephone: +46 72 454 55 09

Ministry of Justice

Press Secretary to Minister for Justice Morgan Johansson

Sofie Rudh

Mobile telephone: +46 72 545 74 21

Press Secretary to Minister for Home Affairs Mikael
Damberg

Miriam Abu Eid

Mobile telephone: +46 72 216 95 65

Ministry of Culture

Press Secretary to Minister for Culture and Democracy, with
responsibility for sport, Amanda Lind

Anna Söderström

Mobile telephone: +46 72 532 17 13

Ministry of the Environment

Press secretaries to Minister for Environment and Climate,
and Deputy Prime Minister, Isabella Lövin

Jakob Lundgren

Mobile telephone: +46 72 206 08 92

Kristoffer Talltorp

Mobile telephone: +46 72 542 80 32

Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

Press Secretary to Minister for Enterprise and Innovation
Ibrahim Baylan

Sami Mashial

Mobile telephone: +46 76 144 17 03

Press Secretary to Minister for Rural Affairs Jennie Nilsson

Maria Soläng

Mobile telephone: +46 72 206 19 47

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Press Secretary to Minister for Health and Social Affairs
Lena Hallengren

Jens Petersen

Mobile telephone: +46 70 293 69 35

Press Secretary to Minister for Social Security Annika
Strandhäll

Victor Harju

Mobile telephone: +46 72 504 36 70

Ministry of Education and Research

Press secretaries to Minister for Education Anna Ekström

Natalie Sial

Mobile telephone: +46 72 520 54 49

Tora Heckscher

Mobile telephone: +46 72 233 84 39

Press Secretary to Minister for Higher Education and
Research Matilda Ernkrans

Daniel Ferreira

Mobile telephone: +46 76 135 56 92

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press Secretary to Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström

Isabel Lundin

Mobile telephone: +46 76 296 46 38

Press Secretary to Minister for International Development Cooperation Peter Eriksson

Hanna Hessling

Mobile telephone: +46 72 55 738 07

Press Secretary to Minister for Foreign Trade, with responsibility for Nordic affairs, Ann Linde

Joanna Abrahamsson

Mobile telephone: +46 72 543 84 89



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Finance, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Government Offices

New state secretaries at the Government Offices

Published 22 January 2019

The Government today appointed 31 state secretaries at the Government Offices. Former state secretaries have been dismissed from their positions. Most of the state secretaries have previously held corresponding positions at the Government Offices.

Prime Minister's Office

The Government has appointed Nils Vikmång as the Prime Minister's State Secretary. The Government has also appointed Madeleine Harby Samuelsson and Karin Wallensteen as state secretaries to Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The Government has appointed Paula Carvalho Olovsson as State Secretary to Minister for EU Affairs Hans Dahlgren.

The Government has appointed Mats Andersson and Maria Ferm as state secretaries in the coordinating committee at the Prime Minister's Office.

Ministry of Employment

The Government has appointed Annika Dahl as State Secretary to Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson.

The Government has appointed Karin Strandås as State Secretary to Minister

for Gender Equality, with responsibility for anti-discrimination and anti-segregation, Åsa Lindhagen.

Ministry of Finance

The Government has appointed Max Elger and Leif Jacobsson as state secretaries to Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson.

The Government has appointed Ulf Holm and Elin Olsson as state secretaries to Minister for Financial Markets and Housing, Deputy Minister for Finance, Per Bolund.

The Government has appointed Alejandro Firpo as State Secretary to Minister for Public Administration Ardalan Shekarabi.

Ministry of Defence

The Government has appointed Jan-Olof Lind as State Secretary to Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist.

Ministry of Infrastructure

The Government has appointed Mattias Landgren as State Secretary to Minister for Infrastructure Tomas Eneroth.

The Government has appointed Sebastian De Toro as State Secretary to Minister for Energy and Digital Development Anders Ygeman.

Ministry of Justice

The Government has appointed Catharina Espmark and Lars Westbratt as state secretaries to Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson.

The Government has appointed Elisabeth Backteman as State Secretary to Minister for Home Affairs Mikael Damberg.

Ministry of Culture

The Government has appointed Helene Öberg as State Secretary to Minister for Culture and Democracy, with responsibility for sport, Amanda Lind.

Ministry of the Environment

The Government has appointed Eva Svedling and Gunvor Ericson as state secretaries to Minister for Environment and Climate, and Deputy Prime Minister, Isabella Lövin.

Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

The Government has appointed Stina Billinger and Emil Högberg as state secretaries to Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Ibrahim Baylan.

The Government has appointed Per Callenberg as State Secretary to Minister for Rural Affairs Jennie Nilsson.

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

The Government has appointed Maja Fjaestad as State Secretary to Minister for Health and Social Affairs Lena Hallengren.

Ministry of Education and Research

The Government has appointed Erik Nilsson as State Secretary to Minister for Education Anna Ekström.

The Government has appointed Malin Cederfeldt Östberg as State Secretary to Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government has appointed Annika Söder as State Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström.

The Government has appointed Per Olsson Fridh as State Secretary to Minister for International Development Cooperation Peter Eriksson.

The Government has appointed Niklas Johansson as State Secretary to Minister for Foreign Trade, with responsibility for Nordic affairs, Ann Linde.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to travel to Paris

Published 07 November 2018

On 11 November 2018, it is 100 hundred years since the ceasefire was concluded that led to the end of the First World War. This Armistice Centenary will be commemorated in Paris on 10–11 November, attended by some 80 heads of state and government and heads of international organisations.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven has been invited by President Emmanuel Macron to attend the French Memorial Ceremony and to speak at the Paris Peace Forum.

In connection with his visit, Mr Löfven will also meet Angel Gurría, Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), to hand over the role as host of the Global Deal for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth, an initiative launched by Mr Löfven. The Global Deal aims to strengthen dialogue between the social partners and countries' governments to improve employment conditions and productivity. A press briefing will be held during his visit.

General programme

Friday 9 November

18.00

Press briefing at the OECD, together with Secretary-General Angel Gurría.

Saturday 10 November

Reception ahead of the Armistice Centenary celebrations, at the invitation of President Emmanuel Macron, Musée d'Orsay.

Sunday 11 November

8.00

Press briefing (address announced on registration).

11.00

Memorial Ceremony to commemorate the Armistice Centenary, Arc de Triomphe.

13.00

Lunch at the Elysée Palace, at the invitation of President Emmanuel Macron.

15.30

Inauguration of the Paris Peace Forum, Grande Halle de la Villette.

16.45

Address given at the Paris Peace Forum, Grande Halle de la Villette.

Swedish media representatives who would like to take part in Mr Löfven's press briefings should notify Press Secretary Ingela Nilsson. Please note that special accreditation is required for the Memorial Ceremony and the Paris Peace Forum.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to receive Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez

Published 05 September 2018 Updated 05 September 2018

Note! New version with updated timetable. On Wednesday 5 September, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez will visit Enköping, Sweden, for talks with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. Among the topics for discussion are current EU issues and cooperation between Sweden and Spain.

Tid: 5 september 2018 at 16.35

Plats: Fagerudd Conference Hotel, Bredsandsvägen 63, Enköping

Press programme for the visit:

16.35: Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez will arrive to Fagerudd Conference Hotel in Enköping - photo opportunity.

15.45–16.15: Admittance and security check.

Address: Fagerudd Conference Hotel, Bredsandsvägen 63, Enköping

16.36-17.20: Talks – photo opportunity.

Approximately 17.20: Mr Löfven and Mr Sánchez will give a press statement.

17.35: Joint departure.

Please bring your press credentials. Registration for accreditation required

via email to sb.press@regeringskansliet.se by 4 September.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to visit UN and NATO

Published 28 June 2018

On 6–12 July, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will travel to New York to meet the UN Secretary-General and chair a meeting in the Security Council, and to Brussels to take part in a NATO summit.

Sweden will hold the presidency of the Security Council in July. In connection with this, Mr Löfven will travel to New York on 6–10 July to meet leading representatives of the UN, including Secretary-General António Guterres, and chair a meeting in the Security Council.

The agenda includes follow-up of the visit of the Secretary-General and members of the Security Council to Sweden in April, continued discussions on UN efforts to deal with crises and conflicts, UN reform and Sweden's contributions to greater peace and security.

Mr Löfven will then travel to Brussels to take part in the NATO Summit on 11–12 July. Sweden and Finland have been invited to the Summit in their capacity as NATO enhanced opportunity partners. The agenda includes Sweden's defence and security policy cooperation with the organisation and the security policy situation in the Baltic Sea region.

More information on Mr Löfven's programme will be sent to registered journalists. Please register your attendance with Jonatan Holst.

Accreditation:

UN accreditation is required. Information is available at:

<https://www.un.org/en/media/accreditation/accreditation.shtml>.

Please address any questions to Martin Gallagher at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York: martin.gallagher@gov.se.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to attend European Council meeting in Brussels

Published 25 June 2018

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will attend the European Council meeting in Brussels on 28–29 June. The agenda will include migration, trade and security issues.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

New Nordic cooperation on 5G

Published 23 May 2018

The Nordic countries have entered into new deepened cooperation on 5G. A declaration of intent was presented today laying out the Nordic countries' vision. "The Nordic region is one of the most innovative regions in the world. The development of 5G is progressing quickly and the Nordic region will be at the fore of this development. It creates jobs and prosperity in our countries," says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The declaration of intent states that the Nordic region will be the first interconnected 5G region in the world and identifies areas in which Nordic cooperation needs to be intensified.

Letter of Intent – Development of 5G in the Nordic region (pdf)

The declaration of intent was presented during the Nordic prime ministers meeting in Örnköldsvik, which was hosted by Mr Löfven. His colleagues Erna Solberg from Norway, Lars Løkke Rasmussen from Denmark, Juha Sipilä from Finland and Katrín Jakobsdóttir from Iceland attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the prime ministers also viewed an exhibition in which companies from all Nordic countries showcased products exemplifying the advantages of 5G. These include drones that deliver defibrillators and driverless transport. The exhibition was also shown to upper secondary school pupils interested in technology.

The meeting was held on 22–23 May and the first day took place on the beautiful island of Ulvön in the High Coast archipelago. The agenda included current foreign and security policy issues and Nordic cooperation. But the

prime ministers also had the opportunity to taste fermented herring. The meeting will conclude on Wednesday with a working lunch bringing together representatives of the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Nordic Council and the Faroe Islands.

This year, Sweden is presiding over the Nordic Council of Ministers and also N5 cooperation – Nordic cooperation on foreign and security policy issues. This was why the informal prime ministers meeting was held in Sweden this year.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Reminder: Stefan Löfven invites Nordic colleagues to prime ministers meeting in Örnsköldsvik

Published 09 May 2018 Updated 16 May 2018

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven has invited his prime minister colleagues Erna Solberg from Norway, Lars Løkke Rasmussen from Denmark, Juha Sipilä from Finland and Katrín Jakobsdóttir from Iceland to attend the annual informal prime ministers meeting. Sweden is chair of Nordic cooperation this year and Mr Löfven will host the meeting on 22–23 May in Örnsköldsvik.

The meeting will focus on Nordic cooperation, current foreign and security policy issues, EU issues, and digitalisation and 5G.

The informal prime ministers meeting will end with a working lunch together with the autonomous territories – Åland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands – and the Nordic institutions – the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers.

”I look forward to welcoming my Nordic colleagues to the municipality that is so close to my heart,” says Mr Löfven.

Media representatives need special accreditation to cover the meeting. The deadline to apply for accreditation is 09.00 on Friday 18 May. The accreditation is closed.

Media programme

Tuesday 22 May

06.00–23.00

Media workroom at First Hotel in Örnköldsvik is open.

10.20

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Ms Ulla Löfven welcome participants at the jetty in Docksta. Photo opportunity. The organisers will provide transport by bus from Örnköldsvik to Docksta, via the airport in Örnköldsvik.

10.30

Boat trip to the island of Ulvön in the Örnköldsvik archipelago. (estimated travel time approx. 1 hour 15 min) Photo opportunity when Mr Löfven welcomes guests to the boat.

11.45

Arrival at Ulvön. Photo opportunity.

12.15

Lunch for media at Ulvö Hotell.

13.20

Prime ministers meeting in the large conference room at Ulvö Hotell. Photo opportunity.

14.35

Joint walk to Ulvö Lilla Salteri.
Photo opportunity.

15.10

Prime ministers sum up the day.
Media opportunity with time for individual interviews.

15.30

Departure from Ulvön by boat to Örnköldsvik.
(estimated travel time approx. 2 hours 10 min)
No media opportunity.

17.45

Arrival in Örnköldsvik. Örnköldsvik Municipal Commissionern Glenn Nordlund receives the party at the harbour.
Photo opportunity.

Wednesday 23 May

07.00–15.00

Media workroom at First Hotel in Örnköldsvik is open.

09.00

Prime ministers meeting on the future of 5G in the Nordic region.

Venue: Large conference room at Elite Plaza Hotel Örnköldsvik.

Photo opportunity.

09.00–10.00

Media viewing of 5G exhibition.

Venue: Outside Elite Plaza Hotel Örnköldsvik.

10.05

Prime ministers are shown the 5G exhibition. Venue: Outside Elite Plaza Hotel Örnköldsvik.

Photo opportunity.

11.05

Press conference with the Nordic prime ministers.

Venue: In the tent outside Elite Plaza Hotel.

14.45

Transport by bus for media from First Hotel to airport in Örnköldsvik.

Media hotel

The organisers have reserved rooms for the media at First Hotel in Örnköldsvik. Quote the code 'Regeringskansliet' (Swedish Government Offices).

The email address is: ornskoldsvik@firsthotels.se



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

Sweden and India agree to deepen their innovation cooperation

Published 17 April 2018

Sweden and India today signed a joint innovation partnership to deepen the collaboration between the two countries and contribute to sustainable growth and new job opportunities. The partnership was signed in connection with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Stockholm.

"The innovation partnership with India will strengthen our exchange with one of the world's most important emerging economies. It will boost our prospects of developing joint solutions to face global societal challenges, while at the same time strengthening Sweden's competitiveness and innovation capacity," says Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg.

The partnership in brief:

- The partnership covers several areas, including smart cities, transportation and eMobility, energy, clean technologies, new materials, space, circular and bio-based economy, and health and life sciences.
- Sweden and India will cooperate to develop and implement joint innovation projects. Indian and Swedish enterprises and other key innovation players will work together to find solutions to common challenges and make use of each other's strengths.
- Sweden and India will cooperate on support to innovative start-ups, for

example through exchanges between incubators. The two countries will also step up their collaboration regarding research infrastructure and test beds.

- The partnership is intended to deepen the bilateral dialogue on innovation issues through increased cross-sectoral, cross-ministerial and cross-agency cooperation, to discuss innovation from a system perspective.

"The partnership will make it easier for Swedish companies to increase their knowledge of India's needs and strengthen the prospects for both new collaborations and new business opportunities," says Mr Damberg.

"Supporting Swedish knowledge-intensive companies to spread sustainable technology and develop green solutions in collaboration with countries such as India could be one of the most effective ways to make the world a better place," says Peter Eriksson, Minister for Housing and Digital Development.

As part of this partnership, on Thursday 19 April the Government will task Vinnova (the government agency for innovation) with strengthening innovation cooperation between Sweden and India in the field of smart cities. The Government intends to allocate up to SEK 50 million to Vinnova for this assignment up to the year 2021.

The Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation is responsible for the development of the partnership, in close cooperation with the Indian Ministry of Science and Technology.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to receive India's Prime Minister

Published 05 April 2018

On 16–17 April 2018, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Sweden at the invitation of Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. They will meet to discuss issues such as innovation, sustainable development and how Swedish–Indian relations can be further strengthened.

Global economic growth is primarily taking place in Asia, not least in India, which is currently the world's fastest growing major economy. The Government is working to strengthen Sweden's role as a key partner for India in the country's rapid development, especially in innovation.

Swedish businesses have long had a considerable presence in India. We are also seeing how Indian businesses are making major investments in Sweden. Increasing trade and investments in both directions will strengthen jobs and growth in Sweden. Bilateral cooperation is taking place in a number of areas, including the environment, renewable energy, research and health.

Programme points

Monday 16 April

Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrives in Sweden.

Tuesday 17 April

The King receives Prime Minister Narendra Modi in an audience at the Royal Palace.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Prime Minister Modi for bilateral talks at Sager House. These will be followed by a working lunch at

Rosenbad.

In the afternoon, Mr Modi and Mr Löfven will take part in roundtable discussions with the business sector.

In the evening, a Nordic–Indian summit will be held. Prime ministers from the Nordic countries – Lars Løkke Rasmussen, Denmark, Juha Sipilä, Finland, Katrín Jakobsdóttir, Iceland and Erna Solberg, Norway – will take part.

The visit will conclude by Mr Modi giving a speech to the Indian diaspora in Sweden.

To editorial offices

Accreditation from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is required to cover the visit. The deadline to apply for accreditation is Thursday 12 April 2018. More detailed information about times and venues will be sent to relevant media representatives.

The accreditation is closed.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive Prime Minister Theresa May

Published 04 April 2018

On Monday 9 April, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive UK Prime Minister Theresa May for talks at Rosenbad. The two heads of government will discuss issues concerning cooperation between the UK and Sweden, Brexit and the aftermath of the nerve agent attack in Salisbury.

Media programme

17.30 Prime Minister Löfven welcomes Prime Minister May in the entrance to Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity

17.35 Talks in the Guest Dining Rooms at Rosenbad.

Photo pool

Approx. 18.55 Press conference at Bella Venezia, Rosenbad.

Language: English.

The press conference will be webcast on www.regeringen.se.

Admittance and security check via the Kopparporten entrance in Rosenbad from 16.45–17.15 for photographers taking part in the photo opportunity at the arrival and during the talks. Please bring your press credentials.

Admittance and security check via the Kopparporten entrance in Rosenbad from 17.45–18.15 for journalists and photographers covering the press

conference. Please bring your press credentials.

Registration required via email to Nina Kefi by 6 April.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Sweden has decided to expel a Russian diplomat following the Salisbury attack

Published 27 March 2018

Following the nerve agent attack in Salisbury in the UK on 4 March, the EU has strongly condemned the attack and named Russia as the likely perpetrator. To support the UK and as part of the response from EU Member States, Sweden has decided to expel a Russian diplomat.

“The attempted murders in Salisbury are more than just a bilateral matter between the UK and Russia. They represent a further challenge by Russia to the international rules-based order, which is why we must respond,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

“We expect Russia to answer the questions the UK has asked, and to collaborate fully with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.”

A number of EU Member States have decided to take similar action. The European Council decided on Friday to recall the EU ambassador to Moscow for consultations.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Löfven to meet with German Chancellor Merkel

Published 14 March 2018

On Friday 16 March, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will meet with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin. The two leaders will discuss issues including migration, trade and the EU's long-term budget.

At approximately 13.00, Prime Minister Löfven and Chancellor Merkel will hold a joint press conference at the Federal Chancellery.

Advance registration is required. Please email the Prime Minister's Press Secretary Jonatan Holst.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to visit Luxembourg

Published 06 March 2018

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will travel to Luxembourg on 9–10 March for talks with Prime Minister Xavier Bettel. The agenda includes cooperation between Sweden and Luxembourg, EU issues and the Global Deal. The two heads of government will also visit the Museum of Robert Schuman.

During his visit, Mr Löfven will also pay courtesy calls on Grand Duke Henri of Luxembourg and President of the Chamber of Deputies Mars Di Bartolomeo.

The invitation to the official visit was sent to Mr Löfven and his wife Ulla Löfven, who will also participate in the visit to Luxembourg.

Media programme

Media representatives wishing to cover the visit on site in Luxembourg must register their participation with Press Secretary Dan Lundqvist Dahlin via email.

Friday 9 March

16.10 Courtesy call on Grand Duke Henri of Luxembourg. Photo opportunity on arrival to the Grand Ducal Palace, 32 Rue de l'Eau.

16.50 Courtesy call on President of the Chamber of Deputies Mars Di Bartolomeo. Photo opportunity on arrival to the Chamber of Deputies, 19 Rue du Marché-aux-Herbes.

Saturday 10 March

10.00 Talks with Prime Minister Xavier Bettel. Photo opportunity and press conference at the Ministry of State, 4 Rue de la Congrégation.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit the United States

Published 20 February 2018

On 6 March, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and US President Donald Trump will meet for talks in Washington DC. The aim of the meeting is to further deepen relations between Sweden and the United States, with a focus on growth, innovation and job creation. Another important area of discussion will be Sweden–US cooperation in external relations, defence and security.

"Our relations with the United States are important, both for our economy and our security. Through our broad cooperation we create growth and security for our citizens," says Mr Löfven.

The full programme of Mr Löfven's visit to the United States will be published later.

For press accreditations, please email Monica Enqvist, Press Counsellor at the Swedish Embassy in Washington DC.

Programme

Tuesday 6 March

09.00 Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg meets US Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross. Mr Damberg will be accompanied by a Swedish business delegation.

11.30–12.30 Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and the Swedish delegation take part in a lunch meeting in Congress with the Congressional Friends of Sweden Caucus.

14.00 Talks with President Donald Trump in the White House.

15.15 Joint press conference with Prime Minister Löfven and President Trump in the White House (can be seen on the White House YouTube channel).

18.30 Dinner at House of Sweden to celebrate 200 years of diplomatic relations between Sweden and the United States.

Wednesday 7 March

09.15 Visit to MedImmune/AstraZeneca in Gaithersburg, Maryland. 12.15 Visit to Volvo Group Trucks in Hagerstown, Maryland.

14.45 Press conference.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government to attend climate summit in Paris

Published 08 December 2017

On Tuesday 12 December, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate and Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin will attend the international climate summit 'One Planet Summit' in Paris.

The One Planet Summit is being organised in light of the fact that it is now two years since the historic climate agreement was adopted in Paris in 2015. The aim of the Summit is to raise the level of ambition regarding climate change and implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Prior to the Summit, Mr Löfven will attend a lunch with invited heads of state and government at the Elysée Palace.

Earlier in the day, Ms Lövin will meet France's Minister for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition Nicolas Hulot and take part in a high-level panel on the theme 'Strengthening Policies for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition'.

Minister for Financial Markets and Consumer Affairs Per Bolund will attend the high-level Climate Finance Day conference on 11 December.

Mr Löfven and Ms Lövin will hold a press conference at the residence of the Swedish Ambassador in Paris on 12 December at 09.30.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Launch of senior advisors for the Global Deal

Published 23 November 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven launches an international group of senior advisors to the Global Deal for decent work and inclusive growth. The group will give strategic advice for the future work of the Global Deal initiative.

- I am very happy that this diverse and highly qualified group of people want to contribute to the Global Deal. Their knowledge and experiences will play an important role as we continue to take the Global Deal forward, says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

In total seven senior advisors will make up the group of whom all have long experience of leading roles in the private sector, trade unions, governments, academia and civil society. Two members of the group are Oliver Blanchard, former chief economist of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Natalia Brzezinski who is the CEO of Symposium Stockholm and the Brilliant Minds Foundation.

- In the current poisonous environment, with the rise of distrust and populism, how to maintain and strengthen social dialogue is a priority. The senior advisors come from different horizons, each with our own expertise, and I look forward to putting our wisdom in common, says Oliver Blanchard, former chief economist of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

- I'm constantly looking for platforms that can curate honest, productive cross-sector dialogue on empowering workers so they can form a better future collectively. The Global Deal is that platform, and I'm so proud to be a part of it. Our diverse backgrounds will help lead us to solutions that can truly help people find a new role in society and for society to find a new role in better social dialogue, says Natalia Brzezinski the CEO of Symposium

Stockholm and the Brilliant Minds Foundation.

Senior advisors:

Olivier Blanchard, professor and former chief economist at the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Sharan Burrow, General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

Natalia Brzezinski, CEO of Symposium Stockholm and the Brilliant Minds Foundation

Sabina Dewan, President and Executive Director of the JustJobs Network

Jason Furman, former chief economist of President Obama

José Antonio Ocampo, co-director of Colombia's central bank and former Minister for Finance

Emmanuelle Wargon, Senior Vice President, Corporate Affairs & Business Sustainability Integration at Danone



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven at Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth

Published 15 November 2017

On 17 November, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven is hosting the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth in Gothenburg.

The Summit will bring together EU heads of state and government, EU institution leaders, the social partners and other key stakeholders to discuss how to promote good working conditions and more jobs.

The Prime Minister will conclude the day with a visit to the Volvo Group, together with French President Emmanuel Macron.

Prime Minister Löfven's programme:

07.45 Doorstep

Venue: Outside the main entrance to Eriksbergshallen

The Prime Minister holds a brief doorstep.

08.00 Welcoming the delegations

Venue: Plenary room, Eriksbergshallen (at the end of the entrance hall)

Prime Minister Löfven and President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker receive the delegations.

09.30 The Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth opens

Venue: Plenary room, Eriksbergshallen

The meeting begins and Prime Minister Löfven holds a brief opening

address.

10.30–12.30 Working sessions on fair jobs and growth

Venue: Meeting rooms 1, 2 and 3, Eriksbergshallen

Prime Minister Löfven will take part in each session.

12.35 Closing remarks, group photo and signing ceremony of the European Pillar of Social Rights

Venue: Plenary room, Eriksbergshallen

Prime Minister Löfven holds a brief closing address. A group photo will be followed by the signing of the European Pillar for Social Rights by President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Parliament Antonio Tajani and Estonian Prime Minister Jüri Ratas.

13.15 Working lunch, chaired by the President of the European Council

Venue: River Restaurant

Prime Minister Löfven will take part in the working lunch with the heads of state and government.

15.30 Press conference

Venue: Plenary room, Eriksbergshallen

Prime Minister Löfven, President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and the President of the European Council Donald Tusk will hold a joint press conference.

16:45 Visit to the Volvo Group with French President Emmanuel Macron

Venue: Volvo Campus Lundby, Gropegårdsgatan 2

Prime Minister Löfven and French President Emmanuel Macron visit the Volvo Group to discuss innovation and bilateral relations between the two countries.

17:30 Press conference with French President Emmanuel Macron

Venue: Volvo Campus Lundby, Gropegårdsgatan 2

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and French President Emmanuel Macron hold a joint press conference. Media representatives who wish to participate in the Volvo Group visit and the press conference must register separately. To register, please send an email to Boel Lindbergh. The number of places is limited.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven presented the Swedish programme for the 2018 Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers

Published 01 November 2017

The 69th Session of the Nordic Council is taking place in Helsinki between 31 October and 2 November. Sweden is represented by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Nordic Cooperation Margot Wallström, Minister for the Environment Karolina Skog and Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

At the opening of the Nordic Council's session in Helsinki on 31 October, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven presented the priorities of the 2018 Swedish Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers. Sweden's Presidency programme, entitled 'An inclusive, innovative and secure Nordic region' is based on three themes.

The first theme, 'An inclusive Nordic region', focuses on the Nordic social model whose hallmarks are trust, equality, gender equality and openness. The starting point is a number of challenges that the Nordic countries share in these areas.

The second theme, 'A sustainable and innovative Nordic region', focuses on Nordic innovation as a driving force for sustainable social transformation. Engagement in environmental issues is, and historically has been, strong in

the Nordic countries, but considerable efforts are needed if we are to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda both in the Nordic region and globally.

The third theme is 'A secure and open Nordic region'. Here, the focus is on cooperation on broad security issues, with security and openness as the watchwords.

In 2018, Sweden will also lead the work of the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, and coordinate informal Nordic and Nordic-Baltic foreign and security policy cooperation (N5 and NB8). The ambition is to find points of contact between these forms of cooperation and all countries in the Baltic Sea region to strengthen regional cooperation horizontally.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Information for journalists covering the #SocialSummit17 in Gothenburg

Published 31 October 2017

Registration for accreditation to the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth in Gothenburg on Friday 17 November opens today.

Please register at socialsummit17.se/press.

Please download or read the Media Advisory at www.socialsummit17.se/press/. It offers useful information about the Summit events, the services that will be available, practical information about Gothenburg and important programme times to consider in your planning.

If you have any questions, please contact our staff whose contact details you will find here socialsummit17.se/press/.

Please send your questions about accreditation to media.socialsummit@aexp.com

Please send your media questions to rk.socialsummit.media@regeringskansliet.se

Background

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker will co-host a summit in Gothenburg on 17 November 2017 focusing on the promotion of fair jobs and growth.

The summit will bring together EU leaders, the social partners and other key stakeholders to discuss how to promote fair jobs and growth.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

EU heads of state or government invited to a Social Summit in Gothenburg

Published 26 September 2017

Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, together with European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, has invited heads of state or government from EU Member States, as well as over 30 different organisations and actors, to attend the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth in Gothenburg on 17 November 2017. More than 180 participants have been invited to the summit.

The Social Summit in Gothenburg is an opportunity for key actors to discuss common challenges, political priorities and how the European Union, the Member States and the social partners can use exchange of experience to achieve better results on issues concerning labour markets and welfare systems in the future.

“We must become better at talking about issues that make a difference in people's everyday lives. In a more social Europe, fair working conditions, efficient labour markets and a strong social dialogue will contribute to increased growth and prosperity. And I am convinced that this Social Summit will help us create a stronger focus on these issues, both at national level in the Member States and at EU level,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The invitation has just gone out to the 27 other EU heads of state or government and to the other participants. European Council President

Donald Tusk and European Parliament President Antonio Tajani are also among those invited.

The Swedish social partners have been invited to attend. European social partners have also been invited, as good cooperation between employee organisations and employer organisations is key to improving the labour market and its conditions.

Other civil society actors that have been invited include Social Platform as a representative of many different civil society organisations in the EU, and the European Youth Forum representing a large number of youth organisations in the EU. Representatives of the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions have also received invitations. Other invited participants include representatives of the International Labour Organisation, the Council of Europe and Eurofound.

In addition, members of the parties represented in the Swedish Riksdag will be invited to the Summit.

As large parts of the Social Summit will be webcast, citizens around Europe will have the opportunity to follow the discussions on issues concerning citizens in their everyday lives, such as new job opportunities, decent work and access to skills development.

Read more about the summit on the website: www.socialsummit17.se.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government ministers at the United Nations General Assembly

Published 15 September 2017

Next week, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate and Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin and Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström will travel to the opening of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

The Swedish priorities are sustainable development and inclusive growth, the fight against climate change and strengthening the UN's conflict prevention and peacekeeping efforts. The Swedish ministers are scheduled to meet representatives of countries on the Security Council agenda.

During the visit, Mr Löfven will participate in a meeting on peacekeeping missions in the Security Council and meet with a number of leaders and the Secretary-General to discuss current foreign and security policy issues. Mr Löfven will also participate in a climate summit and speak about the efforts for inclusive growth and the Global Deal initiative at the World Economic Forum's Sustainable Development Impact Summit. Mr Löfven will be in New York between 18 and 20 September.

Ms Lövin will participate in the Conference on the Global Pact for the Environment and co-host an event on climate financing with French Minister for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition Nicolas Hulot. Ms Lövin will also participate in a summit on the humanitarian situation in South Sudan and meet with UN Women and UNFPA to discuss how access to sexual and reproductive health and rights affects women's economic empowerment. Ms Lövin will be in New York between 19 and 20 September.

Ms Wallström will participate in high-level discussions on conflict prevention, children and armed conflict, women, peace and security, as well as meetings on Yemen, Syria and South Sudan. As Sweden is a member of the Security Council, Ms Wallström will also attend a number of meetings during the week on issues currently on the Security Council's agenda. Ms Wallström will be in New York between 17 and 23 September.

For more information and detailed programmes, please contact the relevant minister's press secretary.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

New state secretaries at the Prime Minister's Office

Published 28 August 2017

On 27 August, the Government appointed Nils Vikmång as the Prime Minister's State Secretary and Kristina Persdotter as State Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive Finnish Prime Minister Juha Sipilä

Published 22 August 2017

On Friday 25 August, Finnish Prime Minister Juha Sipilä will visit Stockholm. The visit is to commemorate Finland's 100th anniversary as an independent state.

Mr Löfven and Mr Sipilä will visit Kungsträdgården, where the Finnish Embassy and its cooperation partners will organise a centenary event. A sculpture entitled 'Two countries – one future' will also be unveiled at Engelbrektsplan.

Afterwards, discussions and a press conference will be held at Rosenbad. Bilateral cooperation, regional security and EU matters will be discussed.

Press programme for the visit

Kungsträdgården

Approximately 14.30

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Finnish Prime Minister Juha Sipilä in Kungsträdgården.

In connection with the City of Turku exhibition Photo opportunity.

Approximately 14.40

Mr Löfven and Mr Sipilä take part in Finland's centenary celebrations. Main stage.

Photo opportunity.

Approximately 15.00

Mr Löfven and Mr Sipilä tour the centenary celebration exhibitions. Photo opportunity.

Engelbrektsplan

Approximately 15.30

Unveiling ceremony of the sculpture entitled 'Two countries – one future'. Photo opportunity.

Rosenbad

Approximately 16.05

Mr Löfven and Mr Sipilä arrive at Rosenbad for discussions.

Photo opportunity at the entrance on their arrival. Photo pool at the start of the discussions.

Approximately 17.20

Press conference with Mr Löfven and Mr Sipilä in Bella Venezia. Language: English.

Obligatory registration for the photo opportunities and press conference by email to Dan Lundqvist Dahlin.

Please state which of the photo opportunities you are interested in.

More detailed information about times and venues will be sent to relevant media representatives.

Please bring your press credentials for entry to Rosenbad.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to co-chair new UN commission on the future of work

Published 16 August 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven has accepted an invitation to co-chair the new Global Commission on the Future of Work with President of Mauritius Ameenah Gurib-Fakim. The Commission brings together some 20 experts from diverse regions of the world. It will examine the impacts of the revolutionary and long-term changes associated with the digital economy, climate change, demographic shifts and other factors. The Commission will publish recommendations for the creation of a more efficient labour market.

“The world is facing major challenges. But if we join forces, the opportunities are enormous. Technological advances and climate adaptation must be used as positive forces for innovation and new business ideas, new jobs with better conditions and a system to ensure that more people all around the world can share in the benefits of globalisation,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

Media representatives are invited to attend the launch of the Commission that will take place at ILO headquarters in Geneva on Monday 21 August at 15.00.

Press programme 21 August

14.40 Press conference with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, President of

Mauritius Ameenah Gurib-Fakim and ILO Director-General Guy Ryder.

15.00 Launch of the Global Commission on the Future of Work.

16.30 Time for Swedish media interviews with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

For registration and accreditation, contact: Hans Von Rohland, rohland@ilo.org, +41 795 93 13 21 or newsroom@ilo.org, by Friday 18 August.

The launch will be webcast live on <http://www.ilo.org>



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice

Government reshuffle, 27 July 2017

Published 27 July 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven today announced a government reshuffle. Three ministers have chosen to leave their posts, two new ministers have been appointed, and two ministers have been entrusted with revised areas of responsibility.

Ministers Anna Johansson, Anders Ygeman and Gabriel Wikström are leaving their posts.

Newly appointed ministers

Minister for Infrastructure Tomas Eneroth

Minister for Migration, and Deputy Minister for Justice: Heléne Fritzon

Changes by ministry

Ministry of Justice Minister for Justice and Home Affairs: Morgan Johansson

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs Minister for Health and Social Affairs: Annika Strandhäll



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to meet President Emmanuel Macron

Published 18 July 2017 Updated 18 July 2017

On 31 July, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will travel to Paris for meetings with President Emmanuel Macron and Prime Minister Edouard Philippe. The agenda for talks includes Swedish-French cooperation, the future of the EU, migration and security, and jobs and growth. Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg will also travel to Paris, as one important issue to be discussed is innovation cooperation and the business sector.

Times and venues

16.00 Meeting with President Emmanuel Macron, Elysée Palace.

17.00 Photo opportunity and statements by President Macron and Prime Minister Löfven, Elysée Palace.

17.30 Meeting with Prime Minister Philippe.

18.30 Prime Minister Löfven to make comments to the media, Swedish Embassy in Paris.

Media are welcome to attend the opportunity for photo and statements following the meeting with President Macron, and to come to the Swedish Embassy where Mr Löfven will be available for comments following his meeting with Prime Minister Philippe. For further information and

accreditation, please contact the Swedish Embassy in Paris.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Löfven to receive Japan's Prime Minister Abe

Published 04 July 2017

On 8–9 July, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will visit Sweden at the invitation of Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. They will meet to discuss deeper economic cooperation, including innovation, the UN Security Council – of which both Sweden and Japan are members in 2017 – and the 150th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Sweden and Japan which will be celebrated next year.

Programme for the visit

Saturday 8 July

Evening Prime Minister Shinzo Abe arrives in Sweden. He is received at Arlanda Airport by Minister Mikael Damberg. Photo opportunity.

Evening The Prime Minister receives Prime Minister Abe and Mrs Abe for dinner. Photo pool.

Sunday 9 July

Morning The Prime Minister receives Prime Minister Abe for talks at Rosenbad. Photo opportunity at the entrance.

Tête-à-tête and start of talks. Photo pool.

Joint press statement by the Prime Minister Löfven and Prime Minister Abe

in the entrance to Rosenbad. Languages: English and Japanese.

The press statement will be webcast on www.regeringen.se

After taking leave of Prime Minister Abe, Prime Minister Löfven will be available to the media for comments concerning the meeting.

To editorial offices

Accreditation from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is required to cover the visit. The deadline to apply for accreditation is 18.00 on Thursday 6 July. More detailed information about times and venues will be sent to media representatives concerned.

Accreditation application



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Conference to highlight gender equality ahead of Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth

Published 20 June 2017

The University of Gothenburg, the seat of the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, has been tasked with organising a conference ahead of the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth to be co-hosted in Gothenburg by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker on 17 November 2017.

"It is hard to discuss well-functioning and fair labour markets, and efficient and sustainable social security systems, without highlighting gender equality. This is why the gender perspective will be addressed at the Summit. The gender perspective is also key in the discussion of the EU's future in a broad sense, and for this reason, we are organising this ministerial conference with the University of Gothenburg," says Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

The target group for the conference includes gender equality ministers from a selection of EU Member States, representatives of the social partners, the European Commission, the European Institute for Gender Equality and civil society representatives. The University of Gothenburg has been allocated SEK 1.4 million for the conference, which aims to conduct a dialogue on current gender equality issues and highlight aspects of gender equality in fair jobs and growth.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to attend European Council meeting in Brussels

Published 16 June 2017

On 22–23 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will travel to Brussels for a meeting of the European Council.

Prior to this meeting, Mr Löfven will travel to The Hague on 21 June for informal talks with Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte and government representatives from other Benelux, Nordic and Baltic countries.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister receives Botswana's President

Published 16 June 2017

On Monday 19 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Botswana's President Seretse Khama Ian Khama in Rosenbad. Talks will focus on bilateral relations between Sweden and Botswana and how commercial exchange can increase.

Since Botswana's independence in 1966, both countries have had close and cordial relations, and share central values of democracy and respect for human rights. At the same time there is potential to develop the bilateral exchange further, mainly in the area of trade, primarily within the energy, mining, transport, information technology and defence sectors.

During his visit to Sweden, President Khama will also hold meetings with Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist and Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde. He will also be received by the King and Queen at the Royal Palace, as well as visit Linköping.

Invitation to press conference

11.30 Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives President Khama at Rosenbad.
Photo opportunity at the entrance.

Tête-à-tête

Photo pool – meeting room.

Admittance to photo opportunity via Kopparporten from 11.00.

13.00 Prime Minister Löfven and President Khama hold a joint press conference in Bella Venezia.

Admittance to photo opportunity via Kopparporten from 12.30.
The press conference will be webcast live on www.government.se

Language: English

Please bring your press credentials.

Media representatives must register with Nina Kefi.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Invitation to photo opportunity when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Bangladesh's Prime Minister

Published 14 June 2017

On Thursday 15 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Tid: 15 juni 2017 at 12.45

Plats: Rosenbad

Bilateral relations between Sweden and Bangladesh, including opportunities for increased trade, will be discussed during talks. The two heads of government will also discuss the importance of improving working conditions and productivity in an increasingly globalised labour market, as well as the Global Deal initiative.

During her two-day visit to Sweden, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will also have bilateral talks with Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate and Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin and Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson. She will also meet First Deputy Speaker Tobias Billström and be received by HM The King in an audience at the Royal Palace. In addition, she will take part in a business event organised by Business Sweden.

Media programme

12.45 Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

in the entrance to Rosenbad.

12.50 Talks begin in the Guest Dining Rooms at Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity at the entrance and the Guest Dining Rooms.

Prior notification of attendance is required. Send your registration to Nina Kefi.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Reminder – Deadline for accreditation: Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit Poland

Published 14 June 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will be in the Polish capital of Warsaw on 19–20 June. During his visit, Mr Löfven will have talks with Prime Minister Beata Szydło, primarily about common challenges in the EU, such as combating unemployment, creating fair working conditions in the labour market, dealing with migration and contributing to security in our neighbourhood. Mr Löfven will also speak to students and members of the public at the University of Warsaw about the future of the EU.

Programme:

Monday 19 June:

17.30 Speech at the University of Warsaw

Tuesday 20 June:

08.30 Bilateral talks with Prime Minister Szydło, photo opportunity

Approx. 10.10 Press conference

11.20 Visit to the POLIN Museum, photo opportunity during parts of the

visit

Accreditation is required. Applications must be received by the Swedish Embassy in Warsaw no later than 15 June.

If you have questions about the programme, please contact Press Secretary Ingela Nilsson.

If you have any questions about accreditation, please contact Katarzyna Szota.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Prime Minister to welcome Aung San Suu Kyi to Stockholm

Published 09 June 2017

On Monday 12 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will welcome Myanmar's State Counsellor, Aung San Suu Kyi, to Rosenbad. They will meet to discuss bilateral relations between Sweden and Myanmar.

During her two-day visit to Sweden, Ms Aung San Suu Kyi will have bilateral talks with Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström, Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde and Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin. She will also give a speech in the Riksdag at the invitation of Speaker of the Riksdag Urban Ahlin.

Programme points

Monday 12 June

Morning Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström receives Ms Aung San Suu Kyi at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Initial talks are followed by a working lunch. Photo opportunity on arrival.

Early afternoon Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Ms Aung San Suu Kyi at Rosenbad. Photo opportunity at the entrance to Rosenbad. Photo pool at the start of the meeting. Joint press conference.

Late afternoon Meeting with Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, followed by a meeting with Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate and Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin.

Tuesday 13 June

Morning Ms Aung San Suu Kyi gives a speech in the Riksdag. Photo opportunity on arrival. Media representatives with Riksdag accreditation have the opportunity to be present during the speech.

Advance registration

Media representatives must register and/or apply for a place in the photo pool. Please register/apply via the International Press Centre at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs no later than 15.00 on Sunday 11 June. More detailed information about times and venues will be sent to media representatives concerned.

Advance registration/application for place in photo pool



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit Poland

Published 09 June 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will be in the Polish capital of Warsaw on 19–20 June. During his visit, Mr Löfven will have talks with Prime Minister Beata Szydło, primarily about common challenges in the EU, such as combating unemployment, creating fair working conditions in the labour market, dealing with migration and contributing to security in our neighbourhood.

Mr Löfven will also speak to students and members of the public at the University of Warsaw about the future of the EU.

Accreditation is required. Applications must be received by the Swedish Embassy in Warsaw no later than 15 June.

If you have questions about the programme, please contact Press Secretary Ingela Nilsson.

For accreditation, please contact Katarzyna Szota.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to participate in memorial ceremony

Published 10 April 2017

On Monday 10 April, the Prime Minister will participate in the City of Stockholm's official ceremony in connection with the minute's silence for the victims of 7 April. The ceremony will take place at Stockholm City Hall at 12.00.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Government Offices flags at half mast

Published 07 April 2017

From 8.00 tomorrow, Saturday 8 April, the Government Offices will fly its flags at half mast. Half-masting will be coordinated with the Royal Court, the Riksdag and the City of Stockholm.

"This is a day of mourning for Sweden. The attack targeted our society at its most vulnerable – when we are going about our daily lives. Our thoughts go to those affected and to their families," says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Press briefing with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

Published 07 April 2017

Press briefing in connection with the incident in central Stockholm.

Tid: 7 april 2017 at 21.30

Plats: Venue: Rosenbad, Stockholm



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance

Smaller EU budget and Sweden's contribution must be kept down – the Government's general priorities ahead of the upcoming EU budget negotiations

Published 27 March 2017

The EU's new budget must be smaller than the current one and Sweden's contribution must be kept down. Money should go to common areas such as migration and security rather than to agricultural aid, and payments to Member States must be subject to the condition that joint decisions in the area of migration are followed. This is the Government's position ahead of the upcoming EU budget negotiations that was presented by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson today.

“We need a modern and efficient EU budget in the future. A budget in which money goes to the right things and where there are consequences for not taking responsibility and following EU decisions,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

When the United Kingdom leaves the EU, a major contributor to the EU budget will disappear. This will have major consequences for both the budget that applies now and future negotiations on a new budget.

The EU budget is governed by a multiannual financial framework, known as

the long-term budget. The current framework applies for the period 2014–2020. A proposal for a new long-term budget from 2021 is expected to be presented at the end of this year, or early next year.

Work on a new long-term budget has already begun, and today the Government is presenting its overarching positions ahead of the coming budget negotiations.

- When the UK's contribution disappears, the budget will have to be reduced by the corresponding amount. The Government wants to set an expenditure ceiling that does not exceed 1 per cent of the EU's GNI.
- Sweden's contribution must be kept down. We want to do this primarily by reducing the budget but also by defending the proportion we pay ourselves.
- The Government wants to see a modern budget with reprioritisations that benefit common measures, such as security, migration, competitiveness, research and climate change adaptation. This is done through reduced appropriations for agricultural support and structural funds.
- There must be a price for not taking responsibility. Countries that do not take their responsibility when it comes to migration policy should not be able to have access to support from the EU in the same way as is currently the case. All Member States must stand up for our shared values and joint decisions. The EU brings with it both benefits and obligations.
- The Government wants to see more effective control of how EU funding is used. With a reduced budget it will be even more important to ensure that the money is used in the right way.

“It is important that the budget is reduced when the British leave the EU. It is not reasonable that we, and other Member States, should have to pay more; we must keep Sweden's EU contribution down,” says Ms Andersson.

Sweden will take a proactive role in the coming budget negotiations and has already initiated a dialogue with the European Commission on Sweden's priorities.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven to travel to Slovenia

Published 24 March 2017

On 26–27 March, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven is travelling to Slovenia for talks with Prime Minister Miro Cerar.

The agenda includes cooperation between the two countries and topical EU issues such as growth, fair jobs, migration and developments in the neighbourhood.

Mr Löfven will also meet President Borut Pahor during his visit.

A selection of Mr Löfven's programme points:

Monday 27 March

09.35 Photo opportunity, Blue Salon, Presidential Palace.

10.50 Press conference, Press Centre, Presidential Palace



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Global Press Release - Human Development Report 2016

Published 21 March 2017 Updated 21 March 2017

Press release from UNDP. World's most marginalized still left behind by global development priorities: UNDP report Millions of people are not benefiting from progress, with the gap set to widen unless deep-rooted development barriers, including discrimination and unequal political participation, are tackled.

Stockholm, 21 March 2017 – A quarter-century of impressive human development progress continues to leave many people behind, with systemic, often unmeasured, barriers to catching up. A stronger focus on those excluded and on actions to dismantle these barriers is urgently needed to ensure sustainable human development for all.

These are the findings of the Human Development Report 2016, entitled 'Human Development for Everyone', released today by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The report finds that although average human development improved significantly across all regions from 1990 to 2015, one in three people worldwide continue to live in low levels of human development, as measured by the Human Development Index.

"Leaving no one behind needs to become the way we operate as a global community. In order to overcome the barriers that hamper both human development and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, inclusiveness must guide policy choices," said Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, speaking at the launch of the report in Stockholm today, alongside UNDP Administrator Helen Clark and the report's lead author and Director

of the Human Development Report Office, Selim Jahan.

"The world has come a long way in rolling back extreme poverty, in improving access to education, health and sanitation, and in expanding possibilities for women and girls," said Helen Clark. "But those gains are a prelude to the next, possibly tougher challenge, to ensure the benefits of global progress reach everyone."

This is a concern in developed countries too, where poverty and exclusion are also a challenge, with over 300 million people – including more than one-third of all children – living in relative poverty.

Left behind and unable to catch up: systemic discrimination against women, indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities, among others

The report notes that not only are deprivations high, but disadvantages disproportionately affect some groups.

"We place too much attention on national averages, which often mask enormous variations in people's lives," stated Selim Jahan. "In order to advance, we need to examine more closely not just what has been achieved, but also who has been excluded and why."

The report shows that in almost every country, several groups face disadvantages that often overlap and reinforce each other, increasing vulnerability, widening the progress gap across generations, and making it harder to catch up as the world moves on.

Women and girls, rural dwellers, indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, migrants and refugees, and the LGBTI community are among those systematically excluded by barriers that are not purely economic, but political, social and cultural as well.

In the case of women, the largest of these groups, the report notes that while global gender disparities are narrowing slowly, longstanding patterns of exclusion and lack of empowerment for women and girls remain pressing challenges.

Women tend to be poorer, earn less, and have fewer opportunities in most aspects of life than men. In 100 countries, women are legally excluded from some jobs because of their gender, and in 18 countries, women need their husband's approval to work. Dangerous practices like female genital mutilation and forced marriage continue.

Populations living in rural areas also face multiple barriers. For instance, children from poor rural households attending school are less likely to be learning reading, writing and mathematics.

Moreover, migrants and refugees often face barriers to work, education and political participation and more than 250 million people in the world face discrimination on the basis of their ethnicity, the report notes among other examples.

It is time to face up to deep-rooted barriers to development

"By eliminating deep, persistent, discriminatory social norms and laws, and addressing the unequal access to political participation, which have hindered progress for so many, poverty can be eradicated and a peaceful, just, and sustainable development can be achieved for all," Helen Clark said.

Marginalized groups often have limited opportunities to influence the institutions and policies that determine their lives. Changing this is central to breaking the vicious circle of exclusion and deprivation.

For example, indigenous peoples account for five percent of the world's population, but 15 percent of people living in poverty. And members of the LGBTI community cannot actively advocate for their rights when same-sex acts between men are illegal in more than 70 countries.

The report calls for far greater attention to empowering the most marginalized in society, and recognizes the importance of giving them greater voice in decision-making processes.

The report also calls for a more refined analysis to inform actions, including making a shift toward assessing progress in such areas as participation and autonomy. Key data, disaggregated for characteristics such as place, gender, socioeconomic status and ethnicity, is vital to know who is being left behind.

Moreover, the report warns, key development metrics can overstate progress when they focus on the quantity, rather than the quality, of development. For instance, girls' enrolment in primary education has increased, but in half of 53 developing countries with data, the majority of adult women who completed four to six years of primary school are illiterate.

Human development for everyone is attainable

"Despite progress gaps, universal human development is attainable," said

Selim Jahan. "Over the last decades, we have witnessed achievements in human development that were once thought impossible."

Since 1990, one billion people have escaped extreme poverty, and women's empowerment has become a mainstream issue: while as recently as the 1990s, very few countries legally protected women from domestic violence, today, 127 countries do.

The report stresses the importance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to build on these gains, noting that the agenda and human development approach are mutually reinforcing.

The report includes recommendations to reorient policies to ensure progress reaches those furthest behind, and urges reforms of global markets and global institutions to make them more equitable and representative.

* * *

MEDIA CONTACTS

UNDP Headquarters, New York

Anna Ortubia: anna.ortubia@undp.org / +1 212 906 5964 

Ann-Marie Wilcock: ann-marie.wilcock@undp.org / +1 212 906 6586 

UNDP Nordic Regional Office

Trygve Olfarnes: trygve.olfarnes@undp.org / +47 94156028 

Caroline Åberg: caroline.aberg@undp.org / +46 70 547 93 42 

ABOUT THIS REPORT: The Human Development Report is an editorially independent publication of the United Nations Development Programme. For free downloads of the 2016 Human Development Report, plus additional reference materials on its indices, please visit: <http://hdr.undp.org>

2016 Human Development Report <http://report.hdr.undp.org/>

Full press package in all UN official languages <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2016-report/press>

UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that

can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in 177 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive Croatia's President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović

Published 17 March 2017

On Tuesday 21 March, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović in Stockholm. They are meeting to discuss issues such as increased growth, migration and security, and how the good relations between the countries can be developed.

Invitation to press conference

11.30 Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Croatia's President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović in the entrance to Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity.

Talks.

Photo pool.

13.00 Joint press conference with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović in Bella Venezia. Language: English.

The press conference will be webcast live on www.government.se.

Admittance via Kopparporten, 11.00–11.15 for the photo opportunity and 12.30–13.00 for the press conference.

Please bring your press credentials.

During her visit to Sweden, President Grabar-Kitarović will also be received

by HM The King in an audience at the Royal Palace and meet Speaker of the Riksdag Urban Ahlin. There will also be meetings with representatives of the business sector and visits to Swedish companies, as well as visits to Gothenburg and Malmö.

Please register in advance by emailing Dan Lundqvist Dahlin.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Human Development Report 2016 to launch on 21 March 2017 in Stockholm, Sweden

Published 14 March 2017

Media Advisory from UNDP.

Who: Stefan Löfven, Prime Minister of Sweden
Helen Clark, United Nations Development Programme Administrator
Isabella Lövin, Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden
Selim Jahan, Director of the Human Development Report Office

What: Launch on UNDP's Human Development Report 2016 'Human Development for Everyone'

Event will include formal launch and a media Q&A.

When: Tuesday, 21 March 2017, at 3 pm in Stockholm, Sweden (2 pm GMT)

Where: The Pillar Hall, Norra Latin, Drottninggatan 71B, Stockholm, Sweden. Admittance via Marmorvalvet.

Please bring your press credentials.

Follow livestream at <http://hdr.undp.org>

'Human Development for Everyone'

The Human Development Report 2016 'Human Development for Everyone' will be launched on 21 March in Stockholm with the Prime Minister of Sweden, Stefan Löfven; the United Nations Development Programme Administrator, Helen Clark; Isabella Lövin, Deputy Prime Minister of

Sweden and the Director of the Human Development Report Office and lead author of the report, Selim Jahan.

In past decades, there have been significant gains in human development levels in almost every country; but millions of people have not benefitted from this progress. Who has been left behind and why? The Human Development Report 2016 looks into these two questions. It identifies and recognizes that in every society certain groups are far more likely to suffer disadvantages than others and identifies deep-rooted, and often unmeasured, barriers to development.

The report also looks to what societies should do to advance human development for everyone. It sets forward policy recommendations at the national level and also looks at ways in which the global development landscape could be made more effective in the fight to leave no one behind and achieve the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Please RSVP: caroline.aberg@undp.org

Media contacts

UNDP Headquarters, New York:

Anna Ortubia
anna.ortubia@undp.org
+1 212 906 5964 

Ann-Marie Wilcock
ann-marie.wilcock@undp.org
+1 212 906 6586 

UNDP Nordic Regional Office:

Trygve Olfarnes
trygve.olfarnes@undp.org
+47 94156028 

Caroline Åberg
caroline.aberg@undp.org
+46 70 547 93 42 

About this report: Human development is about expanding the richness of human life, rather than simply the richness of the economy in which human beings live. This idea focuses on people and their choices and opportunities. The Human Development Reports use this approach to analyse some of the most pressing challenges facing humanity to achieve sustainable progress. More information at <http://hdr.undp.org>



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to receive Lithuanian Prime Minister Saulius Skvernelis

Published 01 March 2017

On Monday 6 March, Lithuania's Prime Minister Saulius Skvernelis will be visiting for talks with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. During their talks, they will discuss current issues such as trade and increased growth, migration and security in our neighbourhood.

Tid: 6 mars 2017 at 15.15

Plats: Rosenbad, at the entrance to Rosenbad

Photo opportunity.

Please bring your press credentials. Registration required via email to Dan Lundqvist Dahlin.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive Malta's Prime Minister Joseph Muscat

Published 22 February 2017 Updated 22 February 2017

On Tuesday 28 February, Joseph Muscat, Prime Minister of Malta, the country currently holding the Presidency of the European Union, will arrive for talks with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. Talks between the two will primarily focus on the future of the EU and current issues such as migration and fair conditions in the labour market. The visit will begin with a joint wreath-laying ceremony at Olof Palme's grave.

Press programme for the visit

10.00 Adolf Fredrik's cemetery

Mr Löfven, Social Democratic Party Secretary Lena Rådström Baastad and Mr Muscat will lay wreaths at Olof Palme's grave.

Photo opportunity. Photographers must be in place by 09.50.

11.50 Rosenbad, Bella Venezia

Press briefing with Prime Minister Löfven and Prime Minister Muscat.
Language: English.

Enter via Kopparporten from 11.15–11.40. Please bring your press credentials. Registration required via email to Dan Lundqvist Dahlin.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Visit by German foreign minister cancelled

Published 20 February 2017 Updated 20 February 2017

Tuesday's scheduled visit by Germany's Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs Sigmar Gabriel is cancelled due to illness.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive Canada's Governor General David Johnston

Published 16 February 2017 Updated 16 February 2017

As part of the Canadian State Visit, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Governor General David Johnston.

Date and time: Monday 20 February at 16.00. Photo opportunity on the Governor General's arrival at Rosenbad. Prime Minister Löfven and Governor General Johnston will hold a press briefing in Bella Venezia at 16.45. Language: English.

Place: Rosenbad. Photographers taking part in the photo opportunity at 16.00 must be in place by 15.45. Entry via Kopparporten from 15.15. Entry for journalists taking part in the press briefing is between 16.05 and 16.40.

Advance notification of attendance: Please register in advance by emailing Dan Lundqvist Dahlin.

On 20–23 February 2017, Governor General of Canada David Johnston, accompanied by Dr Sharon Johnston, will pay a State Visit to Sweden at the invitation of HM The King.

The Governor General will be accompanied by a delegation of prominent Canadian citizens from various areas of society.

The Swedish Government will be represented by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Minister for Higher Education and Research Helene Hellmark Knutsson and Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde.

Global issues, migration, innovation, sustainability and trade will be the focus of the State Visit, alongside the promotion of potential business opportunities between the two countries.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

President and CEO of Volvo Group and President of KTH take seats on National Innovation Council

Published 13 February 2017 Updated 13 February 2017

Sigbritt Karlsson, President of the KTH Royal Institute of Technology, and Martin Lundstedt, President and CEO of the Volvo Group, are new members of the National Innovation Council. Both will take part in the Council's first meeting of 2017, on 13 February.

As two new members take their seats on the National Innovation Council, Sweden's status as an innovative country is on an upward curve. Sweden is gaining ground in global comparisons of countries' innovative capacity and competitiveness. Other countries are interested in Sweden's solutions and wish to collaborate. One example of this is the agreement between Germany and Sweden on innovative cooperation on digitalisation, eHealth and future mobility that was reached during Chancellor Merkel's visit to Sweden earlier this year.

Now two new members will take their seats on the National Innovation Council and offer their knowledge and experience to contribute to society's development, with a focus on innovation.

"I am very pleased and proud that Sigbritt Karlsson and Martin Lundstedt are now members of the National Innovation Council. They are both people with great experience and, with their knowledge from research and the business sector, will have a lot to contribute to the Council's work," says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

Sigbritt Karlsson has been the President of the KTH Royal Institute of Technology since 2016. She holds an MSc in Engineering and is a professor with long experience from education and research.

"I am really looking forward to this assignment and, with my experience from academia – both as a researcher and as President – I believe I have a lot to offer from that particular perspective. KTH also conducts extensive work in the area of innovation and entrepreneurship," says Ms Karlsson.

Martin Lundstedt has been President and CEO of the Volvo Group since 2015. He holds an MSc in Engineering and has previously served as CEO of Scania.

"The task of the National Innovation Council is to develop Sweden as an innovative country. I look forward to assisting in this effort. Together, we can create even better conditions for development, entrepreneurship and growth. Sweden cannot be best at everything, and we must have the courage to prioritise. I hope that those of us on the Council can also point out a clear direction so that we take advantage of the opportunities ahead of us," says Mr Lundstedt.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment

Government proposes historic climate reform for Sweden

Published 06 February 2017 Updated 06 February 2017

The Government today adopted a proposal on a climate policy framework for Sweden. The climate act and new climate goals will give Sweden an ambitious, long-term and stable climate policy.

A proposal for a new climate policy framework was adopted today. It consists of new climate goals, a climate act and a climate policy council, and is based on an agreement reached last year in the Cross-Party Committee on Environmental Objectives. The proposal has now been sent to the Council on Legislation.

"The climate act is historic and represents an epochal shift for Sweden. Just as we must keep our fiscal house in order, we must also put our house in order regarding climate policy. This is the most important reform that our generation of politicians will carry out for Sweden's young people, our children and grandchildren. Sweden will be one of the world's first fossil-free welfare nations," says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The climate act contains fundamental provisions on the Government's climate policy efforts. In its annual Budget Bill, the Government is to submit a climate review to the Riksdag and draw up a climate action plan for each electoral period.

"There will be no more arbitrariness in climate policy. The large majority of the Riksdag supporting the framework enables a long-term approach and stability, which is exactly what climate policy needs. The transition presents enormous opportunities in the form of jobs, better health and competitiveness," says Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Employment,
Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President Jean-Claude Juncker to host Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth

Published 23 January 2017 Updated 23 January 2017

Together with President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will host a Social Summit in Gothenburg on 17 November 2017, focusing on promoting fair jobs and growth.

The Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth will gather heads of state and government, the social partners and other key players to work together to promote fair jobs and growth. Well-functioning and fair European labour markets, effective and sustainable social protection systems and the promotion of social dialogue at all levels will be at the heart of these discussions.

In spite of recent improvements in economic conditions, the legacy of the worst economic and social crisis in recent times has been far-reaching. The world of work and our societies are changing fast, with new opportunities and new challenges arising from globalisation, the digital revolution, changing work patterns and demographic developments. We share a responsibility and an interest in working for a more prosperous and 'future-proof' Europe, where economic and social developments go hand-in-hand.

The Summit will be an opportunity for key stakeholders to discuss the policy priorities and initiatives set at European level and to see how the European

Union, the Member States and social partners at all levels can deliver on their shared economic and social priorities.

President Jean-Claude Juncker said: “Since the start of my mandate, I have made clear that I wanted a more social Europe. We have taken important first steps to achieve that. This year will be crucial. Following the broad public consultation, it is time to establish the European Pillar of Social Rights. The Social Summit in Sweden will help us to deliver the momentum and put social priorities where they belong: at the top of Europe's agenda.”

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven said: “In these challenging times, we need to show that we can deliver results in peoples’ everyday lives. A more social Europe, with fair working conditions, effective labour markets and a strong social dialogue, should be a priority for all of us. I trust we can take important steps towards this goal at the Social Summit in November.”



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to receive German Chancellor Angela Merkel

Published 19 January 2017 Updated 19 January 2017

On Tuesday 31 January, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Germany's Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel. Talks between the two will primarily address the future of the EU and current issues such as security and migration.

“I look forward to welcoming Chancellor Merkel to Stockholm. We are still facing many major challenges in Europe, and it is important for Sweden to be able to cooperate with Germany for more jobs and higher growth, for security, and to ensure that the EU is better able to deal with the refugee situation,” says Mr Löfven.

Programme for the visit

Early morning

Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel arrives in Sweden. She is received by Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg.

Photo opportunity

Morning

The King and Queen receive Chancellor Merkel in an audience at the Royal Palace.

Photo pool.

Lunch

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Chancellor Merkel at Rosenbad.
Photo opportunity at the entrance.

Tête-à-tête.
Photo pool.

Mr Löfven and Dr Merkel hold a joint press conference in Bella Venezia.
Languages: Swedish and German.

The press conference will be webcast live on
government.se and regeringen.se.

Afternoon

Prime Minister Löfven and Chancellor Merkel take part in the seminar
‘German Swedish Tech Forum’, where they will each give a speech.
Photo opportunity and opportunity for the media to attend the speeches.

Advance registration

Media representatives must register and/or apply for a place in the photo pool. Please register/apply via the International Press Centre at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs no later than 16.00 on 27 January. More detailed information about times and venues will be sent to media representatives concerned.

Advance registration/application for place in photo pool



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Invitation to photo opportunity when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Estonian President

Published 18 January 2017 Updated 18 January 2017

On Thursday 26 January Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Estonian President Kersti Kaljulaid.

Tid: 26 januari 2017 at 08.00

Plats: Rosenbad

Talks will primarily concern EU issues such as a more social Europe, digitalisation and Estonia's upcoming Presidency of the Council of the European Union in July–December 2017. Bilateral issues and security in our region will also be discussed.

During the visit to Sweden, the President will also meet HM The King, the Speaker of the Riksdag and the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Media programme

08.00 Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives President Kersti Kaljulaid in the entrance to Rosenbad.

08.05 Talks begin in the Rosenbad Guest Dining Rooms.

Photo opportunity at the entrance and the Guest Dining Rooms.

Registration required via email to Dan Lundqvist Dahlin.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit Iran

Published 16 January 2017 Updated 16 January 2017

On 11–12 February, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will visit Iran at the invitation of President Hassan Rouhani. Discussions will primarily concern bilateral cooperation, trade issues and developments in the region, with a focusing on Syria.

Iran is an important political and economic actor with a key role in the region. Developments in the Middle East increasingly affect both Europe and Sweden. The Prime Minister has therefore travelled extensively in the region and spoken with the major stakeholders. Good relations are particularly important now that Sweden has taken its seat on the United Nations Security Council. Sweden and Iran have close ties, not least because of the large Iranian diaspora in Sweden.

A business delegation, including representatives of a large number of Swedish companies and government agencies, will also be travelling to Iran. The delegation, led by Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde, is part of the Government's Team Sweden initiative and export strategy to promote increased Swedish presence in growth markets. Historically, Iran has been one of Sweden's most important export markets in the Middle East and several Swedish companies have long had a presence in the country.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven attends World Economic Forum in Davos

Published 12 January 2017 Updated 12 January 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will take part in the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos on 17–18 January. This year's theme is Responsive and Responsible Leadership and in his meetings Mr Löfven will highlight the importance of greater equality and reduced economic disparities in the wake of globalisation.

Mr Löfven will take part in discussions on the new UN Sustainable Development Goals and in a panel discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of globalisation.

A selection of Mr Löfven's programme points:

Tuesday 17 January

16.00–17.30 Seminar on the 2030 Agenda

Wednesday 18 January

7.30–8.45 Roundtable discussion with the Europe Regional Business Council

10.45–11.45 Governing globalisation – panel discussion on globalisation, Congress Centre, Aspen 2, open to the media

15.00–15.30 Press conference with Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson, Press Conference Room, Media Village



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Invitation to press conference and photo opportunity when the Prime Minister receives Juan Manuel Santos, President of Colombia and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Published 08 December 2016 Updated 08 December 2016

On Monday 12 December, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos in Stockholm. The visit will take place in connection with President Santos being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to bring about a peace agreement between the Colombian Government and the FARC guerrillas.

Date and time: Monday 12 December at 13.30. Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, between 12.45 and 13.15 for a joint walk to Sager House. Please come on time.

Press credentials are required.

Place: Sager House.

During his visit in Stockholm, President Santos will also meet King Carl XVI Gustaf and Crown Princess Victoria, and attend a seminar at the Riksdag. The purpose of the seminar is to discuss the lessons that can be learned from the Colombian peace process and how these can be applied to other conflicts.

Registration to: dan.lundqvist.dahlin@regeringskansliet.se



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive Poland's President Andrzej Duda in Stockholm

Published 25 November 2016 Updated 30 November 2016

Poland's President Andrzej Duda will visit Sweden on 30 November–1 December. As part of the visit, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive President Duda for talks at Rosenbad. Focus during the talks will be on the countries' relations and security in the Baltic Sea region.

Tid: 1 december 2016 at 08.00

Plats: Rosenbad, Stockholm

Invitation to statements and photo opportunity

Thursday 1 December 08.00: Mr Löfven will receive Mr Duda in the entrance to Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity

Statements by Mr Löfven and Mr Duda in the entrance to Rosenbad.

The statements will be given in Swedish and Polish, and webcast on www.regeringen.se.

Talks begin in the Guest Dining Rooms at Rosenbad.

Photo pool.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 07.30.

Media representatives must be in place by 07.45.

Please bring your press credentials.

Registration required via email to press secretary Dan Lundqvist Dahlin.

Programme points

During his visit to Sweden, Mr Duda will also meet the King and Queen, the Speaker of the Riksdag and representatives of the Swedish business sector.

Wednesday 30 November

Morning

Polish-Swedish business seminar, 'Innovation: a key to future growth. Polish and Swedish experiences', Norra Latin.

Meeting with the King and Queen at the Royal Palace.

Afternoon

Meeting with Speaker of the Riksdag Urban Ahlin.

Thursday, 1 December

Morning

Mr Löfven receives Mr Duda in the entrance to Rosenbad as above.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister receives Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko – invitation to press conference and photo opportunity

Published 08 November 2016 Updated 08 November 2016

On 14 November, Ukraine's President Petro Poroshenko will visit Sweden at the invitation of Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. The agenda for their discussions at Rosenbad will include Sweden's support to Ukraine, its sovereignty and territorial integrity, the country's modernisation reforms and its process of EU integration, and security in the region.

Tid: 14 november 2016 at 11.30

Plats: Rosenbad, Stockholm

During his visit to Sweden, President Poroshenko will also meet with Speaker of the Riksdag Urban Ahlin and hold discussions with Swedish businesses under the leadership of State Secretary Oscar Stenström.

Media programme

11.30 Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives President Petro Poroshenko in the entrance to Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity

11.35 Talks begin in the Guest Dining Rooms at Rosenbad.

Photo pool

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 10.45. Photographers must be in place by 11.15.

12.20 Press conference in Bella Venezia, Rosenbad.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 11.45.

The press conference will be held in English and Ukrainian and webcast live on www.regeringen.se.

Please bring your press credentials.

Registration required via email to Dan Lundqvist Dahlin.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Defence

Prime Minister to receive Czech Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka – press conference and photo opportunity

Published 28 October 2016 Updated 03 November 2016

On 3–4 November, Prime Minister of the Czech Republic Bohuslav Sobotka will visit Sweden at the invitation of Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. Issues including jobs and growth, the internal market, decent working conditions and migration will be the focus of the talks at Rosenbad. Developing and deepening cooperation between the Czech Republic and Sweden in the EU context, not least in light of Brexit, will also be discussed.

Tid: 3 november 2016 at 11.45

Plats: Bella Venezia in Rosenbad, Stockholm

Media programme

11.45 Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka in the entrance to Rosenbad.

11.50 Talks begin in the Rosenbad Guest Dining Rooms.

Photo opportunities at the entrance and in the Guest Dining Rooms.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 11.00. Photographers must be in place by 11.30.

13.00 Press conference in Bella Venezia, Rosenbad.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 12.15.

The press conference will be held in English and Czech and webcast live on www.regeringen.se.

Please bring your press credentials.

Registration required via email to Nina Kefi, Prime Minister's Office.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven visits Iraq

Published 24 October 2016 Updated 24 October 2016

Today, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven is visiting Iraq. The Prime Minister will discuss developments in the country, particularly the fight against Daesh and the offensive against Mosul, as well as Swedish-Iraqi cooperation, which is to intensify. During his visit to Baghdad, the Prime Minister will have talks with the Iraqi Prime Minister, and the President and Speaker of the Parliament.

The fight against Daesh and the ongoing offensive against Mosul will also be key topics of discussion. Iraq has been severely affected by Daesh's warfare, but Daesh also constitutes a threat to all open societies, not least in Europe. Sweden is helping in the form of a military training operation, and also in the long term through development cooperation and extensive humanitarian support.

"The forces that attack our open societies with bloody acts of terrorism must be combated. The offensive against Mosul is an important step in the fight against Daesh and all players must do their utmost to protect the large civilian population in the city. It is also important that Iraqi leaders work for national reconciliation and reform in the country. This is crucial for long-term, stable development in the country," says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit Saudi Arabia

Published 20 October 2016 Updated 20 October 2016

On 22–23 October, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will visit Saudi Arabia to discuss bilateral cooperation, development in the region, Syria and other current issues.

On Sunday 23 October, Mr Löfven will have talks with representatives of the Saudi Royal Family and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and he will meet the Saudi Human Rights Commission. Mr Löfven will also meet Saudi business representatives.

On 1 January 2017, Sweden takes its seat on the UN Security Council. Top of the agenda is Syria, which is one important reason why the Prime Minister is travelling to the region.

"Saudi Arabia is an important political and economic actor with a key role in development and security in the region. The situation in Syria will be a priority issue during the talks. I also see good opportunities for greater exchange in areas such as innovation and sustainability."



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Invitation to photo opportunity when Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Estonian Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas

Published 07 October 2016 Updated 07 October 2016

On Wednesday 12 October, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Estonian Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas for talks. Discussions are expected to primarily focus on EU issues such as migration, a social Europe and digitalisation. Security and Baltic Sea issues will also be discussed.

Tid: 12 oktober 2016 at 14.00

Plats: Rosenbad

During his visit to Sweden, Prime Minister Rõivas will also meet Minister for Housing and Digital Development Peter Eriksson.

Media programme

14.00 Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas at the entrance to Rosenbad.

14.05 Talks begin in the Guest Dining Rooms at Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity at the entrance and the Guest Dining Rooms.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 13.15. Photographers must be in place by 13.45.

Please bring your press credentials.

Registration required.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Invitation to photo opportunity when Prime Minister receives EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini

Published 07 October 2016 Updated 07 October 2016

On Monday 10 October, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini for talks.

Tid: 10 oktober 2016 at 13.30

Plats: Rosenbad

Agenda points include the war in Syria, the refugee crisis and security in our region.

Media programme

13.30 Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini.

13.35 Talks begin in the Guest Dining Rooms at Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity at the entrance and in the Guest Dining Rooms.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 12.45. Photographers must be in place by 13.15.

Please bring your press credentials.

Registration is required.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to attend the state funeral of Shimon Peres

Published 29 September 2016 Updated 29 September 2016

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will attend tomorrow's state funeral in Jerusalem for Israel's former President Shimon Peres.

In an earlier statement, Mr Löfven said, "With the death of Shimon Peres, Israel has lost a legendary leader and the world has lost a champion of peace. Shimon Peres was part of the generation who founded modern Israel. He will be remembered for his decades as a leading political representative in Israel for peace between Israelis and Palestinians."

Media questions of a practical nature concerning the state funeral should be addressed to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Reminder: Photo opportunity and press conference as Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Portugal's Prime Minister Antonio Costa

Published 28 September 2016 Updated 02 October 2016

On Monday 3 October, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Portugal's Prime Minister António Costa for talks. Sweden and Portugal are celebrating 375 years of bilateral relations. Issues on the agenda will primarily include our bilateral and EU cooperation, not least in light of Brexit, efforts to ensure a more social Europe, and migration.

Media programme

12.00 Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Prime Minister Antonio Costa at the entrance to Rosenbad.

12.05 Talks begin in the Guest Dining Rooms at Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity at the entrance and in the Guest Dining Rooms.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 11.15. Photographers must be in place by 11.45.

13.30 Press conference in Bella Venezia, Rosenbad.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 13.00.

The press conference will be held in English and webcast live on www.regeringen.se

Please bring your press credentials.

Registration required via email to Dan Lundqvist Dahlin.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven travels to Canada and the United States

Published 13 September 2016 Updated 13 September 2016

On 17 September, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will travel to Montreal for a meeting with Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, after which he will continue to New York and the opening of the United Nations General Assembly. In New York Mr Löfven will take part in President Barack Obama's Leaders' Summit on Refugees, co-hosted by Sweden, and the launch of the Global Deal initiative.

Programme:

On 17 September, Mr Löfven will meet Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in Montreal. Discussions will focus on how the two countries should continue to develop the good relations they share and how they can cooperate on global issues such as migration. Gender equality, jobs and trade will also be addressed.

While in Montreal, Mr Löfven will also take part in the Global Fund Replenishment Conference. Sweden is a substantial donor to the Fund, which is a key partner in the fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

On 19–21 September, Mr Löfven will attend the opening session of the UN General Assembly in New York. In connection with this, President Obama has taken the initiative for a Leaders' Summit on Refugees. Sweden will co-

host the Summit, together with Canada, Ethiopia, Germany, Jordan and Mexico.

Mr Löfven's Global Deal initiative will also be launched during his visit to New York. This global initiative for social dialogue and better conditions in the labour market internationally was designed in cooperation with the OECD and the ILO, and will be launched on 21 September.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Finance, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government presents historic climate and environment budget

Published 13 September 2016 Updated 13 September 2016

The Government wants to further strengthen Sweden's position as a climate leader. The Budget Bill for 2017 proposes the largest investment budget in the area of climate and the environment in Sweden's history.

The Government's efforts to build our society are accelerating the transition to a more sustainable society. In the budget for 2017, the Government is proposing SEK 12.9 billion in new investments in climate action, fossil-free travel and renewable energy sources for the period 2017–2020. These investments will primarily be made in four areas: the transition to renewable energy, fossil-free travel, the 'Involving all of Sweden' initiative and international climate investments.

Climate Leap and urban environment agreements

Through the Climate Leap, the Government is investing a total of SEK 3.5 billion in regional and local initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This is being matched by at least 50 per cent co-financing by businesses, municipalities, county councils and tenant-owner associations, thus enabling SEK 7–9 billion in climate investments in Sweden during the period 2015–2020.

The Government proposes increased investment in urban environment agreements. These agreements were launched to contribute to sustainable urban environments through support for public transport investments. This support will now be expanded to include investments in cycling infrastructure as well. The SEK 500 million per year in 2015–2018 that

previously applied will be increased by SEK 250 million in 2017 and SEK 500 million in 2018.

Fossil-free travel

As a step in breaking free from fossil fuels, the Government is continuing to strengthen the railways to improve the possibilities for more journeys and transports to take place by train. The Government is allocating SEK 5.9 billion to augment resources for the operation and maintenance of railways during the period 2019–2020, and intends to present an infrastructure bill to the Riksdag proposing an economic framework for a national plan during the period 2018–2020.

A special investment of SEK 200 million will be implemented in 2017 to increase railway capacity and make the system more robust.

International investments

The Government is also introducing a programme for purchasing and cancelling emission allowances in the EU. The intention is to invest SEK 300 million each year in the programme during the period 2018–2040. The initiative is a concrete measure to reduce the total amount of carbon dioxide that may be emitted within the EU Emissions Trading System. SEK 500 million will be added to the development cooperation framework during the period 2017–2020. The proposed increase will improve opportunities for climate financing in low and middle income countries.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to receive President of the European Council Donald Tusk

Published 07 September 2016 Updated 07 September 2016

On Friday 9 September, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive President of the European Council Donald Tusk. Mr Löfven and Mr Tusk will discuss the EU's future and the challenges it faces following the UK referendum as part of preparations for the informal European Council meeting in Bratislava in September.

Tid: 9 september 2016 at 16.10

Plats: The entrance hall to Rosenbad, Rosenbad 4

"We are facing major challenges but also many opportunities in the EU in the near future. I look forward to discussions with President of the European Council Donald Tusk on how we in the EU can work together for more and better jobs, an ambitious environment and climate policy, and a sustainable common asylum system," says Mr Löfven.

Programme

16:10 Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives President Donald Tusk in the entrance to Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity and statements by Stefan Löfven and Donald Tusk in the entrance.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 15.30. Photographers and journalists must be in place by 16.00.

The statements will be in English and published on www.regeringen.se.

Please bring your press credentials. Registration required via email.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to meet with Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel

Published 19 August 2016 Updated 19 August 2016

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven has been invited to meet with Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin on 26 August. Together with the Danish Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen, the Finnish Prime Minister Juha Sipilä and the Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, the two heads of government will discuss the EU's future and the challenges it is facing following the UK referendum, in preparation for the informal European Council meeting to be held in Bratislava in September.

Ahead of the meeting with Ms Merkel, Mr Löfven says:

"As leaders of EU Member States we have to show the public that our cooperation is sufficiently robust to cope with the common challenges we are facing in the way that they expect of us. We must tackle unemployment, especially youth unemployment, and create more jobs and fair conditions in the European labour market. We have to pursue an ambitious climate change and environmental policy, and all EU Member States must take responsibility for the refugees making their way to Europe."



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive US Vice President Joe Biden

Published 13 August 2016 Updated 24 August 2016

Updated version. On Thursday 25 August, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Vice President of the United States Joe Biden.

Current bilateral and international issues as well as global challenges will be discussed at the meeting. A key agenda point for both the US and Sweden is the issue of global responsibility for migration and refugees.

Sweden and the United States have close and good relations, which was manifested not least by the Nordic-American Summit in Washington in May. The meeting in Stockholm is important for continuing to deepen the already broad cooperation with the US.

"I look forward to welcoming Vice President Joe Biden to Sweden. The relations between Sweden and the US have rarely been as good as they are now, and I see his visit as an expression of this," says Mr Löfven.

More detailed information about the programme will be provided as the date of the visit approaches.

Programme for the visit

Wednesday 24 August

Vice President Joe Biden arrives in Sweden late in the evening.
Photo opportunity.

Thursday 25 August

Morning. Mr Löfven receives Vice President Biden in the entrance to Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity.

Talks.

Photo pool.

Lunchtime. Joint press conference with the Prime Minister and the Vice President.

Details of assembly times and places will be sent to accredited media.

Press credentials are required.

Media accreditation

Media representatives need special accreditation from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to cover the visit. The last day to apply for accreditation is 12 noon on Tuesday 23 August.

Accreditation application



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister has spoken with UK Prime Minister Theresa May

Published 10 August 2016 Updated 10 August 2016

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven spoke today by phone with UK Prime Minister Theresa May.

Mr Löfven began by congratulating Ms May on her appointment as Prime Minister.

Both leaders emphasised the importance of continuing to develop the good bilateral relations between our countries.

Regarding the negotiations on the UK's exit from the EU, Mr Löfven stressed that the UK should not wait too long before invoking Article 50, but that he understands and respects that it needs time to make preparations.

Mr Löfven also stressed that the UK's access to the single market is contingent upon its acceptance of all the EU's four freedoms, including freedom of movement for people.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit Serbia

Published 10 August 2016 Updated 10 August 2016

On 15–16 August, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will travel to Belgrade for talks with Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić and President Tomislav Nikolić. The talks will focus on growth and migration issues, European cooperation, development in the region and how relations between the two countries can be developed.

In connection with the visit, Mr Löfven will also take part in a breakfast meeting with Serbia's Minister of Economy and a number of Swedish companies represented in Serbia.

"Cooperation with the EU is the most effective way to bring about positive democratic, economic and political development in the region," says Mr Löfven.

For more information about the programme, please contact Press Secretary Erik Nises.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit Jordan

Published 05 August 2016 Updated 05 August 2016

On Sunday 14 August, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will travel to Jordan for discussions on the refugee situation and other current regional issues. On Monday 15 August, Mr Löfven will have talks with Jordan's Prime Minister Hani Mulki, visit refugee camps with the responsible UN organisations and take part in a seminar on job creation for young people.

Jordan is one of the countries in the world that has received the most immigrants from Syria. Sweden is pushing for greater efforts to create jobs for these refugees in neighbouring countries such as Jordan and to enable displaced children to attend school. Sweden's contribution to the Syria crisis is extensive, including financial support to the region amounting to SEK 1.7 billion over a five-year period and SEK 2.2 billion in humanitarian aid to date.

Prior notification of attendance is required **via email** to Press Secretary Erik Nises no later than 8 August. For more information on the programme, and for questions about visas and logistics, please contact Erik Nises.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Changes in the Press Department at the Prime Minister's Office

Published 15 June 2016 Updated 15 June 2016

Helena Hellström Gefwert will take up her post as Deputy Head of Press Department at the Prime Minister's Office, replacing former Deputy Head of Press Department, Adam Bergsveen. Ms Gefwert was previously Press Secretary to former Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson.

Anne Ekberg, formerly Press Secretary to the Prime Minister, will take up her post as Deputy Head of Press Department at the Prime Minister's Office and, when necessary, will assume the role as acting Head of Press Department.

Ingela Nilsson is the new Press Secretary to Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. Ms Nilsson previously served as Press Secretary to Minister for Rural Affairs Sven-Erik Bucht.

"These changes will enable us to develop the coordination of our media efforts at the Prime Minister's Office and enhance our service to the media," says Head of Press Department Odd Guteland.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven to host refugee summit with President Obama

Published 03 June 2016 Updated 03 June 2016

Today, the U.S. Government announced that Sweden will co-host the Leaders' Summit on the Global Refugee Crisis, initiated by President Barack Obama. The Summit, to be held in New York in September, aims to work for a global division of responsibility for the world's refugee situation. Sweden was invited to participate as a co-host, together with Canada, Ethiopia, Germany, Jordan and Mexico.

"It became clear following the US-Nordic Leaders' Summit in Washington that the US would like to see Sweden as one of the co-hosts of the Summit. This is recognition of the line that the Government is pursuing – that responsibility for the refugee situation in the world is global," says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The summit, to be held on 20 September, will be hosted by President Barack Obama, together with the heads of state or government from the co-hosting states.

"I am pleased to have strong allies in the struggle to ensure that more countries contribute to helping the 60 million people who have been forced to flee; it cannot be the responsibility of only a few countries to offer protection and help," says Mr Löfven.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive Chilean President Michelle Bachelet

Published 09 May 2016 Updated 10 May 2016

On Tuesday 10 May, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Chilean President Michelle Bachelet for talks at Rosenbad. They will meet to discuss free trade, UN policy, human rights, climate change and gender equality. They will also talk about the dialogue between social partners around the world to improve working conditions, productivity and the development of society.

On 10–12 May 2016, Chilean President Michelle Bachelet will pay a State Visit to Sweden at the invitation of His Majesty the King. This is the first State Visit by a Chilean president to Sweden.

Programme points 10 May:

14.00 The Prime Minister receives the President at Rosenbad

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven when President Michelle Bachelet arrives at Rosenbad. Photo opportunity at the entrance.

Talks. Photo pool – meeting room.

Signing of cooperation agreement. Photo pool – meeting room.

15.25 Press conference, Rosenbad

Mr Löfven and Ms Bachelet hold a joint press conference in Bella Venezia,

Rosenbad.

The press conference will be held in English and webcast live on www.regeringen.se

Advance registration

Advance registration and/or application for a place in the photo pool is required.

Please register/apply via the International Press Centre at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. More detailed information about times and venues will be sent to media representatives concerned.

Advance registration/application for place in photo pool



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Joint statement by High-Level Group in support of implementation of 2030 Agenda

Published 21 April 2016 Updated 16 June 2016

(New version) The heads of state and government who last year formed an informal High-Level Group to maintain political support at the top level for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda adopted a joint statement today. This statement to today's meeting on the 2030 Agenda in the UN General Assembly sends a joint message about the importance of leadership and involving civil society in the work of achieving the Global Goals.

"Implementing the 2030 Agenda and its Global Goals for sustainable development is crucial if we are to improve people's lives and at the same time protect our planet. I have convened an informal group of heads of state and government from all around the world who have begun their national efforts to achieve the Goals, and we are now urging others to begin implementation," says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

Joint statement on the occasion of the general assembly meeting on implementation of the 2030 agenda in New York on 21 april 2016:

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is our common undertaking for the future of our people, our planet and our prosperity. This agenda is the result of global consultations and the goals translate the aspirations of the

people around the world. It will be truly transformative for our world if it is implemented effectively and universally.

We, members of the informal High-Level Group in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, are convinced that political leadership, partnership and responsibility at the highest level are necessary to achieve all the sustainable development goals by 2030. Through such commitment we can empower our societies to pull together efforts at all levels and across all sectors.

Aware of our responsibility in implementing the 2030 Agenda at all levels, our governments are already engaged in this process, and we call upon others to join us. The SDGs can only be achieved with effective policies and action at all levels being geared towards their implementation, and through a strong global partnership. While taking into account national and regional challenges and priorities, we believe that national strategies for implementation must focus on a comprehensive approach to the entire integrated Agenda with full recognition of the synergies among its goals and targets. The 2030 Agenda must form an integral part of the overarching political program of each country. Global implementation requires broad consultation, engagement and partnership with all stakeholders - civil society, the private sector, trade unions and academia. Everyone needs to do their share.

As a group, we are committed to lead by example and do our part. We have started to carry out concrete actions to ensure that this global vision is effectively put into motion. In our countries, consultations with stakeholders are being held, goals and indicators are being analysed. Sustainable development strategies and implementation plans have already been or are being developed on national and local levels. Some of us have launched the national implementation work through broad conferences; some have formed national secretariats or steering committees, while others have appointed multi-stakeholder committees to spur implementation efforts. We are also engaged in conversations with our peers - leaders of other countries - sharing experiences and learning from each other. We engage in regional workshops and dialogues on implementation.

We look forward to continued exchange with all our colleagues on how to make national and local implementation effective, transformative and irreversible, as well as on how to best mobilise the necessary means of implementation. We have made a personal pledge to embody the required leadership and encourage all other leaders to join us in this commitment and

to leave no one behind.

Members of the High-Level Support Group:

HE President Dilma Rousseff (Brasil)

HE President Juan Manuel Santos (Colombia)

HE Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel (Germany)

HE President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (Liberia)

HE President Jacob Zuma (South Africa)

HE Prime Minister Stefan Löfven (Sweden)

HE President John Magufuli (Tanzania)

HE Prime Minister Rui Maria de Araújo (Timor-Leste)

HE President Beji Caid Essebsi (Tunisia)



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven to receive UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

Published 24 March 2016 Updated 24 March 2016

On Wednesday 30 March, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for discussions. The agenda includes Syria, migration, the implementation of the Global Goals, gender equality, women's participation in peace processes, and humanitarian issues.

In connection with this visit, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will also hold the annual lecture in memory of Dag Hammarskjöld, which is being jointly organised by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and Uppsala University.

Invitation to press conference

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the entrance to Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity.

Joint press conference with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in Bella Venezia.

Language: English.

Admittance via Kopparporten, 16.00–16.20 for the photo opportunity and 16.40–17.00 for the press conference.

Prior notification of attendance is required via the International Press Centre at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs:

Press conference registration



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to attend Leaders Summit with President Obama

Published 18 March 2016 Updated 18 March 2016

President of the United States of America Barack Obama is to host a US-Nordic Leader Summit with the Prime Ministers of Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Iceland, and the President of Finland. The summit will be held on 13 May at the White House in Washington D.C.

"The summit in Washington is important for relations between the Nordic region and the United States. For Sweden, it is a good opportunity to develop and deepen our already broad cooperation with the US," says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

Current international issues and global challenges will be discussed at the summit. The aim is to deepen US-Nordic cooperation in areas concerning European security, transatlantic trade, and the promotion of democratic values.

In the evening of 13 May, President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama will host a State Dinner.

More information about the summit and press accreditation will follow in due course.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to receive Latvian President Raimonds Vējonis

Published 08 January 2016 Updated 08 January 2016

On Monday 11 January, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Latvia's President Raimonds Vējonis for talks. The talks will focus on bilateral relations, the migration issue, the security policy situation in the neighbourhood and relations with Russia.

During his visit to Sweden, the Latvian President will also attend the Annual National Conference in Sälen, where he will meet the Minister for Foreign Affairs for talks. The President will also meet King Carl XVI Gustav at an audience at the Royal Palace on Monday afternoon. This will be Mr Vējonis's first visit to Sweden since entering office in July 2015.

Press programme 11 January

12.00 Prime Minister receives President Raimonds Vējonis at Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity at the entrance.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 11.15. Photographers must be in place by 11.45.

12.05 Discussions

Photo pool – Rosenbad Guest Dining Rooms.

Please bring your press credentials.

Obligatory registration for the press briefing to Dan Lundqvist Dahlin via e-mail.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Sweden and Afghanistan begin negotiations on readmission agreement

Published 04 December 2015 Updated 08 December 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met today with President Ashraf Ghani of Afghanistan.

Mr Löfven and Mr Ghani spoke about the difficult security situation in Afghanistan. They also spoke about the challenge – to both countries – presented by the increased number of Afghan asylum-seekers coming to Sweden. The number of unaccompanied minors was highlighted. Mr Löfven and Mr Ghani agreed that there was a need to strengthen cooperation on the refugee situation. Negotiations will therefore be initiated on an agreement to ensure the efficient readmission of those whose asylum applications have been rejected.

"Many of the refugees who come to Sweden are from Afghanistan, and many of these are unaccompanied minors. This year, some 20 000 minors, primarily young men, have come to Sweden from Afghanistan. This is a serious challenge for both our countries. Today, we have agreed to begin negotiations on a readmission agreement. An agreement of this kind will facilitate the return of those who are not granted asylum in Sweden," says Mr Löfven.

In close dialogue with Afghanistan, Sweden will also continue to try to improve the social and economic conditions in the country through development cooperation. This will allow us to create conditions so that people do not feel compelled to flee.

Sweden has extensive development cooperation with Afghanistan and also contributes to NATO's training mission to train and advise the Afghan forces.

Mr Ghani expressed appreciation for the extensive and long-standing Swedish contributions. A development cooperation agreement between Sweden and Afghanistan was also signed in connection with the meeting. The agreement covers regular consultations on matters such as respect for human rights, with particular regard for the situation of women and children.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received President Ashraf Ghani of Afghanistan in Stockholm

Published 30 November 2015 Updated 30 November 2015

On Friday 4 December, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven received the President of Afghanistan, Ashraf Ghani, in Stockholm. They met to discuss topics including developments in Afghanistan, Swedish support and the international refugee crisis. A cooperation agreement between the two countries was also signed.

Invitation to press conference

Mr Löfven will receive President Ghani in the entrance to Rosenbad.
Photo opportunity.

Discussions.
Photo pool.

Signing of cooperation agreement.
Photo pool.

Joint press conference with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President Ashraf Ghani in Bella Venezia Language: English.

The press conference will be webcast live on www.regeringen.se

To editorial offices

Special media accreditation obtained via the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is

required to follow the programme. Please apply to the International Press Centre at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs no later than 18.00 on 2 December.

Apply for accreditation

The assembly place and time for each programme point will be announced to the media representatives concerned.

Programme points, 4 December

During his visit to Sweden, President Ghani will also hold bilateral talks with Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström and Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist, and meet Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin. He will also meet Speaker of the Riksdag Urban Ahlin, and have a meeting with Crown Princess Victoria at the Royal Palace. He will also undertake a visit to the KTH Royal Institute of Technology.

Morning

Visit to the KTH Royal Institute of Technology.

Meeting with Speaker of the Riksdag Urban Ahlin.

Late morning

Bilateral talks between President Ghani and Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström.

Photo pool.

Afternoon

Bilateral talks between President Ghani and Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist.

Photo pool.

Crown Princess Victoria receives President Ghani at the Royal Palace.

Photo pool.

Mr Löfven receives President Ghani in the entrance to Rosenbad as above.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden increases its contribution to climate change adaptation in the most vulnerable countries

Published 30 November 2015 Updated 30 November 2015

At the opening of the COP21 climate conference in Paris today, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will announce the Government's intention to provide an additional SEK 250 million in support for climate change adaptation to the poorest and most vulnerable developing countries. This contribution encompasses SEK 150 million to the Adaptation Fund and SEK 100 million to the Least Developed Countries Fund. For developing countries, financing for climate change adaptation is one of the most important issues in the negotiations.

Financing for climate change adaptation is extremely important, particularly for small island nations and least developed countries that are already forced to deal with the consequences of climate change. This support shows that Sweden is taking great responsibility and continuing to lead the way in support to the most vulnerable countries, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin.

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) observes that the effects of the climate-related extreme weather events of recent years, including heat waves, droughts, flooding, cyclones, and forest and brush fires, show how vulnerable and exposed societies and ecosystems really are. People living in poverty are particularly vulnerable. Preventive measures and adapting societies to climate change are crucial to save lives and safeguard opportunities to earn a living.

The Adaptation Fund offers support to measures to, for example, develop climate-resilient agricultural methods, warning systems and flood defences, and secure access to water, while the LDCF primarily focuses on supporting the least developed countries in preparing and implementing national action plans for climate change adaptation.

The support announced today supplements previous support from Sweden. Sweden is the largest per capita donor to the Green Climate Fund and the Global Environment Facility, and also contributes to climate financing in various developing countries via the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

COP21 in Paris begins today, 30 November, and is scheduled to continue until 11 December. Sweden's ambition is that the negotiations will result in a global, fair and legally binding climate agreement that over time helps keep global warming as far below two degrees as possible.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Sweden to open embassy in Tunisia

Published 06 November 2015 Updated 06 November 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven announced today that the Government will open an embassy in Tunisia. The news was presented during talks with Tunisian President Béji Caïd Essebsi, who is on a State Visit to Sweden.

“Tunisia is the North African country where the Arab Spring brought democracy, and the positive developments in the country continue to inspire. Reopening our embassy in Tunis will give us the opportunity to contribute to the country’s democratic consolidation on the ground and deepen our bilateral cooperation,” says Mr Löfven.

The previous embassy in Tunis was closed in 2001. Since then, a Stockholm-based Ambassador has been accredited. The aim of reopening the embassy is to strengthen trade promotion as well as to further develop the political dialogue and follow-up of efforts for human rights and democratic development.

The business sector would like to see a Swedish presence in Tunisia so as to promote trade and investment. At present, Swedish companies employ around 5 000 people in the country. The potential for increased Swedish exports is growing as the Tunisian market becomes more stable following the 2011 Jasmine Revolution. There is substantial interest in Swedish solutions and social models in Tunisia.

Sweden and Tunisia also share common challenges such as regional security policy issues and migration. The presence of an embassy will facilitate bilateral cooperation on these issues.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister receives Tunisian President Béji Caïd Essebsi

Published 03 November 2015 Updated 03 November 2015

On Thursday 5 November Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Tunisian President Béji Caïd Essebsi for talks on strengthening the bilateral relations between Sweden and Tunisia. Topics for discussion include increased trade and common challenges such as migration.

The President's talks with the Prime Minister are part of the Tunisian State Visit to Sweden on 4–6 November.

Programme points, 5 November

14.10

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Tunisian President Béji Caïd Essebsi at Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity at the entrance.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 13.30. Photographers must arrive by 14.00.

14.15

Discussions.

Photo pool – Rosenbad Guest Dining Rooms.

14.50

Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding to deepen the bilateral dialogue

in the areas of policies, economy and culture.

Photo pool – Rosenbad Guest Dining Rooms.

15.05

Press conference in Rosenbad, Bella Venezia

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President Béji Caïd Essebsi hold a joint press conference in Bella Venezia.

The press conference will be held in Swedish and Arabic and webcast live on www.regeringen.se.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 14.30.

Please bring your press credentials.

Registration is required for the photo opportunity and press conference.
Please contact: dan.lundqvist.dahlin@regeringskansliet.se



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to receive President of the European Council Donald Tusk

Published 02 November 2015 Updated 02 November 2015

On Wednesday 4 November, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive President of the European Council Donald Tusk for bilateral talks. During the talks, Mr Löfven and Mr Tusk will discuss the refugee situation in Europe, the situation in Ukraine, the Eastern Partnership and other current EU issues.

Programme points, 4 November

13.00 Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives President Donald Tusk at Rosenbad

Photo opportunity at the entrance.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 12.15. Photographers must arrive by 12.45.

13.15 Discussions

Photo pool – meeting room.

14.20 Press conference, Rosenbad

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President Donald Tusk hold a joint press conference in Bella Venezia.

The press conference will be held in English and webcast live on www.regeringen.se.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 13.45.

Please bring your press credentials.

Registration is required for the photo opportunity and press conference.
Please contact Dan Lundqvist Dahlin.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to attend Nordic Council in Reykjavik on 27–28 October

Published 27 October 2015 Updated 27 October 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will be in Reykjavik on 27–28 October for the annual session of the Nordic Council. His schedule includes meetings with the Nordic prime ministers, the Nordic Council Presidium and the three self-governing territories of Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Åland. Subjects including migration, climate, the environment and Syria will be on the agenda.

On Tuesday 27 October, the Prime Minister will take part in the award ceremony for the Nordic Council prizes.

While in Reykjavik, Mr Löfven will also attend a meeting of the Nordic and Baltic prime ministers, focusing on security policy cooperation in our neighbourhood.

In connection to the Nordic Council session, the Nordic–Baltic heads of government will also meet the Prime Minister of the UK within the Northern Future Forum.

Attending alongside Mr Löfven will be Minister for Strategic Development and Nordic Cooperation Kristina Persson, Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist, Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson, Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke and Minister for International

Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin. For details of the respective programmes, please contact the relevant press secretaries.

Press briefings

Wednesday 28 October

11.15–11.45 Press conference with the Nordic prime ministers.

Venue: Harpa – Kaldalón

14.00–14.30 Press conference with the Nordic and Baltic prime ministers.

Venue: Harpa – Kaldalón



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment,
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Binational Commission Sweden-South Africa

Published 16 October 2015 Updated 16 October 2015

This weekend, Deputy President of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa will arrive in Stockholm with a ministerial delegation and a number of business representatives. The reason for the visit is the Binational Commission (BNC) between Sweden and South Africa, which is meeting in Stockholm on 19–20 October 2015.

During his visit Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa will meet with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Deputy Prime Minister Åsa Romson, Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström and Minister for Strategy, Future Issues and Nordic cooperation Kristina Persson.

The Binational Commission meets every other year and is a platform for regular dialogue between the countries, intended to develop our relations in a broad sense. This year's meeting is the ninth.

The meeting will be hosted by Deputy Prime Minister Åsa Romson. The South African delegation will be led by Deputy President Ramaphosa, who will also meet several other Swedish government representatives and business leaders in the course of his visit.

“The Binational Commission is an important platform for Sweden's cooperation with South Africa and I look forward to constructive discussions with my South African colleagues,” says Ms Romson.

A new committee on environmental, water and energy issues is expected to be established at this year's meeting. This will create a space for cooperation

between Swedish agencies such as the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, the Swedish Chemicals Agency and the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management and their South African counterparts. The intended purpose of the committee is to have constructive discussions on shared social challenges, where exchanges of knowledge and closer cooperation in the area can contribute to finding new solutions.

A special business delegation from South Africa is also on the trip to Stockholm. Its programme has been organised by Business Sweden and will offer opportunities for discussions with Swedish business representatives.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to receive President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil in Stockholm

Published 16 October 2015 Updated 16 October 2015

On Monday 19 October, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive the President of Brazil, Dilma Rousseff, in Stockholm. They are meeting to discuss economic exchanges between Sweden and Brazil, climate and sustainability, and defence.

During her visit to Sweden, President Rousseff will also participate with Mr Löfven in a business forum and a meeting with representatives of the City of Stockholm. She will also go to see Norra Djurgårdsstaden and visit companies in Kista and Linköping.

Programme points, 19 October

09.30 Business Forum

Mr Löfven and Ms Rousseff address a business forum at Grand Hôtel.

10.00 Reception by the Prime Minister at Rosenbad

Mr Löfven and Ms Rousseff arrive at Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity at the entrance.

Discussions.

Photo pool – meeting room.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström, Minister for Higher Education and Research Helene Hellmark Knutsson, Minister for Social Security Annika Strandhäll and Minister for Housing, Urban Development

and Information Technology Mehmet Kaplan will also take part in the discussions.

11.15 Press conference at Rosenbad

Mr Löfven and Ms Rousseff hold a joint press conference in Bella Venezia.

The press conference will be webcast live on www.regeringen.se.

Lunch at City Hall

The City of Stockholm hosts a lunch for Mr Löfven and Ms Rousseff at City Hall.

Photo pool.

15.50 Visit to Saab in Linköping

Ms Rousseff and Mr Löfven visit Saab in Linköping.

Advance registration

Advance registration and/or application for a place in the photo pool is required. Please register/apply via the International Press Centre at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs no later than 16.00 on 16 October. More detailed information about times and venues of meetings will be sent to media representatives concerned.

Advance registration/application for place in photo pool



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press release: Sweden and Fiji take initiative to protect oceans

Published 26 September 2015 Updated 26 September 2015

The 17 global goals for sustainable development, including the goal on the sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources, have just been adopted in New York. Today, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, together with Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin and Fiji's Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama, is announcing a joint initiative to push forward the implementation of this goal and ensure a follow-up system is put in place.

“The world's oceans and seas are a unique resource under threat. One of the biggest reasons for their continued deterioration is a lack of resources and global coordination. This is a major challenge we are now addressing,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

“Healthy, thriving seas and oceans are fundamental to combating poverty and creating prosperity for millions of people. The deterioration of marine environments hits the poorest countries hardest. Fish are an important source of nutrition in many developing countries. Marine ecosystem services are crucial for our entire planet,” says Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin.

The initiative was taken during a meeting between Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin and Fiji's Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama. The first step will be to present a resolution to the General Assembly of the United Nations on how to implement the global goal on the sustainable use of oceans, seas and

marine resources. It is crucial that a system is put in place to ensure the goal is followed up and its implementation is advanced.

Our oceans are in serious trouble and this is a matter that knows no national borders. Since 1970, half of all marine fish and mammals have disappeared. Climate change, unsustainable fishing, ocean acidification and environmental pollutants are impacting marine ecosystems.

In the long term, unsustainable management of marine environments and their resources could become a threat to peace and security. For example, it is a question of survival for small island states, whose economic development is closely linked to the oceans and their resources.

Background

Goal 14 on oceans is one of the 17 sustainable development goals in the new global development agenda and focuses on conserving oceans, seas and marine resources. A resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations is necessary to bring about an inclusive international process for implementing goal 14.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government to sign international cooperation agreement for workers' rights in the textile industry

Published 26 September 2015 Updated 26 September 2015

Sweden, Bangladesh and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) will sign a cooperation agreement at a meeting in New York today, aimed at improving the conditions of workers in the textile industry in Bangladesh and promoting union rights.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will participate, together with Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin, who will sign the agreement on behalf of Sweden. The project is part of *A Global Deal* – Mr Löfven's initiative to promote better conditions for workers throughout the world.

“It is in everyone's interests that union rights are respected and decent working conditions upheld. The workers win more influence and participation in their workplace. Employers get better qualified staff and can increase their productivity. Society escapes costs for ill health, fatalities and social conflicts. It's a matter of making sure that competition takes place on equal terms and human rights are respected,” says Mr Löfven.

“We are proud to be working with Bangladesh and the ILO to strengthen workers' rights in a vulnerable industry in which 80 per cent of those employed are women. This project will put women in a stronger economic position and improve their working conditions,” says Ms Lövin.

The project will involve an investment of SEK 45 million, to be funded by Sweden and implemented by the ILO between 2015 and 2020. It is expected to result in better dialogue between employers and employees, and better negotiating and dispute resolution mechanisms in the labour market. Four million people work in the textile industry, the overwhelming majority of whom are women. Their interests will be at the heart of the project.

Other participants in the signing ceremony are Secretary Mikhail Shipar of the Ministry of Labour and Employment of Bangladesh and ILO Director-General Guy Ryder, who welcomes the project as a very valuable contribution.

A Global Deal will be discussed in New York in the presence of the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, the Director-General of the ILO and the Secretary-General of the OECD. The discussion will focus on how states, trade unions, employers and international organisations can take joint responsibility for promoting good working conditions.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment,
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish Government initiates High-Level Group in UN

Published 25 September 2015 Updated 25 September 2015

World leaders are meeting in New York today to adopt 17 global Sustainable Development Goals, which are to be achieved by 2030.

The true test of the entire 2030 Agenda and the global goals is not the adoption of the goals, but that they are implemented throughout the world. The importance of maintaining strong political momentum to realise the new goals cannot be overstated.

The Swedish Government has therefore taken the initiative to start a High-Level Group consisting of nine leaders from various parts of the world to ensure that the 17 global goals and the 2030 Agenda are implemented at all levels of society.

The High-Level Group will work in various ways to promote exchange of experience and discussions on challenges and solutions between governments, civil society, the private sector and international organisations.

Through personal discussions with other world leaders, the High-Level Group will contribute to far-reaching and genuine commitment to implementing the global goals and the 2030 Agenda.

The following are members of the High-Level Group:

- Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff
- Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos
- Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
- Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

- South Africa's President Jacob Zuma
- Tanzania's President Jakaya Kikwete
- Germany's Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel
- Tunisia's President Beji Caid Essebsi
- Timor-Leste's Prime Minister Rui Maria de Araújo



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven takes part in EU summit on refugee crisis

Published 23 September 2015 Updated 23 September 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven is taking part in an extraordinary EU summit between heads of state and government today, Wednesday 23 September in Brussels. The main point of the discussion will be combating the underlying factors causing people to flee. The EU must do more to help resolve the ongoing conflicts and to help people on the ground.

One issue to be particularly addressed is how the EU and its Member States can contribute more to UN humanitarian operations in Syria and neighbouring areas.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit Austria

Published 17 September 2015 Updated 17 September 2015

On Friday 18 September, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will travel to Austria for talks with Austrian Chancellor Werner Faymann, French Prime Minister Manuel Valls, German Vice Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel and European Parliament President Martin Schulz.

The topics for discussion will include the refugee crisis and issues of common interest on the European agenda concerning the labour market and growth.

On Saturday 19 September, Mr Löfven will meet Messrs Faymann and Gabriel and the chairs of the Swedish, Austrian and German trade union confederations to discuss the work to ensure decent conditions in the European labour market.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister receives President of European Parliament

Published 14 September 2015 Updated 14 September 2015

On Monday 14 September, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz in Stockholm for discussions on the international refugee crisis. After the meeting they will hold a joint press briefing.

Time and place:

13.00 Bella Venezia, Rosenbad. The press conference will be held in English.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to receive Austria's Federal Chancellor in Stockholm

Published 08 September 2015 Updated 08 September 2015

Today, Tuesday 8 September, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Austria's Federal Chancellor Werner Faymann for a meeting on the international refugee crisis.

Press programme 8 September

17.30 Prime Minister Löfven welcomes Federal Chancellor Werner Faymann on his arrival at Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity.

17.35 Bilateral talks. Rosenbad Dining Room.

Photo pool.

18.15 Press conference at Bella Venezia, Rosenbad

The press conference will be held in German and Swedish and will be interpreted.

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 16.45. Photographers taking part in the photo opportunity and the photo pool must be in place by 17.15. Other journalists attending the press conference must be in place by 18.00.

Please bring your press credentials.

Registration required via email to: dan.lundqvist.dahlin@regeringskansliet.se



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to meet with Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel

Published 07 September 2015 Updated 07 September 2015

In light of the international refugee crisis, Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Germany's Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel will meet in Berlin on Tuesday 8 September.

“A plan is urgently needed for how Europe is to deal with the international refugee crisis. Sweden, Germany and a small number of other countries have long been alone in bearing their full responsibility. This situation is untenable. All EU countries must now resolutely stand up for human dignity and do their duty in this challenging time,” says Mr Löfven.

After the meeting, Mr Löfven and Ms Merkel will hold a joint press conference.

Time and place:

Tuesday 8 September at 13.00. Admission for media 12.15

The German Federal Chancellery
Willy-Brandt-Straße 1, Berlin

Then Mr Löfven will be available for Swedish media at Sweden's Embassy in Berlin.

Tuesday 8 September at 13.45–14.15

Embassy of Sweden

Rauchstraße 1, Berlin

Accreditation and advance registration should be submitted to Carl Michael Gräns, Press Counsellor at Sweden's Embassy in Berlin, no later than 13.00 on Monday 7 September, email carl-michael.grans@gov.se



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment,
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government to take part in global summit and UN General Assembly

Published 02 September 2015 Updated 10 September 2015

Reminder. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström, Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin and Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson will take part in the opening of the General Debate of the United Nations General Assembly in New York in late September.

This year, the week will begin with the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit. On 25–26 September, the new global Sustainable Development Goals, that are to replace the Millennium Development Goals, will be adopted by all UN Member States in the presence of representatives of civil society organisations and enterprises. Mr Löfven will give an address at the Summit, take part in seminars and roundtable discussions and hold bilateral meetings with other heads of government. Directly following the Summit, the General Assembly will open the General Debate of the 70th session since the United Nations was founded. Mr Löfven will deliver a speech on Swedish priorities in the UN and participate in panel debates on UN peacebuilding operations.

President Barack Obama, Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel and Pope Francis will also take part during the week.

Mr Löfven and Ms Lövin will be at the UN on 25–30 September. Ms Wallström will be in New York between 25 September and 3 October. Ms

Romson will take part in the Summit on 25–27 September.

Press briefing

Ahead of the Swedish delegation's trip to the Summit and the UN General Assembly, we will hold a press briefing, where State Secretary Hans Dahlgren and State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Annika Söder and others will describe the Government's objective for the trip and the programme.

Time: Thursday 17 September at 16.00.

Venue: Rosenbad

Registration (required) to the press briefing via Dan Lundqvist Dahlin:
dan.lundqvist.dahlin@regeringskansliet.se

Accreditation

Accreditation for the Summit closes on 9 September.

Information on accreditation is available on the following web page:
<http://www.un.org/en/media/accreditation/UNGA70.shtml>

For questions about accreditation, please contact Jeanette Mattsson, Press and Communication Officer at Sweden's Permanent Representation at the UN: jeanette.mattsson@gov.se, tel: 001 212 583 2591.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven to receive Jordanian Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour

Published 21 August 2015 Updated 21 August 2015

On Tuesday 25 August, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Jordanian Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour for bilateral discussions.

A photo opportunity for the media will be arranged during the visit.

Press programme 25 August

11.30 Prime Minister Stefan Löfven welcomes Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour on his arrival at Rosenbad. Photo opportunity.

11.35 Bilateral talks. Rosenbad Dining Room.

Photo pool

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 10.45. Photographers must arrive by 11.15.

Please bring your press credentials.

Registration required via email to Dan Lundqvist Dahlin.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Stefan Löfven to receive Marshall Islands President Christopher J. Loeak

Published 21 August 2015 Updated 21 August 2015

On Tuesday 25 August, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Marshall Islands President Christopher J. Loeak for bilateral talks on issues including the challenges of climate change and what is needed for sustainable development.

A photo opportunity for the media will be arranged during the visit.

President Loeak will visit Sweden on 23–27 August to take part in *World Water Week*, which is being organised by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI).

In connection with his visit, President Loeak will have discussions with Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström in addition to the bilateral discussions with Prime Minister Löfven.

Press programme 25 August

10.30 Prime Minister Löfven receives President Loeak on his arrival at Rosenbad. Photo opportunity.

10.35 Bilateral talks. Rosenbad Dining Room.

Photo pool

Enter via Kopparporten, Rosenbad, from 09.45. Photographers must arrive

by 10.15.

Please bring your press credentials.

Registration required via email to Dan Lundqvist Dahlin



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release

High level meeting on free movement and preventing social dumping

Published 24 June 2015 Updated 24 June 2015

Prime Ministers Charles Michel (Belgium), Xavier Bettel (Luxembourg), Mark Rutte (the Netherlands) and Stefan Löfven (Sweden) will host a roundtable discussion in Brussels on 25 June, on the topics of free movement, fair competition and decent work in the EU.

The free movement of goods and services and the right of every EU citizen to work anywhere in the European Union are unique, and hold exceptional potential for social and economic prosperity.

However, there is a need to ensure that gains from free movement are not offset by back-tracking with regard to working conditions and employee rights, which could result in situations where employees are being remunerated differently for carrying out the same work at the same European workplace.

The round table discussion will provide input to the Commission's Mobility Package later this year.

Participants include: Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament
Werner Faymann, Chancellor of Austria
Bohuslav Sobotka, Prime Minister of the Czech Republic
Valdis Dombrovskis, Vice-President of the European Commission
Marianne Thyssen, European Commissioner
European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)
Confederation of European Business (BusinessEurope)

There will be a photo opportunity when the participants enter the meeting. After the discussion the Prime Ministers will be available for questions from media. (Doorstep)

Venue: Résidence Palace, 155 rue de la Loi, Brussels.

Time: 25 June, 11.00 photo opportunity, 12.00 doorstep No accreditation is needed. Security measures from approximately 13 pm with restricted access to the Schuman area.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Congratulations from Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

Published 15 June 2015 Updated 15 June 2015

“Today, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to Princess Madeleine and Mr Christopher O’Neill, who have once again become parents. We share in the joy of the parents and of older sister Leonore,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

HeForShe to be launched in Sweden

Published 15 June 2015 Updated 15 June 2015

On Thursday 18 June, there will be a national launch of the United Nations HeForShe campaign. In connection with the launch, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will host a seminar on the topic 'What responsibility do men have for greater equality between women and men?'.

This will be discussed by leading representatives of the UN, the business sector, trade unions, civil society and responsible ministers.

Media representatives are welcome to the seminar. After the seminar there will be time for questions.

Time: 18 June, 10.30-12.00.

Place: Rosenbad Conference Centre.

Admittance for media via the Kopparporten entrance, Rosenbad, 09.30–10.10. Please bring your press credentials. Registration required via Anne Ekberg.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to receive Colombia's President

Published 12 June 2015 Updated 12 June 2015

On Monday 15 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will meet Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos for talks about the peace process in Colombia, trade relations and international cooperation.

At 17.00, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will welcome President Juan Manuel Santos at the entrance to Rosenbad. Photo opportunity.

Admittance of photographers via Kopparporten, 16.15–16.45.

Bilateral talks in the Guest Dining Rooms at Rosenbad. Photo pool.

18.05 Press conference with Stefan Löfven and Juan Manuel Santos at Bella Venezia, Rosenbad.

Admittance via Kopparporten, 17.30–17.55.

The press conference will be held in English.

Registration required via email to Anne Ekberg. Please bring press credentials.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven receives Juha Sipilä, Finland's newly elected Prime Minister

Published 05 June 2015 Updated 05 June 2015

On Monday 8 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Finnish Prime Minister Juha Sipilä. They will discuss bilateral, European and international issues, including competitiveness and growth in the EU, and developments in our neighbourhood.

Press programme 8 June

17.00: Prime Minister Stefan Löfven welcomes Prime Minister Juha Sipilä on his arrival at Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity.

17.30: Bilateral talks. Rosenbad Dining Room.

Photo pool.

18.00: Joint press conference with the Prime Ministers.

Bella Venezia, Rosenbad.

The press conference will be held in English.

Admittance to the photo opportunity and photo pool via the Kopparporten entrance, Rosenbad 16.00–16.50.

Admittance to the press conference via the Kopparporten entrance, Rosenbad 17.15–17.50.

Please bring your press credentials.

Advance registration is required. Please register to Dan Lundqvist Dahlin.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven to meet French President François Hollande in Paris

Published 02 June 2015 Updated 02 June 2015

During the afternoon today, Tuesday 2 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will meet French President François Hollande in Paris for bilateral talks. Mr Löfven will then meet Prime Minister Manuel Valls.

In the evening, Mr Löfven will take part in joint talks with Prime Minister Valls, Vice Chancellor of Germany Sigmar Gabriel and Federal Chancellor of Austria Werner Faymann.

They will discuss European issues, including growth-promoting measures such as trade and fair conditions on the labour market.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven will meet with Prime Minister Manuel Valls in Paris

Published 01 June 2015 Updated 01 June 2015

On Tuesday 2 June in the afternoon, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will meet with Prime Minister of France Manuel Valls in Paris.

Prime Minister Löfven will then take part in joint talks with Prime Minister Valls, Vice Chancellor of Germany Sigmar Gabriel and Federal Chancellor of Austria Werner Faymann.

They will discuss European issues, including growth-promoting measures such as trade and fair conditions on the labour market.

Prime Minister Löfven and Prime Minister Valls will also discuss the climate challenge.

There will be a photo opportunity in connection with the meeting with Prime Minister Valls. Accreditation is required.

To register photographers for the Valls and Löfven photo opportunity tomorrow, the following contact information applies:

Telephone: +33 1 42 75 50 78/79 and +33 1 42 75 80 15 

Email: communication@pm.gouv.fr



Press release

Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete to visit Sweden

Published 29 May 2015 Updated 29 May 2015

On Wednesday 3 June, Tanzania's President Jakaya Kikwete will arrive in Stockholm for a visit at the invitation of Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

Programme points include an audience with HM The King and talks with the Prime Minister, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Information Technology. President Kikwete will also have lunch talks with the Speaker of the Riksdag and will visit Karolinska Institutet, Sida and Business Sweden.

The programme will have a special focus on promoting trade relations between Tanzania and Sweden, especially in the areas of ICT, energy, and infrastructure. The agenda for the visit also includes development cooperation, and domestic policy and regional development in Tanzania's neighbourhood.

Photo opportunity

17.15: Prime Minister Löfven receives President Kikwete at the entrance to Rosenbad. Photo opportunity.

17.20: Bilateral talks. Rosenbad Dining Room. Photo pool.

Photographers enter via Kopparporten between 16.45 and 17.00. Please bring your press credentials.

Please notify Dan Lundqvist Dahlin if you wish to attend.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven to meet India's President Pranab Mukherjee

Published 28 May 2015 Updated 28 May 2015

On Monday 1 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will meet India's President Pranab Mukherjee at Rosenbad.

At the meeting they will discuss cooperation between Sweden and India, including conditions for greater exchange in the areas of trade and science. India's growing demand concerning issues such as innovation, urban development and sustainable development will also be discussed. Global challenges and multilateral cooperation are other areas to be addressed at the meeting.

Programme points:

11.10 Prime Minister welcomes President Mukherjee at the entrance to Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity.

Photographers enter via Kopparporten 10.30–10.50.

Bilateral talks. Rosenbad Dining Room.

Photo pool.

12.20 The meeting will be followed by a doorstep media opportunity with Prime Minister Löfven and Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg at the entrance to Rosenbad.

Photographers enter via Kopparporten 11.45–12.10.

Background briefing with journalists ahead of the Indian State Visit on 29 May

Ahead of the State Visit, a background briefing for media will be held by Hans Dahlgren, State Secretary for Foreign and EU Affairs to Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, and Oscar Stenström, State Secretary to Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg.

When: Friday 29 May at 10.00 at Rosenbad.

Registrations to be sent to Press Secretary Anne Ekberg no later than 8.00 on 29 May.

Accreditation is required for other State Visit programme points. Interested media not yet accredited for the State Visit are welcome to contact Boel Lindbergh at the MFA International Press Centre:



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Sweden Joins the Fight against Anti-Semitism with Solidarity Sabbath and the Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and Justice

Published 22 May 2015 Updated 25 May 2015

“There must be no place for anti-Semitism in Sweden, Europe or the rest of the world. The Swedish Government is strongly committed to the fight against anti-Semitism in Sweden as well as abroad. Anti-Semitism, like all forms of intolerance and xenophobia, is ultimately a threat to the entire system of values underpinning democratic societies,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The Solidarity Sabbath and Tom Lantos

The Solidarity Sabbath is an international initiative aimed at demonstrating support for threatened Jewish communities and promoting the advancement of the fundamental rights of freedom of religion, conscience and belief.

Tom Lantos was one of thousands of Hungarian Jews rescued by Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg during the Nazi occupation of Hungary. Following his rescue, Lantos worked for Wallenberg delivering Swedish Passports to Hungarian Jews. Lantos immigrated to the United States and was elected to Congress. The Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and Justice was established to perpetuate Tom Lantos' legacy as champion for

human rights.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven to receive Estonian Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas

Published 20 May 2015 Updated 25 May 2015

On Wednesday 27 May, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will receive Estonian Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas for bilateral talks.

The heads of government are expected to discuss bilateral relations between Sweden and Estonia, the security situation in the region and current EU issues, including developments in Ukraine.

Press programme 27 May

12.00: Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas, entrance to Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity.

Photographers enter via Kopparporten from 11.00. Please arrive by 11.45.

13.05: Joint press conference with the Prime Ministers.

Bella Venezia, Rosenbad. Language: English

Enter via Kopparporten from 12.15.

Please bring your press credentials.

Registration required via email to: Dan Lundqvist Dahlin



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister to attend Eastern Partnership Summit in Riga

Published 15 May 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

On 21–22 May, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will be one of the 28 EU leaders attending the Eastern Partnership Summit in Riga along with the leaders of the partnership countries, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven's visit to Riga

21 May

Accreditation is required for the Eastern Partnership Summit (see below).

Approx. 15.50

Prime Minister arrives at the Summit in Riga.

Doorstep interview on arrival at the Radisson Blu Daugava Hotel.

Address: Kugu Iela 24, Riga.

Application for entry to the hotel closes on 19 May. Apply to:

felix.andersson@gov.se.

19.40

Arrival at the Blackheads' House; dinner for the EU's 28 leaders and the Eastern Partnership leaders.

Latvian President Andris Bērziņš welcomes leaders.

Photo opportunity.

The bus for media representatives departs for the Blackheads' House at 18.00 from the media centre at the National Library.

22 May

9.00

Opening of the Eastern Partnership Summit at the National Library of Latvia.

Doorstep interview on arrival at the National Library.

Approx. 14.30

Press briefing with the Prime Minister, National Library of Latvia.

Accreditation

Accreditation is required for the Eastern Partnership Summit.

- Applications must be made by 20 May via:

More information is available in the attached Media Guide and Media Programme.

As you will see from the Media Programme, media representatives will be divided into a number of pools for the various media activities during the Summit (doorsteps, handshakes, etc). All journalists wishing to be included in the pools must register via press@es2015.lv. The deadline for registration is Tuesday 19 May at 12.00. Please note that for security reasons the number of places in each pool is limited. Please note, also, that this registration is separate from the accreditation required for the actual Summit.

Background briefing

A background briefing for media representatives will be held at Rosenbad ahead of the Summit. State Secretary Hans Dahlgren will be among those attending.

The briefing will take place on Wednesday 20 May at 15.00. If you would like to attend, please send an email to:
dan.lundqvist.dahlin@regeringskansliet.se by 19 May.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit the United States

Published 20 March 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will be in New York on 30 March to give an opening address at a meeting on decent work for all at the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). He will also meet with UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson.

In Washington on 31 March, the Prime Minister is scheduled to meet US Vice President Joseph Biden, and give an address at the Brookings Institution think tank on the challenges and opportunities presented by globalisation.

Ahead of the visit, media representatives are invited to attend a press briefing by State Secretary Hans Dahlgren on 23 March at 15.00–15.30. Please notify Anne Ekberg by 09.00 on 23 March if you wish to attend.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit China on 27–28 March

Published 20 March 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

The Prime Minister has been invited to participate in the Boao Forum for Asia in Hainan. He will also meet with China's President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang. In addition, Mr Löfven will meet representatives of the Swedish business community in Beijing, visit the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law and participate in a ceremony to mark 65 years of diplomatic relations between China and Sweden.

A detailed programme will be published later.

Ahead of the visit, media representatives are invited to attend a press briefing by State Secretary Hans Dahlgren on 23 March at 11.30–12.00. Registration is required. To register, please email Anne Ekberg by 20 March.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to attend European Council meeting in Brussels

Published 17 March 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will be attending the European Council in Brussels on 19–20 March. The main items for discussion will be the design of an energy union, how Europe can speed up growth and employment, and developments in Ukraine.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit Poland

Published 11 March 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will visit the Polish capital of Warsaw on 16 March for talks with Prime Minister Ewa Kopacz. Mr Löfven will also join specially invited guests in a discussion on the impact of gender equality on growth. A detailed programme for the visit and information about accreditation will be available closer to the visit.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven's visit to Warsaw

Accreditation is required for all programme points and will be issued by the Swedish Embassy in Warsaw. Times are preliminary.

14.30 Talks with Prime Minister Ewa Kopacz and Secretary of State for European Affairs Rafal Trzaskowski

16.00 Press briefing with Prime Minister Ewa Kopacz

16.30 Individual interviews

17.00 Discussion at the Embassy with specially invited Polish guests on the theme of gender equality for growth

Accreditation

Accreditation is required. Applications must be received no later than 10.00 on 13 March by the Chancellery of the Prime Minister of Poland (for the

press briefing following the talks) and by the Swedish Embassy in Warsaw (for any interviews in connection with the discussion on gender equality).

A detailed press programme will be provided following registration.

For accreditation, please contact:

Piotr Kowalczyk
Chancellery of the Prime Minister of Poland, Press Department
+48 607 490 186
Piotr.Kowalczyk@kprm.gov.pl

Bratumila Pettersson and Katarzyna Szota
Swedish Embassy, Warsaw
+48 885 301 400 and +48 885 301 401
bratumila.pettersson@gov.se
katarzyna.szota@gov.se



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit Ukraine

Published 02 March 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

The Prime Minister will visit the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv on 10–11 March for talks with President Petro Poroshenko and Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk on the situation in Ukraine and the country's reform efforts. Mr Löfven will also meet other government representatives, members of parliament and representatives of civil society organisations and the international community to discuss the political, economic and humanitarian situation. A detailed programme for the visit and information about accreditation will be available closer to the visit.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven's visit to Kyiv

Accreditation is required for all programme points and will be issued by the Swedish Embassy in Kyiv.

Tuesday 10 March

Guided tour of Maidan Nezalezhnosti (Independence Square)
Media representatives welcome.

Wednesday 11 March

Breakfast with young Ukrainian members of parliament and civil society representatives

Place: Residence of the Swedish Ambassador
Media representatives are welcome to attend at the opening of the meeting.

Speech at the Kyiv School of Economics
Media representatives welcome.

Meeting with Speaker of the Parliament Volodymyr Groysman
Place: Ukrainian Parliament in Kyiv, Verkhovna Rada
Possible photo opportunity.

Meeting with President Petro Poroshenko
Place: Presidential Palace in Kyiv
Possible photo opportunity.
Meeting with Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk and Finance Minister
Natalie Jaresko
Place: Presidential Palace in Kyiv
Possible photo opportunity.

Press conference with Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk
Place: Government Building in Kyiv

Time for individual interviews with Swedish media representatives
Place: Government Building in Kyiv

Meeting with Crimean Tatar leader Mustafa Dzhemilev
Place: Residence of the Swedish Ambassador
Possible photo opportunity.

Meeting with representatives of the United Nations and humanitarian
organisations present in Donetsk and Luhansk
Place: Residence of the Swedish Ambassador

Time for individual interviews with Swedish media representatives
Place: Residence of the Swedish Ambassador in Kyiv

Accreditation

Accreditation is required. Applications must be received by the Swedish
Embassy in Kyiv no later than 10.00 on 4 March.

A detailed press programme will be provided following registration.

Contact accreditation

Mr. Andreas Lenander
Swedish Embassy in Kyiv
+380 67 441 53 40
andreas.lenander@gov.se

Background briefing with journalists ahead of the visit to Kyiv

Swedish journalists are welcome to attend a background briefing ahead of the Ukraine visit on 6 March at 13.00–13.30, Rosenbad. To register for the background briefing, email Press Secretary Dan Lundqvist Dahlin: dan.lundqvist.dahlin@regeringskansliet.se no later than 11.00 on 5 March.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to meet German Chancellor Angela Merkel

Published 20 February 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

On 25 February, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will travel to meet German Chancellor Angela Merkel. The Prime Minister's trip to Berlin will also include visits to the startup lab 'Factory Berlin', the Berlin Wall and the Jewish Museum, and a walk along the historic route to 'Tunnel 57'. Mr Löfven will also meet with Vice Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven's visit to Berlin

Wednesday 25 February

Accreditation is required for all programme points and is issued by the Swedish Embassy in Berlin.

12.00 Arrival at the Federal Chancellery, where Mr Löfven will be met by Chancellor Merkel.

Photo opportunity.

13.15 Press conference with Chancellor Merkel.

Venue: Federal Chancellery.

14.00 Visit to the Factory Berlin startup lab.

Media representatives welcome.

15.00 Mayor of Berlin Michael Müller (SPD) and Director of the Berlin Wall Foundation Prof. Dr Axel Klausmeier will arrive at the watchtower on Strelizer Strasse, to then walk the historic route to Tunnel 57, where Mr Ralph Kabisch, one of the men who helped dig the tunnel, will share his personal narrative.

The outdoor programme will be concluded by laying roses at the Berlin Wall Memorial at Ackerstrasse.

Photo opportunities will be provided during the outdoor activities.

16.00 Visit to the Jewish Museum.

Photo opportunity on arrival. Media representatives welcome.

17.00 Meeting with Vice Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel at Willy-Brandt-Haus.

Potential photo opportunity.

Accreditation

Accreditation is required. Applications must be received by the Swedish Embassy in Berlin no later than 10.00 on 23 February.

The Embassy will arrange transportation for Swedish journalists between the programme points. A detailed press programme will be provided following registration.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Prime Minister invites Mahmoud Abbas

Published 04 February 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven has invited Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to Sweden.

On 10 February, Mr Löfven and Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström will meet President Abbas to discuss bilateral relations, the peace process in the Middle East and how Sweden can contribute following its recognition of the State of Palestine.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 30–31 January

Published 28 January 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Prime Minister Löfven will attend the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union. The theme of the summit is “Year of the Women’s Empowerment and Development towards Africa’s Agenda 2063”.

Prime Minister Löfven will hold meetings with several of the participating 53 African Heads of State and Government. He will also visit a Volvo vocation school and a children’s home, and meet with human rights activists.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven attending World Economic Forum in Davos

Published 22 January 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven is attending the World Economic Forum in Davos on 22–23 January.

The theme of this year's World Economic Forum is The New Global Context.

During his stay in Davos, Mr Löfven will focus on the potential of globalisation and how globalisation can create more jobs. He will also consider its challenges – such as growing inequality – which must be combated. Competition between countries and companies must not be achieved through increasingly lower wages and worsening conditions. Mr Löfven will also emphasise that gender equality is a core issue for the Government in both national and international work.

"First and foremost, I will pursue the issue of how we can use the potential offered by globalisation to create more jobs and increase growth. But my focus will also be on how we can build more equal and gender-equal societies. Over the past few decades we have seen how many countries have become increasingly unequal, and this is a trend that must be broken," says Mr Löfven.

Selected points from the Prime Minister's programme in Davos

Thursday 22 January 2015

14.45 (approx.) Press conference. Press representatives assemble at the middle entrance of the congress centre at

14.15, where they will be met by Ambassador Magnus Hartog-Holm.

17.05–17.25 Meeting with UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Angélique Kidjo.

18.05–18.25 Meeting with Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

20.00–22.00 Participation in seminar: The Future of Europe

Friday 23 January 2015

08.00–09.30 Press conference and panel discussion on the UN Women's HeForShe IMPACT 10X10X10 Initiative, with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, UN Women Goodwill Ambassador actress Emma Watson and others. Venue: Kirchner Museum, Ernst Ludwig Platz Promenade 82. NB. Obligatory notification of attendance is to be sent to: Marian.Satzman@havasww.com

11.30–12.00 Meeting with ILO Director-General Guy Ryder

12.30–14.00 Participation in Open Forum: Employment – Mind the Gap? Swiss Alpine School (SAMD).

17.45–18.15 Press conference – Media Leader briefing room, in the congress centre.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven to meet Nobel Peace Prize winner Kailash Satyarthi

Published 09 December 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

On Friday 12 December, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will meet Nobel Peace Prize winner Kailash Satyarthi for lunch at Rosenbad. Ministers Margot Wallström, Ylva Johansson and Åsa Regnér will also be present.

Kailash Satyarthi was awarded the prize jointly with Malala Yousafzai for his struggle against the suppression of children and young people, against child labour and for the right of all children to education.

Date and time: Friday 12 December at 12.00.

Venue: Bella Venezia, Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity. Assembly for photographers at Bella Venezia at 11.30.
Prior notification of attendance is obligatory.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit New York

Published 14 November 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will visit New York on 19–21 November to attend the high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér will also attend.

In connection with his visit to the UN, the Prime Minister will also hold a number of meetings aimed at strengthening Sweden's relations with the UN.

During his time in New York Mr Löfven will also visit the Swedish-American Chamber of Commerce and Spotify, and speak about the Nordic Model at New York University.

Media representatives are welcome to participate in large parts of the programme.

Please note that prior notification and, in some cases, accreditation are required.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at UN Climate Change Conference COP26

Published 01 November 2021

Check against delivery.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

All of you are well aware of the urgency of climate change.
We have all agreed to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees.

The science is clear.

All actors must raise their ambition. Now. And that also means finalising the Paris rulebook here in Glasgow.

In the EU, we will cut emissions by at least 55 per cent by 2030.
Sweden committed in 2017 to become the first fossil-free welfare nation by 2045. We intend to keep that promise.

The countries that are able must pave the way.

In Sweden, we are presently undergoing a transition to net zero that goes hand in hand with growth, job creation and the rise of a stronger society where no one is left behind.

It takes political will to make it happen. It also takes a strong innovation climate and a work force secure enough to transition to new green jobs.

We have implemented stricter legislation to set out stable and predictable rules.

We have invested in education and reskilling.
We have enhanced partnerships across sectors,
And we are now seeing a massive transformation:

- Fossil-free steel production;
- The emergence of circular business models;
- An electrifying transport sector;
- And an energy system rapidly converting to renewable sources.

My message is this: The climate transition is not only possible, it also brings enormous opportunities with it. Opportunities to build better societies. But only so if we ensure that the creation of a sustainable world is a just process, benefitting everyone.

As we embrace the green transition, we must ensure that all countries can be part of it. We have a goal of 100 billion US Dollars in climate financing. I urge all countries to deliver their fair share.

Sweden recently announced a doubling of our climate finance to USD 1.75 billion in 2025.

We will continue to respond to developing countries' priorities, allocating roughly half of our bilateral climate finance to adaptation.

To further strengthen our multilateral actions on climate and the environment, the Stockholm+50 conference in June next year can serve as a follow-up to COP26. A chance to reinforce initiatives on the road to COP27 and beyond.

But first: let's make this conference a success.
Let's deliver on our commitments.
And let's help each other.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speeches by Stefan Löfven in connection with Malmö Forum

Published 18 October 2021



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Address by PM Stefan Löfven at the 76th UN General Assembly

Published 24 September 2021

Speech, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, The General Debate of the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, September 24

Excellencies,

This year marks 75 years since Sweden became a member of the United Nations.

Today's global challenges demonstrate the urgent need to strengthen international cooperation, with a modern UN at its core.

The devastating impact of the pandemic has tested the resilience of our societies and put pressure on the multilateral system.

More than half of the world's population have not yet been vaccinated against COVID-19. Making sure that vaccines are accessible equally to everyone must be our priority.

COVAX remains our best instrument. Sweden is its largest per capita contributor, and I am proud to announce that we intend to increase our support for global access to vaccines.

We look forward to cooperating with all Member States in identifying ways to improve health systems' prevention, preparedness and response capacities.

Excellencies,

The extreme weather events we have witnessed, with forest fires, flooding

and heat waves, underline the urgent need to act against climate change.

We must listen to the science and transform our societies. We must keep the 1.5 degree goal alive.

Lower emissions, adaptation and protection of biodiversity must be our priority. Recovering from the pandemic will provide an opportunity to build back greener.

This year, we need to stand up to the test as we gather at COP26 in Glasgow, COP15 in Kunming, and prepare to conclude a legal instrument to protect biodiversity in the high seas.

Next year marks 50 years since the world gathered in Stockholm for the first ever UN conference on the environment. In June, we will host Stockholm+50, which we expect will be a catalyst for necessary transformative actions for a systemic change as with regard to the environment and climate change agenda. Let's take this opportunity to help redefine humankind's relationship with nature.

Excellencies,

A renewed commitment to strengthening international cooperation must be based on our joint responsibility to uphold international law.

Human rights are universal and apply to all.

We reiterate our strong support for the Secretary-General's 'Call to Action for Human Rights' and advancing human rights across all of the work conducted by the UN.

We remain deeply concerned that respect for democracy continues to decrease globally. Sweden will continue our strong support to democratic institutions and processes, and to defenders of democracy.

Through Sweden's cross-regional 'Drive for Democracy' initiative, we aim to push back against authoritarianism and promote democracy worldwide.

Excellencies,

The pandemic has exacerbated critical gaps in equality, particularly gender equality. Women and girls have been disproportionately affected. Sustainable development, peace and security are not possible when women and girls are

left behind.

This is why my Government is a feminist government.

Sweden will always stand up for sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Excellencies,

International solidarity is part of the Swedish DNA. We remain firm in our global commitments, including to provide 1 per cent of GNI to overseas development assistance.

Free, fair and sustainable trade is key in order to create new jobs and increase prosperity. The World Trade Organization has an essential role in upholding a rules-based international trading system. We must ensure that we have the means to build back better and greener. As chair of the ILO Governing Body this year, we will promote labour rights.

Excellencies,

The pandemic has also increased the suffering of the most vulnerable. The number of people in need of humanitarian assistance to survive has reached a new record level. Global hunger, driven by armed conflicts and climate change, is soaring.

We urge Member States to urgently step up funding to save lives and alleviate suffering. Sweden remains one of the largest humanitarian donors.

We need to find new ways to support the Afghan people to sustain the achievements made in the last 20 years. The increasingly acute humanitarian crisis and the protection and promotion of human rights – in particular regarding people belonging to minorities, women and girls – must be addressed. In this, the UN plays a critical role. Sweden's longstanding engagement and our support to the Afghan people remain steadfast.

Excellencies,

Sweden continues to be a champion for long-term peacebuilding and we are a substantial contributor of personnel to UN peace operations.

In Yemen, relentless fighting has worsened the humanitarian catastrophe. Sweden remains deeply engaged. We urge the parties to agree on a ceasefire and take part in political talks under UN auspices. The implementation of the

Stockholm and Riyadh agreements remains a key step. Sweden is committed to leading international efforts to mobilise additional funding for the world's largest humanitarian operation.

In Ethiopia, the Tigray conflict's expansion is causing immense human suffering. We urgently call on all parties to ensure full and sustained humanitarian access, agree to a ceasefire and work for a political solution.

Excellencies,

One year ago, peaceful protests in Belarus were followed by ruthless repression. Sweden and the EU demand respect for human rights. We support the Belarusian people's right to democracy, freedom of expression and the rule of law.

Sweden remains a steadfast supporter of Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence. We continue to unequivocally denounce Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol.

This year, Sweden is chairing the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Our guiding principle is to return to the basics by defending the European security order based on respect for international law and the UN charter.

Strengthening the OSCE's cooperation with the UN is a priority, not least on the ground in conflict situations.

Excellencies,

The nuclear threat is as present as ever. To reverse this negative trend, we welcome recent steps such as the extension of the New START Treaty, and the US and Russian joint statement reaffirming that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought".

The Stockholm Initiative for Nuclear Disarmament aims to ensure that concrete steps towards nuclear disarmament are taken, not least in view of the upcoming Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Some progress has been made, but much more remains to be done. We call on all States, in particular nuclear weapon states, to do their part.

We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to adhere to its international obligations and take steps towards denuclearisation.

Excellencies,

This will be my last address as Prime Minister of Sweden to the General Assembly. As I look back at my seven years in office, I can only conclude that global challenges are becoming ever more pressing. But together, we have also made important progress.

Sweden remains an active champion of finding common solutions to the challenges we jointly face. Our roadmap is global implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Gender equality is the unfinished human rights struggle of this century. Gender equality has always been a key priority in decision-making and resource allocation in my government – and I have promoted gender equality globally.

Climate change is the defining issue of our time. In 2017, the Swedish Parliament adopted the most ambitious climate reform in Sweden's history, aiming at net zero emissions of greenhouse gases by 2045. Together with India, I am proud to have launched the Leadership Group for Industry Transition.

Inequality has further accelerated. Together with the ILO and the OECD, I launched the Global Deal partnership for decent work and inclusive growth in 2016. The objective is to improve the global labour market and enable people to benefit from globalisation.

In October, I will host the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism – Remember ReAct. The rise of racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia and antisemitism must be rigorously countered. The Forum aims to take concrete steps in the work for Holocaust remembrance and the fight against antisemitism.

Excellencies,

Last year's adoption of the UN75 Declaration, co-facilitated by Sweden and Qatar, was a re-commitment to strengthening international cooperation, with a modern, innovative and inclusive United Nations at its core.

Together with the Prime Minister of Spain, I have launched a network of leaders to support the Secretary-General in taking the Common Agenda forward. Future generations should be at the centre of these efforts. We look forward to contributing to the preparations of a 'Summit of the Future' in

2023.

Sweden joined the United Nations 75 years ago. Rest assured that we will continue working with all of you all towards a peaceful, green, more equal and healthier planet.

We will remain as committed to international cooperation in the future as we have been over these last 75 years.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Statement of Government Policy, 14 September 2021

Published 14 September 2021

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, the Riksdag, 14
September 2021.

Your Majesties, Your Royal Highnesses, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members
of the Riksdag,

Swedish democracy is just one hundred years old.

In the late 1910s, poverty was severe and inequality glaring. But despite the troubled times, 1918 has become known as the year when “Sweden became Sweden”.

Political parties that had previously struggled to cooperate pulled together, putting their differences aside. In the years that followed, universal and equal suffrage was granted. ‘Poor auctions’ were replaced with social responsibility for vulnerable people. The eight-hour working day was introduced. The seeds of the welfare society were planted.

Thanks to cooperation, Sweden was able to move forward in spite of the turmoil that rocked Europe. But it was never self-evident that this would be the case.

Let this serve as a reminder that democracy cannot be taken for granted. It begins and ends with us citizens. The work of building a society is never done or immune to those who want to destroy it and assign differential value to people according to their sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, skin colour, religion or class.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

In a book called Historien om Bodri [‘The Story of Bodri’], a little girl describes her best friend: “Marika and I were almost the same height and we were just as good as each other at whistling. [...] We both had grazed knees and new front teeth. The only difference was that the prayers we said were different.”

The little girl’s name is Hédi Fried. She’s afraid, but most of all she doesn’t understand. Why isn’t she allowed to play with her friend anymore? Why do people hate her when she hasn’t done anything? Dressed in prisoners clothes and hard shoes, she longs for her mum and dad, and for her dog Bodri.

In one month’s time, I will host REMEMBER – REACT, the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism. The Forum will gather leaders and researchers. Concrete pledges to promote Holocaust remembrance and combat antisemitism and racism in our societies will be made by the political leaders attending the Forum.

In March, Sweden will assume the Presidency of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. Sweden’s Holocaust museum will welcome its first visitors in July next year.

* * *

There is no place for racism in Sweden. We will intensify our efforts to combat antisemitism, Islamophobia, Afrophobia, antigypsyism and racism against the Sami. Our efforts will be based on the national plan against racism.

The culture and language rights of the indigenous Sami and other national minorities will be strengthened. The Government wants a stricter Discrimination Act that provides for more comprehensive protection against discrimination. Before the end of this electoral period, it should be possible for the Riksdag to adopt new modern legislation concerning gender recognition.

On 1 January, an institute tasked with promoting human rights in Sweden will be established in Lund.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

EU cooperation makes Sweden stronger and more secure. Threats such as the climate crisis, pandemics, terrorism and organised crime cannot be tackled by one country alone. Together we will strengthen our crisis management and preparedness. The EU will continue to take the lead in the climate transition and in pushing for strengthened competitiveness and a faster digital transformation. Migration also needs to be managed jointly in the EU.

The Government is working to bring about a more equal Europe, with better working conditions and greater gender equality. The EU must be open to the world and protect human rights. The trends we see of academic, media and civil society freedoms being curtailed and judicial independence being questioned must be countered.

Effective European cooperation is based on a clear division of responsibilities between the EU and its Member States. This division remains unchanged. Sweden will continue to make its own tax decisions. The social partners are responsible for agreements on pay and conditions. Forestry will not be subject to exhaustive rules from Brussels.

In an era of rising protectionism, Sweden is a driving force for free, sustainable and fair international trade and a strong single market. The Government promotes new free trade agreements and stands up for the environment and human rights in these contexts. This means that trade can contribute to achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

* * *

Sweden's security policy remains firmly in place. Our non-participation in military alliances serves our country well and contributes to stability and security in northern Europe. Sweden will not take a passive stance if another Nordic country or EU Member State suffers a disaster or an attack. We expect these countries to act in the same way if Sweden is affected.

We are living in a time when geographic, economic and technological power is shifting. Current global developments underscore the EU's position as Sweden's most important foreign and security policy arena. Through EU membership, we can contribute to a secure, democratic and prosperous

Europe, at the same time as our values and foreign policy positions have a greater impact. The transatlantic relationship is essential to the security and prosperity of Sweden and Europe.

Our ongoing term as Chair of the OSCE gives Sweden further opportunity to defend the European security order based on international law and the United Nations Charter. Security can only be guaranteed in cooperation with others and with respect for democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Swedish migration policy must be legally certain, effective and humane. New legislation that upholds the right of asylum and establishes a balance between rights and obligations has entered into force.

The possibility of establishing State-run reception centres where asylum seekers will live and take part in an introduction to Swedish society during their initial period in Sweden will be investigated.

Labour migration to Sweden is important to many growing and developing businesses. Expulsions of skilled people will stop, and a specific visa for highly qualified workers will be introduced. It is equally important to address the problem of exploitation of foreign workers. The legitimacy of labour migration can only be maintained by preventing fraud and injustice.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

The security situation in our neighbourhood and in Europe has deteriorated over time. The threat to Sweden has broadened and become more complex. For this reason, a new, updated national security strategy is being developed.

Sweden's foreign, security and development policies are intertwined and mutually reinforcing. Around the world, armed conflicts are increasing in number and becoming more protracted, and are having increasingly severe humanitarian consequences. The number of refugees is at an all-time high.

Swedish and EU development cooperation create conditions to improve the lives of people living in poverty and oppression. The commitment to allocating the equivalent of one per cent of Sweden's gross national income to official development assistance remains unchanged.

The need for common security has never been greater. Strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation, for example in the UN, benefits

international peace and security.

Sweden is deepening its defence cooperation with Finland, with other Nordic neighbours, in the EU, through the transatlantic link and with NATO. The Government will continue to develop defence partnerships that strengthen Sweden's security.

A strong national military defence is being built up again. The re-establishment of five regiments and an air force wing will begin in late 2021, and these units will be fully operational in 2026. They are the Dalarna Regiment in Falun, the Västernorrland Regiment in Sollefteå with a training detachment in Östersund, the Norrland Dragoon Regiment in Arvidsjaur, the Bergslagen Artillery Regiment in Kristinehamn, the Älvsborg Amphibious Regiment in Gothenburg and the Uppland Air Force Wing in Uppsala.

Sweden also needs a strong civil defence. Society's capacity to manage a heightened state of alert, and ultimately war, will also be increased. This will also improve its crisis preparedness in peacetime.

* * *

Intractable conflicts with far-reaching humanitarian consequences are playing out in Afghanistan, Yemen and Mali. Lasting peace between Israel and Palestine requires a two-state solution. Sweden and the EU condemn Russia's military aggression towards Ukraine and its illegal annexation of Crimea. The increasing repression in Belarus is alarming. Sweden is deeply engaged in all of these issues.

The evacuation from Afghanistan is a reminder of the extraordinary efforts Swedish staff are making in the wider world, often under difficult conditions. Staff at our missions abroad, the Swedish Armed Forces, Sida and other government agencies, civil society representatives, journalists and many others are making invaluable contributions to peace, security, democracy and development. My heartfelt thanks to you all.

The threat of nuclear weapons is a critical global issue. The Stockholm Initiative offers a political agenda for nuclear disarmament. The Government is working for clear progress in the UN's non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament efforts.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

The Government has four overall priorities: jobs, the climate, welfare and security.

Jobs are the foundation of our country's prosperity. Jobs build individual freedom and younger generations' hopes of a better future. Jobs will take Sweden forward after the pandemic.

The greatest freedom and security reform in the Swedish labour market in decades is currently under way. The new career transition assistance scheme will offer support for further education and training to tens of thousands of working adults so they can be better positioned in the future labour market without suffering heavy financial losses while studying.

The Adult Education Initiative provides more education and training places throughout our country. Mälardalen University will receive official university status. Regional dimensioning of upper secondary education that better reflects labour market demands is being introduced.

* * *

Long-term unemployment afflicts families and local communities where it has become entrenched. It must be combated through active labour market policies. More extra jobs and introductory jobs, reinforced new start jobs and more opportunities for work placement schemes are important measures, particularly for older people and foreign-born women. The Government is working to introduce labour market entry agreements in accordance with the social partners' proposal.

The quality of Swedish for Immigrants education will be improved through more stringent scrutiny and the opportunity for more adults to combine Swedish language courses with vocational education and training.

Arbetsförmedlingen (the Swedish Public Employment Service) is being reinforced and the agency's reforms continue. The number of matching services is being substantially expanded so that more people can be supported into employment or education, wherever they live in the country. Arbetsförmedlingen will ensure a local presence throughout the country. Good collaboration with municipalities, the social partners and other actors is necessary to meet the recruitment needs of employers and create more pathways to jobs.

Swedish wages and conditions must apply to everyone who works in

Sweden. More controls and a more effective exchange of information by public authorities are needed to stop rogue businesses that exploit people. The Government will introduce a new national delegation to fight work-related crime.

* * *

It must be worthwhile to work in Sweden – and it must be worthwhile to have worked. The pension supplement is now being paid out to pensioners who have had a long working life with low pay. Additional steps must be taken, however. The Government therefore proposes an increased housing supplement and the introduction of a security pension so that people over the age of 60 who are physically worn out will not have to take out their old-age pension prematurely. The Government considers that payments into the pension system must increase. The issue will be laid before the Working Group on Pensions.

In Sweden, illness must never equate to poverty. For this reason, the Government proposes a comprehensive investment to increase both financial security in case of illness, and rehabilitation time so that people can return to work.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

The climate crisis is the defining issue of our time. The effects of a warmer climate – fires, drought, floods and rising sea levels – continue to impact people. Sweden will drive down climate emissions and become the world's first fossil-free welfare nation. Our future hinges on our ability to do what is necessary now.

The green industrial revolution has only just begun. The Government's proposed green credit guarantees will help reduce risks and lower thresholds for major new industrial initiatives. A regional export advisory initiative is under way to help businesses throughout the country reach international markets.

Twenty per cent of Sweden's emissions derive from the construction sector. The introduction of climate declarations will strengthen the possibility of demanding emissions reductions from the construction sector. The Government wants to accelerate the transition to more sustainable

construction and more resource-efficient use of building materials.

Based on the Forests Inquiry, the Government will propose measures to strengthen ownership rights, simplify regulations and increase sustainable production in our forests.

In this transition, it is crucial that all stakeholders take responsibility and that central government sets an example. The possibility to impose climate criteria in public procurement will be improved.

In the wake of the pandemic, more and more Swedes have been exploring our natural environments. On mountain hiking trails and in nature reserves, visitor numbers are at an all-time high. This trend will be encouraged. The tourism and hospitality industry will be strengthened.

A green reindustrialisation will be enabled by increasing the electrification of our society. A national electrification strategy is being drafted to propose how electricity production can increase, paving the way for industrial transition and an electric vehicle fleet.

The Government's climate policy benefits Swedish businesses and Sweden's competitiveness, and creates new jobs in Sweden.

The European Commission has presented a comprehensive legislative package to achieve the EU climate targets. Sweden will push for the bar to be set high as this work continues.

In June next year we will commemorate the 50th anniversary of the UN's first conference on the environment, which was held in Stockholm in 1972. Sweden will host Stockholm+50, a UN conference that aims to help accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

Together we must transition our society – for the sake of the climate, for the sake of Sweden.

Mr Speaker,

For it to be possible to work throughout the country, it must be possible to live throughout the country.

Housing construction is now growing at a greater rate than the population. The rate of construction will remain high and investment support will continue to be developed. Attractive living spaces will be created in the municipalities that are now growing thanks to new jobs.

It will be easier to build close to shorelines in rural areas, local influence over shore protection areas will increase and shore protection measures will be strengthened in heavily exploited areas.

The Government is now making the biggest rail investment of modern times – in both new tracks and upgrades. New main lines for high-speed trains will be constructed. The North Botnia Line will be completed. Record investments are being made to ensure that it is safe to travel on our roads, and further investments will help improve order on the roads. Work is under way to produce a new national plan for investments in roads and railways for 2022–2033. The aim is to adopt the plan next year.

Good access to commercial and government services is necessary throughout the country. The special operational subsidies for grocery shops in vulnerable areas and remote locations will be made permanent, and support will be offered for necessary investments in filling stations in sparsely served areas. The substantial expansion of government service offices will be completed.

The Government continues to strengthen culture and support recovery in the cultural sector throughout the country. Culture will flourish after the pandemic.

Sweden needs diverse independent media throughout the country and strong public service broadcasting. Newspaper distribution will be strengthened so that everyone can have a newspaper delivered to their door every day. The media subsidy system will be modernised to better fit the modern media landscape.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

The Government will continue to prioritise resources to the welfare system.

Health care, schools and social services rest on the shoulders of those working in them. They need more colleagues, the right training and better working environments. It will therefore be possible for anyone working in care for older people to study on paid work time to become an assistant nurse. The right of all home-help service users to a dedicated contact person will be established in law. The Government continues to work on drafting new legislation on care for older people to boost the quality of care services and make them more equitable across the country.

Health care services will be strengthened. Access will be improved and primary care will be expanded. Continuity of care in general practice will be ensured for more people. The new National Health Competence Council will help ensure that staff with the right skills are available.

Investments in cancer care, maternity care and women's health, psychiatric care and emergency service care continue. Contingency planning in health care will be strengthened in the long term. The pandemic has shown that this is necessary.

The Government will continue to strengthen the right to personal assistance. This year, the Government will propose support for self-care measures, reduced parental requirements and enhanced support for supervision.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

Swedish schools must return to world-class learning outcomes. But for outcomes to continue to rise, schools must be more equitable. Preschools and out-of-school centres will be improved, an initiative to reinforce school libraries will be launched and more resources will be directed to the schools with the greatest needs.

Pupils should be able to choose their school, but schools should not be able to choose their pupils. A common admissions system and fairer selection rules are therefore necessary. Municipal schools have greater responsibilities than independent schools; this must be mirrored in their funding.

Central government needs to take greater responsibility through a regional presence and the introduction of a national professional programme for head teachers, teachers and preschool teachers.

The focus on knowledge and on order in schools continues. It should be

easier to close down schools that are not up to standard. A moratorium on new confessional independent schools will be introduced, and existing ones will be monitored better. The national plan for safe and conducive study environments contains proposals to ban mobile phones and introduce clearer powers for school staff to intervene when the situation demands it.

The pandemic has taken a serious toll on our society and pupils have certainly been affected. For this reason, schools will be given extra resources for catch-up school and homework support.

Every pupil must realise that it is not past dips in form, but present willingness to work hard to learn more that is crucial. Subject grades will therefore be introduced instead of course grades in upper secondary school.

The conditions for values-based actors in the welfare sector will be improved. The activities of non-profit organisations that benefit from government grants must respect democratic principles.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

In the book *Tills alla dör* [‘Until they’re all dead’], a woman from Rinkeby in Stockholm utters these heart-rending words: “It is our children who are dying. We need help.”

Gang crime must be crushed with the full force of society. The investment in ten thousand additional police employees by 2024 continues and is enabling a stronger police presence throughout the country.

Anyone who commits multiple offences should be punished more severely. Reduced sentences for young adult offenders will be abolished for serious offences. The Youth Care Act will also be reviewed to ensure that sentences reflect the severity of the serious offences we are now seeing committed at ever younger ages.

Without witnesses, the work of police officers and prosecutors is very difficult and, ultimately, the rule of law is jeopardised. There will be tougher penalties for obstructing the course of justice and for perjury, sentence mitigation will be introduced for those who assist in the investigation of another person’s offences, and better support will be offered to witnesses.

Crime prevention must be intensified. For this reason, social interventions

must be possible even without parental consent. The municipalities will be given statutory responsibility for crime prevention activities.

Exclusion orders will be investigated with a view to protecting children from destructive areas and environments. More secure places are being created at National Board of Institutional Care facilities. Safety, security and staff training will be increased.

* * *

Earlier this year, five women were murdered by their husbands in the space of just three weeks. Children lost their mothers and families were left shocked and grieving. Men's violence against women must be combated vigorously and decisively.

A new ground for more severe penalties for offences motivated by hate against women will be examined and criminal law protection against psychological violence will be considered. Access to high-quality sheltered accommodation throughout the country will be ensured.

Children must also be protected from violence. An inquiry is reviewing protection for children with regard to contact with a parent who has used violence or is guilty of some other serious violation. Criminal law protection of children against sexual abuse will be strengthened. A comprehensive national strategy to prevent and combat violence against children is now being developed. Next year a Little Sweetheart's law will be adopted, strengthening protection for children and young people in care.

No child or young person should be forced to live under oppression. The Government's efforts to end honour-based crimes continue. A national centre of expertise on honour-based violence is being established and a specific criminal classification for honour-based offences will be introduced.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

More than twenty months have now passed since the Government decided to classify COVID-19 as a dangerous threat to public health. People who have not yet been vaccinated have an important duty to do so – a duty to themselves, to others, and to ease the burden on the health care system.

So far, more than 70 per cent of all adults in Sweden have received two

doses of the vaccine. This is a great success for research, for health care and for European cooperation. Thanks to increasing vaccination rates, Sweden is in a new and better position. We are all looking forward to the day when all the restrictions can be lifted. But we are not there yet.

The Government has appointed an inquiry to apply the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and enhance society's ability to manage future pandemics and epidemics.

The pandemic is still very much around, everywhere in the world. This is why the Government is taking active steps to ensure equitable global access to vaccines. No one is safe until everyone is safe.

Thanks to responsible fiscal policy, Sweden entered the pandemic with strong public finances. The Government has pursued aggressive crisis-response policies to save jobs and businesses, ensure that welfare services can cope and reduce the economic impacts of the pandemic. Sweden's economy is now making a strong recovery.

* * *

The COVID-19 pandemic is slowly loosening its grip. The pandemic is a new chapter in our country's long history.

An unwritten future lies ahead. We have reason to feel confident. Our democracy is strong. We live in peace in one of the most gender-equal countries in the world. Trust between people and a desire to contribute to our world are hallmarks of our country. We have societal challenges but we also have the tools to solve them.

We will meet our challenges together. And we will do so in the conviction that the society we bequeath to our children must be stronger and more sustainable than the society bequeathed to us.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Address by PM Stefan Löfven at the Climate Ambition Summit 2020

Published 12 December 2020

Stockholm, 12 December 2020. Check against delivery.

Your excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Paris Agreement was a triumph for multilateral cooperation. It gave us hope that we could curb climate change and rising temperatures.

During these five years, we have seen progress.

But science never lies. Current measures under the Paris Agreement are not enough.

The clock is ticking. We need to step up the pace.

Sweden will do its part:

- internationally, providing finance and innovative technology; and
- nationally, by increasing measures to become the world's first fossil-free welfare state.

Last week, we presented our national Long-Term Strategy.

By 2045, Sweden is to have zero net emissions of greenhouse gases, and thereafter achieve negative emissions.

This autumn, our first global pilot plant for fossil-free steel production was launched, Hybrit. This is one of the biggest technological shifts in steel

manufacturing in a thousand years.

In addition, a Swedish mining company, LKAB will invest a further 40 billion EUR to lower its emission, which could help their customers world-wide reduce their emissions by 35 million tonnes per year. It is equivalent to two thirds of Swedish national emissions.

The Government's Budget Bill for 2021 includes up to 1.5 billion euros in green credit guarantees.

On export finance – in addition to the existing ban on financing exports to coal power plants – by the end of 2020, no more export credit guarantees will be given for deals linked to the exploration, extraction and transportation of coal.

By 2022, we will end Swedish export credits for investments for fossil-fuel prospecting and extraction.

Last week, we hosted the second summit of the Leadership Group for Industry Transition, which we launched together with India last year. I am happy to announce that Sweden will provide a multiannual contribution over three years to the Climate Investment Fund amounting to 30 million euros.

We are the first country to provide multiannual financial contributions to the Adaptation Fund and the Least Developed Countries Fund, amounting to 100 million euro for the period 2019-2022.

We need to step up our ambition and action. It is a responsibility for all countries.

Let's walk the talk!



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven's address to the nation Sunday 22 November

Published 25 November 2020

Check against delivery.

Tonight I would like to say a few words that I'd like you to bear in mind now as winter darkness settles over us.

This year, the world has changed before our very eyes.

Early this spring, we were faced with a huge challenge in the form of a pandemic.

The COVID-19 virus forced us all to make major sacrifices.

We have had to refrain from so much of what we hold dear.

We have had to cancel or avoid so many of our normal activities.

And tonight, in late November 2020, it is clear that it will be some time before we can return to what we consider 'normal'.

For this reason, I will once again ask you for something that is very difficult but completely necessary.

The short respite we experienced during the summer and autumn is truly over.

Then, neighbours and friends could get together outdoors for a cup of coffee.

We were able to meet our frail relatives out in the fresh air.

Life did not return to normal – but there were moments during those lovely summer days when it almost felt as if it had.

This spring, many people said that at least COVID-19 had struck during the bright days of March rather than the dark days of November.

Now it is November.

People's health and lives are still at risk.

And the danger is increasing.

More and more people are being infected.

More and more ICU places are being used for treating seriously ill COVID-19 patients. More and more people are dying.

Let us remember that more than 6 000 people in Sweden have already died from COVID-19.

Let us remember that for every person who has died, there are people who have lost a beloved parent, a beloved child or a beloved friend.

Let us remember how overworked health and social care staff were.

And let us remember that they are still hard at work, day and night, to save lives.

What we as a country do wrong now, we will suffer for later. What we get right now, we will benefit from later.

What we do now will affect how we celebrate Lucia Day.

How we celebrate Christmas.

Who is still with us at Christmas time.

It may sound harsh. It may sound brutal.

But this is exactly how harsh and brutal reality is.

We know what we have to do to flatten the curve of transmission.

We've done it before. We did it last spring.

Then, when COVID-19 arrived in our country, we all agreed to take

responsibility.

We took responsibility for Sweden. We protected ourselves, our loved ones and people we don't even know.

We took responsibility and we gave health and social care staff a chance to cope with the acute crisis.

We did it together. This is our strength, Sweden's strength.

This autumn, too many of us have neglected to follow the advice and recommendations.

But now we see that people are starting to take responsibility again. That fewer people are travelling, and more are working from home.

Continue to do so – and stay strong.

But we all must to do more.

It depends on you and me.

So:

Stay updated as to the advice and recommendations that apply where you are.

Only get together with those you live with.

If you live alone, choose no more than one or two friends to socialise with.

But continue to keep your distance.

Stay at home if you have the slightest symptoms.

Wash your hands often and carefully.

And employers: if possible, arrange for your employees to work from home.

Regarding all the things you'd like to do but that are not necessary:

Cancel them. Re-book them. Postpone them.

It will be some time before this is over. And until then, this is the new 'normal' for all of society, for all of Sweden.

To those who feel that everything is dark now, let me say: the situation is not hopeless.

Sweden is being tested. But Sweden will pull through.
Our health and social care are functioning, despite everything.
Buildings and roads are being built, despite everything.
Our children are getting an education and are eager to learn, despite everything.

We must take this situation very seriously, but we will do so with discipline, determination and courage.

To those who may feel that this doesn't concern them, let me say:

Even if you only become mildly ill, you can still infect others. In restaurants, at work, during meals at home, on buses or in shops.

A stranger you infect may become very ill.
A friend you infect may need hospital care.
A grandparent you infect may die.

These are the people for whom you should make sacrifices. These are the people for whom you must show determination, self-discipline and a sense of responsibility.

When this crisis is over, we must all be able to remember how we helped one another.

Remember the solidarity. Remember the feeling of community and the feeling of doing the right thing. Remember how we pushed back the spread of infection and lifted our country.

But this means that here and now, we must show our solidarity and our sense of responsibility.

And that these are stronger than the virus we are going to defeat.

So now let's get on with this.

Together.

For Sweden.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at the High-level meeting on Beijing+25

Published 01 October 2020

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action. Check against delivery.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Gender equality is a concern for us all: women, men, girls and boys.

Not only is it a moral or legal obligation to promote equality and rights for women and girls, it is also a question of common sense – and smart economics.

No society will fully prosper if half of its population is denied access to education, to the possibility of working and to supporting a family.

The spring of 2020 was supposed to be a celebration of gender equality. A year to salute the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, the 20th anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325, and the fifth anniversary of the 2030 Agenda.

Instead, the COVID-19 pandemic has on a global level exposed inequality and increased the gap between women and men:

Men's violence against women, including honour-related violence, has increased during the pandemic.

More girls have been taken out of education to be married off.

Sexual abuse cases against women and girls have increased.

It is happening in my country and across the world. It is appalling and must never be accepted. We need to show courage and the leadership to take action.

At the same time, women have often been at the forefront of the pandemic. As doctors, nurses and caretakers in intensive care units, emergency rooms and elderly care homes.

I lead the world's first feminist government. A gender equality perspective is central to all government ministries and to all our priorities, in decision-making and when allocating resources.

Sweden will remain a progressive country for women's rights and gender equality. It is our experience that having an income of their own is decisive for women's empowerment and economic independence. This is a conviction we bring with us to the table as co-leader of the Action Coalition on Economic Justice and Rights in the framework of the Generation Equality campaign.

Now, is the time to start building back better – human rights, democracy, the rule of law and gender equality must be at the heart of our efforts, leaving no one behind.

Now, is the time when we, as leaders and decision-makers, must take joint steps to speed up implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

Sweden is ready to do its part.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Statement of Government Policy

Published 08 September 2020

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, the Riksdag, 08 September 2020.

Your Majesties,
Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of the Riksdag,

Sweden is a country to be proud of.

We are leading the world in the climate transition.
Our country's natural beauty is extraordinary, our popular movements dynamic and our parental insurance system outstanding.

The generations that came before us built a country where everyone is expected to take their share of responsibility for Sweden, but where everyone also has every opportunity to achieve their full potential.

We have safety nets and support for people who become unemployed or sick; we have free education and innovative businesses.

This is our Sweden, and we should be proud of it.
This is our country, and we will make it even better. That is our common task.

Mr Speaker,

The COVID-19 crisis is testing our country.

I would like to thank all the parties and members of the Riksdag for their cooperation in these difficult times for Sweden.

You have given every person in Sweden reason to be proud of our

democracy.

COVID-19 will shape our country for a long time to come, and society is equipped to deal with new outbreaks.

The Government has decided to take part in the EU's joint procurement of vaccines.

Large-scale testing, physical distancing and contact tracing will continue.

A commission is currently evaluating our society's overall response to the COVID-19 crisis. The commission's first report is due by the end of the year and the final report will be submitted in February 2022.

This year, we have spoken much more than usual about responsibility and solidarity.

Every individual has had to take significant responsibility to help Sweden cope with the COVID-19 crisis – and we will need every person to help build a stronger Sweden.

The Sweden that was hit by COVID-19 was not perfect, with deficiencies in care for older people, ongoing climate change that impacts our children's future, and cracks in the welfare system that is meant to guarantee people's security.

That's why we will not go back to how Sweden was before the crisis. We will build back even better.

We now have the opportunity to simultaneously create jobs and address societal challenges.

We will do this by investing in health care, care of older people and the climate transition.

The basis of the Government's policy is the January Agreement, the broad political cooperation agreement that provides stability, protects our open and democratic society, and offers concrete solutions to Sweden's societal challenges.

The solidarity that has characterised our country during the crisis will also be needed in the future. The task of strengthening Sweden is a joint one, involving the social partners, civil society and the engagement of individuals.

Together we will manage COVID-19.

Together we will work Sweden out of the economic crisis.

And together we will build our country back stronger than before.

Mr Speaker,

The COVID-19 virus has severely impacted people's lives and health, but the economy has also been hit. Many entrepreneurs and employees have had a very difficult year.

When COVID-19 hit, Sweden had its lowest national debt since 1977. Our economic strength enabled measures such as short-term lay-offs and reorientation support, which have saved jobs and businesses.

We are now moving forward. We need to continue to keep transmission rates low, but the transition from crisis-response policies to long-term investments is now beginning. This involves a historic budget bill containing new proposals worth more than SEK 100 billion.

Our entire society needs to be on board to work Sweden out of this crisis. Through investments in health care, care of older people and the climate transition we will strengthen Sweden while giving people jobs here and now. Entrepreneurs must be able to hire, and it has to be easier for young people to get their first job and home of their own.

A high employment rate is crucial to Sweden's prosperity. But jobs are also crucial for the individual, for everyone who gets up when the alarm goes off, has a cup of strong coffee with their breakfast and then goes to work. Jobs provide a means of support but also a sense of belonging, the possibility to build our own lives – and contribute to our country. To better enable needs to be met, the reform of Arbetsförmedlingen (the Swedish Public Employment Service) will continue.

People need to be equipped to take the jobs that are available. For this reason, the Adult Education Initiative will continue to be expanded throughout the country. Particular focus will be placed on training programmes for shortage occupations.

Research and innovation are required to create jobs and strengthen Sweden's competitiveness. A research and innovation bill will be presented in the autumn.

Labour law will be modernised and adapted to today's labour market, while maintaining the balance between the social partners. If the social partners reach an agreement on how to reform the Employment Protection Act, the Government will put forward corresponding proposals.

During the COVID-19 crisis, many people who are able to work from home have been doing so. Remote working, digital coffee breaks with colleagues and digital meetings have become the norm. Expansion of digital infrastructure throughout the country will continue.

It should be possible to live and work anywhere in the country. Opportunities for running a business in rural areas will continue to be improved. Investing in housing and infrastructure is an effective way of both stimulating the economy and creating job opportunities throughout Sweden.

We have a historic opportunity to implement measures that provide jobs here and now – but that also strengthen Sweden. We will seize this opportunity. Together we will work Sweden out of the crisis and build a more sustainable society.

Mr Speaker,

Global warming is the defining issue of our time. The effects of a warmer climate – fires, drought, rising sea levels – continue to impact people. The world's poorest are the least to blame for the climate emergency but they are the hardest hit.

Sweden's goal is to be the world's first fossil-free welfare nation. We will continue to be a world leader in fighting global warming and implementing the 2030 Agenda.

Sweden's world-leading position on climate transition and electrification benefits our companies, our exports, our workers, our welfare and our country.

A green tax shift will be implemented, which means that taxes on environmentally damaging activities will be increased and taxes on labour and enterprise will be lowered.

Sweden's first climate action plan is being implemented.

The Government is currently making the biggest rail investment of modern

times. Next year, the Government intends to present an infrastructure bill to the Riksdag containing proposals for the long-term development of our infrastructure.

The solidarity and determination that society is demonstrating during the COVID-19 crisis are needed to ensure a just climate transition. Together we must transition our society – for the sake of the climate, for the sake of Sweden.

During this unusual summer, more Swedes than ever have explored our fantastic country. Many have taken advantage of the right of common access, which is enshrined in the Constitution, to roam in our beautiful mountains and deep forests.

Listened to the silence, breathed the fresh air, discovered how delicious a chocolate bar tastes after a long hike.

Sustainable tourism is important to Sweden, and the Government will therefore improve the conditions for the recovery of the tourism and hospitality industry.

We are taught that when we are out in nature, we must not leave any litter behind – a principle that applies in other situations, too.

We need to make the transition away from our current unsustainable use of resources.

The Government is currently drafting the first Swedish action plan on realising a circular economy. New rules on single-use plastics will be introduced.

Sweden's coasts will be places to be proud of. Our seas will be full of life. The Government is continuing to work to reduce the effects of eutrophication, achieve sustainable fisheries and ensure that no plastics end up in the sea.

Sweden's natural environments, with their great biodiversity, well-managed forests and nature reserves, must be preserved so that future generations can enjoy them as well.

Mr Speaker,

We can all take pride in Sweden's welfare system.

We have large hospitals and small village schools. We have preschools and home-help services; we have safety nets and springboards.

A welfare system built on the idea that nobody should be left behind or held back.

Even before this crisis, the Government had begun to boost Swedish schools, care for older people and health care. Since 2014, we have invested heavily in welfare services, which now employ 100 000 more people. We need to do more; we will do more.

The COVID-19 crisis has clearly exposed cracks in our society – cracks that can only be mended through substantial investments and hard political effort.

Older people, who have helped build Sweden, are entitled to a good life in their old age and a good pension. I can now announce that pensioners' finances will continue to be reinforced.

Next year, a special pension supplement of up to SEK 600 per month will be introduced for those who worked hard their entire lives in low-paid jobs. This money will make a difference. Pensions and earned income will no longer be taxed differently.

At the same time, the Government will take the next step towards raising pensions in the long term through in-depth discussions in the Working Group on Pensions. In the Government's view, payments into the pension system need to increase.

Anyone working in care for older people has an important job involving great responsibility. This needs to be clear. In her novella *De levande* ('The Living'), Catrin Jansson, a licensed practical nurse working in the home-help service, wrote:

"The evenings are the worst; so many people, so little time. It is hard to be human. The needs are so great, the assistance so little.

The worry comes in the evenings, the fatigue, the thoughts, the constant alarms; there is no time for the unexpected. But the impossible becomes possible."

Working in care for older people must be attractive, and care staff must

receive clear recognition.

To increase skill levels, the Government is implementing a care for older people initiative.

This means that people will be able to train as nursing assistants or licensed practical nurses during paid working hours.

It is estimated that the care for older people initiative will lead to more than 10 000 new permanent jobs in the sector. 'Licensed practical nurse' will become a protected professional title.

There are calls that everyone fears when the telephone rings, and that many have received this year: the call to inform them that a family member has been admitted to hospital, or that their condition has sadly deteriorated.

At that moment, life stops; the day-to-day problems that previously seemed so huge suddenly become trivial.

Sweden must have equitable, world-class health care that is accessible to all.

The COVID-19 crisis has placed the greatest strain on our health services in modern times.

Health and care staff have demonstrated great skill in very challenging conditions. You have impressed an entire nation. You have earned the gratitude of an entire nation.

To ensure the availability of emergency care, many patients' appointments and operations have been postponed. The health care system must have resources to handle the backlog of care needs and care related to COVID-19. The needs in our country are great. The reinforcement of the general grants to local authorities will continue.

Primary care will be reformed. The Government wants to make it easier to get appointments at health centres throughout the country, strengthen care services for older people and others, and improve the conditions for preventive interventions. Continuity of care is crucial.

Crisis preparedness in health services is being strengthened. Both public and private actors' responsibility for ensuring provision of pharmaceuticals is being investigated, along with the possible introduction of contingency pharmacies with this specific responsibility.

Compulsory schools in Sweden remained open throughout the spring term.

This is a sentence that has almost certainly never been uttered in any previous Statement of Government Policy. In these new conditions, teachers and other school staff have done a fantastic job.

There must be order in school classrooms – and order in school governance. A national plan for conducive learning environments and security in schools is being developed. The Swedish Schools Inspectorate will be given a broader mandate to close independent and municipal schools with substantial and persistent failings.

Knowledge and learning are the guiding principles of the new revised course and subject syllabuses, and thus of the Swedish school system. Pupils' learning outcomes have improved in several international educational performance assessments, and preliminary statistics from the first half of this year show that the proportion of Year 9 pupils who are eligible for upper secondary school is increasing.

The Government's focus is on ensuring that knowledge attainment continues to increase. School resources will be allocated according to need, and schools will be more equitable. An inquiry on returning responsibility for the school system to central government will be appointed. The waiting lists for child and adolescent psychiatry will be reduced and school health and welfare services will be safeguarded.

Skilled preschool teachers, teachers and head teachers are the foundation of successful schools. A professional programme will be designed to enable preschool teachers, teachers and head teachers to grow within their profession, develop their teaching and contribute to research.

The Swedish welfare system will be strengthened – this year and in the years to come.

Mr Speaker,

The objective of Sweden's foreign policy is to create security in our country and around the world. The major challenges of our time are best tackled through multilateral cooperation – in the UN, in the EU and in our neighbourhood.

We build our common security together.

The EU is our most important foreign and security policy arena. No other

cooperation is as crucial to Sweden's security and peace.

The EU is also central to Sweden's economy, welfare and climate action. Its crisis preparedness must be strengthened, and the single market must be developed to withstand stronger competition in the global economy. Sweden will participate fully in and shape EU cooperation in a way that safeguards both Sweden's and Europe's interests.

The EU is built on our common values. Sweden will continue to push for all countries to respect principles such as judicial independence and media freedom. Countries that do not respect the rule of law should not be entitled as before to EU grants.

Sweden's security policy remains firmly in place. Our non-participation in military alliances serves our country well and contributes to stability and security in northern Europe. Sweden will not take a passive stance if another Nordic country or EU Member State suffers a disaster or an attack. We expect these countries to act in the same way if Sweden is affected.

Sweden stands up for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We condemn Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its illegal annexation of Crimea. We support the EU sanctions against Russia. At the same time, we will have contact and seek dialogue with Russia and Russian society.

We support the Belarusian people's quest for democracy. The developments in Belarus affect security in Sweden's neighbourhood.

The security situation in Sweden's neighbourhood and in Europe has deteriorated over time. For this reason, the Government considers that total defence capabilities need to continue to be strengthened and increase significantly. Considerable additional resources are being allocated to military defence. Sweden should continue to deepen its bilateral and multilateral defence and security cooperation.

Civil defence is being vigorously strengthened after many years of dismantlement. Preparations to set up an agency for psychological defence will continue. A national cyber security centre will be set up this year.

A bank tax will be introduced to fund defence investments.

Europe must take greater responsibility for its own security. The European security order must continue to be defended, including every country's right to choose its own security path. In 2021, Sweden will chair the Organization

for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). This is a considerable responsibility in these uncertain times.

We welcome the Riksdag's consensus on the written communication on Sweden's policy on China. Sweden and the EU will pursue an active policy in relation to China, based on our values and interests. We support the 'One Country, Two Systems' principle to preserve Hong Kong's autonomy.

The transatlantic relationship is essential to the security and prosperity of Sweden and Europe.

Nordic cooperation is unique. Our countries must learn from how the COVID-19 crisis was managed and stand united in the future.

Sweden will continue to be the leading force in the world for feminist foreign policy. The COVID-19 crisis has brought the need for equality and health care into sharp relief all over the world. The focus of development cooperation on democracy will continue. Sweden will push for effective and responsible development assistance globally.

Multilateralism is the watchword as the United Nations celebrates its 75th anniversary. Sweden will continue to do its part to promote peace, freedom and cooperation.

Mr Speaker,

On 15 June, 61 new police constables began working in Police District Stockholm Syd. Police District Nordvästra Skåne has 22 new police constables, while Police District Västerbotten has 11.

Sweden now has almost 21 000 police officers, the highest number ever. We are halfway to meeting our target of 10 000 more police employees by 2024.

Reinforcement of the Swedish Police will continue.

When gangs spread fear and violence, those affected are often hard-working people living in vulnerable areas.

It is society's responsibility to push back against organised crime. Our laws apply in every city, every neighbourhood and every square. No criminal individual, gang or family should believe that they are stronger than society.

The penalties for gang-related crime will be more severe, and public authorities will be given new tools to work together to tackle gangs.

Measures will be implemented to break the culture of silence and strengthen the legal process. The penalties for recruiting young people into crime and for offences linked to disputes between criminals will be more severe.

The Government proposes abolishing reduced sentences for young adults involved in serious crime. The expansion of National Board of Institutional Care facilities and Swedish Prison and Probation Service correctional institutions and remand centres will continue.

It is entirely possible to push back against serious crime. All the increasingly severe penalties, additional police officers and increased resources to law enforcement authorities are important.

But to succeed, it is vital that we stop recruitment into crime. No teenager should ever see a life of crime as their future. The engagement of all members of society is essential to achieve this.

In her book *Osebol*, about the northern Swedish village where she grew up, Marit Kapla interviews villager Lars Jörlén. He describes how he and his school colleagues drove around, picking up pupils whose parents did not get them off to school in the morning.

“It wasn’t our responsibility but people helped out.

We took the approach – or at least tried to – that every child was everyone’s child.

Even though a child has parents, they’re still a child of the community.”

Social workers, teachers, football coaches, school staff and neighbours – everyone can do their part to support and guide teenagers who might be heading down the wrong path.

Municipalities will be given a statutory responsibility to prevent crime. The Government is prioritising prevention. Our entire society needs to pull in the same direction.

We must push back against criminal gangs.

We must ensure that today’s young people do not become tomorrow’s criminals.

We need a whole, strong society to succeed.

Mr Speaker,

Sweden must continue to protect gender equality, equality and democracy – in our country and around the world.

Despite the fact that racism and Nazism should have been relegated to the scrapheap of history long, long ago, they are flourishing today. This year, African Swedes, for example, have raised their voices against the racism they have been subjected to. All members of society must be involved in stopping racism in all its forms and expressions.

The Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism has been postponed due to COVID-19 but will take place in October 2021.

Swedish migration policy must ensure legal certainty and be effective and humane. The right to asylum must be protected. Sweden has shouldered a great deal of responsibility for providing a safe haven for people who have left their country to seek protection. More EU Member States must take their share of responsibility. The Cross-party Committee of Inquiry on Migration will soon present its final report. Work on a sustainable regulatory framework for future migration policy will then continue.

Anyone coming to Sweden who is not entitled to stay must return. But every person who flees to Sweden and is entitled to stay must receive all the help they need to become part of this society.

Every person in Sweden must take part in our society and know their rights. The Government intends to set up an independent, national human rights institute in 2021. Ahead of this, broad parliamentary support will be sought.

Sweden will continue to strengthen the free formation of public opinion, protect freedom of expression and support media freedom throughout the country. Information about Swedish society provided to asylum seekers will be expanded and become a mandatory part of the asylum process.

No child should ever have to worry about violence or being forced into marriage. This is why we are now drawing up a national strategy to combat all forms of violence against children, including honour-based oppression. In

addition, a specific criminal classification for honour-based offences will be introduced.

Everyone in Sweden must have the same opportunities to achieve their full potential. Greater economic equality is needed for this to become reality. And no child's future should be decided by their parents' income – or lack of income. The Equality Commission has presented important proposals for increasing economic equality.

Reforms to strengthen and promote the rights of LGBTI individuals will continue. Parental legislation is being reviewed to determine how it can be made more gender-neutral.

Sweden will be a cultural nation to be reckoned with. Culture unites us, broadens our horizons and inspires new ideas. The cultural sector has been hit hard by COVID-19. It has impacted the finances of every cultural creator – as well as Sweden as a country. Daily life loses its vibrancy when cinemas, concert halls and theatres are closed.

For people to be moved by a powerful poem, enjoy a concert or find a new favourite song, there must be people creating them. Financial security for cultural creators will be safeguarded. A written communication on arts policy will be presented. Culture aimed at children and young people will be strengthened.

Sport brings people together and promotes health. The Swedish sports movement will be given the conditions it needs to weather the current crisis and reach all children and young people who want to take part in sport.

Sweden will continue to be a country where gender equality, equality and democracy are a given in every part of our society.

Mr Speaker,

COVID-19 is putting Sweden to the test. But we, our country, will pass this test too. We are in this crisis together, as a country where we all take responsibility.

The strengths highlighted by the crisis are strengths we must carry forth as we build our country stronger than it was before. Responsibility. Solidarity. It has become so clear – we are all dependent on each other.

We have a new political landscape.

The Government I lead will do what it takes to mend the cracks in our society.

But to succeed, we need to face the future as we have faced the crisis.

As one country, where we continue to take responsibility for each other,
for Sweden,

for our society,

where we continue to face hard times and good times together.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at inauguration of new HYBRIT pilot plant

Published 31 August 2020

On Monday 31 August 2020, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, together with Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin, inaugurated the new HYBRIT pilot plant for the production of fossil-free sponge iron in Luleå. Check against delivery.

Thank you for having me here today.

Steel: it is in the cars in the carpark, in the cutlery in the kitchen, in jewellery, hip replacements and scalpels. Steel: it reinforces our apartment blocks. Forms our bridges, roofs and trains.

Steel is jobs.

Steel has built Sweden, and steel has built our welfare system.

But steel – or rather the manufacture of steel – also threatens our way of life.

The steel industry is one of the sectors that emits the most carbon dioxide in the world. For every tonne of iron that pours from a blast furnace, more than a tonne of carbon dioxide is also produced. This is the fault of coking coal. And this is what you have decided to remedy.

We are embarking on the biggest technological shift in steel manufacturing in a thousand years.

Today, you are laying the foundations that will enable the Swedish steel

industry to be entirely fossil – and carbon dioxide – free in 20 years.

This is ambitious. But it is necessary.

Friends,

That we are standing here today – in the midst of a pandemic that has brought society's problems into immediate focus and slammed the brakes on the economy – feels significant.

I believe it is clear that the society the pandemic affected was not perfect.

We must not return to how everything was before, how things were done before.

We must build something better.

And this is what you are doing here.

We all realise that the pandemic will affect Sweden for a long time to come. The Government is now shifting from temporary crisis-response policies to investments to get the wheels of the economy turning and create new jobs. At this time we need hope in the future, and the steelworkers here in Luleå are showing what the path ahead may look like.

Right now we have a historic opportunity to do things that provide jobs here and now – but also hasten the climate transition that everyone realises is necessary. And lay the foundations for new Swedish export successes and jobs in the long run.

Global warming continues regardless of the pandemic.

Climate change remains the most momentous issue for our planet.

Climate change means that we must transition.

Things will change in towns and cities and societies, for businesses and people.

Climate transition must therefore concern social security, the distribution of resources and jobs.

Precisely the things that Sweden has been uniquely good at doing.

And I hope that the HYBRIT Project will show that if – in collaboration and agreement – we make the right investments in the labour market, in education and infrastructure, we can succeed. Politics, academia and the business sector. Together.

From unemployment and climate threats, green jobs with zero emissions can soon grow. Here there is an opportunity to not only export steel without coking coal , but also technology that is globally unique.

In Luleå, you are building something new, something better.

And together we can rebuild Sweden as the world's first fossil-free welfare nation. Together we can build Sweden out of the crisis.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister's address to the nation, 22 March 2020

Published 23 March 2020

Check against delivery.

This evening, I would like to speak directly to you, the Swedish people.

The COVID-19 virus is testing our country, our society and all of us as fellow human beings.

Every person now needs to mentally prepare for what is coming.

In Sweden, the COVID-19 virus is now spreading in the community.

Lives, health and jobs are at risk.

More people will get the disease, more people will have to say a final farewell to a loved one.

The only way to manage this crisis is to face it as a society, with everyone taking responsibility for themselves, for each other and for our country.

I know that many of you are worried.

Worried about how our society will manage this crisis.

Worried about yourself, about someone you love who is in an at-risk group, or that your job will disappear.

I understand this. The coming months will be trying. But our society is strong.

Our government agencies are working hard day and night. Our health care and education professionals and many, many other people in critical jobs are keeping our country going.

I, as Prime Minister, and the Government I lead, will take every decision that

is necessary to protect the lives, health and jobs of as many people as we possibly can.

In Sweden, public gatherings of more than 500 people have been banned, and upper secondary school and university education is now conducted online.

I want you to be prepared for the possibility of further far-reaching decisions, sometimes at short notice, sometimes disrupting our everyday lives even more.

The aim of the Government's work is to limit the spread of infection, to prevent too many people becoming seriously ill at the same time. But also to secure health care resources, and at this difficult time lessen the impact for those of you who work and for businesses.

Be prepared for this to continue for a long time.
Be ready for the situation to change rapidly.

But you should also know that we as a society are tackling this crisis with our collective strength.

Now we all have a great personal responsibility.

There are a few critical times in life when you must make sacrifices, not just for your own sake, but also for those around you, for your fellow human beings, and for our country.

That time is now. That day has come. And the duty is everyone's.

Each and every one of us has a responsibility to prevent the spread of infection, to protect older people and those in other vulnerable groups.

None of us should risk it. None of us should go to work with symptoms of illness.

Young, old, rich, poor – it doesn't matter, everyone must play their part.

This also applies to those of you who are 70 or older, or who belong to other at-risk groups.

I understand that it is frustrating to have to restrict your life, your social interactions, but right now it is necessary. For the sake of your own health of

course, but also to protect other people and give the health care system a chance to manage the situation.

And the adults among us must now behave like adults. Not spread panic or rumours.

No one is facing this crisis alone, but everyone bears a huge responsibility. Each and every one of us.

I know that the demands are huge. But this is the only way we can hold back the spread of infection.

I know that some restrictions are trying. But this is how we can make sure that the health care system can manage the crisis.

I know that the situation feels tough. But following the advice of the authorities is every person's duty. Yours – and mine.

Many of you are taking your responsibility as fellow human beings.

You are helping your neighbours with their shopping, you are supporting your local restaurant by buying a takeaway lunch, you are not visiting your grandmother – but you are ringing her every day for a chat instead.

This is solidarity in practice.

I am proud to be Sweden's Prime Minister when I see what so many people are doing for their fellow human beings.

You are showing that when things are at their toughest, our solidarity is strongest.

I am sure that every one of you in Sweden will take your personal responsibility and do your utmost to safeguard other people's health and help each other. And that you will be able to look back on this crisis and be proud of your role, your contributions for your fellow human beings, for our society and for Sweden.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Statement of Government EU Policy

Published 13 November 2019

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, the Riksdag, 13 November 2019.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Last Saturday, it was exactly thirty years since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

The Iron Curtain and the Cold War gave way and instead increased cooperation flourished in Europe.

Historic cooperation.

And today, twenty-five years ago, Swedes went to polling stations throughout the country in a referendum on EU membership.

Ahead of that referendum, Sweden was alive with debate. Stickers on coat lapels and car bumpers declared either

“Yes to Europe” or “No to the EU”.

Our identity as Europeans was not always self-evident to everyone.

Sweden had managed to stay out of the wars that had plagued the rest of Europe.

Perhaps we saw ourselves more as Skåningar, Stockholmers or Swedes, than as continental Europeans.

At the same time,
the EU was a unique peace project that made countries stronger through
exchange and trade.

And Mr/Madam Speaker,
twenty-five years ago today, a majority voted for Sweden to join the
European Union.

It is therefore particularly appropriate today – for the first time – to have the
opportunity
to present the Statement of Government EU Policy.

I want to present the Government's views on the European Union
and present the five most important priorities for the coming years.

The political debate about the EU is no longer about yes or no, for or against.

Now we are discussing the substantive issues,
societal problems and Sweden's role in the Union.

And even if we hold different views about these things,
one thing is clear:

- A cohesive EU is our best asset in an uncertain world.
- An open EU is Sweden's best tool for more jobs and economic growth.
- And a united EU is the best guarantor for peace.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Membership of the European Union is a cornerstone for Sweden.

It is crucial to our economy, our security and our voice in the world.

Sweden is an export country,
and more than 70 per cent of all the goods we export – paper, cars,
electronics – go to other countries in Europe.

Today, Sweden has strong influence in the EU, our voice is heard and our
actions have significance.

But sometimes it has also seemed that Sweden has been in two minds about

EU cooperation.

That it has not always served our interests.

Our ability to influence the EU's decisions, direction and development is of fundamental importance to protecting our national interests.

Sweden's point of departure must be that we participate fully in EU cooperation and are active in shaping all of its parts in a way that protects Swedish interests.

Sweden must be proactive on the issues we prioritise.

What does this mean?

It means that other countries in the EU must know that they can count on Sweden.

We can choose to opt out of some things, such as the euro. That decision remains in place.

But as a general rule, Sweden will use our opportunities to influence the EU, quite simply because it is a fundamental national interest.

We take every opportunity to improve the Union.

This is why the Government wants Sweden to:

- Join the European Public Prosecutor's Office.
- Continue to engage in the enhanced defence cooperation.
- Do more in the EU to fight crime, and why we will consider membership of the banking union.

We in Sweden always try to gain traction for our ideas and create new alliances, but at the same time we know that cooperation requires compromise.

Because the alternative to cooperation is introversion and nationalism, the ultimate consequences of which we can see in Europe's graveyards.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

To improve cooperation,

the Government considers that the five most important issues for the EU in coming years are:

- Democracy and the rule of law.
- The climate.
- Jobs.
- Migration.
- Security.

I would like to begin with the very basis of all our work in the Union.

All Member States have agreed on a few fundamental values, including: equality, democracy, the rule of law.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Europe was a continent of optimism. There was a feeling that freedom and democracy could not be stopped.

Today, the situation is different. In some Member States, the independence of the judicial system, the media and universities is under threat.

This harms the entire Union.

Even if countries can hold different views on issues and need to compromise, we must all respect the fundamental values that EU cooperation is built on.

Because the history of our continent shows what can happen when we turn a blind eye to violations of democratic rights and freedoms.

But also because the entire EU project would otherwise become watered down.

Trust between countries would be undermined, investments would be lost, trade would fall and jobs put at risk.

Sweden will never compromise on equality, democracy and the rule of law.

It is the EU's responsibility to ensure that the rest of Europe is not tempted to do so either.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Leading the climate transition is an enormous opportunity for Europe.

No person, company or country can manage the transition by themselves. It is as simple as that.

Here we need the EU's forte: cooperation.

The EU must lead the transition.

Not only because it is our duty to our children, but also to strengthen our countries.

When our Member States lead the transition, with innovation and research, our companies have the climate-smart solutions that the whole world is looking for.

- This improves the exporting countries' economies,
- creates environmental benefits in the importing countries,
- means more jobs in Europe,
- more money for welfare systems,
- and strengthens the EU's position when we show that a just climate transition is possible.

Herein lies the opportunity.

A climate transition now will contribute to more jobs and stronger welfare today and in the future.

- Sweden will therefore push for a climate act at EU level. We will also work for a sharpening of the other climate legislation and for a larger share of the EU budget to go to the climate transition.
- The EU's goals for reduced emissions by 2030 must be sharpened so that ambitions are in line with the Paris Agreement's 1.5-degree target.
- And the EU must achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

The EU must take the opportunity to lead the transition, for the simple reason that we the people, our companies and the climate benefit from it.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Men's and women's lives and working conditions must be improved through the EU.

One way is by helping to create more jobs.
To make this possible
in a time of increasingly tough global competition,
the EU needs a modern and sustainable industrial policy that
is based on trade and the single market, rather than protectionism.

But the EU should not only have more jobs, we must also have decent jobs.

If you are working in Sweden, Swedish rules must be followed.

It is as simple as that.

Wage dumping and unfair competition must end.

I am proud of the success Sweden has achieved for decent jobs.

And now we are continuing.

- The principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights must be upheld,
and Sweden will continue to lead the work for a more secure labour
market.
- The Government will work for zero tolerance in the EU of fatal
accidents at work.
We want to see legislation banning carcinogenic substances in working
life.
- Our Nordic labour market model must be protected.
It is the best in the world.
So now that an initiative on minimum wages is under discussion at EU
level, the Nordic model must be respected.

With a modern industrial sector, more jobs with decent conditions and a
strong Nordic model, we will have an EU that really does improve people's
everyday lives.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

During the refugee crisis in 2015, one thing became clear:
migration must become a shared responsibility of EU Member States.
The EU has not managed this.

There have been several attempts to reach a deal on refugee policy, but little
significant progress has been made.
This is deeply unsatisfactory.

In the end, everyone will have to compromise, but we must work broadly:

- Beyond the EU's borders, by contributing to peace and development so that fewer people are forced to try to come to Europe via dangerous routes.
- At the EU's borders, to smash the ruthless smuggling of human beings, save lives and have control at the borders.
- And within the EU's borders, to achieve a more even distribution of those people who under the right of asylum have grounds to stay. If any Member State refuses to take their responsibility, it must come at a price.

Only through shared responsibility can the EU find a way forward.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

In Sweden, criminality is fought with the full force of society. But today's organised crime knows no boundaries.

According to the assessment of the Swedish Police, international burglary rings account for more than half of all domestic burglaries.

And weapons that are smuggled into the Union are used in shootings in Swedish cities.

The Government will therefore take new steps to enhance EU cooperation against international crime and terrorism. We will participate where we can.

- The Government wants to strengthen the European police and judicial cooperation: Europol och Eurojust.
We must improve cooperation on police intelligence, evidence collection and preliminary investigations.
- EU legislation on explosives needs to be sharpened.
- And security at the EU's external borders needs to be increased.
Biometric verification will allow us to know who is crossing.

This is how we will achieve a safer Union, a safer Sweden.

But,
the EU must also contribute to a safer world outside the Union.

When anti-democratic forces flex their muscles,

the EU is needed as a strong voice for peace, democracy and human rights.

There are some good examples, such as the sanctions against Russia, the Eastern Partnership and the measures against pirates around the Horn of Africa.

But all too often, the EU's voice is missing in world affairs.

We should be able to do better. The fact that cooperation on foreign affairs is based on consensus can be a strength, but in practice it can also be a hindrance. One example is that the EU sometimes fails to produce joint statements on human rights in global forums such as the UN because one or more countries choose to block them.

We should therefore look at the possibility of moving from requiring unanimity to taking qualified majority decisions in certain foreign policy areas – notwithstanding every country's right to decide its own security policy line – with the aim of strengthening the EU's voice in these areas. This concerns issues involving human rights and international conflicts.

The United Kingdom is now in the process of leaving the Union.

At the same time, other countries want to join.

There is concern that we are moving forward too fast, that the EU is not ready to accept more members.

A lot has happened since the last enlargement and we must take this into account.

At the same time, we have good reason to enhance cooperation with our neighbouring countries. If the EU does not have a presence, other powers will fill the void.

Here, the possibility of eventually becoming a member is important.

The Government supports the idea of a review of the entire enlargement process.

The process for membership negotiations must be strict.

All criteria that have been set must be fully met and continue to be followed once a country has been accepted as a member.

Everyone should be assured of this.

This is how we will build a stronger Union.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Many of us remember that November day twenty-five years ago,
when we said yes to European cooperation.

But there are also many who do not know Sweden as anything other than a
member of the EU.

Who learned about our referendum in their history lessons at school,
studied abroad thanks to the Erasmus scheme or have been seasonal workers
in another country
and perhaps see themselves as...well...Europeans.

Sweden said yes twenty-five years ago.
And we can see the power of EU cooperation today.

We have already gone from war and conflicts to peace and cohesion.

This is something to be proud of.

And the EU has improved people's lives.
Membership has strengthened our countries.

When the EU decides something, we set a standard for the rest of the world,
such as in the work against dangerous chemicals.

But we must now take the next step.
Lead the climate transition.
Continue the peace efforts.
Strengthen the cooperation.

And above all
Sweden must continue to cooperate in the EU
to improve the realities that people face,
people's lives,
both here at home
and in the rest of Europe.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Statement of Government Policy, 10 September 2019

Published 10 September 2019

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, the Riksdag, 10
September 2019.

Your Majesties, Your Royal Highnesses,

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of the Swedish Riksdag,

Sweden is our place on Earth.

Generations before us have built one of richest and fairest countries in the world. Our task is to build a stronger nation – one that can make the transition to a new era. We must ensure that our children inherit a sustainable, safe and equal society.

Our country – characterised by natural beauty, openness and hardworking people – has enormous opportunities. Only by working together can we realise Sweden's potential.

We deal with the problems we face together, not each on our own. Global warming, health care waiting times, violent crime, inequality in education and a more divided society are shared problems. We can – and will – solve them together.

Around the world, political forces that promote intolerance, isolation and simple answers to complex social problems are on the rise. Sweden has chosen a different path. We stand up for values that have made Sweden strong: community, social equality, openness and equality between women and men.

* * *

In an uncertain world, our foreign policy must safeguard our country's security.

Sweden's security policy remains firmly in place. The stability and security of northern Europe is enhanced by our military non-alignment. Sweden contributes to common security through dialogue and cooperation – within the framework of the European Union, bilaterally and through international organisations.

Our country's defence capability continues to be strengthened. A defence policy bill based on the Defence Commission's reports will be presented in 2020. There is now broad support for its financing.

The transatlantic link is being safeguarded and our defence cooperation deepened, not least around the Baltic Sea. Providing and receiving operational support will be quicker within the context of Finnish-Swedish cooperation.

Security in Sweden's neighbourhood has deteriorated. Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and intervention in Ukraine are clear violations of international law and the European security order. We support the EU sanctions while we also have contacts and dialogue with Russia and Russian society.

Sweden is facing new forms of threats and challenges. The implementation of the national security strategy continues. A national cyber security centre will be set up next year.

* * *

Membership of the European Union is a cornerstone for Sweden and a clear part of our national, European and global endeavours.

A new legislative period is now beginning in the EU. Sweden is working for a strong and effective Union: a citizen's EU that supports the creation of more jobs with fair conditions. An EU that contributes to security and is a leader in environment and climate action. We will work to uphold respect for the Union's values.

Increased risk of a full-scale trade war underscores the necessity of Sweden being a voice for free, sustainable and fair trade. Global trade must be based on order and rules – not on the right of might.

Sweden will continue to work to ensure that the UK's withdrawal from the EU takes place in an orderly manner. There is preparedness to handle a no-deal withdrawal. The UK's withdrawal heightens the need for active and offensive Swedish action in the EU.

* * *

The fight against terrorism is global. It must be fought at home and in close cooperation with other countries in Europe and the world. It must be fought within the framework of the rule of law.

A review is being conducted of the body of criminal law legislation to fight terrorism. Collaboration with a terrorist organisation will become a punishable offence. We are seeing that criminals and terrorists are trying to find new ways of channelling money to support their activities. This will be countered through the continued tightening of legislation.

* * *

In cooperation with other Member States, Sweden is working for a Common European Asylum System in which Member States share joint and fair responsibility for displaced people.

Swedish migration policy must be legally certain, effective and humane. The policy must have broad support. A cross-party committee of inquiry has been instructed by the Government to present proposals on a long-term sustainable migration policy. The right to asylum must be safeguarded.

Giving persons eligible for subsidiary protection and refugees the same right to be reunited with their children, partner or parents in Sweden is a humanitarian reform that also contributes to integration.

The Swedish Migration Agency should once again be able to rapidly handle asylum applications from people from 'safe countries of origin'. An independent review of medical age assessment methods will be conducted.

A successful fight against war, terrorism and global warming is necessary so that fewer people are displaced.

* * *

Our generation is the first that can end poverty around the world and the last that can end global warming. Sweden must be at the vanguard for the 2030

Agenda.

The democratic dimension of our development assistance will be strengthened.

Sweden promotes sexual and reproductive health and rights globally and thus access to safe abortions. This is an expression of our feminist foreign policy.

Sweden remains committed to its high ambitions for climate financing.

The Government's work on the Global Deal for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth will continue.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

As Mikael Wiehe sings:

Från Ales stenar	[From Ale's stones]
till norra Lappland	[to northern Lappland]
från Bohus klippor	[from Bohuslän's rocky shores]
till Gotlands raukar	[to Gotland's sea stacks]

Landet, det tillhör dig och mig [this land belongs to you and me]

We must hold our country together and we must ensure that the conditions for living a good life are available throughout Sweden.

A major redistribution based on the different conditions that exist in our country will be put in place before the end of the year. Regardless of whether you live in Vellinge or Vilhelmina, you should have the same right to home-help services – distances in your municipality should not determine this.

As a part of the green tax shift, 850 000 Swedish citizens, primarily in Norrland and north-western Svealand, will receive a tax reduction as compensation for the long distances and to make it easier to live in these parts of the country.

To continue to combat the closing of rural shops, the special operational

subsidy to grocery shops will be increased.

Service offices, where several government agencies offer services to citizens, are an effective way for central government to maintain a presence in more places. New service offices will therefore be opened. I can already announce that service offices will be placed in a number of towns, including: Storuman, Torsby, Vansbro and Åsele.

* * *

The Swedish business sector's ambitious climate commitments are impressive. Local engagement, innovative business operators and tough climate requirements produce results. New environmental technologies and innovations give us the possibility to export products and services that the world demands. This is how new jobs are created.

Food retail, mining and minerals, and cement are examples of industries that have produced roadmaps to become fossil-free. An exciting and globally unique development of carbon dioxide-free steel production is now under way in Luleå.

Sweden's raw material resources must be used more effectively and sustainably. Permit examination processes and regulatory frameworks need to be reviewed so that consideration is given to both social benefit and local environmental impacts when a project is examined.

The work with the National Innovation Council continues. The Government will launch four strategic partnership programmes for the electoral period and begin work on a new research bill.

Simpler rules will give more people around the country the chance to start a business. The amount of share capital required will be reduced.

* * *

Swedish nature, Swedish food and Swedish destinations are some of our country's greatest assets.

Times are good for Swedish tourism. Since the turn of the millennium, employment in the tourism and hospitality industry has increased by more than 40 000 people. A national strategy will strengthen the tourism and hospitality industry as an important job and growth engine for the entire country.

Swedish farmers produce world-class produce. The competitiveness of Swedish agriculture will be strengthened through continued investments in the food strategy and an effective farming package.

By pollinating plants, bees play an important role. This is now threatened. Measures are needed to improve the habitat of bees.

A sustainable and growing forestry sector contributes to jobs, growth and climate benefits. Sustainable forests and varied natural environments can increase biological diversity.

Work on the national forest programme continues and the Government is working to strengthen ownership rights and sustainability in Swedish forests. Forests owned by the state will be managed sustainably.

The conditions for the green industries are high on the Government's agenda.

* * *

A functioning housing market is a precondition for both people's security and for a dynamic labour market.

Last year, the greatest number of apartments was completed since 1973. At the same time, 240 municipalities report a shortage of housing. The Government intends to gather all actors in the housing market around the common interest of securing a continuing high rate of construction.

The investment subsidy is to be focused and made more effective, and be targeted at student housing and right of tenancy housing with reasonable rents throughout the country. We are simplifying building regulations and reviewing the rental system. Climate declaration requirements and the increased use of wood in construction can contribute to society's transition.

Shore protection regulations are to be fundamentally overhauled. Increased differentiation will take account of varying levels of access to lakes and shorelines around the country, as well as population density and development pressure.

* * *

The adopted national plans for infrastructure, including investments of SEK 700 billion in roads and railways throughout the entire country, will be

implemented in full.

The Government is improving road maintenance and will now make the biggest railway investment of modern times. New main lines for high-speed trains will be constructed.

It will become easier to book trips abroad by train and it will be possible to travel by night train to several European cities.

Emissions from aviation will be reduced.

* * *

Expanding digital infrastructure is an important part of the efforts to make the entire country grow and for public services to reach the entire population.

The energy agreement forms the basis for Sweden to continue to have a robust energy system and reasonably priced electricity in the future.

The capacity to transfer electricity will be improved to meet growing demand.

The significance of renewable energy sources is now growing rapidly. Wind power is contributing an increasing share of the energy supply. A solar energy revolution is taking place in Sweden. The solar panel subsidy has made it easier and cheaper for homeowners around the country to produce their own electricity.

More and more electric cars are driving on Sweden's roads. The charging infrastructure will be expanded to facilitate the electrification of the vehicle fleet.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

A person who has reached their 100th birthday has, during their lifetime in Sweden, seen democracy take root, industrialised society develop, gender equality improve conditions for women and the transition to a knowledge-based society change the country.

Now we once again face major transitions.

July this year was the warmest on record. Greta Thunberg has become the voice of a generation when she demands that we listen to the scientific advice and take action. Global warming threatens to fundamentally change the conditions for human life on earth. We need to adapt to the changes already taking place. In two weeks, these issues will be in focus at the UN Climate Action Summit in New York.

Meanwhile, Sweden must create and develop jobs and welfare in a time of tough global competition and rapid technological advancements. We must leave no one behind as we build our new society.

Our country will be the world's first fossil-free welfare nation. This will have an impact on all parts of society and permeate policy. A climate action plan will be adopted.

A robust green tax shift has been initiated and will increase over the years ahead. A Swedish state green bond will now also be introduced.

Sweden will have achieved net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. This will require major technical advancements. The Green Industry Leap provides support to companies all the way from research and innovation projects to demonstration facilities and full-scale production.

We will cope with the transition and we will do so in the same way as before: together.

* * *

Our children should grow up in an environment free from toxic substances. The Government is pushing for a global agreement on chemicals, stricter rules in the EU and necessary regulations at home.

The Government will take further action to reduce the use of plastics. The spread of microplastics must be controlled. The use of single-use plastics will be further reduced.

This year saw the first ever emergency ban on large parts of cod fishing in the Baltic Sea. The Government is listening to scientific advice and will work to ensure the recovery of cod stocks. The oceans we leave to our children must have growing fish stocks. Seabeds must be protected and eutrophication must end.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

The international economy is now slowing down, which is having an impact on the economy here at home. In the labour market, we continue to see a high level of employment, but also a recruitment problem, not least in the welfare sector.

Central government debt as a percentage of GDP is at the same level as in 1977. A low level of debt gives us strength should the economy slow down even further – strength that many countries lack.

The Government wants to use the scope for reform to get more people into work, increase the number of police officers, strengthen our welfare system, improve pensioners' finances and stimulate a robust climate transition.

The austerity tax will be abolished as of 1 January 2020.

A bank tax will be introduced to fund investment in defence.

Efforts to combat tax evasion and tax avoidance continue unceasingly. When tax avoidance is transnational, efforts to combat it must also be transnational.

On average, pensioners have received SEK 1 600 more to spend every month compared to 2014. We will now continue to strengthen the financial situation of pensioners. Next year, the guarantee pension and the ceiling of the housing supplement for pensioners will be raised. The unfair tax on pensions will continue to be phased out.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

Equipping people with knowledge is crucial to coping with the transition of society.

Sweden had one of the highest-performing and most equitable school systems in the world. We will reach that level again. Today, 31 000 more people work in the school system than 5 years ago, preschool groups are the smallest they have been since 1992 and teachers' salaries have increased. We have laid the foundations for better learning outcomes.

There are no shortcuts to raising the level of knowledge in the Swedish

school system. The focus must be on knowledge and an environment conducive to learning. Opportunities to receive support in smaller study groups will be reviewed, and high-performing pupils will be given better opportunities to go further in their learning. School outcomes for boys require special attention.

A national plan for security and a conducive study environment in school will be drafted, and a ban on mobile phones during lessons will be introduced. For those schools that wish, an opportunity to set grades from year four will be introduced.

Schools must be a meeting place for pupils from different backgrounds. The Government is taking the first steps towards a moratorium on the establishment of independent compulsory and upper secondary schools with a denominational focus.

The key to a strong knowledge-based school system is an increased number of knowledgeable and competent teachers and more staff who can assist teachers. Initiatives to counter the shortage of teachers are needed. Opportunities to study to become a teacher alongside work in school will be expanded. More people with higher education should be able to change careers and become teachers. Central government support to employ teacher's assistants will be increased.

The Government will improve teacher education, and the attractiveness of the teaching profession will be increased. Proposals from the Schools Commission will be implemented. The Government is initiating the establishment of a professional programme for teachers and school heads. To increase equivalence, central government support to schools where the conditions are most challenging will be enhanced.

Continued measures are needed to improve the ability of schools to accept pupils with neuropsychiatric disorders.

* * *

While there are more than 100 000 job vacancies in Sweden, 350 000 people are unemployed. To deal with the skills deficit, education must be better designed to meet the needs of society.

The Adult Education Initiative will continue, and in 2020 is expected to cover 93 000 government funded places throughout the country. Municipal

adult education will be developed into a base for national and regional skills supply.

The Government is investing in continuing professional development and further training for people midway through their careers.

Higher vocational education will be expanded and steps will be taken to facilitate mobility between higher vocational education and higher education institutions. Skills development by means of short higher vocational education courses will be facilitated. Initiatives will be introduced to strengthen and develop distance learning.

Strengthening access to training places around the country makes it easier to continue studying and to live anywhere in our country.

* * *

For companies to be able to recruit, there must be an effective labour market. Efficient job recruitment benefits both those seeking employment and employers who need staff. To better contribute to this, Arbetsförmedlingen (the Swedish Public Employment Service) will be fundamentally reformed. As an important complement, a new system will be developed in which independent actors match and equip jobseekers for the available jobs.

Regardless of where they live, assistance must be available to jobseekers who need help finding a job. Arbetsförmedlingen must be able to provide service while the reform is being implemented.

There is great potential for effective efforts at local and regional level. Cooperation between Arbetsförmedlingen, municipalities and employers already produces local job tracks in various parts of Sweden.

To avoid unnecessary layoffs when companies are hit by temporary difficulties, central government support for short-time work will be strengthened.

* * *

It is taking less time for people who are new in Sweden to find a job. An intensive year with a language focus and vocational initiatives will be introduced for new arrivals who are thought to have the potential of finding work within one year.

Civic orientation for new arrivals will be enhanced and more focus will be placed on issues such as gender equality and human rights.

Changes will be made to the support available to asylum seekers who choose their own accommodation to reduce problems in areas with socioeconomic challenges.

The emergence of a parallel society will be counteracted through an efficient collaboration between public authorities, police controls and measures against human smuggling.

Working life should not lead to women and men being excluded prematurely due to stress, bullying or tasks that damage or wear out their bodies. A vision zero will apply to deaths at work. The Swedish Work Environment Authority will propose measures to achieve this. More work environment inspectors will be employed.

The social partners have considerable responsibility to reduce work-related ill-health. The Government will closely follow the work the parties have undertaken for healthier workplaces.

* * *

Joakim Berg's text from the Kent song 'Elite' captures a feeling many people identify with:

Min släkt är full av hjältar [My family is full of heroes]

Decennier av slit [Decades of toil]

Brustna hjärtan, trötta leder [Broken hearts, tired joints]

Deras stolthet bar mig hit [Their pride led me here]

Women and men have built a strong Sweden through decades of toil. Sweden is full of heroes. People who contribute every day to a stronger society through parenting, studies, paid work, entrepreneurship and volunteering.

Mr Speaker,

A general welfare system with high quality schools, health and social care services for all is the most important force for redistribution in our society.

The Government is appointing a welfare commission in which the central government, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and the employee organisations will together tackle the problems we see in Swedish welfare. The increasing proportion of elderly people poses new challenges for welfare.

Providing health and social care is one of society's most important tasks. A fixed contact in care of the elderly increases continuity and security. Employees in the welfare sector need to have a better working environment and their status needs to be raised. Assistant nurses will have a protected professional title and better working conditions.

The number of people involuntarily working part-time in welfare will be reduced. Efforts will continue to ensure that full-time work will be a right. Welfare technology will improve the working environment and increase quality, not cause more stress.

Disability policy and the Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments will be enhanced. Personal assistance will be characterised by high quality and legal certainty. The right to assistance for breathing and tube-feeding will be safeguarded. Everyone who has the right to this should receive it.

Sweden will have sickness insurance that is secure, legally certain and comprehensible with a high level of trust among the population. The collaboration between public authorities must improve and the regulatory frameworks must be designed to ensure that everyone receives the support and the compensation they are entitled to.

* * *

Sweden must have world-class health and medical care that is available to all. The Government is therefore making vigorous efforts to ensure more secure, accessible and equitable health and medical care.

We should be proud of the high quality of Swedish medical care. Every day, medical personnel save the lives of acutely injured and seriously ill patients. At the same time, primary care in particular needs to be developed further. It has unique possibilities to meet the entire health and medical care needs and promote good health. The Government will boost local health and medical care.

To improve continuity in health care, the right to the same doctor will be safeguarded. Patient contracts will give both the patient and health and medical care staff an overview of all of the planned care appointments.

Mental ill-health is one of the major problems of our times. Early measures are important to reduce suffering and prevent minor problems becoming serious. To make it easier to get help, a new care form is being prepared for mild mental health issues. The queues for child and adolescent psychiatry will be reduced and school health and welfare services will be safeguarded.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

The police received the call at 09.58 on a Monday morning. The woman in Ribersborg was 31 years old. She was shot dead in broad daylight when she was out with her little child. This unfathomable tragedy leaves no one in Sweden unmoved.

Violent crime causes immense suffering in our society. Boys are lured into a criminal career that ends either in death or long prison sentences. Relatives of crime victims are severely affected.

The violence perpetrated by criminal gangs is a threat to people's safety, to the sense of security in society, and ultimately to the rule of law and democracy. The ruthlessness towards victims is abhorrent. Combating this threat is one of the state's core tasks.

The fight against serious crime is long-term and will entail both successes and setbacks. Our goal is crystal clear: we will put an end to the violence.

The state can remove hardened criminals from the streets, but stopping the influx of young men to criminal gangs requires efforts by society as a whole. This is emphasised not least by the police. Schools, social services, local businesses and our civic organisations have important roles to play.

Municipalities are pivotal to crime prevention. Work has begun to give municipalities a statutory responsibility for this.

The Government will facilitate decisions regarding surveillance cameras and police access to digital evidence and encrypted communications to identify and track criminal activities.

The pilot project involving faster legal proceedings for certain petty offences will be extended and expanded to more parts of the country.

To combat cross-border crime, the Swedish Police needs to be given greater scope to operate in border areas. Camera surveillance using automatic vehicle and number-plate recognition will be considered.

* * *

The Swedish Police will be tasked with strengthening their efforts to fight the illicit drug trafficking that finances much of the gang violence. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention will be tasked with examining the drugs market in Sweden to update the current state of knowledge.

Everyone who buys drugs must understand that their drug money supports criminal gangs and contributes to criminal activities.

Violence by right-wing and other ideologically motivated perpetrators must be taken very seriously.

Rape and other sexual offences must be combatted. The Government will propose continued tighter laws in this area.

The broad political consensus we have to continue reinforcing the rule of law is a strength. The Government is now taking the lead in gathering political decision-makers and other stakeholders to continue strengthening society in the fight against serious crime.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

During this electoral period, Sweden will celebrate its 100th birthday as a democracy. The democracy we inherited from earlier generations must be even stronger when we pass it on.

Strong public service broadcasting combined with commercial media provide a diversity of independent media throughout the country.

Elected representatives and journalists must be given stronger protection under criminal law against threats and hate speech to enable them to fulfil their vital role in a democracy.

An independent institution for the protection of human rights will be established.

* * *

Every child has the right to grow in curiosity and creativity. Music and arts schools must exist throughout the country. People who contribute time and effort to the sports movement and civil society organisations are key to enabling young people's involvement.

In 112 days' time, the Convention on the Rights of the Child will become Swedish law. Every child must be able to express their views and exercise their rights.

Legislation concerning parenthood will be revised to make it gender-neutral. This is part of the Government's efforts to strengthen the rights of LGBTI people.

* * *

Racism has no place in Sweden; work under the national plan to combat racism continues. Sweden's national minorities and indigenous Sami people must be protected.

Hatred of Jews can be found in our history, in extreme right-wing groups, in certain left-wing groups and Islamist environments. We see antisemitism among adults and children who fled to Sweden from countries where hatred of Jews is fed by schools and state propaganda.

Combating antisemitism and remembrance of the Holocaust are the theme of the international conference the Government will host in Malmö next year.

* * *

Sweden does not accept child marriage or oppression. 'Honour' crimes will receive harsher sentences, and a specific offence concerning child marriage will be introduced. Work to introduce a specific offence of 'honour crime' will continue.

Children and young people will have greater access to support and help from social services, without the consent or knowledge of a parent or guardian.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

Just over six months ago, the Government took office after a policy agreement on the budget and several policy areas was reached between the Social Democratic Party, the Green Party, the Centre Party and the Liberal Party. Together, we are taking responsibility for harnessing our country's opportunities and solving the social challenges of our time.

Swedish politics is in a time of intensive reform.

A time to build a stronger Sweden – together.

* * *



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at Centenary Session of the International Labour Conference

Published 12 June 2019

Geneva, 10 June 2019. Check against delivery.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Excellencies, Friends,

It is a great honour to hold this speech today on the occasion of the ILO centenary.

“The sated day is never first.
The best day is a day of thirst.
Yes, there is goal and meaning in our path –
but it’s the way that is the labour’s worth.
The best goal is a night-long rest,
fire lit, and bread broken in haste.
In places where one sleeps but once, sleep is secure, dreams full of songs.”

This was written by the Swedish poet Karin Boye in the 1920s, when the ILO was taking its first tentative steps.
I have chosen to start with these words because what we are celebrating today is really not an organisation, a convention or a date, but a movement.

A movement forwards, upwards, from the misery
- of First World War trenches,
- of factories and fields,
- of hunger and squalor.

A movement that has encountered setbacks, new wars and catastrophes, but has never stopped, has always found new energy, new solutions.

It is a movement, that is summed up and symbolised by the three letters I-L-O, it is a movement that now marches towards the future.

Because we know: “The sated day is never first. The best day is a day of thirst.”

* * *

And we gather here today, with stories from our different countries about what has been achieved and what is still to be done.

I would like to mention two Swedish women: Kerstin and Ingegerd. Kerstin Hesselgren was born into a wealthy family in the second half of the 19th century.

Her father was a doctor, she was educated by a governess at home and then at a school here in Switzerland.

Ingegerd Friberg on the other hand was born into harsher conditions. Her parents struggled. They couldn't afford to buy the farm they leased, and considered emigrating for a better life.

These two women did not know each other. They probably never met. But Kerstin used her privilege and her education to work towards improving the conditions of thousands of workers in Sweden.

She became Sweden's first female factory inspector in 1912, and she came to the first International labour conference in 1919 to change the course of the world, together with representatives from many of your countries.

Now as for Ingegerd, she started working at sixteen, helping out at a hospital – and continued on as a maid, a night watch, a newspaper carrier, and a factory worker.

And when she was almost 90 years old, she was interviewed by her daughter and spoke about the changes she had seen over her lifetime.

- About the more dignified life she was able to lead.
- About the decent pension she could now live on.
- About her four children, and how they could now live the kind of lives that would never have seemed impossible to her as a child, and how that was the

greatest joy in her life.

Just think, she could also dream, as Karin Boye wrote, “dreams full of songs.”

* * *

And what Ingegerd’s and Kerstin’s fates symbolise is the co-operation that I believe lies at the heart of this movement.

We all come from different backgrounds, different walks of life. We have different values and different opinions – but if we come together if we make an effort we can find shared goals – and shared dreams.

* * *

I so strongly believe in this. Because it played out in my own life. I was not born into wealth; I grew up as a foster child in a working class family, and began working as a welder.

When I later became a trade union leader, the people across the negotiating table were people with a different education, different values, different lives.

Yet still – when we sat down, when we talked with an honest and respectful desire to agree, we could, despite our different starting points, find a shared goal, shared meaning.

* * *

This is why I started the Global Deal in cooperation with the ILO and in cooperation with the OECD, to promote social dialogue globally – an initiative I urge all of you to join if you have not already done so.

I have seen what social dialogue between workers, employers and governments can achieve.

Both in relatively small things that could be improved for me and my co-workers, for the company we worked for and the society we lived in. But also in a bigger perspective: How it could transform the country I represent here today – from a poor country at outskirts of Europe, to a rich country at the cutting edge of the global economy.

Social dialogue and tripartite collaboration are something so rare as a solution where everyone wins.

Workers by gaining influence, improved working conditions, higher wages and better opportunities for education and social welfare.

Companies win from a constructive working atmosphere, an openness to change, respect for their right to lead the company, increased productivity and stronger consumers.

Society wins from inclusive growth and social stability.

It's a win-win-win situation. It is "the way that is the labour's worth..."

* * *

And it is a fantastic force. A force that has driven the ILO's work for a century.

Now where should we target this force today? What direction should our movement take?

For my part, I have returned to a Swedish economist, a professor, a contemporary of Ingegerd Friberg, and also to the birth of the ILO.

This man's name was Gösta Rehn, and just like Ingegerd he came from a small village in Sweden, but had the opportunity to work at the OECD in Paris and the University of California at Berkeley.

He saw the difference between on the one hand the "safety of the shell", which shields from external dangers, and on the other hand the "safety of wings", which helps to reach a better and safer place.

And he pointed out that true safety didn't come from futile attempts to protect old jobs in a new economy, but by making sure workers could reach new and better heights.

He understood the importance of being able to move towards something better. "In places where one sleeps but once, sleep is secure..."

* * *

In recent times, I have had the great privilege South African President Cyril Ramaphosa and I have had the great privilege of gathering a group of global labour market experts on behalf of this organisation to analyse the "future of work".

Our goal was to discuss how we could best shape the future labour market in light of the major upheavals the world is facing.

And when we saw the analysis of these experts, of the latest research findings and reports, I felt how Gösta Rehn must have smiled up in his heaven.

For the final report that was written, contained nothing more and nothing less, than a version of the “safety of wings” for the twenty-first century.

* * *

You are of course all aware of the upheavals that are defining our time: climate change , AI revolution.

What do they have in common?

Well, they will both require our societies to react with strength.

- By quickly re-training entire professional areas, when key work assignments can be automated, for almost everyone - from our lorry drivers to salary administrators.

- And quickly making entire sectors of the economy sustainable, as we in Sweden are now doing with our steel industry, where we aim to be able to produce steel without using coal.

And this must be done in a way that does not hamper the economy or put large groups of people out of work.

If we don't succeed, we'll never manage to hold our societies together, we will not manage to have economies that are strong enough to meet the third major challenge: an ageing population.

There will be very little time for this change, it will require trust and close co-operation between workers, business owners and society.

And it will require everyone to dare to try again, to try something new.

To perhaps find new abilities they didn't know they had.

To feel a “day of thirst” for something new, something novel.

* * *

So what we propose is an agenda - that focuses on the development of

women and men, and their ability to acquire new skills, to reskill to upskill,
- that creates institutions to help people with more job changes in their lifetime,
- that supports investment in decent jobs, developing the rural economy in ways that foster prosperity, sustainability and equality,
- an agenda that creates social safety nets, based on solidarity and sharing risks, and launches a Universal Labour Guarantee, giving fundamental rights to all workers, all over the world, regardless of their contractual arrangements or employment status. Because it is only when we feel secure that we dare to spread our wings.

And let me also mention something in particular.

Kerstin Hesselgren's story did not end at the first International labour conference. When she returned to Sweden, she was elected as the first woman ever to the First Chamber of the Swedish Parliament in 1921.

The Speaker at the time he had a hard time adjusting to her presence, and for several years continued to address the Chamber by saying "Gentlemen".

And at a service to mark the opening of the parliamentary session, Kerstin was stopped outside the church by a police officer, who said: "No, no... no women here."

This seems comical now. But at how many workplaces, in how many leadership positions, do women still hear: "No, no... no women here"?

How many times in their working lives, do they have poorer working conditions than men, lower wages, and are looked over and ignored, just like Kerstin was – when the Speaker said "Gentlemen"?

And therefore our agenda is one that also clearly empowers women,
- promotes the sharing of unpaid care work at home,
- eliminates violence and harassment at work and all other places,
- ensures equal pay and equal opportunities,
- and strengthens women's voices and leadership.

Because Friends, when we talk about the safety of wings, we mean the safety of wings for everyone.

* * *

So lastly – what force will implement this agenda? How will it be possible?

You know the answer. It's through the force that has formed the basis of my own life, my country's success, and the ILO's hundred years of progress.

It is nothing more, it is nothing less, than the close co-operation of workers, employers and governments.

Co-operation between the social partners is like a bottle of fine wine.

You pick it up, think it looks old and mouldy, but on closer inspection you will find that it is better than ever!

* * *

So friends, let's now look ahead to a new century!

We must continue to seek energy from pioneers like Kerstin, from workers, like Ingegerd, who want a better life, whether they are from the forests of Sweden,

- the textile mills of Bangladesh,
- the farms of Mozambique,
- or the bauxite mines of Surinam.

Together, we need to give each other the safety of wings in a time of upheaval. It is an enormous task.

Therefore, I give to you the closing lines of Karin Boye's poem.

“Strike camp, strike camp! The new day shows its light. Our great adventure has no end in sight.”



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Lofven in European Parliament 3 april 2019

Published 03 April 2019

Brussels, 3 April 2019 Check against delivery.

The defence of democracy – and our young people's dreams

President of the European Parliament.
[Vice-]president of the Commission.
Distinguished Leaders of the Political Groups.
Members of Parliament.
My fellow Europeans.

Firstly, I would like to show my appreciation for your work during this electoral period,
and the progress you have achieved for Europe.

But my focus today,
will not be on our past,
but on our future.

I believe that we must step up,
to defend our fundamental values in the European Union.

And the most strategic way to fight the forces that challenge those values,
is to deliver results in the areas of employment, security, migration and climate change,
and thus: to create hope for the future.

That should be our core mission:
the defence of our democratic values
– and our young people's dreams.

* * *

Some people say that idealism is the preserve of the young.

And when we enter the world of adults,
we learn that nothing is black and white,
and realise that self-interest and cynical trade-offs rule the world.

I believe this narrative is wrong.
My parents took me in as a foster child,
and taught me about shared responsibility,
about respect for every human being,
about solidarity.

During my political career,
I have had to compromise and make tough decisions,
in difficult situations,
such as economic downturns and terrorist attacks.

But it has not made me forget my values.

It has only deepened my belief in the importance of having a moral compass,
to guide you through the tough times.

Because if we didn't let our values steer our decisions,
if we didn't feel our choices were leading us towards the kind of society we
believe in,
what would be the point in making any decisions at all?

* * *

The same applies to the EU.
Our union is based on values.
The whole idea of creating a common market,
and joint responsibility for coal and steel production, was to tie our countries
and our peoples closer together.

We wanted to fulfil Friedrich Schiller's sentiments in Ode to Joy
that Alle Menschen werden Brüder

with equal value and equal rights,
which – put to the music of Beethoven
– became our common anthem.

* * *

And now that our union has grown and grown older,
we, just like every individual, need to
remember our most fundamental values.

For what would be the ultimate point of our work,
the ultimate point of our union,
if it did not promote the values we believe in?

It may also be the greatest thing we could do for the world.

We are living in a time when the multilateral system is being shaken to its
core.

The United Kingdom wants to leave our union,
and the transatlantic link is being questioned.

Meanwhile, China is on the rise – and several economies in Southeast Asia
and Africa are ready to follow in its footsteps,
and redraw the entire global economic map.

At the same time, Russia is acting in a revanchist manner, in flagrant
contempt of international law.

Now more than ever it's time
to stand up for common, principle-based solutions, and a world order where
might does not come before right.

But the EU can only be a strong voice for democracy in the world if all of us
Member States stand up for the principles of democracy at home.

We can only be a credible actor in the Middle East,
if we fight anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in our home countries.

We can only be a force for free media and the rule of law in our
neighbourhood, if we have free media and independent courts in our union.

For every democratic principle that is weakened in the EU, the EU's voice in

the world is equally weakened.

Therefore, the EU must stand up for our fundamental values. Both externally, in our world
– and internally, in our union.

* * *

And this is not just about our place in the world
– but the whole future of our cooperation.

If the principles contained in our most fundamental contracts are not adhered to,
how are we then to trust the other agreements?

On the single market.
On free movement.
Everything that does so much for our prosperity.

If our promises to each other are to be trusted,
if our cooperation and our economy are to continue to grow,
then pacta sunt servanda must apply
to the most fundamental contracts of all.

* * *

Therefore, Sweden will work to defend the EU:s core values - in the budget negotiations and in our support of the Commission's work.

My government will propose to the Swedish Parliament that Sweden will join the European public prosecutor's office, to contribute in the fight against corruption and the embezzlement of EU funds.

We support the Belgian proposal to establish an EU mechanism for the peer review of adherence to the rule of law.

And I will devote my efforts in Europe to defending the values I have borne since my childhood,
of the equal value of all people, and of solidarity.

I will give my all,
side by side with so many of you,
to refute and fight the extremist forces,
who deny these values

– and are doing everything they can to tear apart the union that defends them.

Of course the EU is a compromise,

– probably one of the most successful compromises in world history.

But there can be no compromising on human dignity.

– No reasonable level of anti-Semitism.

– No acceptable level of racism.

– No tolerable level of misogyny or homophobia.

Never will we compromise on these values!

* * *

But, and this is very important:

The defence of democracy is also the defence of young people's dreams.

Is there anything more dangerous to society than its young people ceasing to dream?

It is in societies that have lost hope that both political and religious extremism can grow the strongest.

And this is not only crucial in the fight against extremism, but also in the work to uphold broad, popular support for our union.

I believe it is crucial for all of us in the current Brexit negotiations, that the UK and the EU have the ability to move on as friends
- and create a close, strong and long-term relationship.

But the only way for the EU to avoid similar exit ordeals in the future is to constantly prove its worth to people's everyday lives – and to their dreams for the future.

That is why the EU should not only benefit the market
– but also benefit the people.

It is also why the work for a larger market
can also be the work for a stronger democracy,
if that market can create jobs – and hope – for our young people.

Over the past two years, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa and I

have co-chaired a Global Commission on the Future of Work for the International Labour Organisation.

And there is no doubt that in the future work will be more advanced, more automated and more digitised – and that demand for skilled workers will soar.

This is good news for the EU.

We benefit from global competition that is based on knowledge – rather than lower wages.

But – we cannot rest on our laurels.

Everyone wants to be in the same position.

China has long been training more engineers than the United States, Germany and Japan – put together.

In this respect, our European cooperation will have an incredibly important role to play in the creation and sharing of world-leading knowledge and innovation.

And there are always many competing interests in budget negotiations.

But my country has learned the very hard way that it is only with strict priorities and a budget that is under control that democracy can deliver, in the long-term and with stability.

That is why, given all the competing interests, we do not propose a larger budget, but rather the stronger prioritisation of innovation and new jobs, and the digital, educational and physical infrastructure required to make them possible.

It is our responsibility, for our young people's dreams, to take advantage of this opportunity.

Our solution can never be to lower wages, or raise protectionist walls.

We should not shut ourselves off from world – we should lead it.

* * *

Therefore I'm proud that young people in Tallinn or Bratislava, can listen to

hip hop from Paris,
or fado from Lisbon - on Spotify from Stockholm.

But I also know how hard Spotify had to work
to get launched in Europe. A start-up company in Silicon Valley can launch
a product on the US market and reach over 320 million people immediately.

Our only chance of competing with this
is to make it just as easy to reach all the citizens of the EU at the same time.

Believe me, anyone who has lived through a dark, Nordic winter, knows that
we can't compete with California when it comes to the weather!

For generations, people from our continent have travelled across the
Atlantic, in search of a better life.

But the young IT geniuses of today and the future,
should not have to go west, or east,
to realise their dreams.

They should be able to do so here, in Europe,
in a digital single market, open to everyone.

* * *

And it is now almost a treat to visit the European Commission website, and
see that one priority policy area is: the European Pillar of Social Rights.

And, of course, my pride is not diminished
when it also says that we launched this work
in the Swedish city of Gothenburg.

I am grateful to President Juncker and the Commission,
to the European Parliament and to the Member States in the Council
for all of our work
to create a social pillar,
and establish 20 key principles that strengthen the social rights of all the
citizens of Europe.

But no worker will or should thank us,
until these 20 principles are a reality, across the EU.
- Until we stand up for collective agreements and fair wages.
- Until we put a stop to rule breaking and tax fraud.

- Until we secure gender equality,
and women's right to a full wage,
a career without glass ceilings,
and the freedom to decide over their own lives.

For the same reasons, Sweden will actively promote all new free trade agreements,
because we know how many jobs they can create.

But all these agreements should be favourable to people as well as to the market, and respect our environment, our health and the rights of workers.

And there is enormous potential for the European services market – if it is opened up – and shaped with concern for social rights.

But the EU labour market must be defined by all of the positive freedoms:
The freedom to study abroad, learn languages, work throughout Europe.
Never the freedom to set worker against worker!

Our common labour market should not crush workers' dreams, it should fulfil them!

* * *

And I know, that if you are to have hope in the future,
you must also feel safe, in the here and now.

IS and terrorism are dreadful security threats
that must be dealt with together,
– but, unfortunately, they are not our only ones.

I recently met the leadership of Europol at their headquarters in The Hague,
and their Virtual Command Post.

Europol has done an amazing job breaking up and arresting paedophile networks.

It is a type of crime where every nation's police service can see their part,
but where we can only see the whole - and crush it - in cooperation with each other.

A single nation would not – even if it really wanted to,
even if it poured in resources – be able to solve it alone.

Europe is borderless for criminals, too.
They read up on European laws,
looking for the weakest national legislation,
and for new national markets to enter.

That's why Sweden wants to deepen European efforts to fight organised crime and cyber threats.

We want to strengthen our cooperation on security and defence,
increase our ability to implement joint civilian and military crisis management operations,
and have a European Union that cooperates with strategic partners and builds security – together.

* * *

I also know that there is broad agreement,
in this parliament and on this continent,
that the EU must never again lose control
in the way it did during the refugee crisis.

Chaotic migration affects the confidence of the whole of society in the reception of refugees – but it affects the refugees themselves worst of all.

The only ones who benefit are right-wing extremists,
who are able to use the situation to inflame hatred of migrants.

The EU's free movement of people requires shared external borders,
and a shared responsibility for orderly and regulated migration,
built on three pillars:

- Firstly: strong co-operation with countries outside the EU so that fewer people are displaced, and more people can have better living conditions, so that new migration crises can be reduced or prevented entirely.
- Secondly: the control of all external borders, which is now taking place through the strengthening of Frontex, creating greater security and saving lives.
- Thirdly: the fair distribution of those who arrive and whose grounds for asylum are to be examined,
with that work carried out as a shared responsibility by all Member States.

It should not be possible to benefit from all of the advantages of Schengen cooperation,
and then refuse to share in the responsibility for its maintenance.

We have a huge task ahead of us.
Sweden will do its best to support the completion of that task.
And I am under no illusions that it will be simple.

But if we fail to deliver,
the Schengen Agreement will be weakened,
and – in the long run – so will the entire EU.

So, it is time to step up, for orderly and regulated migration in Europe – it is the best interests of us all.

* * *

And friends,
as Swedes we're often asked:
Do you know ABBA? Do you know Zlatan Ibrahimović?

But now we have to get ready for another question:
Do you know Greta Thunberg?

We are proud of the demonstrations she has inspired,
which gathered over a million young people all over the world.

But one thing we must never forget in their message:
It is not up to their generation to solve the climate crisis.
It is up to us. All generations. Here and now.

Sweden is ready to be in the lead, and show what is possible.

We have a climate framework for our society,
which will lead our efforts to cut emissions quickly and powerfully,
and achieve net-zero emissions by 2045.

But we, together, must implement the Paris Agreement
without any 'ifs' or 'buts' or 'maybes',
to keep the global temperature rise below 1.5 degrees.

And, as part of this work, the EU needs to adopt a goal of net-zero emissions
by 2050 at the very latest.

It is also a great opportunity for European industry,
as the whole world is crying out for new solutions.

So, it is not only the right thing to do morally,
it is also the right thing to do economically,
and is crucial to our survival.

* * *

To conclude,
This is what I want to say to you today.

Idealism is not only the preserve of the young.
Our common values have been the basis of the EU's fantastic history,
and they must guide us, so that we can have an even better future.

And in these times when people say that the EU must prove its worth,
there is no better task for our union
than defending our democratic values,
and – by delivering on jobs, security, migration and climate change –
defending the dreams of our young people.

An EU that can deliver this not only gains greater legitimacy – but also a
stronger voice in the world.

It is a difficult task.
But that's why it's so alluring,
that's why it's so perfect for us.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Remarks by Prime Minister of Sweden, Mr. Stefan Löfven at the First LAS-EU Summit

Published 25 February 2019

Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, 24 February 2019 Check against delivery.

Your majesties, excellencies, ministers, colleagues, neighbours,

Our regions are intertwined, through geographical proximity, economy and family ties. We share challenges, be it climate change, peace and security, economic development, terrorism or irregular migration.

And we share a duty – to address these challenges through cooperation, as good neighbours should do.

Therefore, I warmly welcome this first Summit between the League of Arab States and the European Union, and I thank Egypt and President el Sisi for hosting us here.

* * *

Globalisation is a powerful force.

It has the potential to serve as a catalyst for us to achieve inclusive growth, meet the Sustainable Development Goals and create better societies for us all.

But it also has the potential to widen inequalities, creating uncertainty, unrest and a lack of security.

It is up to us to use the tools we have at hand – the greening and

diversification of our economies, promotion of private sector growth, social dialogue, anti-corruption measures and public sector reform – to create a globalisation process that suppresses no one, and benefits us all.

* * *

That goal can only be reached through working together. We must use multilateralism as a tool to build democracy, security and prosperity.

For Yemen, the Stockholm Agreement represents a much-needed turning point, provided it is implemented. It requires continued engagement by all.

On Syria, we call on the regime to engage constructively in the UN-led political process and take irreversible steps towards a political solution. Until then, there can be no normalised relations or reintegration of Syria into international bodies.

And as a friend of Palestine and of Israel, I say this:

We must spare no effort, 25 years after the Oslo Accords, to support the two-state solution, based on the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as the future capital of both Israel and Palestine.

It is our joint responsibility to work for an end to the occupation and for a two-state solution, in accordance with international law and previous agreements. The Arab Peace Initiative is key in this regard.

* * *

Excellencies, neighbours,

Democracy, security and economic development are interrelated.

Without progress in one, sustainable results in the other two cannot be expected.

This is the reason why Sweden constantly stresses the importance of establishing inclusive, accountable and transparent institutions.

Together we need to intensify efforts to protect and promote human rights, the rule of law, and space for civil society.

We need to realise women's full and meaningful participation in political, social and economic life, and the Tunis Forum on Gender Equality will be an

important stepping stone in that endeavour. Freeing the full power and potential of all adults in an economy is both ethically right and financially smart.

* * *

Yes, we share more than an intertwined part of the world.

We share a history – and we share a future.

We share the responsibility, as leaders of our communities, to offer the means and the possibilities for our citizens to fulfil their dreams and to live their lives in dignity, freedom, peace and security.

And we share the possibility to do this together, as neighbours – and as friends.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven's speech on International Holocaust Remembrance Day 2019

Published 28 January 2019

Stockholm, 27 January 2019. Check against delivery.

Survivors,
Your Royal Highness,
Excellencies,
Friends.

I would like to say a few words about emptiness.

A few years ago, the play *Our Class* was staged here in Stockholm. It deals with the annihilation of the Jewish population of the Polish village of Jedwabne in 1941.

There is an extremely painful moment in the story, where the young man Abram, who has emigrated to United States, reads a letter in which he asks about his mother and father.

His sisters and brothers.

His grandmothers and grandfathers.

His cousins, his aunts and uncles.

He asks, “Who has killed my entire family, taken our home, our belongings, everything, and now lives in our house?”

He tries to scream out his fury and despair.
That awful emptiness.

* * *

Today, a battle is being fought over values, a battle that has not been won yet, and which may never be won for good.

Threats and hatred towards Jews remain horribly widespread in Sweden. Anti-Semitism can be found in far-right and far-left groups, in conspiracy theories on the internet, in fundamentalist Islamic environments, but also among adults and children who have fled to Sweden, who have been exposed to anti-Semitic propaganda, often orchestrated or incited by the very same regimes that they have fled from.

Here, no emptiness, no moral vacuum, can be allowed to exist. Here, we must step in and, with unhesitating clarity, expose, confront and combat anti-Semitism, wherever it may appear and no matter who expresses it.

We have started the work of strengthening the law forbidding racist symbols, we have secured funding to enable more young people to travel to Holocaust memorials in Europe and we have made sure to increase resources to Jewish communities and other organisations needing support for their safety.

But if new education programmes are needed, we will create them.
If new safety measures are needed, we will take them.
If tougher police efforts are needed, we will implement them.

Jewish life is an incontrovertible part of Sweden and, wherever it is threatened or challenged, it will be defended. Let there be no doubt about this.

* * *

Another part of this defence is the preservation of memories.

Many of us have been moved by Jacob Mühlrad's work on portraying his grandfather's memories of Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen, which now live on and have been spread across the world in the composition Kaddish.

Achievements like this make Sweden proud.
But the task of keeping memories alive cannot just be shouldered by survivors and their descendants.
It must be borne by a whole society.

Last summer, Max Safir contacted me.
Since his liberation from the Ebensee concentration camp, he had kept his

memories alive.

He had worked, formed a family – and, at the same time, toiled and travelled to show new generations the tattoos on his skin and to tell the tale he carried inside him.

Now his strength is starting to fail, and he told me he thought that Sweden should found a museum to preserve his memories, and those of other survivors, for coming generations.

We are now establishing a museum for Holocaust survivors in Sweden. I mentioned this in my Statement of Government Policy in the Riksdag after I was elected Prime Minister.

Together with the international conference that we are arranging next year, this museum will lay the foundation for deepening and strengthening the work of remembrance in Sweden and across the world.

I want Max Safir, Hédi Fried, Livia Fränkel, Emerich Roth, and all of you who have devoted your lives to telling of the crimes committed against you and your loved ones to know this:

Your memories will not vanish into emptiness.
They will live on.

* * *

Finally, I would like to say this: Today, we have gathered to grieve, and to support all of you who still live with the emptiness left behind by your parents, family members, friends and loved ones.

But we are also doing it to honour and celebrate that which has lived on. Jewish life and the fantastic Jewish culture, which has survived millennia of persecution and oppression.

At the end of the play *Our Class*, an older Abram appears again. He grieves for the death of his wife, but, as he tells of those who attended her funeral in the United States, something else emerges. As he lists his children and their partners, in his pride over his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, Abram describes the life, the love, the joy that is the opposite of emptiness.

So many of you live, even today, with sorrow and pain.

But so many also live in love, in community, in freedom.
And I promise you, as Prime Minister and fellow human, I will do everything
in my power to ensure this freedom is defended.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Statement of Government Policy, 21 January 2019

Published 21 January 2019

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, the Riksdag, 21 January 2019.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of the Swedish Riksdag,

All around Europe, extreme right-wing movements are spreading. In several countries, forces with an antidemocratic agenda have made it all the way to government. But in Sweden we stand up for the equal value of all people. We are choosing a different path.

We are now beginning a historic form of cooperation. Sweden will now have a Government made up of the Social Democratic Party and the Green Party that will cooperate on the budget and the direction of policy in several areas with the Centre Party and the Liberal Party.

Now we can finally make a fresh start. The problems in society cannot wait. Jobs must increase and climate emissions must be reduced. Welfare must improve and integration must become more efficient and effective. Security must increase and crime must be combated.

Sweden is in need of major reforms. We can now address these, together, across the old political blocs.

Mr Speaker,

This morning, hundreds of thousands of Swedes got out of bed, had a cup of coffee, made breakfast, reminded their children not to forget their gym bag.

There may have been a minor battle in the hallway about coats and gloves before everyone got out the door. Children off to preschool and school. Adults off to work. And most people are too busy to listen to today's Statement of Government Policy. It's the hard work of ordinary people that is building Sweden.

The Swedish economy is strong. The budget deficit has been turned into a surplus, employment levels are at their highest in more than 25 years, and the national debt is at its lowest since the 1970s.

We now have room for manoeuvre. We now have major opportunities. When things are going well for Sweden, this should benefit everyone.

In the last electoral period, historic investments were made in welfare. Over the next four years, these resources will be strengthened by an additional SEK 5 billion per year for welfare.

Pensions will increase for those who have worked their whole working life on low wages. They have fought hard for Sweden's welfare. Now they should get the respect they deserve.

Employers' social security contributions will be reduced. It will be cheaper for business owners to hire their first employee.

The first steps will be taken towards a family week. This country's parents should have more time with their children.

Future generations must have access to clean air, healthy oceans and thriving natural environments. The climate transition will permeate policy.

Our society must be strong – and our development sustainable.

* * *

Everyone who can work should work. Our economy must be kept in good order. The agreement on the fiscal policy framework remains in place. There must be full preparedness for a downturn in the economy.

A major new tax reform will be implemented. This is how we will promote jobs and competitiveness, reduce disparities and increase equality. This is

how we will secure welfare and contribute to achieving the climate and environmental targets.

The last vestiges of the tax on pensions will be abolished. The austerity tax and extra taxation on generation changes will be removed. Tax deductions for household work will be expanded. Swedish industry and Swedish businesses, both small and large, must have good conditions to grow and employ more people. The problem of skilled people being expelled from Sweden must be resolved.

Sweden is a leading research nation. We will defend this position. Independent research must be guaranteed, and at the same time research policy must respond to global and national challenges in society.

The work of the National Innovation Council will continue. An export initiative for more jobs throughout the country will be implemented. Green obligations will be trialled. Collaboration, innovation and the climate transition make Swedish companies world leaders.

Together we are equipping ourselves for the future.
Together we are building a strong Sweden.

* * *

The Government's objective is not only for the whole country to live. The whole country must thrive.

The national plan to invest SEK 700 billion in roads and railways will be completed.

New main lines for high-speed trains will be laid and the railways in northern Sweden will be expanded. More long-haul freight transport will shift from lorries to trains and ships.

A national ticketing system will be introduced for all public transport throughout Sweden. The travel deduction will be based on distance and will be neutral in terms of mode of transport. Foreign travel by train will be made easier – more people should be able to take the train down to the continent.

Trains must be more punctual. Investments in railway maintenance will increase. Commuting by bike will be made easier. Road maintenance will improve.

Broadband and mobile services will be expanded throughout the country and more service points will be opened.

It must be possible to live and work all over the country. Sweden must hold together.

* * *

Rarely do people feel as free as when they put the key in the door to their first apartment.

Housing construction must be faster, cheaper and more sustainable. Mobility on the housing market must increase. The renting model will be reformed by allowing rents to be set freely for new builds. The quality and location of an apartment will have a greater influence on how the rent is set.

Investment support for the construction of rented housing will be concentrated, streamlined and targeted at rented housing throughout the country. Interest on the amount deferred when moving house will be abolished. Penalties for selling black market contracts will be tougher, and the purchase of such contracts will be criminalised.

The housing shortage will disappear, reform by reform.

* * *

The Swedish forest industry must be sustainable and it must grow. Private forest ownership rights must be guaranteed. Landowners must receive fair financial compensation for restrictions to their right of ownership and right of use.

It should be a great deal easier to build close to shorelines in unexploited rural areas. At the same time, shore protection and the right of common access will be guaranteed in exploited areas.

An effective farming package will be put together to strengthen Swedish food production. Agriculture's dependence on fossil fuels must be reduced.

Consumer demand for organic food must be met and food waste must be tackled.

Mr Speaker,

Sweden will be the world's first fossil-free welfare nation. There is no time for hesitation.

The transition required is considerable. A lot of work remains to be done. But we are at the forefront. With electric lorries and public transport. With increased construction using timber. With coal-free steel production and new textiles from recycled clothing.

The climate policy framework remains in place. All relevant legislation will be reviewed. The climate objectives must be achieved.

The energy agreement will be implemented. It should be easy and worthwhile to invest in your own production of renewable energy.

Sweden will push for a climate law at EU level. The reform efforts to implement the Paris Agreement will be intensified. The 1.5-degree target must be met.

A robust green tax shift will be implemented. Taxes will be raised on activities that are damaging to the environment and reduced for work and entrepreneurship.

The major climate impact of aviation must be reduced. Climate requirements for aviation will be tightened. It should be possible to charge and fuel fossil-free vehicles throughout the country. Climate bonuses and climate fees for cars will be strengthened and simplified. No new petrol- or diesel-driven cars will be sold after 2030. This is how we will reduce the major climate emissions from the transport sector.

Prospecting and new exploitation of coal, oil and fossil gas will be prohibited. A major drive will be initiated to sequester some previous emissions.

The climate investment programmes and the urban environment agreements promote local investments for global sustainability and they will be developed and made more efficient.

Children should be able to walk and cycle to school safely, and outdoor activities should be promoted.

Sweden must further develop a resource-efficient, circular and bio-based

economy. Swedish consumers should be able to make sustainable and toxin-free choices.

More steps will be taken to make it easier to recycle and re-use. A minimum service level for household waste will be introduced. Deposit requirements will be introduced for more products and the spread of microplastics will be combated.

Biological diversity must be protected. Ecosystem services must be safeguarded. The appropriations for the protection of valuable natural environments will be increased.

Marine environments must be improved. Eutrophication, use of environmental toxins and emissions of pharmaceutical waste must be minimised. Fisheries must be sustainable. Controls will be tightened to stop illegal fishing, and bottom-trawling will be prohibited in protected areas.

Groundwater levels will be secured and access to drinking water protected.

Twenty years ago, the Riksdag took a crucial decision: we will pass on to the next generation a society in which the major environmental problems have been solved. The environmental objectives system must now be developed and new interim targets set.

The magic of Sweden's old forests. The trilling of the lark. The buzzing of honey bees. It is our duty to preserve Sweden's natural environment for our children and grandchildren.

Mr Speaker,

Language and work are the way into society.

During the electoral period, comprehensive reforms for better integration will be implemented. The entry agreements negotiated by the social partners for newly arrived immigrants and long-term unemployed people will be launched. It should be possible for the model to be used by temporary work agencies and also companies without collective agreements. An entry deduction will be introduced whereby the employers' social security contribution for young people without an upper secondary education and newly arrived immigrants is removed for the first two years.

An integration year – the Swedish New Start – will be introduced with intensive vocationally oriented Swedish language instruction, work experience, vocational education and training, obligatory civic orientation and a one-year mentorship programme.

Women and men must have equal opportunities to support themselves and control their own lives. There will be a special focus on women's establishment in the labour market.

The provisions in the Reception of Asylum Seekers and Others Act on making one's own living arrangements will be limited to reduce segregation.

Passing an examination in Swedish and basic civic studies will be a requirement for receiving citizenship. We are raising ambitions and efforts to ensure that everyone learns Swedish, through a language obligation, enhanced Swedish for Immigrants, language preschool and language training for people on parental leave. More career posts for teachers will be introduced in areas of social exclusion.

Setting high standards for people and giving them a lot of opportunities helps them to grow.

* * *

We live in a modern knowledge society. Everyone must be able to build on their knowledge and reshape their skills.

The Swedish labour market must be characterised by security and flexibility. Employment law must be adapted to the labour market of today, while a fundamental balance between the social partners is maintained. Companies will be given greater opportunities to adapt, and individual workers will be protected against arbitrary termination of employment.

If the social partners do not reach an agreement, a legislative amendment will be implemented to clearly expand the exemptions from the rules on order of selection. At the same time, an enhanced right to skills development will be introduced, and a better balance will be created in employment protection for staff with different terms of employment.

Arbetsförmedlingen, Sweden's public employment service, will be fundamentally reformed. Independent actors will help to match people with employers and equip job seekers. Unemployment insurance will be developed so that more people qualify for compensation, and the incentives

to apply for new jobs and retrain will increase.

At the same time, the study support system will be made more generous for older people wanting to further educate themselves or retrain. State support for short-time work will be developed. Professional development time will be introduced to enable skills development and entrepreneurship.

The Adult Education Initiative will be expanded and access to higher education and distance learning will increase throughout the country.

This way, everyone can be equipped for a rapidly changing labour market.

* * *

Thanks to major efforts from headteachers, teachers and pupils, school performance in Sweden is improving.

In Södertälje, a quality drive across political blocs has helped improve school performance for the eighth year in a row. At Hovsjöskolan, the number of pupils achieving the grades they need to qualify for upper secondary school has doubled.

Nonetheless, a major reform effort is still needed to reinstate our country as a leading knowledge nation.

All pupils must be given a fair chance, regardless of their background or where they live. The focus on knowledge will be strengthened and quality requirements increased in all schools. The School Commission's proposals for increased equality in schools will be implemented. State support will be increased.

Material will be produced for a decision that will create the conditions for schools to be answerable to central government. There will be a moratorium on the establishment of independent compulsory and upper secondary schools with a confessional focus.

Teacher education will be reformed, standards will be raised and the admission requirements will be increased. It will be easier for academics to choose the teaching profession. Resources will be added to employ more teaching assistants.

Teachers must receive the support they need so that grading is fair and equitable throughout the country. Schools that want to should be able to

introduce grading from year four. Subject grades will be introduced in upper secondary school. Grade inflation must be combated.

A national plan for peaceful study environments and security in schools will be produced. Mobile phone bans will be introduced. Vigorous action will be taken to tackle bullying. It should be easier to exclude or move pupils who have threatened others or subjected them to violence.

No pupil should be left behind, and those who want to should be able to get ahead. The reading-writing-arithmetic guarantee will become a reality. A proposal will be drawn up to make a ten-year compulsory school possible. Preschool and after-school care groups will be made smaller. It should be easier to get special support in smaller teaching groups. Support for children with neuropsychiatric disabilities will increase. Resource schools will be developed and schools for pupils with learning disabilities will be strengthened.

A homework guarantee and a priority timetable will be introduced so that pupils at risk of not achieving the necessary grades to qualify for upper secondary school can receive more teaching in the subjects they need. An increased pace of study will be offered to pupils who can achieve the knowledge objectives more quickly. Pupils in the upper years of compulsory school should be able to study upper secondary courses, and upper secondary pupils should be able to study higher education courses.

Let there be no doubt about where we are heading. The Swedish school system must be the greatest pride of our society.

Mr Speaker,

When a new life is on the way. When something hurts, or doesn't feel right. When the pain is constant. It is then, at our most fragile moments in life, that Sweden's health care system should be there offering security.

No one should have to wait too long for treatment or an operation. A general plan for shorter queues will be drafted, along with an updated 'waiting list billion'. There will be a particular focus on ill health among women. There will be new investments in ambulance care, cancer care and maternity care. A broad primary care reform will be implemented. It must be more attractive for doctors to work in primary care, and easier to provide health care in rural

areas.

A person who is sick should be informed about their care plan and who they should call. The patient contract system will be developed. The right to continuity of care in general practice will be safeguarded. It should be possible to impose fines or sanctions on care providers that do not meet the care guarantee.

Sickness insurance should provide financial security in the event of illness. It should be easy to return to work upon recovery. Rehabilitation and occupational health services are crucial.

The conditions and working environment of those employed in health and social care must be improved, so that more young people choose to apply to the sector and remain in it – in the knowledge that their job is not only important, but also stimulating. The professional role of assistant nurses will be strengthened by means of a register or protected professional title. More people should be able to study on full pay to become specialist nurses.

Psychiatric care will be expanded. Mental health must be tackled. A new form of care for patients with minor mental health issues will be investigated. A zero-queue target will be introduced for child and adolescent psychiatric services.

Children living in sheltered accommodation need better support.

Elderly care should maintain a high standard. Continuity of care in home-help services will be introduced throughout the country. Home-help staff should receive work uniforms free of charge.

The prospects of a job, a good life and meaningful leisure time will be improved for everyone with any form of disability. The right to assistance for self-care, breathing and tube-feeding should be reintroduced. The definition of normal parental responsibility will be narrowed. The right to assistance due to a need for supervision will be strengthened. The question of who should have overall responsibility for personal assistance will be investigated.

Anyone who is entitled to personal assistance must receive it.

Mr Speaker,

A century ago, the Riksdag took the first of two decisions that gave women and men equal suffrage. The best way to honour those who showed the way in the fight for democracy is to continue their work in a new era.

Democracy in Sweden is strong, but we can never take it for granted. It must constantly be defended – generation after generation, electoral period after electoral period.

Democratic institutions must be protected. The independence of courts and public service media must be strengthened. The electoral system's resilience to manipulation will be improved. The media support system will create better conditions for independent journalism throughout the country.

We will preserve the reform ensuring free entry to state-owned museums. Culture schools will be developed, and all children should have the opportunity to benefit from them.

Astrid Lindgren once said that “children create miracles when they read”. She was right. For this reason, access to school libraries with trained librarians will increase. The Reading Delegation's proposals will be implemented. We want more miracles in Sweden!

The sports movement and civic organisations should be supported and encouraged. Financial security for artists and cultural creators should be improved.

We are a feminist government. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency will remain. The rights of LGBTQ people will be strengthened. The Discrimination Act will be made more stringent.

The self-determination and influence of the indigenous Sami people will be strengthened. An independent human rights institution will be established.

Work on the national plan to combat racism will continue. Xenophobic hate crimes against minorities will be vigorously combated.

Wherever anti-Semitism exists, and however it is expressed, it must be identified and fought. In 2020, Sweden will host a new international conference on remembrance of the Holocaust, and Swedish young people should be given the opportunity to visit memorials in Europe. A new museum will be established to preserve and pass on the memory of the Holocaust.

Never forget – this was the promise we made to each other. Sweden will never forget.

Mr Speaker,

Criminality must be fought with everything society has. Record numbers of women and men are now applying for police training programmes. They should be supported by substantial resources, coordinated agencies and more effective legislation.

Ten thousand more people should be employed in the Swedish Police Authority by 2024. Policing must be an attractive profession. There must be increased protection for police officers and other emergency services staff. The penalties for offences linked to disputes among criminals should be tougher. New legislation on data storage will be presented to the Riksdag shortly. Police will be given the right to take decisions on camera surveillance in public places.

The minimum penalty for obstructing the course of justice will be increased substantially. A crown witness system will be investigated. Unregistered pay-as-you-go mobile SIM cards will be banned. The penalties for those who transfer narcotics to others will be tightened.

Serious offences committed by young people under the age of 15 must always be investigated by the police. Actions to combat tax evasion and tax avoidance will be stepped up. Measures will be taken against the use of false identification documents, and against organised crime targeting our welfare systems.

People who are arrested and convicted must be handed effective sentences that can lead to life changes. The penalties should be tougher for those who recruit young people to criminal activities. Prisoners who do not cooperate in care and treatment should have their time in prison extended.

Crime prevention begins with the fight against poverty and segregation. A national exit programme will be introduced to allow more people to leave criminality behind them, and more community liaison workers and community police officers will be employed to ensure that fewer people are enticed into crime.

We are tough on both crime and its causes.

Society is always stronger than the gangs.

* * *

The new Consent Act enables more rape prosecutions. The work to realise a culture of consent will now continue.

More resources will be allocated to prevention efforts, and sex and relationship teaching in schools will be modernised. The minimum penalty for rape will be increased. A new offence classification of gross sexual molestation will be introduced. Statutory limitation periods will be extended, and removed entirely for sexual offences against children. More reception centres for victims of sexual offences will be established.

The Government will increase its initiatives against domestic violence. This applies to immediate support to victims and their children, preventive efforts, and initiatives to make those who perpetrate such violence change their behaviour.

* * *

Standing up for your life and your love, even when you know that your family refuses to accept it, takes great courage. And telling the world about it to bring about change for others takes even greater courage.

Fadime Sahindal had that courage. And because of this she was murdered, exactly 17 years ago today. This is how she concluded her speech to the Riksdag a few months before her murder:

“It should be a given that you can have both your family and the life you want for yourself. Unfortunately, it is not a given for many girls. I hope that you won’t turn your backs on them. That you won’t close your eyes to them.”

I wish I could say that honour culture has been suppressed. But this is not the case. It persists, and it still threatens people’s freedom and safety. Previous action has not been sufficient. We must do more. We will do more.

We must impose tougher penalties, increase awareness and strengthen efforts in schools and social services.

It should be easier to expel non-Swedish citizens who commit honour-related offences and hate crimes. At the same time, there should be greater

protection against expulsion for victims of honour-related crime.

It should be possible to offer young people a greater degree of intervention without their parents' consent where there is a suspicion of honour-related crime. Society must act immediately on any suspicion that someone is going to be subjected to female genital mutilation or be married off against their will.

Mr Speaker,

The fight against terrorism and violent extremism must be uncompromising. The legislation will be made tougher. Participation in a terrorist organisation will be criminalised. The Swedish Security Service will be given the possibility to read encrypted traffic. The internal border controls will remain in place as long as is necessary.

Terrorism and extremism are unfortunately just parts of the complex security threat targeting all open and democratic societies.

The work to create a modern total defence continues. The national security strategy must be implemented based on a broad security analysis. A national centre will be set up to increase information and cyber security. A new government agency will be established to strengthen our psychological defences against influence operations and similar. Our civil preparedness will be equipped to better handle climate-related crises such as health threats, fires, drought and flooding. Our vigilance against foreign attempts to acquire sensitive infrastructure will increase.

Sweden will maintain its security policy line. The defence appropriations will be gradually increased to strengthen Sweden's military capabilities and our cooperation with other countries and organisations will be deepened.

Our military non-alignment serves our country well. Sweden will not apply for membership of NATO. However, we will safeguard the transatlantic link, develop our defence cooperation, particularly with Finland, and deepen cooperation for increased security around the Baltic Sea.

If another Nordic or EU country suffers a disaster or an attack, Sweden will not remain passive. We expect these countries to act in the same way if Sweden is similarly affected.

* * *

Membership of the European Union is a foundation stone of Sweden's national, European and global action.

Sweden will work for an effective EU – an EU for the citizens, that creates jobs and increases the security of its people. An EU that tackles the threat of climate change and improves its competitiveness in the global economy.

Together with the rest of the EU, Sweden will continue to work to ensure that the planned withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU is accomplished in an orderly way. We are prepared to handle various scenarios.

Member States that break with the EU's values and the rule of law should face severe consequences. History teaches us what can happen if we close our eyes to abuses of democratic rights and freedoms.

* * *

Our term on the UN Security Council has now come to an end – but Sweden's international work for peace and democracy continues.

A number of serious challenges need to be dealt with:

The conflicts in Syria and Yemen pose serious security threats with catastrophic humanitarian consequences. Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and intervention in Ukraine are flagrant breaches of international law. The Rohingya in Myanmar are being subjected to crimes against humanity. The violence must cease, and those responsible must be brought to justice. The Korean Peninsula must be rid of nuclear weapons. A lasting peace between Israel and Palestine requires a two-state solution.

Sweden is working actively to promote necessary reforms of the UN. International law must be safeguarded. The role of women in peace processes must be strengthened. Peace and democracy must be promoted through efforts for non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, for easing of tensions and disarmament, for mediation and dialogue. Trust between people and countries is a powerful tool against war and conflicts.

That is how common security is created.

* * *

The right of asylum must be safeguarded in Sweden, in Europe and internationally. More countries must take greater responsibility. Sweden's reception of refugees must be sustainable in the long term. The Act Temporarily Restricting the Possibility to Obtain Residence Permits in Sweden will be extended for two years, while at the same time persons eligible for subsidiary protection will be given the same right to family reunification as refugees.

The Government will work to establish a common asylum system in the EU that distributes the reception of refugees fairly and proportionately. Asylum seekers should be offered a legally certain reception with short waiting times. Those with grounds for protection must rapidly become a part of society, and those without such grounds must return promptly.

The most important tool to stop refugee disasters is action for development and conflict resolution.

The feminist foreign policy will be developed. The rights of women and minorities around the world must be strengthened. Gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights are essential parts of global development policy.

In a time of trade wars, Sweden must defend free trade and stand up for fair conditions. Investments in Sweden and international trade agreements must safeguard the environment, human health and workers' rights.

The Swedish Global Deal initiative brings together almost 100 governments, enterprises and organisations. The OECD is now taking over as host organisation. Sweden will continue to promote social dialogue for better working conditions and increased productivity.

The Government will continue Sweden's extensive development cooperation and maintain development assistance equivalent to one per cent of GNI. Development assistance should focus even more on promoting democracy. We remain committed to high ambitions for climate financing. Our leadership for globally sustainable oceans will continue.

As other countries reduce efforts for global sustainability, Sweden will increase them. We must be at the vanguard for the 2030 Agenda.

* * *

Mr Speaker,

The electoral period began in the autumn. Winter has now arrived, but today, 21 January, a new Government will begin its work. We have less time than usual, but together, and in broad cooperation, we can and will achieve all the more.

This is a new era, a challenging and crucial era. The parliamentary cooperation that begins today is historic.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech

Speech by Prime Minister Löfven UNSC 9 July 2018

Published 09 July 2018

Check against delivery.

Members of the Security Council,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I want to thank Special Representative Gamba and Executive Director Fore for their important and, at times difficult to listen to, briefings to the Council. Let me also thank Yenny Londoño for sharing her inspirational story.

Excellencies,

Childhood is not just the start of our life; it is the foundation of it. It is the base from which we reach our full potential. The base for peaceful and prosperous societies.

Put simply: ensuring the care, safety and protection of children today, prevents conflicts tomorrow.

Yet, we are not doing nearly enough to protect our children. 350 million children are affected by armed conflict today. They are at risk of being killed or maimed. They risk being victims of sexual violence. They risk having no other school than that which war teaches them: Loss. Fear. Hatred. Revenge.

While the need to do more is clear, our concerted efforts are having an effect. In the last two decades, 130 000 children have been released from armed groups.

In the last two years, more than 12 000 children have received UN-assistance for reintegration.

Excellencies,

With today's unanimous adoption of resolution 2427 we not only strengthen the Children and Armed Conflict agenda more broadly, but we also further the prevention agenda.

Let me highlight a few ways in which this is done:

First, children's needs are often overlooked when peace is negotiated. Indeed, universal concern for children may sometimes open the door to find new solutions. This resolution emphasizes how the Children and Armed Conflict agenda is integral to conflict prevention and sustaining peace.

Second, it sets out a framework for the reintegration of children associated with armed forces or armed groups. Successful reintegration is in the best interest of the child, but also in the best interest of societies. It places children as part of the solution, not part of the problem.

Third, it recognizes that access for all girls and boys to education and health care, including mental health, in conflict is essential. It also, for the first time, distinguishes between girls and boys and makes the point that their needs and vulnerabilities are different.

Fourth, it links the Children and Armed Conflict Agenda to the Sustainable Development Goals. To achieve the 2030 Agenda, we can leave no child behind.

Fifth, it states, for the first time in a Council resolution, the central principle that children in armed conflict should be treated primarily as victims.

Sixth, the resolution stresses accountability for ALL violations and abuses against children – not just the gravest crimes – thereby setting a new standard for the prevention of human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law. There can be no exceptions to humanity, and there can be no exceptions to international humanitarian law.

Finally, the resolution addresses the need to also consider the views of children. We must listen to children, hear their perspectives, as well as their proposals for solutions.

In that vein, Sweden, with UNICEF and civil society partners, organized a

series of child consultations around the world focusing on children as refugees, children as agents for peace and on the reintegration of former child soldiers. We also organized consultations in Sweden.

All this resulted in these recommendations where the messages from children to us, as decision makers, are clear:

Provide security and safety. Put food on the table. Ensure education.

Provide care for sick or injured.

And, above all else: End war.

Excellencies,

We've agreed on today's resolution; now we must implement it.

Representative Gamba, with partners, is working to develop practical guidance and tools to integrate child protection issues in peace processes.

For us, in this council, our responsibility is to consider the effect of conflict on children, in all our work; in the renewal of mission mandates, by ensuring every mission has child protection advisors, and by including children's perspectives in our discussions.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I can think of no better way to address the root causes of conflict than to give children a loving and safe childhood and protect them from the scourge of war.

It is up to us to live up to our responsibilities and to deliver on the children's demands.

It is up to us to prevent the conflicts of tomorrow, by protecting children today.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven's speech on the anniversary of the terrorist attack on Drottninggatan

Published 07 April 2018

Stockholm, 7 April 2018. Check against delivery.

Your Royal Highnesses, friends,

First of all, I would like to directly address those of you who lost a loved one.

One year has passed. One year of shock. Of sadness. Of grief.

But amidst all of this unfathomable pain, I understand that you also carry happy memories. Of a conversation, a smile, a look, a hug.

All of the things that formed your love, and that now make you miss that person so much.

But that also, in all of the darkness, can help us to celebrate life, because it has given us such wonderful people to love.

As the author Thornton Wilder wrote:

'There is a land of the living and a land of the dead and the bridge is love, the only survival, the only meaning.'

* * *

I hope that those of you who are grieving, those who were injured, those who bear the wounds of that day, feel the love, support and solidarity from an entire nation, and not least from all of us gathered here today.

We are here for you. You are not alone.

* * *

We are also here to pay tribute to all of those who responded when disaster called for you to act. All of you who gave up your free time, worked an extra shift and demonstrated love for your society.

You, the rescue workers, who put yourselves in harm's way to help as many people as possible, as quickly as possible.

You, the police officers, who worked tirelessly to protect people and catch the perpetrator, but who also took the time to comfort people and explain what was going on.

You, the medical staff, who worked long shifts, side by side, to provide the best care a modern society can offer.

You, the volunteers, who revealed the hero in you.

You have shown us the meaning of duty, sacrifice and courage.

I see you as fantastic role models for our young people, and as a reason to be proud of our country.

* * *

And one thing I remember clearly from that day is this:

Faced with this horrific, meaningless, fanatical hatred, there were so many people who chose to show such great empathy for each other.

Who held in their arms a despairing stranger.

Who offered to collect their neighbour's children.

Who said: We may not know each other, but I'm here if you need me.

Let us never forget this, when the history of our time is written.

When our society was at its most fragile, that's when our sense of community was at its strongest.

That is what survives.

That is what gives meaning.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

180307 Speech in Great Synagogue of Stockholm, Holocaust Remembrance Day 2018

Published 07 March 2018

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven in Great Synagogue of Stockholm on Holocaust Remembrance Day 2018, 27 January 2018. Check against delivery.

Survivors, Your Majesties, Excellencies, Friends.

First of all, let me thank you, Livia, for your speech.

When you showed me Auschwitz-Birkenau last summer, it was the first time I had been there. Over the years, I have visited Yad Vashem in Israel and many other Holocaust memorials. But to stand with you at the entrance to Auschwitz, to see where the selection process took place, where you and your sister were separated from your mother, to see the red cattle car that you travelled in – that made a deep impression on me, a very deep impression.

And even if we as individuals can only manage to comprehend the tiniest fraction of the fear, the horror, the despair that place embodies, it can be enough to crush you.

Our trip, Livia, has had the greatest impact on me as Prime Minister and as a human being. Thank you.

Holocaust Remembrance Day is a day of mourning. Mourning mothers and fathers, grandparents, friends and loved ones.

Mourning young people who never had the chance to grow up, mourning children who never had the chance to start school or take their first steps, mourning families, relatives, communities.

Mourning the wounds that many of you carry within you, and will do forever.

But unfortunately, today is also a day of anger.

Anger over the raw and despicable anti-Semitism that we still see around the world, in Europe and in Sweden.

We have seen it in attacks against synagogues, rabbis, adults and children, in fanatical slogans during demonstrations, in debate forums, in online comments, in propaganda films.

At times when I get the reports, it seems almost overwhelming, stifling. How can this happen? How can people not have learned?

When I think about it, I feel a sense of profound anger. I know that you feel it too. But there is also something I want each and every one of you to know.

Your security and your constitutional right to exercise your religion, to observe your culture, to be who you are, to be able to live openly, securely and freely with your children and those you love – this is my primary task and that of our country.

The streets you walk on are your streets. The cities you live in are your cities. Your history is Sweden's history – and our future is something we will share.

Sweden is your country, and the democracy we have built will work tirelessly to ensure that our children and grandchildren will not only be able to continue to live as we do today, but be able to strive for something even better.

That is why anti-Semitism must be confronted with the full might of Swedish society. Democracy must confront hate – before hate confronts democracy.

Today, and all other days, we must declare: never again.

In order to fight anti-Semitism in Sweden, we need to see its different roots.

It exists in right-wing extremist and neo-Nazi groups, and these groups must be identified and handled as the terrorists they are, or risk becoming. It exists in left-wing extremist groups, which lapse into anti-Semitic lines of reasoning and conspiracy theories in a way that can never be defended or glossed over. It exists in fundamentalist Islamic environments, inspired by terrorist sects and fanatics.

But besides this, we also see anti-Semitism among adults and children who have sought refuge in Sweden. People who are not necessarily particularly religious, but who have been exposed to anti-Semitic propaganda throughout their lives through stories, newspapers, TV – often orchestrated or supported by the oppressive regimes from which they fled.

I don't care what shape or form the hate takes.

Wherever anti-Semitism exists, it must be identified and fought.

The most fundamental element of all is to ensure that hate crime is highlighted and punished, and that physical security is improved, here and now.

The Swedish Defence Research Agency has been tasked with surveying extremist propaganda on the internet, and we will strengthen the ability of society as a whole to fight it.

The Swedish Security Service has received greater resources to prevent foreign and domestic terrorism, and a month ago we established the new Swedish Centre for Preventing Violent Extremism, which will have greater powers to lead the work throughout the country.

The Swedish Police have established democracy and hate crime groups in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö, and have created similar functions in all police regions in the country. They have also received increased resources to fight hate crime on the internet.

At the same time, we are doubling state support to strengthen security for the premises of religious communities. We are also broadening the support so that we can also support non-confessional Jewish associations, and we are making more tools available, including making it easier to use surveillance cameras.

And we will continue to do that which is necessary. I refuse to allow undemocratic forces to use democracy in order to destroy it.

The only way we will be able to cope with the considerable work ahead of us is to work together. That is why I want to take the opportunity to thank you, Aron, and all of you involved in the Jewish communities and organisations, for our direct and constructive dialogue. We cannot thank you enough for the work you do.

But all of us here know that the efforts of the armed forces, the police and guards can only alleviate the symptoms – they cannot cure the disease.

For anti-Semitism to be thoroughly defeated, it must be done in schools, in liberal adult education, in every person's heart.

I am afraid that, after a while, the work Göran Persson accomplished with the Living History Forum began to be taken for granted. This work must be revitalised in each new age and in each generation.

This is why we will continue to promote the work of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance for remembrance, research and education, and organise a new international Holocaust conference here in Stockholm in two years' time.

This is why we are now organising new training courses and conferences throughout the country, so that school employees learn to nip racism and anti-Semitism in the bud.

This is why we are equipping all pupils in Swedish schools with knowledge of source criticism and responsible use of digital media, so as to be able to confront anti-Semitic conspiracy theories.

And this is why we will also improve national educational materials for newly arrived immigrants, so that every member of Swedish society understands the rights and obligations of individuals, the fundamental role of freedom of religion – and not least, the misapprehensions and repugnance of anti-Semitism.

I also want many more children and young people – regardless of background – to be able to make the trip that I took with you, Livia, and be given state aid to visit Holocaust memorials, to be able to see with their own eyes, be able to feel, and try to understand.

It can arouse feelings that are overwhelming, but also build something stronger, something more decisive in a person's soul. And, my friends, this is a day of mourning, of anger – but also of determination. And we are

determined, to honour all the children, parents, loved ones, those we have lost, whom we mourn today. And in every age, in every generation, in every part of our community of humanity, we are determined to make one thing very clear:

Never again.

Never again.

Never again.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech on the 2030 Agenda for Children: End Violence Solutions Summit

Published 14 February 2018

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the 2030 Agenda for Children: End Violence Solutions Summit. Check against delivery.

Your Majesty, Your Royal Highness, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

this year marks one hundred years since Swedish society ended the practice of auctioning off poor and orphaned children to the person who asked for the least amount of money to care for the child.

Many of the children who were auctioned off were subjected to starvation, violence, neglect and abuse. The death rate was so high that some of the auction winners became known as "angel makers".

Step by step, over the century that has passed, respect for the fundamental rights of every child has increased in our society. We were the first country to ban corporal punishment, among the first to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child and we are now in the process of incorporating it into Swedish law.

Over the years, we have failed many times, leaving children in abusive families or bad foster homes. But we have also succeeded in giving many children much better and brighter futures than they ever thought possible.

I know, because I was one of those children. When my mother couldn't take care of me, society stepped in, and I had the opportunity to move to a loving foster family, the opportunity to grow up safe and happy, the opportunity to

stand before you here today.

Now we are here to do what we can to ensure that every child, in every region of the world, is given the same opportunity: to grow up in a safe, secure and loving environment, free from violence.

Violence against children is a disgrace, a disgrace that must be confronted with the full force of the global community. And this is not just something we wish or hope for. This is a promise we have made.

Every country that has signed up to the 2030 Agenda has promised to achieve target 16.2: to end exploitation and all forms of violence against girls and boys. And it is our duty to keep that promise.

We need solutions. Concrete examples of legislation, collaboration and action plans that can be shared across the globe.

The purpose of this summit is to present and promote those solutions. But we also need leadership. Leadership in governments, in the United Nations and other governmental organisations, in civil society and in the private sector.

I offer my leadership, and Sweden's leadership – but we need your leadership too.

So – let us all step up!

Step up – to give every girl and boy the opportunity to grow up to be a strong and confident individual, the opportunity we were once given.

Step up – to ensure that the solutions presented at this summit will not end up as just high-sounding words or as broken dreams, but lead to permanent change.

Step up – to keep our promise – to end violence against children in our time.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at demonstration against anti-Semitism

Published 20 December 2017

Stockholm, 20 December 2017.

Check against delivery.

Friends,

In June this year I travelled to Auschwitz with Livia Fränkel, who has just turned 90.

It was her first trip back. She wanted to close the circle, say goodbye to her parents.

We stood at the entrance to the concentration camp, side by side, and her memories returned. They were lined up, grouped. Livia and her sister, Hédi, were sent to the right.

Their mother, Frida, to the left. They never saw each other again. As we are standing there, Livia talks about the horror, about her fear. She was sixteen.

I recall her words when the Nordic Resistance Movement march with placards bearing photos of Jewish survivors and call them traitors. When firebombs are hurled at the synagogue in Gothenburg. When demonstrators in Malmö make anti-Semitic death threats. It is a disgrace that those who survived have to experience this again.

In this age. In our nation.

The Holocaust is a part of our history, but Jews are still being persecuted here and now.

Once again, fear is spreading – that familiar feeling when doubts assail. Do I dare wear a kippa or Star of David? Should we take out the Hanukkah menorah? It shouldn't be like this anywhere. It shouldn't be like this in

Sweden.

Everyone should be able to feel proud of their origins, their religion, their identity.

Jewish culture is part of Swedish culture, Jewish history is our history and, in Sweden, everyone has the right to live in our society in security and freedom. We owe it to the people who survived. I owe it to Livia.

And those who try to legitimise violence and hatred to achieve their goals – whether they are Nazis, religious extremists or left-wing extremists – will be inexorably condemned.

We will never allow them to poison our society.

To this end, we are strengthening security around synagogues, schools and other premises. The police have received additional resources and been instructed that efforts to combat hate speech and incitement must be prioritised.

But this is not enough. In the long term, security is not built by guards but by values. It is built in a cohesive and trustful society, an open society that takes great pleasure in our individual similarities and differences.

This is why greater efforts are needed to combat intolerance, in schools and in society, and not least among immigrant groups from countries where anti-Semitism is strong.

We are reintroducing support to enable school pupils to make history and remembrance trips. In 2020 a new international conference on remembrance and education will be held in Sweden.

And we need more occasions like today, when we stand side by side, parties, religions and organisations. And show that what unites us is so much more important than what divides us. That light is stronger than darkness. Love so much greater than hate.

We will stand up for human dignity. We will do it together. It's in our hands!

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by the Prime Minister of Sweden at the AU-EU Summit

Published 01 December 2017

On 29-30 November 2017, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven participated in the Summit between the African union and the European Union, in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Check against delivery.

President Ouattara, Commission Chairperson Moussa Faki, African and European Heads of State and Government, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, Dear friends,

Africa and Europe share a past – and we share a future. Strengthening our partnership will help us to address mutual concerns and challenges.

Excellencies,

What does the future hold for young Europeans and young Africans today? What are their interests and aspirations? Having listened to some of the young voices here at this summit, it is striking how similar their hopes and concerns are: Freedom, a family of one's own, a job, a brighter future, safety and security.

I am also struck by the similarity to my own experiences as a young man. I got my first job in the early 1970s. I was in my teens. I cleared brushwood out of a ditch close to my home village. It was hard work, but I enjoyed it. Because I knew that a job is the foundation on which to build a life of your own. Your own money. Your own choices. Your own future.

Our future lies in these dreams of young people. Our most important duty is to ensure that we create the opportunities that give our young people hope for the future.

As was said by many in the Youth Pre-Summit, Africa is losing many of its youth. Some leave in search for a better life. Their dreams are often brutally exploited by smugglers, by human traffickers. Their lives are lost when they try to cross the Mediterranean in rickety boats. Promises are broken. The job does not exist when they arrive. Their work permit was fake. Instead, many are forced to stay illegally under very harsh conditions.

I was outraged and horrified by the recent footage of African migrants being sold as slaves. What this footage depicted must be condemned in the strongest possible terms. These reports must be thoroughly investigated without delay. We are encouraged by the action to be taken to free those now kept as slaves.

As a Member of the UN Security Council, Sweden adds its voice to the outright condemnation of the cruel and illegal practice of slavery. No young man or woman should be sold as a slave. Migration between countries should be safe, orderly and sustainable. This is our shared responsibility.

Good governance is about putting people first. Our obligation as leaders is to serve our people. Democracy, respect for human rights, and the rule of law are the foundations of all our societies. As is freedom of speech and freedom of the press because politics always benefits from intense scrutiny.

Providing space for civil society and strengthening the independence of civil society organisations are fundamental to building sustainable and democratic societies. Civil society is also the fabric that links people-to-people and will remain an indispensable stakeholder to build popular support for our continued partnership.

Good governance is inclusion. Commitment to gender equality, to reducing inequalities and to providing sexual and reproductive health and rights is essential for the empowerment of women and girls.

Excellencies,

Allow me to emphasise three points: Firstly, we have agreed on strong common goals. Now we have to deliver. The Paris Agreement, the 2030 Agenda and the African Union's Agenda 2063, including the African Governance Architecture, must be implemented. Everyone has to do their part. We need enhanced dialogue in a number of areas, for example electoral processes and democracy.

Secondly, we must fight corruption. Tax money belongs to the people. We need to further strengthen initiatives to fight tax evasion, illicit financial flows and corruption, otherwise these will undermine our societies and our economies.

Thirdly, investing in education is an investment in the future. A capable and skilled workforce is every country's most important asset. Education, training and re-training is key to the diversification of economies as well as to maximizing investment. Let us aim for more cooperation on vocational training, in research, in science and in higher education.

What this is ultimately about, is turning the wealth of a country into prosperity and welfare for all of its people. There is no better policy against forced migration. There is no better cure for despair. This brings hope for the future. It makes young people stay. This is just good governance.

Finally, I would like to thank our hosts, the African Union Presidency and President Ouattara and the people of Côte d'Ivoire. Meetings such as this summit, and dialogue between our continents leave our two Unions better equipped to build a shared future that is peaceful and prosperous.

Let me conclude by quoting His Excellency Felix Houphouët-Boigny, the first President of Côte d'Ivoire:

“Dialogue is the weapon of the strong, not the weak”.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Closing address at Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth

Published 17 November 2017 Updated 17 November 2017

Closing address by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth, Gothenburg. Check against delivery.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Friends,

This Summit has been enriched by all the experience, expertise and engagement you have offered here today.

Thank you all for your insights and ideas on how we should move forward together.

Our discussions today have shown that there is a clear commitment to put the interest of our people at the heart of the EU agenda.

There is a willingness to act to create a more inclusive, fair and social Europe. And if we move from words to action, we can further strengthen Europe's already expanding economy.

The question at the end of this important day is: What's next?

First of all, President Juncker and I will summarise our discussions in a report to inspire our future work.

The report will also make a substantial contribution to the European Council in December, which will focus on the future of the social dimension.

So I believe it is fair to say that we have had a very productive Summit.

And in just a moment, we will have a signing ceremony for the European Pillar of Social Rights. But before that, I would like to thank all of you for taking part in this Summit.

Your contributions are important and will help us take the next steps we need to build a fairer Europe and strengthen its social dimension.

Together – and only together – can we build a better Europe for everyone.

Thank you all!



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Opening address at Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth

Published 17 November 2017 Updated 17 November 2017

Opening address by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth, Gothenburg. Check against delivery.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Friends,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to Sweden and the beautiful city of Gothenburg. This is a city with a long history of trade and seafaring. The port where we are right now dates back to the 17th century. And this building used to be a mechanical workshop, when Gothenburg was known around the world for its fine shipbuilding.

The working men and women of the time fought for decent wages, acceptable working conditions, and the right to paid annual leave.

The old docks have been transformed into a campus and a science park, where thousands of people today work, live and study.

What takes place here nowadays has very little to do with building ships. And the people going about their activities are doing so in an environment that would have been unimaginable in the shipbuilding days.

Our economies and the world of work have changed so profoundly. This means that the challenges we face have also changed, and that we need new solutions to manage them. That is what this Summit is about.

If we look around Europe, we can see how timely this Summit is. Europe has

faced numerous challenges over the last decade. We have seen growing concerns among people and rising distrust in political solutions. It is time for us to put people first.

The European Union is nothing more and nothing less than our people. Addressing issues such as inequality, unemployment and unfair practices is not only morally right. It is also the smart thing to do. It will boost productivity and strengthen our economies. So let's focus on two things at the same time: fair jobs and growth.

Let's improve access to the labour market and get more people into work. Let's ensure decent working conditions and put an end to unfair practices. Let's better manage the forces of globalisation, so that change can be an opportunity, not a threat.

Most of the tools we need to achieve our goals are national. But support and coordination at European level can add tremendous value. That is why I am so very happy to welcome you all here today and to be co-hosting this Summit with President Jean-Claude Juncker. My friend Jean-Claude has made enormous efforts to put these issues higher on our agenda. But keeping fair jobs and growth at the top of the EU agenda must be the work of many.

And thankfully, as I look around this room, I see heads of state and government, social partners, civil society representatives, students, and other stakeholders.

As a former trade union leader, I am naturally guided in our common mission for fair jobs and growth by the popular motto: United we stand, divided we fall. If we do not work together, we will fail to meet tomorrow's challenges, and the competitiveness, prosperity and legitimacy of the EU will suffer.

But by working together, as leaders, unions and employers, we can improve both the lives of our people and the strength of our economies. So let's unite, and let's get to work!

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Our Europe – our shared responsibility

Published 26 October 2017

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at Uppsala University, 26 October 2017. Check against delivery.

Students,
ladies and gentlemen,

Today I want to talk about the future of Europe. And what more appropriate place to look at the bigger picture than at the oldest university in the Nordic countries. Since the 15th century, Uppsala University has looked outwards towards the world. This is a distinguished seat of learning in Europe, and one of the world's 100 best universities according to the most important rankings. This makes me proud.

The place is the Plenary Chamber of the European Parliament in the city of Strasbourg on the French-German border. The date is 1 July this year. Helmut Kohl's coffin is draped in the European flag. And in the front row, Bill Clinton stands up, walks past the coffin towards the podium. He sounds slightly hoarse, and begins by turning to Europe's leaders. Chancellor Merkel and President Macron are sitting in front of me, side by side. President Clinton asks us all to think about something that has just occurred to him – something that was not in his notes. Why have so many political leaders come to say farewell?

“Why?” he asks. “Because Helmut Kohl gave us the chance to be involved in something bigger than ourselves, bigger than our terms of office, bigger than our fleeting careers.” And he says, pointing to the former German Chancellor's coffin: “Because all of us, sooner or later, will be in a coffin like that. And the only gift we can leave behind, is a better future for our children...”

The project – that is bigger than ourselves, that can guarantee our children a life in peace and freedom, that gives us opportunities we often take for granted – is the European Union. Helmut Kohl helped unite East and West Germany. He was part of laying the foundations for the successful and peaceful post-Cold War era. He said that Germany is his home country, but that Europe is our common future.

Today I want to talk about the future of the European Union.

Europe is the second-smallest continent. It is far from the most populous. But we are rich in many other ways. We have a European culture, recognised for its world-renowned composers and musicians, authors and artists. We enjoy a high standard of living. We are the world's second-largest market.

But times are changing rapidly. The map of the world is being redrawn. China's economy is expected to be twice the size of the EU economy by 2050. But we don't need to look that far ahead to see global challenges. Some are confronting us here and now.

The United States is leaving the Paris agreement on climate change. Russia is breaching the European security order. North Korea is sending the most alarming signals. The number of displaced people in the world is the highest since the Second World War.

At the same time, we are grappling with internal difficulties. In some EU countries, developments are at odds with our fundamental values. We have Member States that are refusing to shoulder their share of our joint responsibility for migration policy. The after-effects of the financial crisis are still tangible. In recent years, we have seen growing distrust in the ability of politics to solve these difficulties. In the wake of all this, we have to tackle populism and xenophobia. And one Member State has chosen to leave the European Union.

So what are we to learn from this? Those of us with political responsibility for Europe must step up and respond more effectively to the challenges of today.

How do we do this? The first step is to remember why the EU was founded. The Treaty of Rome, signed in March 1957, set the course. Economic and social progress would be secured. The living and working conditions of citizens would be improved. Economic and social differences between

regions would be reduced, and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations would be followed.

From the outset, the EU has had the wellbeing of its people as a goal, a single market as a means, and the rest of the world as partners. Thus no new major projects are needed right now. Amending the EU treaties would not solve any problems. Rather, we must focus on the key issues where the EU brings added value. This makes us strong.

So let me address the most important issues: jobs and the economy, a fair labour market, environment and climate, peace and security, migration and our shared values.

The one thing that really changed our European continent was the creation of the single market. The EU is our home market. Almost 80 per cent of all foreign direct investment in Sweden comes from the EU. Of our exports, 71 per cent go to the EU single market. These figures speak for themselves.

Sweden must be a driving force behind continued efforts to tear down trade barriers so that we can all benefit from the free movement of goods and services. We will push to ensure that the EU is the world-leader in digital transformation. This is necessary to promote innovation – an area where Sweden is already world-class.

We will push to increase gender equality and the number of women in work. According to a recent report, we could increase EU GDP per capita by up to nine per cent. Increased gender equality would mean adding another Germany to the EU economy.

We will push to bring down unemployment, which is beginning to fall but is still far too high, especially among Europe's young people. An entire generation must regain hope and confidence in the future.

We will push to ensure that the EU secures more free trade agreements. Those with Canada and South Korea are very important. The agreement with Japan is almost finalised, and hopefully a number of countries in Latin America are next in line. I would like to see us resume talks with the United States on the trade and investment partnership where considerable progress had been made. And why shouldn't the EU be able to initiate negotiations about a comprehensive trade agreement with China in due course?

Europe's economic outlook is brighter, and it is time to raise our sights. Our

goal is this: that the EU will be the most dynamic market, where we compete with the sharpest skills, the best products, the smartest innovations, and the greenest technologies.

Sweden has not introduced the euro. This was a decision taken by the Swedish people, who are in control of the matter. Effective cooperation in the euro area, with growth and stability, is good for Sweden. How euro area countries develop their cooperation is important for the entire European Union. This is why cohesion among all EU Member States must be safeguarded, and Sweden should have influence over decisions that affect us.

The Government will carefully consider the question of whether to join the EU's banking union, which is now beginning to take shape. By November 2019, an inquiry will be ready regarding the potential benefits and disadvantages of Sweden's membership in such a union. For me it is natural to continuously evaluate how we can maximise Sweden's influence in the European Union.

The single market and free movement have been an engine for growth and development in Europe. Nonetheless, this must be complemented by strengthening the rights of citizens. We cannot have a Europe that exists merely to serve the market. Europe must be there for its citizens.

Equal pay for equal work must apply to everyone – both in Sweden and in the rest of the EU. People should be able to live on their wages. And we should work, not wear ourselves out, not jeopardise our health at work. This is why my Government has worked hard from day one to put these issues higher up on the EU agenda. This is not about the EU taking more decisions, or about making everyone do things in the same way. We would never, as some people claim, replace our Swedish model with anything else. Instead, we will draw on our combined knowledge and experience.

And now, finally, we are beginning to reap the benefits – on several fronts. On Monday, the EU's three legislative institutions – the European Commission, the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament – decided to endorse the European Pillar of Social Rights.

This Pillar consists of twenty principles that put citizens' interests first and that should be regularly monitored. It is through this kind of structured cooperation that we can bolster each other and together strengthen citizens' rights in Europe.

Earlier this week, we received another welcome piece of news. The European Council of Ministers has agreed on new rules for posted workers. This is about ensuring that it is not possible to dump wages or working conditions if you are temporarily working in another EU country. These new rules will now be negotiated with the European Parliament, and they mean that equal pay for equal work will apply regardless of whether you work in your home country, or temporarily in another country. After many years of unfair competition, we are on the verge of success on this issue.

So we are now seeing great advances for Sweden, and for EU workers. A great deal remains to be done, however. This is why President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and I have invited EU leaders, the social partners and other stakeholders to Gothenburg for the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth that will begin in three weeks.

This will be the first time that key stakeholders gather to jointly give their views on the way forward. We will then chart the path towards more jobs and better working conditions. I have worked in Swedish industry and gained my political education in the Swedish trade union movement. Throughout my working life I have called attention to the unique role of the social partners in the labour market. I have always recognised European cooperation and said that the EU is what we make of it. And today I can say to you: Soon, Europe's leaders will come to Gothenburg to put decent work even higher up on the EU agenda. This is proof that we in Sweden can play an important role in moving the European Union forward. The EU must demonstrate that good working conditions, greater equity and increased gender equality, are the path that will secure our leading position in the world.

Emissions from a factory follow the wind or a river – not a national border. Environmental and climate issues are among the areas in which the EU's added value is most apparent. Sweden's objective is self-evident: the EU must be a world leader in this area, which offers great opportunities for economic growth, new jobs and better living conditions. Important progress is now being made. The EU is negotiating binding climate and energy objectives. This is absolutely essential if we are to curb global warming. To do this, we must reduce our emissions of greenhouse gases. We will increase the share of renewable energy and reduce our energy consumption. In times when climate change needs leadership, the EU is sending a clear message to the world: we stand firm in our commitments under the Paris Agreement. We are taking responsibility for future generations. We will take the lead in this transition.

One issue, however, symbolises EU cooperation even more powerfully than our borderless environmental and climate efforts. We have enjoyed peace in our country for more than 200 years. We often take this peace for granted.

But anyone who has travelled in Europe has seen another story: military cemeteries in Normandy and Flanders Fields, Auschwitz, the Berlin Wall, and Picasso's Guernica in Madrid. The EU is a peace project, a way to guarantee that the wars and abuses that dominated a large part of the previous century cannot happen again.

Nothing is more important for a government than guaranteeing the safety of its citizens. The security situation in our part of the world has now deteriorated. In addition to purely military threats, Europe's nations must be able to combat and overcome terrorism, cyber threats, influence operations, violent extremism and organised crime – to list a few examples.

This is a tough challenge. Evil forces think nothing of turning a lorry into a lethal weapon on a crowded shopping street. In Sweden, we are now strengthening our defence capability, and we have adopted a national security strategy. In the new world situation, the EU is more important than ever for Sweden's security.

We want to help advance the Common Security and Defence Policy. This does not mean that we want to see a defence union. But our line is clear: the countries of Europe must take greater collective responsibility for European security. We must strengthen intergovernmental defence policy cooperation in the EU and continue to develop cooperation between the EU and NATO. And when we act together, the EU is a strong foreign policy actor that takes global responsibility, with a broad view of security.

The EU has condemned Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its illegal annexation of Crimea. We agree that sanctions against Russia must remain in place for as long as the reasons for their introduction remain. Stable, prosperous and democratic countries in our neighbourhood lead to a more secure Europe, and thereby a more secure Sweden.

Another challenge is migration. It is a yardstick of our ability to tackle difficult issues. Two years ago, we experienced the worst refugee crisis since the Second World War to directly affect us in Europe. Every week, overcrowded vessels sank and were lost. Children, women and men drowned at sea. For a few weeks that September, the train stations all over Sweden were packed with people who had come to our country, with just the clothes on

their backs or, at best, with a bag in their arms.

Many people made tremendous efforts to receive these newly arrived immigrants. But the situation was not tenable – not for anyone. Today, fewer people are coming here. But a lot of work still remains to be done before we have a sustainable and responsible migration policy.

The EU has an important role to play internationally. Because the solution is not that everyone should come to Europe. We are working together with the UN on poverty reduction, conflict resolution and development in the refugees' home countries. We are combating human smugglers, whose business concept is profiting from people's desperation. European vessels now patrol the Mediterranean and rescue people in distress. We are making tremendous contributions here. And they are having an impact. Fewer people are now making their way to Europe along dangerous routes, which is an achievement.

These efforts must be combined with shared responsibility by the EU to receive our fellow human beings who are forced to flee. And in this, we have not yet made sufficient progress. We have done what is required at national level to ensure a well-ordered reception system. We accomplished that. And we will keep it that way. Sweden cannot have an asylum policy that differs substantially from the rest of the EU, and we must put in place a new asylum system in which all Member States take their share of responsibility.

We are putting huge efforts into this. I am prepared to compromise in order to agree on a solution. However, if some Member States decline, then I am prepared to come to a decision without consensus. Countries that do not take their responsibility for refugee reception should not have access to economic support from the EU as they do today.

And as long as we do not have an efficient system in the EU, as long as order and security cannot be guaranteed, then it is likely that we will not see the end of border controls in Europe. This will have some ramifications for free movement in the EU for a while, but for the time being, this seems to be a necessary evil. The signal to other countries must be clear. Everyone must take their share of what is our joint responsibility.

What unites us as countries of Europe is more than just geography, history and economic cooperation. Our foundation is our common values, our way of life: freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights. For countries aspiring to become members of our European

community, these are the values that matter. This is how we have laid the foundation for the democratisation of countries that have left decades of fascism or communism behind them. The pursuit of democracy and the aspiration to belong to the European Union have been intricately linked. But if we are to credibly place demands on others, we must also tackle problems among our own Member States. The EU is not a project where we can pick and choose among the rules and obligations that apply. Nor is the EU a cash dispenser doling out money with no strings attached. Each country in the EU must stand up for the decisions we have taken together. Each country also has an obligation to take care of its own citizens. Freedom of movement does not entitle some countries to shirk their responsibility for citizens who face discrimination or have no means of support. Throughout Europe today, we see a large number of beggars; this is completely unacceptable. I also find it deeply troubling that some Member States today no longer seem to share our fundamental values. There must be consequences for this. We need to find better ways to ensure that everyone respects democracy and human rights, and follows the rule of law. Belonging to a club and breaking its common rules must come at a price.

The most important thing for the EU is to resolve concrete and relevant issues. But let me say a few words about the forms of our continued European cooperation. One matter under discussion is whether all countries must keep pace and move forward in unison. Or can some countries take the lead and deepen their EU cooperation further?

Having different forms of cooperation on some issues is not so strange. Schengen and the euro are two examples of how this is already the case today. And will be so in the future as well.

But there is an apprehension that we are in the process of creating different types of membership: an 'A team' and a 'B team', if you will. This apprehension creates a fear of divisions in the EU. It is a concern that we must take seriously. Those of us who choose to remain outside areas of our cooperation must demonstrate that we are nonetheless constructive and engaged. Those participating in the areas of cooperation, such as the euro area, must show consideration for us all.

In recent weeks we have also heard suggestions for everything from a joint finance minister to combining the offices of European Commission President Juncker and European Council President Tusk. I think it would be unfortunate if we get bogged down in discussions about amending treaties or changing individual positions. This is not where the EU's problems lie.

Besides, we already have the world's best Minister for Finance: Magdalena Andersson from Uppsala. We don't need anyone else.

Discussions about our future EU have taken on even greater relevance now that one of our Member States has voted to leave. Good relations with the UK are an important component of a strong future EU. An orderly exit creates opportunities for close relations following the divorce, too. It is important for us to establish strong trade relations, favourable conditions for our citizens and continued cooperation wherever possible, such as in education, research and security. This is why it is imperative for an essentially negative event such as Brexit to end as constructively as possible.

The UK's exit will naturally mean a loss, financially, for the EU. This will have consequences as we revise the EU budget. The EU must cut its coat according to its cloth. Sweden, however, needs to also reflect further on how we can help to take on the role the British have played. The UK and Sweden have often pushed in the same direction – stood side by side in negotiations. We must now continue to build alliances and pull harder on our own as we move forward without the UK's efforts.

But every cloud has a silver lining. EU cohesion has improved. Perhaps the importance of European cooperation has once again become more apparent. Support for the EU is currently on the rise, both in Sweden and the rest of Europe. We Swedes should be proud of what we accomplish in the European Union. Aside from the six largest Member States, Sweden and the Netherlands – an EU founder – are said to have the greatest influence in the EU.

The work we do for our Europe can only grow in strength if support at home – in Sweden – remains strong. The Government also aims to strengthen participation, awareness and engagement with respect to EU issues in our country. Through the 'EU handshake', a number of different actors – from municipalities to the social partners and student organisations – have agreed to promote greater citizen participation. I hope we will also continue to have constructive cooperation on EU issues between the political parties in the Riksdag.

We have a shared responsibility for our Europe. This applies to you as well. You are our future, all you students who are at the beginning of your life journey. I hope that many of you will study in another European country, if you have not done so already. I hope that you find European friends and discover how similar our thoughts and dreams are.

I hope that some of you will apply for jobs in the various EU institutions, as these are important workplaces in need of even more competent Swedes. I hope that you learn more European languages, not just English. And I hope that you will think about the kind of Europe you want, and that you find contexts in which you can realise your ideas.

We find ourselves at a crossroads. Either our continent will cope with global competition by being united and focusing on the challenges that lie ahead of us, or our future will be marked by dissension, where we all lose out, where we fall behind countries in other parts of the world.

The path we must choose becomes clear if we think back to the words spoken at Helmut Kohl's memorial. European cooperation is something bigger than ourselves, our terms of office and our fleeting careers.

A successful Europe will improve the prospects of a successful Sweden. I am convinced that many of the challenges we face can only be resolved together. This is why my Government and I will continue to work for a better and stronger EU. An EU that is closer to its citizens, that gives priority to the major, significant issues in which the EU has clear added value.

The challenge lies in this very moment. The time is always now. Together – and only together – we can build a better Europe. This is our shared responsibility.

Thank you for your attention.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Statement of Government Policy, 12 September 2017

Published 12 September 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, the Riksdag, 12
September 2017.

Your Majesties, Your Royal Highnesses, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members
of the Riksdag,

The challenges of our time are critical: the serious nuclear threat from North Korea, the humanitarian disaster in war-torn Syria, the climate change crisis, famine in East Africa and Yemen. Uncertainty and insecurity are taking a toll on people around the world. The need to work together to build sustainable peace and resilient societies is clearer than ever. This means that Sweden's efforts must increase too.

Sweden has a year and a half remaining on the UN Security Council. Respect for international law, democracy, human rights, conflict prevention and confidence-building measures are guiding our work.

Our security policy remains firmly in place. Our non-participation in military alliances serves our country well and contributes to stability and security in northern Europe.

More women are needed in UN peacekeeping operations and at the negotiating table when peace agreements are concluded. Sweden's efforts to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights continue. The world's first expressly feminist foreign policy will continue to deliver.

A strong European Union in which everyone takes their share of responsibility increases security and the ability to address major global challenges. Sweden is working to ensure that the United Kingdom's exit from

the European Union is orderly. We need an EU that remains strong and united. In November, the President of the European Commission and I will host a summit on fair jobs and growth. Workers must not be pitted against each other in Europe.

Strong Nordic cooperation is an integral part of our international engagement.

Sweden is pushing for the goals of the 2030 Agenda to be achieved. Over the next year, new milestone targets will be developed in the environmental objectives system. The goal of one per cent of GNI to aid will be achieved in 2018. Stronger action is needed to prevent armed conflicts and meet the pressing humanitarian needs around the world.

The countries of the world have a joint responsibility for displaced people. The EU needs to finalise a new common asylum policy that is humane and based on solidarity. The right to asylum must be safeguarded. Immigration in Sweden must be regulated. The Government's work to improve the return system continues. Processing times will be shortened. Those permitted to stay must be able to start working or studying much sooner.

The largest Swedish Armed Forces exercise in 20 years is currently under way, involving 20 000 Swedish soldiers and officers, some 40 government agencies and broad participation from several countries. Sweden's defence capabilities are being developed.

Our bilateral and multilateral defence and security cooperation is deepening. As national military service is reintroduced, 6 000 young men and women are now being called up for enrolment and others have voluntarily signed up to the Swedish Armed Forces. Early next year, the first recruits will begin their basic training. This makes me proud.

The security situation has deteriorated. The illegal annexation of Crimea and Russia's aggression against Ukraine violate international law and challenge the European security order. International terrorism and climate change pose threats to us all. We are more susceptible to disruptions in critical infrastructure.

Information security is a priority. The Swedish Armed Forces and the Swedish Security Service are being given tools to stop the outsourcing of

sensitive information. The new national security strategy will be implemented. Our country must be secure in a new era, too.

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank the parties represented in the Riksdag that have contributed to broad agreements on stronger total defence, energy policy, a climate policy framework and measures to combat terrorism.

Security is something we build together – in Sweden and globally.

Rachel Carson, author of the ground-breaking book *Silent Spring* from 1962, once wrote:

Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth
find reserves of strength
that will endure as long as life lasts.
There is something infinitely healing
in the repeated refrains of nature –
the assurance that dawn comes after night,
and spring after winter.

Rachel Carson opened people's eyes, but she also gave people hope. We can cause problems, we humans. But, when we decide to, we can also put things right again. We can adapt.

Climate change is happening here and now. Water shortages in Sweden, the Lucifer heatwave in Europe, the drought in the Horn of Africa, Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma scare us. Extreme weather events follow in the wake of climate change. The climate cannot wait. Societal transformation must be accelerated to safeguard opportunities for future generations.

Sweden now has a new climate policy framework with a progressive Climate Act. It outlines the objectives and the direction for future governments and guarantees a continuing high level of ambition in addressing climate change. During this electoral period, the budget for environment and climate will more than double. The Climate Leap will be strengthened. Around the country, charging stations for electric cars are popping up in more and more places. Solar cells glisten on the roofs of many private houses, and there will be more.

Groundwater resources need to be surveyed and drinking water protected. Wetlands will be established and restored. A drive is now under way to protect the seas and oceans. Plastic, pharmaceuticals and nutrients must not destroy our oceans. Protection of marine areas will be expanded. The Baltic Sea and the North Sea must be clean and healthy.

Sweden is demonstrating leadership on action to implement the Paris Agreement. We are showing that it is possible to combine ecological sustainability with welfare, equity and development.

Mr Speaker,

Following the 2014 election, the Government inherited a deficit of SEK 60 billion. This has now been turned into a large surplus. Unemployment has been pushed back. An additional 200 000 people are in work. Employment is at its highest and dependence on compensation systems at its lowest since before the crisis of the 1990s.

The Swedish economy is in a completely new situation. We now have the means to both pay off national debt and invest in a stronger future for Sweden.

Together we will fight the climate change crisis and environmental threats.
Together we will fight insecurity and inequalities.
Together we will future-proof jobs and welfare.
Now it is time to build our future.

The gaps between urban and rural areas must be closed. It must be possible to work, run a business and benefit from public services whether you live in Visby, Vårby gård or Vittangi.

There must be opportunities throughout our country for cultural participation. Culture makes people grow and strengthens democracy. Reduced fees and lower thresholds for municipal art and music classes are giving more children the opportunity to express themselves through words, images, sounds and movement. The 'Unga Klara' theatre company will become a national theatre institute for children and young people. The Royal Opera, the Royal Dramatic Theatre and Riksteatern (the Swedish national touring theatre) will receive funds for more digital broadcasts of theatre and music performances. Conditions for artists will be improved. A new media policy will be presented for media pluralism and freedom throughout the country.

In Sweden, it must be possible to find housing when moving for work or study. Not since the days of the Million Homes Programme has there been as much construction taking place as there is today. The Government's investment support is now providing more rental housing with reasonable rents. The use of wood in housing construction will be increased. This will help mitigate the effects of climate change and create jobs throughout the country.

The trend towards centralisation will end. The largest relocation of government agencies in more than a decade is now under way. At least ten new local service centres will be opened to offer integrated services from several government agencies. In the coming year, a new rural development policy will be drawn up.

Our forests will be protected and also contribute to development. A national forest programme will be presented to enable our forests to contribute to the growth of the bio-based economy. More natural forests will be protected and greater consideration will be given to nature conservation in managed forests. Companies in the tourism and hospitality industry will be stimulated. Value added tax for nature guides will be reduced. Food production is growing and creating new jobs. Thirty per cent of Sweden's agricultural land will be organically managed by 2030.

Sustainable forests and diverse natural environments can improve biological diversity.

Infrastructure connects the different parts of the country. It must be possible to both travel sustainably and arrive on time. Record investments are being made in railways and road maintenance. A national transport infrastructure plan for the period up to 2029 will be adopted. New, modern main lines for high-speed rail links will be built. Travelling by train should be faster than driving and cheaper than flying. Broadband expansion will continue at a rapid pace.

Sweden's economic strength must benefit everyone, throughout the country.

Sweden must stand together. Crippling unemployment and hopelessness pave the way for criminality, polarisation and extremism. This must not be tolerated anywhere in our country. To people living in suburbs, industrial

towns or rural areas, I say this: we will change this trend together.

The manner in which newly arrived immigrants are integrated into the workforce and communities will mean the difference between poverty and confidence in the future for tens of thousands of people, and will affect all our futures.

The Delegation against Segregation is starting its work. Municipalities, county councils, regions, government agencies, organisations, researchers and those living and working in socially vulnerable areas will work together. Resources for the schools and pupils with the greatest needs are increasing considerably. The modernisation of the areas built during the Million Homes Programme will continue.

Where needs are greatest, support will be strongest.

Mr Speaker,

There is no place for organised crime in Sweden. Society must always be stronger than the gangs. Next year, this century's biggest investment in Swedish police gets under way. Sweden cannot afford to have police officers leaving the profession. The Swedish Police Authority has received a new assignment to improve career and development opportunities for police officers together with the trade unions.

This investment will make a difference, and the entire judicial chain must therefore also be involved. Today, I am able to inform the Riksdag that the Government's budget contains additional investments of almost SEK 750 million to strengthen SOS Alarm, Swedish Customs, the Swedish Security Service, the Swedish Prosecution Authority, the Swedish Economic Crime Authority and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. More crimes must be solved. It will be more difficult to be a criminal in Sweden.

Sentences for gross firearms offences will be tougher. The number of places available in institutional youth care will increase. New penalties are being proposed for young criminals. Protection of emergency services and medical personnel will be strengthened. Our joint message is: don't touch our heroes!

Drottninggatan, Stockholm, 7 April, 14.53.

Most of us clearly remember what we were doing that afternoon. Society rallied behind those working to help the victims. People opened up their

homes. There were many of us who met and supported each other, sorrowful, yet resolute, who wanted to say: This is our city. Our country. No terrorist can take that away from us.

Let us remember the victims and honour their memory.

And let us fight terrorism with the full might of Swedish democracy. The Swedish Security Service must have access to signals intelligence in parallel with ongoing preliminary investigations. Participation in a terrorist organisation will be criminalised. A national centre to combat violent extremism will be established.

Sexual offences are an abomination. New legislation on sexual offences based on consent will be presented. Children are children. Sweden does not accept child marriage. Protection against child marriage will be strengthened. Travel abroad for the purpose of forced marriage will be stopped. So-called 'honour' crimes must lead to more severe penalties. Religious extremists must not gain ground in the public sphere, nor decide where women can go or what they wear.

Every woman in Sweden must be able to live as she pleases. Proud, upright, confident. Sweden must be safe for everyone.

Mr Speaker,
The Swedish labour market is strong.

Investments are increasing. Industrial manufacturing is returning home. Swedish exports are showing new record figures. Real wages are growing. Next year, unemployment is expected to fall below six per cent for the first time in almost ten years. The objective is to achieve the lowest unemployment rate in the EU by 2020.

In this situation, Sweden is facing two major challenges.

The first is that employers have difficulties finding people with the right skills.

There are more than 100 000 job vacancies and the list of shortage occupations is long. If unemployment is to fall further, even greater investments in education are required.

The Adult Education Initiative is being expanded to comprise almost 80 000 student places during the electoral period. Learning centres will be developed so that more students can undertake distance learning. Student grants are being raised. The possibility of obtaining CSN loans for driving lessons is being introduced.

This is how we equip Sweden for the global and digital economy. Sweden is competing for the jobs of the future on the basis of knowledge and skills – not low wages. It must be worthwhile to work and it must be possible to live on your wages. Conditions in the Swedish labour market must be fair and decent.

This is the Swedish model.

The second challenge is shortening the path to jobs for newly arrived immigrants.

Sweden's employers can do a lot in this regard. It has never been as simple as it is now. Employment support is being combined and simplified. The number of 'extra jobs' is being increased. Support to companies that employ their first worker is being expanded.

An education and training obligation is being introduced. Those who do not have adequate skills to obtain a job during their introduction period will be required to undertake education and training.

Foreign-born women are needed on the labour market. Special efforts are being made to enable more women to find jobs. Parental benefit has been changed so that the bulk must be taken during the child's first years. Outreach activities are being expanded, as is the opportunity to learn Swedish during parental leave.

Efforts to ensure healthy workplaces and speedy rehabilitation are yielding results. The soaring sick leave rates have been halted. An agency for work environment awareness is being established. More measures for better working conditions and work-life balance are being examined. Barriers to people with disabilities will be torn down and more job opportunities created.

Everyone who can work should work. Everyone is needed in building our future.

Swedish industry will lead the way when climate change, globalisation and the digital transformation demand rapid adaptation. The National Innovation Council's strategic partnership programmes are launching a number of initiatives so that Swedish businesses can develop the attractive products of tomorrow and attract foreign investment. Swedish testing and demonstration facilities are being developed. The Government's export strategy is helping Swedish companies to secure business throughout the world. Sweden will be a pioneer for free and fair trade.

Industrial emissions must be reduced. The process industry will be provided with new support for innovative projects and green tech advances – a Green Industry Leap. A strategy is being drawn up for the transition to a circular and bio-based economy. Renewable energy production is being expanded.

Considerable investment in electrification is being made in partnership with the Swedish automotive industry. The vehicle fleet needs to be modernised so that we can do away with petrol and diesel. An expanded bonus will make it cheaper to buy a low-emission car, and more costly to pollute. An electric vehicle premium will be introduced to encourage more people to use electric scooters or bicycles.

Climate adaptation forms the basis of tomorrow's jobs and prosperity. Sweden will be transformed into the world's first fossil-free welfare nation, and we are doing this with the help of our trusty old – yet ultramodern – industry.

Swedish industry has not invested this much since the financial crisis. At the same time, we know that booms and slumps come and go. Now is therefore the time to prepare and equip industry for future recessions. A competitive system for short-time work is being developed to secure industrial jobs. Security for small businesses and entrepreneurs is being reviewed and strengthened.

Investments in knowledge, from preschool through to vocational education and training to research, bode well for a competent Sweden when the competition stiffens.

Mr Speaker,

Now Sweden is growing. Many people have immigrated to our country. We are living longer, and more babies are being born. This is a sign of strength. The Swedish welfare state needs to be expanded.

Since the Government took office, 100 000 more people have been employed in welfare services. This makes Sweden more secure. By 2020, injections of additional resources to welfare will have increased by SEK 50 billion. Many more people can be employed in health, schools and social services.

For every new doctor, fewer seriously ill people will have to wait for an appointment. For every new assistant nurse, more elderly people will feel safe knowing that someone will come when they need them. For every new teacher, more children will be able to crack the code – understand the principle – to overcome a difficulty and feel that magical: 'Aha!' This makes a difference every day. this goes before tax cuts.

This is how we will build welfare together – and a sustainable society for a new era.

A few weeks ago I met class 3A from Nälstaskolan at Berättarministeriet (the Ministry of Tales) in Husby. Berättarministeriet works with children to provide them with what is most crucial for their learning, namely mastering language, writing and storytelling. I was there as a volunteer. My job: to enliven, inspire and take the children's imagination seriously. Thank you for all the inspiration I received in return.

Learning requires reading. A reading-writing-arithmetic guarantee for the early years will be laid down in law. More school libraries will be staffed. Greater emphasis will be placed on source criticism. Compulsory schooling in Sweden will begin at age six. Special needs education will be strengthened and more special needs teachers will be trained. Schools must provide a safe learning environment. All pupils must acquire more skills and knowledge.

Schools are no longer plagued by cutbacks. Despite the shortage of teachers and large year groups, the staff to pupil ratio is rising. The number of staff working in schools has increased by 20 000. Preschool groups are at their smallest for 25 years. Three out of four registered teachers in compulsory and upper secondary schools have received a substantial pay increase. More paths to becoming a registered teacher will be available. At last, more people are choosing to become teachers.

The Schools Commission has delivered the most thorough proposal for

improving schools in Sweden in decades. It lays the foundation for an equitable school system and high learning outcomes.

School segregation must end. Schools must be a meeting place for pupils from different backgrounds. Newly arrived pupils will be more evenly allocated, including to independent schools. Major investments will continue to be made to ensure that all schools are good schools.

More young people must complete their upper secondary school education. The introductory programmes will be strengthened so that more people qualify for the national programmes. All national programmes will include aesthetic subjects. Vocational packages will be developed so that more young people without an upper secondary school qualification can choose a shorter programme that leads to a job. Vocational programmes are being enhanced and basic eligibility for higher education will be reintroduced.

If you ask people what is really important to them, most will say: "Good health, and that my family is well and happy."

So when someone falls ill, there must be no doubt: care must be available when you need it. Waiting times are too long and must be shortened. More resources to health centres will enhance primary care. The patient contract will be further developed for patients with significant care needs. Hospitals will specialise to be able to provide high-quality, state-of-the-art care. Where you live must not determine your chances of regaining your health.

A major women's health initiative is under way. Parents-to-be must be secure in the knowledge that maternity services are effective. Mental ill health is being experienced at ever younger ages. Young people suffering mental ill health must receive help at an early stage.

Health care professions must be attractive. Working conditions are being improved. Additional training places are being created. The possible introduction of a professional status qualification for assistant nurses is being examined. Health care workers will be given the recognition they deserve.

Nothing represents the future better than our children. The autumn budget will prioritise the financial position of families with children.

To protect the child's right to their parents and to enhance gender equality,

parental insurance is being modernised. Parental insurance must also work for contemporary families and not present an obstacle for women in the labour market.

Work on making the Convention on the Rights of the Child part of Swedish law on 1 January 2020 continues. A three-year national initiative to enhance knowledge of children's rights will be implemented. Children also have a right to breathe clean air. To improve air quality in our cities, municipalities will be given new opportunities to introduce low emission zones.

Sweden is to be the best country in the world to grow up in.

No one deserves our gratitude more than our older people. Those who built this country before us deserve respect, and they also deserve financial security.

A great deal has already been done: an increased housing supplement, cheaper dental care for older people, free primary care for people over the age of 85. We are now taking further steps. A national dementia strategy is being developed. The financial position of the most disadvantaged pensioners will be improved. Taxes have already been reduced for six out of ten over-65s. The goal is to completely abolish the unfair tax on pensions. New steps will be taken in the autumn budget.

This is not an act of kindness – it is our moral responsibility.

Welfare should be financed collectively and in solidarity.

Everyone with an income must do the right thing and pay tax. If they don't, the social contract of a welfare nation cannot be upheld. Tax evasion and aggressive tax planning are being combated. Social security systems will be better protected against cheating and fraud.

Tax revenues for welfare must go to welfare – not turned into unreasonable profits or transferred out of the country. During the year, a proposal will be put forward to limit profits in education and social services.

Our welfare system must be in order.

Mr Speaker,

In the middle of the field at the Birkenau extermination camp there is a red

cattle truck. Livia Fränkel and her sister Hédi Fried arrived at Auschwitz in one of these on 17 May 1944. Packed together, without food and with very little water, they had travelled for three days and two nights.

In June this year, Livia and I were at Auschwitz-Birkenau together. That was the first time she had been back. "I want to close the circle," she said. "I want to say goodbye to my parents."

We have an obligation to remember, because if we do not remember the atrocities of history, violence and hatred can triumph again. And then another circle will close. On 1 May this year, approximately 500 neo-Nazis demonstrated in Falun. The Nordic Resistance Movement was present at Almedalen Week and it will soon gather in Gothenburg. This is frightening.

The Government is now concentrating efforts on a national action plan to combat racism and hate crimes. Support to enable school pupils to make history and remembrance trips will be reintroduced. In 2020 a new international conference on remembrance and education will be held.

There are groups in our country that are more afraid than ever. Security for minority groups and religious premises will be heightened. Work to strengthen the rights of transgender people will be intensified. Protection against hate and agitation crimes will be boosted.

The rights of the national minorities will be strengthened. A major investment will be made in the Sami Parliament. A new disability policy will point the way to a more equal society, where different backgrounds or circumstances do not determine people's ability to participate.

In country after country, polarisation is on the rise. Distrust of democratic institutions is growing, the media is being questioned, the rhetoric is harsher and facts are distorted. Our society's resilience to attacks from foreign powers and troll factories will increase. Exposure to threats and acts of hate directed at journalists, elected representatives, artists and opinion-formers is dangerous.

If there is one thing that each citizen should see as their duty, then it is this. Never accept the unacceptable. Speak out. Stand up for human dignity in public spaces and comment sections. Anti-democratic voices must never go unchallenged. Freedom of speech must be protected. Step up! We will do it together. It's in our hands!

Together we have built, and continue to build, Sweden as we want it to be.
By showing respect, compassion and warmth.

Human dignity is fundamental.

Mr Speaker,

Our Government has led Sweden in a new direction. Our goal is a sustainable society imbued with a sense of community, where we care about each other and thus believe in the future. We will not leave our children and grandchildren to pick up the bill. This is how we want to continue to govern.

We will continue building our society. The direction remains unchanged:
investments not tax cuts,
equality not inequality,
together – not each on our own.
This is how we are building a future for everyone.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Unveiling of the sculpture 'Two countries – one future'

Published 30 August 2017

Stockholm 25 August. Check against delivery.

Friends,

It is a great honour to receive Finnish Prime Minister Juha Sipilä in Stockholm today. I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to our dear neighbour. Together, we celebrate our countries' shared history, as well as our shared future.

In Swedish Television's documentary 'Finland's centenary', a number of Finns were given the chance to describe their country. "We have become a competitive welfare society," says one man. "Finland has become a model for gender equality" says one woman. These are comments that could describe both of our countries, and the similarities can be explained by a long shared history.

As far back as the 1500s and 1600s, many people moved from Finnish to Swedish parts of what were then areas of the same country. At present, some 700 000 Sweden-Finns live here in Sweden. Everything from corporate mergers to cultural exchanges serve as present-day reminders that our countries will remain closely linked. But the similarities are also due to the fact that our societies rest on shared values. Many of these values are symbolised by the dates engraved in Marja Kanervo's lovely work of art here around us.

The world's oldest Freedom of the Press Act, which is the foundation of our open societies. The introduction of parliamentary democracy, which led to women's suffrage. Our countries accession to the EU, where we cooperate closely and frequently.

But Finland's history also includes events that we Swedes should know more

about. Healing the wounds after a civil war. Defending your independence with weapon in hand. Living with the long border with Russia. It is impossible not to feel deep respect for the 'land of a thousand lakes'.

Friends,

A section of Ms Kanervo's stone statue has been left blank. This refers to the future, and we know that the future comes quickly. And when the global winds of change are strong, we have seen that it is our Nordic model that can help people prosper and economies grow.

It is a model with broad support in our countries, and which attracts interest around the world. It is a model that builds on competitiveness, which is why we are developing Swedish-Finnish cooperation on everything from research and innovation, to forestry and culture. It is a model that is reinforced by welfare reforms, creates prosperity, security and freedom that we are always ready to defend. This is why we have deepened our defence cooperation, which creates trust and respect around the Baltic Sea.

But our cooperation is not limited to ensuring a secure region, it also includes a stronger Europe in a sustainable world. And in this we are guided by the principles of which the dates in the sculpture remind us. And is this not a beautiful vision for the next 100-years? Two sister countries in the north, part of a Nordic model that combines competitiveness and welfare, increasing people's freedom. Two sister countries in the north, whose close cooperation in the Nordic region and the EU is based on such clear values that they can be engraved in stone sculptures mined from the bedrock of Finland and Sweden.

Friends,

It is heartening that the friendship between our countries is so strong it can be written in stone. Thank you for your kind attention, and for the opportunity to take part in the ceremony here today.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Launch of High-Level Global Commission on the Future of Work

Published 21 August 2017

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven in Geneva 21 August 2017. Check against delivery.

Ms President, Director-General, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for inviting me to this important event. It is a great honour to serve as co-chair of this Global Commission on the Future of Work. Access to decent work is fundamental for all women and men.

I got my first job in the early 1970s. I was in my teens, longing for adulthood, for freedom. I cleared brushwood in a ditch in northern Sweden. It was hard work, but I enjoyed it.

Because I knew: a job is the foundation of a life of your own. Your own money, your own choices, your own future.

Our jobs have a huge impact on our lives. How we feel, how we live – even how long we live.

We live in a changing world, with a dramatically changing labour market. In light of this, there are some questions we have to address:

First of all, how do we fight unemployment in a world that still has over 200 million unemployed, so that everyone can feel the freedom I felt clearing brushwood in that ditch? How do we create more decent jobs, so that leaving for work in the morning is for a greater purpose than just getting a pay check at the end of the month? How do we create the conditions, so that all enterprises, all workers and all people can reap the benefits of globalisation

and technological change?

In the international debate, it is becoming increasingly clear that one of the great challenges of our time will be to reduce inequalities.

Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, has said:

“You do not have to be an altruist to support policies that lift the incomes of the poor and the middle class. Everybody will benefit from these policies, because they are essential to generate higher, more inclusive and more sustainable growth.”

It is time to make globalisation work for everyone. And it is by addressing the problems in the global labour market that we can build social cohesion and confidence, and shape a globalisation that represses no one and benefits everyone.

Equality – between countries and within countries – is the defining issue of our time. It must be addressed. Otherwise we will feed a growing insecurity and people will turn to more extreme solutions, or to simpler, populist solutions.

Only people who feel secure will welcome change. Without security, change can bring fear. But with security, change brings hope. My point is – closing the inequality gap is key.

Let me return briefly to the 70s. Around the time I got my first job, IBM presented the floppy disc. Its capacity was 360 kilobytes. If you show one to a young person today, they won't know what to do with it. This gives us some idea of the change that working life has undergone since then.

Having said that, I believe the transition before us is even more fundamental.

Climate change is real; it is here. Men and women are living longer than ever before. Digitization, robotics and artificial intelligence are pushing areas of production to frontiers we never dreamed of before.

These changes alter the way we look at work, both domestically and globally. But just as throughout history we have undergone technological evolution and emerged better, we can face these challenges with the knowledge that we have today and we can emerge better this time as well.

We cannot stop development, nor should we. What we need to do is to come together: to harness innovation to improve the daily lives of millions, to use new technology to build cleaner and more sustainable societies, and at the same time create new jobs with better conditions for everyone. These objectives lie at the heart of this Commission.

When thinking about the future of work and how we should approach the ever-ongoing evolution of technology, I repeatedly come back to a quote from a friend of mine – a former governor of Gothenburg, Social Democrat and union leader – Göran Johansson.

On a visit to a new industrial plant, he was asked what he thought when looking out over the high-tech industrial robots on the factory floor. He said:

“I don’t fear new technology. What I fear is the old one.”

We will undoubtedly have many fruitful and interesting discussions over the next two years. New ideas will be formulated, old theories rejected. But here are three important building blocks for managing the future of work that I will bring to the table.

We need to foster innovation.

We must create conducive environments for new ideas to grow and new types of jobs to be created. At the same time, we need to focus more attention on lifelong learning. People need opportunities for retraining – often more than once – in order to take the jobs that are available on a constantly evolving labour market.

We need improved social dialogue.

The labour market is sometimes described as a zero-sum game: a tug of war in which an advantage to one side means a disadvantage to the other. Every improvement for workers comes at the cost of the employers and vice versa. However, more and more people now understand that this notion is false. Strong social dialogue does indeed often lead to improved conditions for workers. But for businesses, it leads in turn to increased stability and productivity. I call it a win-win-win situation – a win for employers, a win for workers and a win for society.

But we also need to improve welfare and social security

– investing in improved healthcare and education, better and more accessible childcare and social services so that more people are able to enter the workforce. This is especially important for women’s employment. And

believe me, women's participation in the economy has positive effects on just about everything - food security, growth, health and education.

A universal welfare system is crucial for women's liberation.

So is all this possible? Yes. Will it take a lot of effort, cooperation and political will? Absolutely.

I firmly believe that the capacity to shape the future of work is in our own hands. And so is the power to create better jobs, better working environments, more sustainable societies and a more even distribution of the benefits of globalisation.

I look forward to working with you, Ms President, with the Director-General and the members of the Commission, to lay the foundation of a working life where everyone can realise their dreams.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at The University of Warsaw, June 19 2017

Published 19 June 2017

Check against delivery!

Chancellor, students, ladies and gentlemen,

Dzien dobry!

I am pleased to be in Warsaw again. This is my third visit to this wonderful city as Prime Minister. The ties between our countries and societies are strong and manifold, and we cooperate closely not least as members of the European Union. Today, I would like to share some thoughts on our common Europe.

“When you come out of the storm, you won’t be the same person who walked in. That’s what this storm’s all about.”

This is a quote by Japanese author Haruki Murakami. It tells us that turbulence brings change, but also that we should not be afraid. The secret of change is to focus our energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new.

We have some stormy times behind us. For the last few years, the European Council has been in almost constant crisis mode. From terrorist attempts to attack the foundations of our democracies – in Brussels, Paris, Copenhagen, Berlin, London, Nice, Munich, Stockholm and many more places; from the

onslaught of the financial crisis and the EU's inability to tackle youth unemployment, social despair and the global refugee crisis, and from Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and its continued aggression in Ukraine to Brexit and the long, hard negotiations that lie ahead of us.

But in recent years, we have also seen the results of strong political leadership and countries coming together to tackle the challenges we face. These results include the global climate agreement, which today demands even stronger European leadership, new sustainable development goals, and large parts of the African countries rising from poverty – faster than ever before. These advances show us that global cooperation makes a real difference. And that the EU is able to come out of these storms stronger. Standing united against external threats. Tackling common challenges with the collective strength required to resolve them. Clearing away the last ruins of the financial crisis and building strong societies again.

This is a defining moment in Europe's history. If we manage it well – if we focus on building the new – we will become stronger.

Today I would like to focus on three central values of our European Union. The first concerns added value for our citizens. We need to stop blaming Brussels and be better at delivering results that are visible in people's lives. The second concerns defending democracy, against terrorism but also about being true to our Union's most fundamental principles and the third concerns the true spirit of cooperation.

I believe that the future of the European Union must deliver on a much stronger promise to our citizens. If EU cooperation is to gain the broad popular support needed to stand strong in the 21st century, we must have a Union that works harder for the wellbeing of its people.

We need good conditions to create economic growth and more jobs in a world of increasing competition. It is clear that Asia, and in particular China, is gaining in importance, while the West's relative weight is diminishing. Europe will remain one of the most prosperous parts of the world – but only if we stick together.

Together, we represent half a billion of the world's population, and we are the main trading partner of both the United States and China. But individually, each one of our countries would have very little opportunity to

influence the changing world order. No single European economy will be among the eight largest in 2050. But the EU will still carry weight as the representative of us all. Simply put – we are stronger together.

Economic growth should never come at the expense of ordinary people. This is a lesson for all of us. Globalisation is good, but it is certainly better for some. In a world where nine of the world's wealthiest people own as much as 3.5 billion people together, we need a European Union that strives for equality and supports people's aspirations for a good life.

The Single Market and its freedoms are key to achieving this. In no other part of the world can people, goods and services move so freely between states. When travelling across Europe, to study or take a job, we should be able to do so freely. This is a cornerstone of European cooperation – and perhaps the most visible freedom for us as European citizens.

But when crossing the border to take that job, we should be able to do so without being paid less than our fellow workers in our host country. Nationality should never determine pay levels or working conditions. They should be the same for all.

Working for a Europe where all citizens benefit from growth and globalisation should be a priority. This is the background to the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth in Gothenburg in November. I am very pleased that your Prime Minister has indicated that she will join us. It will be a key moment to discuss how our societies can improve and prepare to meet the challenges and opportunities of today and tomorrow.

For me it is crystal clear. I want the EU to work hard for the size of the market, but even harder for the wellbeing of its people.

Friends, the European Union is a family of nations, united by a common vision of peace, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Being part of our community is a choice made by each Member State in the belief that we can achieve more together. It is a commitment to the shared values enshrined in the EU Treaty.

We are currently strengthening our joint actions against terrorism in the wake of a number of brutal attacks against our societies, against our peoples. Many of these joint actions are tough, but they are necessary.

However, the work to defend democracy is a much greater task. Poland knows this better than most. You have a proud history of struggling for freedom.

Defending democracy means ensuring the safety and security of everyone. It means standing up for our Jewish citizens, at a time when anti-Semitic threats, violence and the manifestations of hatred are once again reverberating throughout Europe. It means never accepting the demonisation of Muslims or other groups by populists and extremists. It also means working for the right of women to live free, earn a fair and equal wage and control their own bodies, and promoting the rights of minorities held back by prejudice and poverty. It is the obligation of all leaders in all countries to speak out forcefully against all forms of violence, oppression and extremism.

Defending democracy also means defending free and independent media, freedom of reporting and freedom of the press, because we know that politics always benefits from hard scrutiny.

Defending democracy means respecting every person's right to assemble freely, to be tried in free and fair trials, to move freely in society and to love whomever they want. Respect for the rule of law and due process that guarantee the rights of all people is fundamental to our cooperation. There is no room for trade-offs here.

If we do not defend our democratic values, we will lose our Europe as we know it.

My last point concerns cooperation itself.

In his book *Markings*, former Swedish UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld wrote:

“Never look down to test the ground before taking your next step; only he who keeps his eye fixed on the far horizon will find the right road.”

Cooperation involves give and take. Believe me; I know this from long, hard negotiations as a trade union leader. Cooperation involves making deals and compromising, giving up some of our own standpoints, listening to others and, in the end, doing what is best for everyone. It involves doing the right

thing and almost always having our eyes on the horizon and not on our own shoes.

Cooperation involves standing up for common decisions, not just those that suit us or our electorate the best. The EU cannot be reduced to some sort of cash machine from which to withdraw money when needed. The EU is a joint project that comes with many advantages, but also obligations. It is built on trust.

This trust has declined in recent years. Throughout the global refugee crisis, we have witnessed not only an inability, but an unwillingness, to share responsibility.

Many words have been said and decisions have been made, but far too little action has been taken.

It's time to ensure control of our external borders, implement the redistribution of refugees within the EU, combat human smuggling and strengthen our common foreign policy to put a stop to the root causes of the refugee crisis.

We must move from chaos to control. We must share responsibility, or we jeopardise the future of our European cooperation as we know it.

If we do not establish a new, common and sustainable asylum system, more countries will be forced to act unilaterally, which will hurt mobility and trade.

For me, this is about honesty – towards my colleagues in the European Union and my own people in Sweden. No one gains from weak European cooperation. But it is also about solidarity with, and justice for, the people fleeing for their lives.

Next month I will turn 60. I was born in 1957, the year the Treaty of Rome was signed. My generation was given vast opportunities and had great hopes and dreams for the future. I want you to have the same.

We face huge challenges today. We did in the 1960s as well. But enormous opportunities lie in front of us. I never cease to be amazed at the progress we make together: how we find new, smart solutions to climate change or injustice in the world, how the young generation explore and renew the way

we think, leading to innovation beyond our imagination.

For me, there is no greater duty than to pave the way for the young generation of today. And I know that the European Union can be a driving force for this – if we stand up for our core values: democracy, cooperation, and always serving our citizens.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Ceremonial speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on Sweden's National Day, Skansen, 6 June 2017

Published 06 June 2017

Check against delivery!

Your Majesties, Your Royal Highnesses, Excellencies, friends,

On 7 April 2017, at 14.53, it was as though time stood still. I think we all clearly remember what we were doing that afternoon, what we felt and thought. I met many people that first evening, people who were distressed yet resolute, as though to say. This is our city. Our country. No terrorist can take that away from us.

And we saw how social media was awash with people offering help and support. Does anyone need something to eat? Do you have somewhere to sleep tonight? Do you need someone to talk to, some comfort, some support? You are not alone! And the entire community rallied behind all those working to assist people who had been affected. The number of blood donors trebled. Police vehicles were covered in flowers.

In those dark hours, there were so many people who were the light. What we saw then was a very simple yet very powerful show of solidarity. That is what I want to pay tribute to today. From the bottom of my heart: thank you.

We sometimes hear people talk about what we should actually celebrate on Sweden's National Day. I believe it's up to each of us to choose what we want to pay tribute to. But when I see the flag we are flying here today, I

think about the sense of community that leads us to help each other. I think about the kind of Sweden where we say: I am here for you when you need me and at the very same time we also know that you are there for me when I need you. We trust each other. That is what Sweden is to me.

It is more than a gathering of people in a geographic area, it is a community where we feel responsible for each other, where we help each other. The sense of community that we build together, is what I love about Sweden.

That's why I would also like to say to all of you listening here today: use this day to think about what we, each one of us, can do for our community. Ask yourself: What is my role? What is my duty? What can I do?

Be one of those who protests when people hate, incite and threaten each other. If there is anything that each citizen should begin to see as their duty, then it is this. Help to make social media the tool for democracy and freedom of expression that it can be. Never accept the unacceptable. Speak out. Show that you think that violating human dignity is just as serious in a comment section as it is in the public sphere. Anti-democratic voices must never go unchallenged. Democracy must be protected every day. We must do this together.

I also want to pay tribute to all of you who every day, year in and year out, help to build our community – everyone who goes to work, runs a business, takes care of our children and our older people, – all parents, friends, volunteers and not least, our previous generations.

Together we have built, and continue to build, Sweden as we want it to be. Together we will help to make our community even stronger. By showing respect, compassion and warmth. In good times. In difficult times. Today and every day.

Don't do so because it is smart and beneficial for you too. Do so because it is your duty as a citizen. Do so because it is morally right. Do so, to protect our democracy, and to enable our children and grandchildren to continue to celebrate one of the freest and most successful countries in the world: Sweden.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at the memorial ceremony at Stockholm City Hall

Published 10 April 2017

Your Majesties, Your Royal Highnesses, Excellencies, Swedes, people of Stockholm, friends,

Losing a loved one is the most terrible thing that can happen in a person's life.

I have thought so much about those of you who on Friday lost someone you loved more than anything in the world.

You now carry with you the memories – of conversations, looks, laughs – alongside your unfathomable loss.

I just want to say this: you are not alone. Our thoughts are with you. Sweden is with you.

* * *

And so many people have done so much for their fellow human beings in the last few days.

Sweden's brave police officers. Our highly skilled emergency services. Our fantastic medical professionals.

And all of you who discovered the hero within you, who offered help and consolation.

We cannot thank you enough.

Your actions make Sweden proud, and are a testament to people's incredible capacity in times of adversity.

You put me in mind of the following lines by priest and author Anders Frostenson:

"Our own wounds are healed when we heal the wounds of others.
Bowed down by burdens, we are carried.

From the solace I gave another, solace my own heart received.
In going to one who needed me, I came home."

So thank you, from the bottom of my heart.

You were put to the test. You stood firm. You have the gratitude of an entire country.

* * *

And I know that we will get through this as we in Sweden have always done: together.

The strength, the resolve, the steadfast values that Sweden has demonstrated in the last few days can never be taken from us by a murderer.

Our unity will always be stronger than the forces that seek to tear us apart.

Our way of life will never be suppressed.

Our democracy will triumph over fundamentalism.

* * *

Friends,

Sweden, Belgium and the United Kingdom stand together in mourning the citizens we have lost.

Our three countries have suffered horrendous acts of terrorism.
But we have also seen the strength, determination and power of our democratic societies.

We will never surrender to terror. We will get through this, together.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven's speech at the presentation of Human Development Report 21 mars 2017

Published 22 March 2017

Check against delivery.

Excellencies,
Administrator Helen Clark,
Mr Selim Jahan,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear friends,

I am honoured to be here. A special thanks to Helen Clark and the United Nations Development Programme, who have made this possible, and to Mr Selim Jahan and his Human Development Report Office and team, who once again have given us an inspiring report which will continue to push us towards the world we want.

I would like to start by quoting from Professor Hans Rosling, who sadly passed away last month. He once said:

"The first thing to think about the future is to know about the present."

Hans Rosling really changed our view of the world today. He did it with statistics, showing that the world is actually a better place than most people think. He gave us the most important tool there is for change – hope.

The Human Development Report has become an institution. This unique

report has not only helped to establish a new broad definition of development, but also to evaluate the progress made and make setbacks visible using statistics.

This report puts pressure on us as leaders around the world to keep raising our ambitions and following-up on areas that need support.

Looking back on past Human Development Reports, I am impressed by some of the amazing improvements that have been achieved. What took Sweden 100 years to achieve in terms of schooling and life expectancy, many of today's developing countries are doing within a generation – 25 years.

This year's edition of the Report is special, since it is the 25th. We can actually follow changes in the development landscape over the course of one generation, from the end of the cold war when multilateralism flourished, to a period when globalisation integrated people, markets and work and to a time when digitalisation profoundly changed our way of life.

And, since then, development has accelerated.

In 25 years, life expectancy in China went from 69 years to 76 years. In Colombia, the expected years of schooling went from 9 to almost 14. In Tunisia, the average income per person doubled.

And the big picture: fewer than 10 per cent of the world's population now live in extreme poverty. Nine out of ten boys and girls go to school. Billions of people have gained access to clean water. A global middle class is emerging and one in two people have access to a mobile phone.

The world's population is actually better-educated, better-fed, and healthier than ever before.

Therefore, it is time to raise the bar. And this is what we have done with the new Global Goals and the 2030 Agenda.

Because the challenges ahead are still huge.

We see deepening wars, conflicts and terrorist attacks and, in their wake, the worst refugee crisis in modern times. We see growing public scepticism of free trade and globalisation, and growing populist and extremist forces. And,

last year, was also the warmest on record.
Climate change is catching up with us.

And, even though we are seeing less extreme poverty around the world, inequality is increasing. If you fill a bus... I used to say a bus, but now it is actually a minibus.

If you fill a minibus with the richest people in the world, they own as much as the poorest 3.5 billion people.

It is absurd. It is totally unacceptable.

I welcome the theme of this year's report: human development for everyone.

It highlights the need for equality.

Leaving no one behind needs to become the way we operate as a global community.

There is a moral dimension, of course, but there is also an economic one.

Equality is winning new ground among economists.

Let me quote one of them, the IMF's Managing Director Christine Lagarde. She says:

"You do not have to be an altruist to support policies that lift the incomes of the poor and the middle class. Everybody will benefit from these policies, because they are essential to generate higher, more inclusive and more sustainable growth."

Simply put – equal societies perform better.

We must address the problems in the global labour market, build social cohesion and shape a form of globalisation that represses no one, and benefits everyone.

This is also the driving force behind our Global Deal initiative. It encourages cooperation between employers, employees and governments to bring about decent work, increase productivity, and enhance economic stability and shared prosperity.

It is time to make globalisation work for everyone.

When I say everyone, I mean everyone.
Globalisation must work for both women and men.

One of Sweden's strongest forces for development is the fact that both women and men work. We have one of the highest employment rates in the world. It is well-known that women's participation in the economy has positive effects on just about everything – growth, health, education and food security.

A general welfare-system is key for women's liberation.

But still, women in Sweden are also paid less. They do more of the unpaid work at home. The fight for gender equality must go on. In Sweden, and in the rest of the world. The gender inequality index that was introduced in 2010 helps us to keep track of one of the chief factors blocking human development.

Women and men are equal.
Women and men should be treated equally.
Women and men should have equal opportunities.
Nothing else will do.

Finally, I would like take the opportunity to thank you, Helen, for having done a remarkable job.

You have served with admirable dedication and unwavering resolve. Under your leadership, UNDP has empowered people to lift themselves out of poverty and create sustainable livelihoods, in times of severe financial crisis.

You have compelled the UN Development System to increase coherence – and brought home the necessity of the UN acting in unison on the delivery of the 2030 Agenda.

For Sweden, and for me personally, it has been a privilege to be your partner.

I am now eager to listen to you addressing the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead, armed with the knowledge, facts and statistics in this year's Human Development Report.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at IVA

Published 31 January 2017 Updated 31 January 2017

Stockholm, 31 January 2017. Check against delivery.

Chancellor Merkel,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen.

I am honoured to be here today, and I am honoured to be accompanied by the German Chancellor. It is a pleasure to see and hear about the breadth of German-Swedish cooperation in the field of innovation.

And I am very happy to be here for the opening of the German Swedish Tech Forum.

Germany and Sweden are two countries with many characteristics in common. We have a large proportion of innovative problem-solvers and entrepreneurial mind-sets.

We share the willingness to adapt in times of change and make something even better for the generations to come.

To put it simply, we combine good business with the moral obligation to do the right thing.

And there is no shortage of challenges. Climate change, just to give one example, is pushing us all to find new solutions. And for sure, there is a big market waiting to buy new smart products and emission-reducing solutions.

Being at the forefront will create new jobs and growth. Innovation and cooperation are two of the keys to sustainable economic development.

I have great respect for the way Germany has been able to innovate and export new solutions and state-of-the-art technology to the rest of the world, year after year. Not least, it is inspiring to study the many medium-sized 'hidden champions', which have been powering German exports.

The success of the German Industrie-Vier-Punkt-Null is widely known and we have been fortunate enough to learn from it when establishing the Swedish strategy for Smart industry.

The German success of automation, modernising and digitalisation of its industry is something we can all learn from. I believe our countries have much to gain from increased cooperation on specific innovation projects and from sharing our experiences.

So I am very happy about the German-Swedish partnership on innovation, I see great potential in partnering more closely, both bilaterally and within the European Union.

Innovation is one of the things I personally find most fascinating and inspiring. As the proud founding country of Skype and Spotify, with Stockholm being second only to Silicon Valley in terms of the number of start-ups per capita in the world, we will continue to foster a development where new ways of thinking and smart solutions are encouraged, from preschools to universities.

Swedish success depends on our ability to stay competitive in a globalised economy. We will compete with knowledge and skills, and therefore we need the best schools for our children. We need to ensure access to good education, not only during the first 20 or 30 years of life, but throughout our ever changing working life.

We have increased Sweden's focus on innovation and stepped up broad cooperation. One of the first things I did as Prime Minister was to set up a National Innovation Council, which I chair and which is now working with representatives of politics, business, trade unions, academia and civil society to clear paths for development and growth.

We strive to learn from positive examples. For one of the first meetings, the council invited a German expert to explain more about the Energiewende, the impressive policy encompassing all key sectors for transition to green low-carbon energy.

But let's be absolutely clear about one thing.

This is not something we do for businesses; it is something we do with businesses. The success of Swedish innovation is built on close collaboration with industry and other stakeholders.

That's why we have created innovation partnership programmes, and the concept of Testbed Sweden. We are currently running five programmes, addressing: next generation transport; smart cities; a circular and bio-economy; life sciences; and connected industry and new materials.

And digitalisation is obviously at the forefront of them all.

So, what does this idea of cooperation for innovation mean in practice?

Just a few months ago, the world's first electric public road was opened in Sandviken, 200 kilometres north of Stockholm. In a partnership between Scania, Siemens, and local and national authorities, a hybrid lorry is operated by a local transport company on the electric road, delivering materials to the steel industry in the area.

This has gone from being a vision for the future to a reality today. It gives us a hint of what can be done to achieve a fossil-free transportation sector. I am eager to continue this journey together with you all here.

Today's round-table has initiated a new and stronger German and Swedish partnership for innovation.

We have four priorities:

First, mobility. The demands on transportation will continue to rise. Future travel and transport have to cut down greenhouse gas emissions dramatically. Today we are taking the very first steps towards an eHighway between Germany and Sweden.

Second, digitalisation. Both Sweden and Germany have strategies for smarter, connected and more competitive industries. We face the challenge to get small and medium-sized enterprises to lead the digital transformation. Now, we are joining forces to create the best possible conditions for small and medium-sized companies in both our countries.

Third, strengthening eHealth. Our populations are getting older and the demands for quality in health care are increasing. We need to seize the

opportunities of digitalisation to improve quality, efficiency and access to health care. Tools in the field of eHealth enable remote expert consultation, monitoring and medical education. And we have much to gain from the closer cooperation that we have agreed upon today.

Fourth, we will improve test facilities for industrial development. As global competition is increasing we need to take our innovation capacity to the next level. We aim to increase the number of innovations tested in real life environments and launched on the global market. Now we are opening up our testbeds and making it easier for German and Swedish companies to test new products and take the leap from start-up to scale-up.

Chancellor Merkel,
this partnership brings together our governments, businesses and institutions.

It paves the way for deepened future cooperation and for new innovative breakthroughs.

I look forward to our growing partnership, where we will work together to promote growth and economic development in the best interests of everyone.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at Euroskills 2016

Published 02 December 2016 Updated 02 December 2016

Gothenburg, 30 November 2016 Check against delivery.

Young talents, family members, teachers, representatives of business and trade unions, friends.

Welcome to Sweden. Welcome to Gothenburg.

It is an honour for any country to be allowed to organise large events.

And an event of this kind, where young people from 27 European countries, alongside guest competitors from around the globe, have the opportunity to show off the fantastic skills that build all of our societies – in my view, that is the greatest event of all!

**

Once upon a time, long before any of the contestants here today were born, I worked in a timber sorting plant in Ångermanland in northern Sweden.

And when the sorting equipment broke, we called in a welder.

He had an almost magical ability to take something that was completely broken, and make it like new again. And I thought: "I want to do that!"

So I trained, and went into my first workplace as a welder, and although I never became the best, I remember the pride I felt at doing something really well.

**

I want to congratulate all of you who are here competing.

You have that pride. You have become the best in your professions. And that is why you are here. And through your efforts, you have also become representatives of your home towns, your countries, your generation.

You also represent the future.

Your hands create the furniture of the future, the design of the future, the communication of the future.

Your drive will digitalise society, produce solutions to the climate threat, build the houses and lay the floors that our children and grandchildren walk on.

Your dreams will become the reality of the future.

So treasure them. Take pride in them. And never hesitate to make them a reality.

* * *

Your know-how and your professional skills inspire me. But I am also inspired by your teachers.

You and your teachers have probably not always got on, and they have probably not always realised how smart you actually are, but they must have been doing something right to have got you here!

So, before you leave this competition, don't forget to thank the people who have inspired and paved the way for you.

Role models like them are one of the most important things in life. And your presence here today shows that you are potentially on the way to becoming such role models yourselves. Shoulder that responsibility. Help others, just as you yourselves have received help along the way.

* * *

Because I must tell you that you are needed.

In a world in which the pace of change is constantly increasing, the need for people who are constantly striving to develop, to be the best and the most

skilled in their profession, to try new technologies and push new boundaries is greater than ever.

Here in Sweden, perhaps the greatest threat to our economy at the moment is the shortage of people with vocational qualifications.

And this competition also shows the absolute best thing about being extremely skilled in your profession: it is really good fun.

So my message here today is this:

The world needs your pride; we need your hands, your drive, your dreams, and we need you as role models for the future.

So once again: welcome to Sweden, welcome to some hard work and difficult challenges.

Let the fun begin and good luck in the competition!



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at the Strategy Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

Published 09 November 2016 Updated 09 November 2016

Speech held in Stockholm at the Strategy Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region 8 November, 2016. Check against delivery.

Colleagues,

friends from around the Baltic,

The theme of this conference is Vision 2030 for the Baltic Sea Region.

We are here because we want to have our own hands on the rudder, and not simply be steered by events elsewhere.

We are here to shape the future of the Baltic. So welcome to Sweden, welcome to Stockholm, and welcome to the incredibly important work we have ahead of us.

We learned to cooperate early on. As early as the 12th century, the Baltic was bound together by the Hanseatic League, and the prosperity created remains in evidence in many of our ports and cities.

But the Baltic has also been a region marked by conflict.

Throughout history, states and warlords have forcibly occupied land and moved borders back and forth around the Baltic. Plundering. Attempting to

control people and trade. Making short-term gains.

For a large part of the 20th century, the Baltic was divided by the Cold War's iron curtain.

But through the independence movement at the end of the century, trade and growth increased again. And when Poland and the Baltic States joined the European Union in 2004, the old tradition of mutual dependence and trade around the Baltic was restored.

And that is why we are here today. To develop this cooperation further.

We are meeting at a time when the security situation in the Baltic is once again deteriorating. Our situation is becoming hallmarked by unease and fear. This is dangerous.

It could lead us into a new era of arms race, which would freeze and paralyse development in our region.

I am a firm believer in the idea of common security. Common security is a term coined by one of my predecessors, Olof Palme, and is based on the idea that we must cooperate across national borders and create a common future built on trust and dialogue. Exactly as we are doing here today. Common security is built on international law. On strong international institutions. On reduced tensions and on disarmament. Trusting dialogue together with trade, investment and increased cooperation. This must be the future of the Baltic – and we can only build this security together.

Peace and growth are also created by tackling the two crucial global challenges for the future: poverty and climate change.

Last year, I met my good friend and colleague Jonas Gahr Støre at the World Economic Forum. We noted that the tide has turned in discussions of equality and sustainable development.

Some 25 years ago, when Gahr Støre was working on follow-up of the Brundlandt report on sustainable development and equality, he encountered considerable resistance. The goals were considered unrealistic and wrong.

That has now changed. And this was visible in Davos. Now sustainability and equality are on everyone's lips. It began with the realisation that equality and sustainable development are tools for change.

Now we have reached a point where people understand that they are prerequisites to bring about positive change. This was also clear when the world's leaders gathered in New York at the end of last year and agreed on the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Global Goals.

And the work in the 2030 Agenda is not to be done by someone else, somewhere else.

It has to be done by all of us together.

The goals place great demands on all countries and all actors.

It is my ambition to see Northern Europe take the lead.

And there are two reasons for this.

1. It is morally right.

We have a responsibility towards others, and not just ourselves here and now. We have a responsibility towards people all over the world, but also towards future generations.

2. But it is also economically smart.

Our companies can be the ones to develop the new technologies and solutions that the world is crying out for to reduce carbon emissions. Our region will benefit from being at the forefront of climate adaptation.

This is why we should take the lead.

It is time to get stuck in.

The Baltic is now a polluted sea. Large areas of the seabed are suffering from oxygen depletion. Levels of several hazardous pollutants are high. Severe algal blooms bear witness to an ecosystem out of balance.

For far too long we have allowed excessive nutrients to feed into our shared sea. Eutrophication affects all of our countries in the form of a declining marine environment. We must live up to the commitments we have made under the Helsinki Commission.

The Baltic is already one of the world's busiest waterways. And traffic is expected to double by 2030. In essence, this is positive: we should continue to bind our countries closer together. But at the same time, we risk both increased emissions and a higher chance of serious accidents as traffic expands. This is unacceptable. We must be able to interconnect our

countries safely while at the same time increasing security and reducing emissions.

But we need to continue to tackle environmental damage in the Baltic together. The joint strategy is needed if we are to meet the environmental challenges we face.

No country can resolve the environmental challenges alone, but together there are few issues we cannot resolve.

And in our efforts to improve our weaknesses, we can mobilise our region's great strengths.

We must take advantage of the fact that our region is at the cutting edge of digital development. We have the technological know-how. But we also have people – customers – who are world leaders in drawing on digital innovations.

Whether it is the latest way of listening to music or talking to each other by telephone, or furious feathered creatures from Finland, we possess an innovative power that often astounds the world.

With us here today we have Niklas Zennström, who changed global perceptions of communications with his Swedish-Estonian collaboration, Skype. I am sure that I am not the only one who is looking forward to hearing about his experiences.

Another opportunity is the transition to a fossil-free society. Here too we have the right conditions. We have rivers. We have plenty of wind. And we have forests. We can do a great deal with our forests.

The bioeconomy offers fantastic opportunities. Renewable fuels. Clothing made from forest-based materials. Bioplastics replacing fossil-based plastics. Anything that can be done with oil can also be done with wood – the KTH Royal Institute of Technology here in Stockholm is, for example, currently undertaking research to produce the first transparent wood-based material that could replace plastic.

It is important to strive to find common strengths and explore joint opportunities. For the development of sustainable products that can be exported beyond our region. For the growth of countries in the Baltic region.

Digitalisation and fossil-free societies are just two of the opportunities open

to us.

There are probably thousands more – and they are precisely what we hope will emerge from this forum. None of us know exactly what the path to 2030 will bring.

But from our thousand-year history, we do know this:

When free trade and joint development are the hallmarks of our region, and when we discuss our common security in a trusting dialogue, life is improved for people all around the Baltic.

Thank you.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Remarks at 'From Conflict to Communion: Together in Hope'

Published 03 November 2016 Updated 03 November 2016

Malmö 31 October 2016. Check against delivery.

Friends,

I would like to begin with the words of the German Lutheran theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who confronted Nazism in his time. For this, he was interned and murdered. But his thoughts on optimism live on.

He said: "Optimism, in its essence, is not a view of the current situation, but a life force, a force of hope, when others resign, a force to hold your head high, when everything seems to fail, a force to endure setbacks, a force that never leaves the future to its opponent, but claims it for itself."

Friends,

the number of armed conflicts in the world have increased over the latest decade. In the face of the cruelties of war, we now, more than ever, need a force of hope – creating a global momentum for peace.

A force that compels warring parties from the trenches to the negotiation table. A force that shines a light on conflicts that are outside the world's spotlight. A force that tackles the roots of conflict: in social divides, in the destruction of our earth, in intolerance, extremism and hate. We can all be that force!

And in all the darkness of the world – there are rays of light.

We created one such ray of light in Paris, where the world agreed on the first-ever universal, legally binding global climate deal. We created a ray of light in New York, where the world agreed on 17 Sustainable Development Goals to end poverty and ensure prosperity for all.

Rays of light are created wherever we come together – to raise our ambitions and set goals for a more peaceful world.

But a force is needed to fulfil those goals. A force that sets new examples. A force that pushes for new commitments. And a force that makes sure we all respect the promises already made.

This cannot be left to us politicians alone. We must all be that force!

And here tonight shines a new ray of light, from all of you coming together in hope.

You represent all the women and men of faith, who live by the ideals of peace, in marches and protests, in humanitarian aid and international development, in simple solidarity with your fellow human beings.

Your determination matters. Your action matters. Your communion matters.

Because time and time again, people have proven that war is only a creation of man, and that when enough people come together to demand peace – then peace is created.

And we, all people of good will, share this responsibility. So let us promise each other: We will be that force.

A force of hope, a force to hold our heads high, a force that claims the future for optimism, and the steadfast belief in peace.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at the Leaders' Summit

Published 21 September 2016 Updated 21 September 2016

New York 20 September 2016. Check against delivery.

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to begin by thanking President Obama for initiating this Summit and for his personal engagement in the global refugee crisis.

I am proud to be one of the co-hosts of this summit.

No country, no continent, no organisation can handle this challenge alone. We must work together. This is why we are here.

We need to bolster global efforts with ambitious new commitments. More countries have to take a greater share.

During my recent visit to Jordan I met with King Abdullah II and visited the Za'atari refugee camp.

I would like to start there. Because as Europeans or Americans or Australians, we must always remind ourselves that most refugees never come to our countries.

They walk cross borders in search for safety. They stay there with the hope of being able to return to their homes and relatives as soon as possible.

While they wait, and hope, there should be more than a roof or tarp over their heads. There should be safe water, enough food rations, heat if it is cold. There should be classrooms for the children and increased possibilities of work for women and men.

This is not of benefit to the children, to the women and men alone but to society as a whole, and it will prepare them for their return home.

Proximity to countries of origin should not be the only determinant of solidarity. We all have a shared global responsibility.

Sweden has for many years shown a strong commitment to good humanitarian donorship.

Last year Sweden was the seventh largest humanitarian donor. For 2016, Sweden has so far allocated approximately USD 625 million in humanitarian aid.

Today I am proud to announce that the Government of Sweden plans to make an extraordinary contribution of USD 17.5 million to the IOM-UNHCR Emerging Resettlement Countries Joint Support Mechanism and USD 20 million to the World Bank Global Crisis Response Platform.

Our strong and long-standing commitment to resettlement continues. We have committed to gradually increasing the number of resettlement places in the coming years.

It is high time to take responsibility. Together we can ease the suffering for many more people. Together we can make a difference.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Statement of Government Policy

13 September 2016

Published 13 September 2016 Updated 13 September 2016

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, the Riksdag, 13 September 2016.

Your Majesties, Your Royal Highnesses, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of the Riksdag,

We live in an age of contradictions.

Our security, our prosperity, our health, our democracy, our climate – challenges unite the countries of the world, in setbacks and success. A banker's speculation in Manhattan jeopardises jobs in Malmö. City developers in Shanghai are assisted by research from Chalmers. Climate adaptation in California creates optimism in Karlskoga.

While societies and people are becoming increasingly interconnected, we are being torn apart. We see growing gaps between rich and poor, between urban and rural areas, a divided labour market, anxiety and uncertainty about our own future and that of our children.

Understanding that the future – yours, mine and ours – is a common future must permeate policy in our country. Sweden must stand together.

Inwardness has never been Sweden's path. Openness to the world characterises Sweden and the everyday life of every inhabitant. For a small nation with high ambitions for jobs, climate and education, this is a decisive choice. Today, leadership calls for broad and active collaboration – locally, nationally and internationally.

The Government's response is therefore twofold: we will advance Sweden by building our society and by choosing cooperation.

* * *

Two years have passed since the parliamentary election. Sweden's economy is performing strongly. The Government has changed the direction of Swedish policy – from tax cuts and cutbacks to vigorous investments in building our society. We are beginning to see results.

So far, 120 000 additional jobs have been created. Employment rates are the highest in the EU. Youth unemployment is declining. Today, significantly more school leavers can look forward to a job or higher education. For the first time in more than seven years, unemployment is under seven per cent. The budget deficit has essentially been wiped out. Public finances are in good order.

The years of welfare cutbacks are over. Over the last two years, an extra 13 000 people have been employed in schools alone. Investments in climate adaptation lead to reduced emissions. Long-term and vital action to curb growing insecurity and break down segregation has begun.

The parliamentary session we have ahead of us will be shaped by the Government's priorities: jobs, education and climate. This is a policy for responsibility – for the future, for Sweden and for the world around us.

Taking responsibility for the future requires us to modernise Sweden – our education system, our energy production, our public administration and our labour market.

Taking responsibility for the world that we are so dependent on requires active global collaboration, solidarity and the recognition that security must be built in partnership with others.

Taking responsibility for Sweden requires us to stand together, develop the Swedish model, and invest in welfare and the things that make our country both strong and secure.

Mr Speaker,

Building our society means focusing on the future.

Strong economic growth, full employment, and socially and ecologically sustainable development lay the foundation for the possibility of a good life for future generations. Quicker climate adaptation contributes to both new jobs and a more secure world for our children and grandchildren.

Employment growth will continue to be stimulated and labour market matching improved. The objective of achieving the lowest unemployment rate in the EU by 2020 guides economic policy. Initiatives are being taken in broad collaboration – with the business sector, academia and civil society.

Sweden's potential will be strengthened in five areas:

1. Sweden will compete on the basis of knowledge and expertise – not low wages.

Later this year a research, innovation and higher education bill will be presented. Appropriations to research and third-cycle education are being increased. Sweden's position as a leading knowledge nation will be strengthened.

Today, Sweden's labour market is hampered by a lack of people with appropriate training. Labour shortages are taking their toll on businesses and the public sector alike.

Strong investments are therefore being made in new educational opportunities. The Adult Education Initiative is being expanded to include a special focus on vocational education and training for adults. An education entry grant will be introduced for unemployed people who have relatively little education and training and considerable educational needs. A proposal will be presented to entitle all adults to municipal adult education to complete their upper secondary school education. The quality of upper secondary school vocational programmes is being enhanced. The reintroduction of higher education eligibility is being prepared. Additional measures to achieve the 90-day guarantee are being taken.

Regional collaboration is being strengthened to ensure that vocational education programmes are more responsive to labour market needs. New arrivals who already have educational qualifications or experience in a shortage occupation will be fast-tracked into jobs. Fast tracks for twenty or so occupations have been set up and the number of participants is increasing steadily. The Swedish Public Employment Service is to be a matching agency with a clearer employer focus.

To address future skills supply in the Swedish labour market, I intend to invite the social partners and industry representatives to further discuss the design of these major education initiatives.

2. Sweden's exports will grow to create more jobs and increase prosperity.

The Government supports the EU's upcoming signing of a new trade agreement with Canada. The trade and investment partnership negotiations with the United States continue. The objective is as ambitious an agreement as possible while ensuring the ability to maintain and strengthen the protection of workers, the environment, and human and animal health. The agreements must respect democratic decisions. Sweden should be a pioneer of free and fair trade.

The Government's export strategy enhances growth and development opportunities for Swedish enterprises. Export successes are emerging from the creative and climate-smart industries. Initiatives to win major export deals and attract business start-ups to Sweden are strengthened by Team Sweden. Regional export centres are being set up in several places around the country. New embassies are opening in important growth markets – in the Philippines, Peru and Tunisia.

3. Sweden will be one of the world's first fossil-free welfare nations.

The transition to a green economy strengthens Sweden's competitiveness. Our leading position in international climate action is being consolidated.

In a week's time the largest climate and environment budget in Sweden's history will be presented. A new climate policy framework and new climate objectives will be adopted. A broad agreement in the Riksdag will see the energy system modernised and long-term, sustainable electricity supply secured for both households and industry. Investment support for solar electricity will increase eightfold over three years. The goal is 100 per cent renewable energy.

The Climate Leap and urban environment agreements are resulting in climate investments for living cities and vibrant rural areas. New electric buses are on the roads of Umeå. New bus roads are being built in Växjö. New tram lines are being laid in Lund. From north to south, investments are being made in biogas, biofuels and charging points. The trend that is seeing more people cycling to work and school will be encouraged. The super green car rebate and reduced preferential taxation of green cars will be extended. The objective is a fossil-free vehicle fleet.

Efforts to protect the environment and ensure a toxin-free everyday life are being intensified. Swedish schools and preschools must be free from harmful

chemicals. A strategy for sustainable consumption will be presented. Decisive steps are being taken to ensure that the environmental objectives are met. The principle is simple: it has to be cheaper to be a friend of the environment and more costly to release emissions.

4. Sweden will be a world leader in innovative and sustainable industrial production.

The five strategic collaborative programmes of the Innovation Council will be set in motion. Innovative solutions are creating next-generation transport, smart cities, a circular and bio-based economy, life sciences, connected industries and new materials.

Industry-related research is being developed. The attractiveness of Sweden's innovation environments is being strengthened.

Self-employed entrepreneurs can employ their first colleagues using the new 'growing support'. Central government venture capital reform will make it easier to get money for new ideas. The new state-

owned company Saminvest will support more innovative and growing businesses. The 'Smart industry' reindustrialisation strategy is being implemented.

Public procurements should to be used strategically to contribute to a sustainable society and new innovative solutions. Opportunities offered by digitalisation will be seized for both businesses and citizens. A new digital strategy will support the business sector and social development. To enhance service and accessibility, the digital transformation of Swedish public administration will continue.

5. Sweden's infrastructure will be sustainable and promote development throughout the country.

It must be possible for people to move out of home or find a place to live where they find a job. The Government is making a historic investment in more housing. According to forecasts, construction will begin on 61 500 new homes next year. This is an increase of more than 50 per cent in three years.

Housing construction will be facilitated further. It will be easier to produce modular houses. More exemptions from building permit requirements will be introduced. Amended tax regulations will stimulate mobility in the housing market. More climate-smart homes will be built. An architecture policy for

more sustainable urban environments will be drawn up.

Infrastructure and transportation must be reliable. Improvements in transport make larger labour market regions possible and are key to companies' freight transport. An infrastructure bill for 2018–2029 will be presented before the end of this year. Considerable investments are being made in the operation and maintenance of roads and railways. The railway network is being expanded. Long-haul freight transport should shift from lorries to trains and ships. Travelling by train should be faster than driving and cheaper than flying.

The Swedish forestry sector has a key role to play in enabling the transition to a circular and bio-based economy. This will create new, green jobs. A national forestry programme will be presented in 2017.

For the first time, an integrated approach to the entire food chain is being taken in a food strategy. Conscious consumers see the added value in Swedish agriculture, helping to make it an industry for the future. The rising demand for organic products will be met.

Mr Speaker,

We live in an age when it is becoming increasingly clear that our own security is synonymous with common security. The Government is strengthening its commitment to a strong and assertive EU, and to an effective UN.

Our need for functioning European cooperation has never been greater. Sweden will contribute actively to shaping Europe's future. The EU has to be better at living up to citizens' expectations. A Europe for jobs and growth, an ambitious environment and climate policy, and shared responsibility for migration are priorities. The EU single market is crucial to curbing high unemployment. At the same time, decent working conditions must be secured. Equal pay for equal work must apply in accordance with laws and agreements in the country of employment. Sweden is pushing for a social Europe, and will host a social summit in the second half of 2017.

In one week's time, Sweden – together with a large number of countries, companies, trade unions and international organisations – will launch the Global Deal initiative to strengthen workers, businesses and societies. The advantages of globalisation must benefit everyone.

During this parliamentary year, negotiations on the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union will begin. The EU's good relations with the United Kingdom must be maintained. And so must Sweden's.

* * *

Security in our neighbourhood has deteriorated. Russia's aggression against Ukraine and illegal annexation of Crimea, the situation on the EU's southern border, the attempted coup in Turkey and the ongoing war in Syria – all of these issues require strong and joint action, in both the EU and the UN.

Sweden's election to the UN Security Council is an acknowledgement of Swedish foreign policy and of our Foreign Service. Our foreign and security policy is based on the universal principles of democracy, international law and human rights. Efforts to promote disarmament and prevent conflicts are a priority, as are efforts to combat new security threats, such as climate change. Women's participation in peace processes is being highlighted; this is one of many examples of how the Government is developing its feminist foreign policy. Openness and dialogue, for example with the countries in Africa, will be the hallmarks of our work in the Security Council.

Sustainable peace can only be achieved by attacking the root causes of conflicts. Sweden is taking a leading role on the UN's global 2030 Agenda. At national level, municipalities, county councils, NGOs, the business sector, researchers and government agencies are taking part in its implementation. A new policy framework for development cooperation will be presented.

Responsibility must be taken for the environment and the climate. Later this year, a government bill will be presented for Sweden to approve the historic Paris Agreement. The aim is to keep the global rise in temperature as far below 2 degrees Celsius as possible, and to strive to limit it to 1.5 degrees. The countries and the people who are most vulnerable to the impact of climate change must be supported. Sweden is the largest donor to the UN Green Climate Fund.

The breadth of security policy instruments, such as diplomacy, mediation and trust-building measures, helps ensure that threats do not emerge. 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. Sweden is strengthening its defence capability. Since the start of this year, defence policy has had a new direction. The prime focus of the Swedish Armed Forces is defending our country. The operational capability

of military units is a priority. Personnel supply will be guaranteed for the long term.

Defence and security policy cooperation is being broadened and deepened. Our partnership with NATO is being developed and the transatlantic link strengthened. Cooperation with Finland is pivotal. Involvement in international peacekeeping operations will remain important. This session, the Government will seek broad support for a national security strategy.

Next year marks the fiftieth year of Israel's occupation of Palestine. The situation continues to deteriorate, with new illegal settlements. Violence against civilians is increasing as a result of the conflict. Both parties have a responsibility to end the violence. Sweden's long-term and strong commitment has an unequivocal goal: a two-state solution with Israel and Palestine living side by side, in peace and security.

The war in Syria and the serious situation in Iraq also require the joint fight against Daesh to continue. Sweden's active role in the global coalition continues. A doubling of the military contribution in Iraq is proposed.

Mr Speaker,

Let me tell you about Muzon. She has gone through things that no child should have to experience. She fled with her family from Syria to the Za'atari refugee camp in Jordan. There she was able to finish her schooling. She says:

"No one needed to tell me that education is important. I've always understood that. Our house was built by an architect. When I was ill I went to see a doctor. Education is everything in life."

Our humanitarian assistance in neighbouring regions provides people with food for the day and a roof over their head. More children have the opportunity to go to school. Sweden will remain one of the world's largest humanitarian donors.

The global refugee crisis continues to cause unimaginable human suffering. More countries must contribute more – in the EU and globally. The causes forcing people to flee must be combated. These will be Sweden's demands at the UN summit on migration, and at the summit on the global refugee crisis that Sweden is co-hosting with the United States later this month.

Sweden is pushing for a functioning asylum system in the EU. Responsibility for people who are fleeing must be borne by all Member States in a spirit of

solidarity. The Government has done, and will continue to do, what is necessary to manage reception and introduction in Sweden, maintain regulated immigration and protect the right to asylum.

Mr Speaker,

The Swedish model is based on trust and solidarity. It can be described as a mutual social contract. All people must have equal rights and opportunities. With rights come obligations and responsibilities.

Sweden has a system of universal welfare. It applies equally to everyone – regardless of whether you are rich or poor. Welfare systems must be robust, and adapt as society changes.

But the social contract also includes an obligation to do the right thing. To contribute by working and paying tax. Not to commit fraud, crimes or shirk responsibility. To contribute to gender equality, democracy and respect for others.

Sweden is now growing, with many new inhabitants.

People who have fled their homes and been given the right to stay here belong to our country just as you and I do. We are all part of building our society.

Now there are new members of our communities who will need to start studying and working to contribute to society. Very many local inhabitants, employees and volunteers are currently doing great work to this end. Together we must fight segregation and discrimination. We must stand side by side, for human dignity and democracy. And we must stand up to racism, extremism and divisive hatred.

The Swedish model is the foundation as we continue to build our society and modernise our country. Sweden must stand together.

* * *

If we are to trust each other and society, equality before the law must be upheld.

Vigorous action must be taken against tax evasion and aggressive tax planning. Minister pensions are under review. Overuse and incorrect use of our welfare systems and social insurance must be prevented. A new

delegation has been appointed for this. Requirements concerning staff registers and monthly statements will reduce levels of undeclared work and exploitation in the labour market. This will reward serious employers. Additional measures will be taken to combat increasing fraud.

No one should be able to buy their way to the front of the queue for publicly financed health care. Draft legislation banning the privatisation of university hospitals will be presented. A new regulatory framework will ensure that taxpayers' money is used for its intended purposes.

Quality and freedom of choice must be the hallmarks of our welfare system.

* * *

There is a line in Elin Wägner's debut novel, *Men and Other Misfortunes*. The book is about four young women – office clerks – in Stockholm at the turn of the last century. One of them, Eva, explains that she has met an old classmate from the business institute where she studied. She says:

"Our results back then were about the same. But would you believe, now his basic salary is 4 600 crowns, and mine is 1 000, isn't that odd?"

A hundred years later, we see that during their working lives, women on average earn SEK 3.6 million less than men.

I would say: that is odd.

Shortly, the Government will present a gender-responsive budget. For the second year in a row, economic equality between women and men is increasing. The goal of a gender balance on the boards of central government agencies has been achieved. Governance and follow-up of gender equality policy is being strengthened. The pace of gender equality efforts is accelerating.

Girls should not have to think twice about attending music festivals or concerts. Women and men should be able to feel safe, even after dark. Women's safety must increase – both at home and in public spaces. It is not up to men to decide where women can go, or how they should dress.

Sweden is governed by a feminist government. A new strategy to combat men's violence against women will be presented. Sexual offences legislation is being strengthened. Honour-related violence is being combated. Support to non-profit organisations is being increased, while requirements for efforts to

combat racism and promote democratic values and gender equality are being tightened.

Sweden should be a safe place.

Nobody should be subjected to hate or threats because of their beliefs, their sex, the colour of their skin, who they love, their identity or their disabilities. A plan to combat hate crime and racism will be presented. Legislation against online hate is being tightened.

Efforts to help improve living conditions in vulnerable EU citizens' home countries continue. No one should have to beg in Sweden.

Shootings, car burnings and drug dealing must not be allowed to destroy people's security. Robust action is being taken this year to break the trend and combat organised crime. More resources than ever before have been invested in the Swedish Police in recent years. The upcoming budget will include further substantial reinforcements. More civilians can be employed, freeing up police officers for other duties. More future police officers can begin their training. Police presence will increase in crime-prone areas. Protection of emergency services staff will be strengthened. Penalties for vandalism will be tougher.

Terrorism must be defeated. The Swedish Police National Task Force will be able to receive foreign support. The Swedish Security Service will be given greater resources. Terrorist travel and participation in terrorist training have been criminalised. Additional measures against radicalisation and extremism are being taken.

We must come down hard on crime, and on the causes of crime. A new crime prevention programme is being drafted. A multiannual initiative to break segregation is being launched. Long-term unemployment must be beaten and housing segregation must be reduced. Support will increase for schools and preschools where conditions are difficult.

Mr Speaker,

From the time when I was a welder attending evening seminars in Örnsköldsvik to the present day, when I represent Sweden as Prime Minister at the World Economic Forum in Davos, I have followed the economic debate.

Universal welfare is unsurpassed when it comes to creating equitable living

conditions. But as globalisation intensifies, knowledge and security are also crucial competitive advantages. More and more people around the world understand the importance of equality for a growing economy.

For this Government it goes without saying that welfare is the priority rather than further tax cuts. The general government grants to municipalities and county councils will be permanently reinforced to the tune of SEK 10 billion.

The principle of public access to official documents and freedom of communication must apply in tax-financed welfare. Governance must draw on the skills of staff to the benefit of citizens and business. This is the starting point for the Government's trust reform.

A comprehensive initiative to turn around performance in schools is under way. Investments in schools have increased by more than SEK 8 billion.

More and more people are applying to teacher training programmes, which are now being expanded to tackle the teacher shortage. The quality of these programmes will be enhanced. The Teachers' Salary Boost will give around 60 000 teachers a higher salary. Measures are being implemented to ensure that more schools take in new arrivals. It will be obligatory for all education providers to offer holiday school in years 8 and 9.

The early years of school are a priority. Preschool and after-school care groups are now smaller. Support must be given at an early stage to pupils who are behind in mathematics or reading. Pupils who are ahead must be given new challenges. A reading-writing-arithmetic guarantee will be introduced. A major reading promotion initiative is being launched because reading is not only fantastic in itself - it is also the foundation of all other learning. Initiatives will be taken to ensure that schools are better at preventing bullying. More people are being employed in school health and welfare services.

The Swedish school system must offer high quality. Where you live or the school you attend must not determine your future. All schools must be good schools. In the first half of next year, the Government will receive proposals from the Schools Commission that will lay the foundation for clearer governance and a more equitable school system.

Health care needs to be modernised. A new regional structure and increased coordination of specialist health care services will guarantee equitable health care throughout the country. Staffing problems will be tackled through

increased government grants and the 'health care professionals billion'. Training programmes for nurses and specialist nurses have been expanded.

Higher staffing levels will both ensure better operational standards and improve working conditions for those employed in welfare services. Work environment initiatives are under way. Sick leave forecasts are now being revised downwards. The social partners have once again demonstrated the responsibility that is a cornerstone of the Swedish model. All the partners have committed to improving the work environment and bringing sick leave rates down.

It is a victory that a record number of people are able to celebrate their hundredth birthday. Sweden must be a welfare nation for older people, too. The shortage of accommodation for older people will be eliminated through more construction. A new form of investment support is being introduced. Elderly care will be reinforced through continued investment in more staff. The first step has been taken towards abolishing the unfair tax on pensions.

Society must step in to offer support to those children and young people who need it most. Social care for children and young people is being strengthened. Initiatives to combat mental ill health among young people are being given priority. Family policy is being developed because all children should have equal opportunities in life. Reforms for more gender-equal parenting continue.

The rights of LGBTQ people remain a priority. A review is under way to adapt parental insurance to contemporary families and modern working life. Efforts to consolidate the rights of national minorities continue. Sami self-determination will be strengthened. Sami culture and society will be safeguarded.

Competition for jobs is, and will remain, tough. Collective efforts to build our society must also create opportunities for people with relatively little education and people with disabilities. For this reason, more paths into the labour market are being created.

Areas with the most job opportunities should take in the most newly arrived immigrants. Modern temporary jobs in the public sector will be introduced. 'Extra jobs' will be developed so that more people can work in welfare services. Employment support is being adapted to make it more targeted. Wage subsidies will be improved so that more people with disabilities that entail reduced working capacity can find jobs. A new disability policy will be

presented. Efforts to combat discrimination are being strengthened.

Opportunities to engage in outdoor activities are being improved. Everyone should have access to the natural environment. Valuable nature areas are being protected and managed. More natural forests are being preserved. New marine reserves are being established. Ambitions are being raised for biodiversity. Support to both the sports movement and outdoor activity organisations is increasing. Public health efforts are being upgraded.

In many places jobs are in short supply, services are closing down and there is a feeling of exclusion or of having been forgotten. This is a dangerous trend. Throughout the country there must be good conditions for people to live and work.

Public services throughout the country must be improved, step by step. The expansion of broadband and mobile coverage will be strengthened further. Higher education will be expanded. The presence of central government agencies will increase. Municipal art and music classes, county theatres, museums, regional music institutions and libraries make it possible for everyone to access and participate in cultural life. Investments in art and culture are continuing. Support to cinemas will increase. School libraries can employ more staff. More children will have the chance to attend municipal art and music classes. Hundreds of thousands more people are visiting the national museums now that free admission has been reintroduced. Depopulation is being counteracted through favourable conditions for small businesses and a varied business sector. Strategic investments are being made in the important and growing hospitality industry.

Society is us, all of us. People and places, urban and rural, together.

Building our society encompasses all of us.

* * *

In the first two years of this electoral period, several parties in the Riksdag have concluded 15 important agreements, most recently concerning energy policy, new climate targets, and the entire economic framework. I would like to warmly thank all of you who have so constructively contributed to these agreements. Our cooperation makes Sweden stronger.

* * *

Sweden is part of the world, and the world is part of Sweden.

Now Sweden is being modernised, with new strides towards sustainability and growth, climate adaptation, equitable knowledge-based education and more jobs.

Now our international engagement is being strengthened at all levels.

Now investments are being made in the things that make our country both strong and secure. The Swedish model will not be dismantled: it will be developed.

This is taking responsibility for the future, for the world around us on which we are so dependent, and for a Sweden in which we stand together.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the shooting in Orlando, USA

Published 13 June 2016 Updated 13 June 2016

Statement, 13 June 2016

A brutal attack in Orlando, Florida, has shaken the United States and also shocked the Swedish people. More than 50 people have lost their lives. Our thoughts are with the victims and their families at this difficult time.

The brutality of the attack is further amplified by the fact that the victims were at a club for LGBTQ people. Together, we must combat hate, violence and terror and stand up for human rights.

Today I have sent condolences to President Obama and the people of the United States.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at European Parliament

Published 09 March 2016 Updated 09 March 2016

Strasbourg, 9 March 2016 Check against delivery.

President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, thank you for your kind invitation to be here today. Vice President of the European Commission, Kristalina Georgieva, members of the European Parliament, ladies and gentlemen,

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair."

Many of you probably recognise the opening lines of Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*. He is describing Europe at the end of the 18th century – but he could just as well be talking about our own times.

We have weathered a winter of despair. Of terrorists and extremists attempting to attack our fundamentals. Of Russia continuing to try to move European borders using armed force. Of our union not being able to cope with youth unemployment, social hopelessness and the global refugee crisis.

But there are also some rays of hope in the world. The global climate agreement, the new sustainable development goals, and large parts of the African continent rising from poverty show that we live in a time when global cooperation can make a difference.

And the EU also has a chance at a spring of hope. Standing strong and united against external threats. Tackling common challenges with the collective strength required to resolve them. Clearing away the last ruins of the financial crisis and starting to build strong societies again.

I was born in 1957, the same year as the Treaty of Rome. My generation was given vast opportunities and had great hope for the future. To many of us, the world seemed to be ours to explore and to make into a better place.

I cannot see any greater duty than to give the same opportunity and hope to the young generation of today. And I know that the European Union can be a driving force to this end, if we stand up for three central values of our union: Democracy. Cooperation. And added value for our citizens.

Let me start with **democracy**.

We are currently strengthening our joint actions against terrorism following cowardly and appalling attacks against our society. Many of these actions are tough, but necessary. But the work to defend democracy is a much greater task.

Defending democracy is standing up for the safety of our Jewish citizens at a time when anti-Semitic threats, hatred and violence once again echo throughout Europe.

It is never accepting or spreading populists' and extremists' demonisation of Muslims, even if it scores cheap points with the electorate.

It is working for the rights of the Roma and of all minorities who are held back by prejudice and poverty.

Defending democracy is also defending free and independent media, freedom of reporting and freedom of the press, because we know that politics always benefits from hard scrutiny.

Defending democracy is respecting every person's right to meet, to be tried in free and fair trials, to move freely in society and to love whoever they want.

If we do not defend these democratic values, we will lose Europe as we know it.

That brings us to my second point, **cooperation**.

Rarely have so many people been displaced in the world as they are right now, but rarely have so few European countries stepped up and been prepared to act.

During a two-month period last autumn, Sweden took in 80 000 people at a rate that is equivalent to 25 million asylum seekers annually in the EU as a whole.

This brought our reception system to the brink of collapse and, in the absence of working European solutions, it forced us to take unilateral action.

The Schengen Agreement and the free movement it creates is a mainstay of the EU, and crucial for our economies.

But if we do not act, and act fast, we risk losing it.

I see a lot of words and plans to move forward, but far too little action. I urge all member states to take their responsibility.

It's time to act, to ensure control of our external borders, enhance our cooperation with Turkey on the basis of International law, implement the redistribution of refugees within the EU, fight human smuggling and strengthen our common foreign policy to put a stop to the causes of the refugee crisis.

We must move from chaos to control, otherwise we risk the future of European cooperation as we know it.

And looking ahead, it is time to admit that the Dublin Regulation is not working and must be replaced.

If we do not create a new, common and sustainable asylum system, more countries will be forced to act unilaterally, which will hurt mobility, trade and – most of all – the human beings who are fleeing.

Sweden will work for a new asylum system in the EU that is based on equal distribution, and in which asylum is sought in the EU – not in an individual country.

Quite simply, if we are to share an external border and have free movement between our countries, we must also share a system of asylum reception.

And I cannot see how countries that do not participate in the common asylum system can participate in Schengen cooperation either.

This is also clearly linked to my third point, **added value for our citizens**.

We have shown that we are ready to work hard to keep together, as we have recently done to help keep the United Kingdom within our union.

But the complaints against the EU all over our continent should not be brushed aside. They show us the dire need to emphasise that special something that keeps us together – the European spirit, the shared value of cooperation for our citizens.

We need to demonstrate the value of 28 countries and 508 million inhabitants joining together:

To address challenges such as climate change that no country can manage alone, in this time of global interdependence.

To create an even larger common market, in this time of global competition.

To generate greater security for our people, in this time of global unease.

But if EU cooperation is to truly gain the broad popular support that is needed to stand strong in the 21st century, we must have a union that works harder for the wellbeing of the people.

In a world where 62 people own as much as 3.5 billion people, we need a European Union that works for equality, and everyone's chance to pursue their innermost hopes for a good life.

This is why we need to build a social Europe that strengthens people through more secure jobs and living conditions and strengthens enterprises through more secure access to citizens with purchasing power. Because when people and enterprises are strengthened, economies grow.

In a social Europe, the EU is a prime advocate for good terms and conditions for everyone working in the union. Making sure that workers never are forced to compete against each other through lower wages or poorer working conditions. Ensuring that in a tricky world of global subcontractors, there is always someone who is responsible for ensuring that you are safe at work.

In a social Europe, the EU should work to unleash the energy in a growing labour force. If women were employed to the same extent as men in the EU, GDP could increase by 12 per cent by 2030. The EU must not only act as a sentinel for sound finances, it must also act as a driving force for women's entry into the labour market and a truly equal world of work. This is as

ethically right as it is economically smart.

In a social Europe, the EU should take a collective stand against the youth unemployment that is breaking down our economies and our societies' faith in the future. We should prioritise investments in education. Expand exchanges of European students between not only higher education institutions but also upper secondary schools. And create the jobs of the future for young people via social investment, ambitious free trade agreements and a digital internal market.

This is the kind of social Europe that can win the hearts of the European people.

The Commission's proposal for amending the Posting of Workers Directive and the development of the social pillar show that the work is finally and truly under way, which I welcome. Taking steps towards more decent working conditions and social progress is paramount. So let us continue onwards and upwards. Let us come together for a summit in Sweden in 2017, and draw up a strategy to move the idea of a social Europe forward.

For an EU that works hard for the size of the market, but even harder for the wellbeing of the people.

I see the European Parliament and the Commission as key actors on all these three issues.

I feel that in this hall and in this union, we carry the ability to create the same hope I felt in the generation of 1957, for the generation of 1997, 2007, 2017, and many generations to come.

Europe's winter of despair has been long and hard. But if we stand up for democracy when it is tested, if we cooperate and turn words into deeds to address the migration crisis, and if we create a social Europe that increases the wellbeing in people's everyday lives, then we will be able – in these best of times and worst of times – to create a new spring of hope in Europe.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at memorial for Olof Palme

Published 28 February 2016 Updated 28 February 2016

Kulturhuset in Stockholm, 28 February 2016 Check against delivery.

Friends,

It is wonderful to be here – I can't think of a better way to honour the memory of Olof Palme than talking about the future.

There is a classical satirical cartoon of Palme – one of the more sympathetic ones – in which he is dressed as Sisyphus, the Corinthian king from Greek mythology.

The one who was condemned to push a boulder up a hill, only for it to roll back down every time he reached the top.

And so there is Palme in his toga, with a boulder that is an enormous version of the 1969 and 1970 May Day slogan: "Greater equality".

And it is true, the work for an equitable future may appear to be a Sisyphean task. It has been rolled back down the hill not only by centre-right politics, but also by global developments that are often beyond national control.

Palme himself experienced the oil crisis in the 1970s, which was followed by the banking crisis in the 1990s and the global financial crisis in the 2000s.

Palme was also quick to see this development, and he often spoke of the modern world's "common destiny".

And today, nobody can be in any doubt as to how right he was. Everything concerns us all. Everything affects us all. Anyone who wants to effect change must look far and wide.

And at the moment, we see much that challenges our common global development.

We see impending climate change, war, terrorism and persecution, and in their wake we see the largest refugee crisis since the Second World War.

But at the same time, there are contrasting images.

I remember a time, around the turn of the millennium, when few, if any, believed that the UN's Millennium Development Goals could be achieved.

But poverty was halved – five years ahead of the deadline. Today, nine out of ten girls and boys around the world go to school. Maternal mortality has fallen. Child mortality has fallen.

And last year the world's leaders agreed on 17 new global development goals and a historic climate agreement, and the American magazine The Atlantic dubbed 2015 "The best year in history for the average human being".

Amidst the darkness, there are bright rays of light. And it is up to us to allow the light to penetrate.

For this reason, we are now raising Sweden's voice in the world, for equality and international solidarity, through a strong UN and a feminist foreign policy.

The right tries to call it Palme-nostalgia, but global cooperation for global equality is our best strategy for the future.

Palme understood this. More and more people understand it today. Now we are just waiting for the Swedish right.

And we see the same complex situation, with light and dark, at national level.

When Palme took office in 1982, the centre-right government bequeathed him a substantial budget deficit, dwindling competitiveness and high

unemployment. Something about that situation rings a bell...

The maintenance of Sweden has been neglected.

We see this in the insecurity, the unemployment, the lack of hope for the future, and the hate and polarisation that are sweeping forward in their wake.

But there is also another side to this. Since the last change of government in Sweden, some 80 000 more people have a job to go to, and many of these are young people who were previously trapped in long-term unemployment.

Exports are increasing, growth is increasing, and we now have the highest rate of growth in the Nordic region, and one of the highest in Europe.

There is light. There is vigour in the Swedish economy.
And with this vigour, we will begin to aim for an equitable future.

But therein also lies the central conflict in Swedish politics today.

Because there is an abundance of proposals that would mean we would – in Sisyphean style – see much of the Swedish efforts to promote equality wiped out.

The right are now coming out with ideas about reduced wages.
Reduced social security. And sweeping cuts in welfare and education to fund further tax reductions to the tune of SEK 64 billion.

They promise positive outcomes. But quite honestly, I fail to see how lower wages, reduced welfare and weaker social safety nets are to give people greater faith in the future.

Insecurity cannot be combated through greater insecurity.

This is what the Swedish labour movement must take a stand on.

Of Palme's accomplishments I take with me his sense of confidence – fighting spirit – that stems from an awareness that another society is possible.

Naturally, taking in more than 160 000 people in one year has placed an

enormous strain on Sweden, and will lead to even more work in the future.

The task will definitely not be made easier by our having had years of under-investment, tax cuts and cutbacks.

But it is equally evident that the solution cannot be to cut off the strongest branch on which we are sitting, and get rid of the model that has made Sweden strong and cohesive.

This is why our work for an equitable future is also a fight for the Swedish model.

In these times of generalisations and false dichotomies, of 'either or', we must fight for a Swedish model that represents 'both'.

Both growth – through new innovations and new businesses – and justice – through new school initiatives and new social reforms.

Both rights – to welfare and security we can depend on – and obligations – to educate ourselves, develop ourselves, and work and do our share.

Both individualism – and the possibility to follow your innermost wishes – and solidarity – and the confidence that when you are at your weakest, our community is at its strongest.

This is the only way we can build an equitable future.

And even though the centre-right parties did everything in their power to delay it, the Government has now begun this new development of society.

With new investments in housing and infrastructure. Through a new education initiative with 50 000 new educational places. Through more teachers and elderly care staff. Better unemployment insurance, more secure sickness insurance, and stronger finances for pensioners.

And we will do more. To ensure that welfare is reliable. To ensure that school performance finally improves. To ensure that every adult in Sweden who is able to work can say: I am going to work now.

Step by step, we are launching real reforms that are the basis for "free and equal people in a society based on solidarity", which we declare to be the goal of democratic socialism in our party programme.

This is how we will advance efforts for an equitable future. It will not happen quickly. It will not be easy. But it will be done. Yes, we have grand goals. But the Swedish Social Democratic Party seldom has small ones.

And if we learned anything from Palme, it was also that society is different from the myth of Sisyphus. Nothing is predetermined. Our destiny is in our own hands.

Inequality is not a law of nature. It is man-made – and it can therefore be changed.

Fighting for an equitable future may often feel difficult. At times, the challenges increase. We may be knocked back and have to redouble our efforts.

But there are many of us to share the work, and we know what we want to achieve. And we are doing our best, Olof: we are doing our best.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Addis Abeba, 30 January 2016

Published 09 February 2016 Updated 09 February 2016

Check against delivery.

Prime Minister Hailemariam and other representatives of the Government of Ethiopia, African Union Commission Chairperson Dlamini Zuma, President of the AU, President Déby African Heads of State, Secretary-General of the UN Ban Ki-moon, Members of the African Union, Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, Dear friends,

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to my colleague, Prime Minister Hailemariam, for this wonderful event, and the fine opportunity to speak to you all. It is a great honour to be the first Swedish Prime Minister to address the Heads of State and Government of the African Union, and a great privilege and pleasure to be back in Addis Ababa.

I was here a year ago and met with many of you. I was here again in July at the Financing for Development Summit. And now I'm back again. Addis is becoming like a second home to me, and due to the long, dark Swedish winters – I might need it!

As I return to Addis, I can see how fast things move around here! I am not only speaking of the new railway here in Addis, where Swedish consultants have been honored to play a part, but of the extensive and rapid development in general. In this sense, Addis is an example of Africa.

Great things are happening in many parts of this great continent. It makes me want to learn, listen, understand and bring back to our cold north the message of an Africa of inspiration, growth and opportunities. I will tell them about hard work. Ambitions for progress. Impressive growth figures. And –

not least – human development.

And my words will not fall on deaf ears. Your development has caught the attention of Swedish businesses, and many of them are ready to engage or expand in Africa. Emerging economies will soon drive the majority of the world's growth. I want my country to be part of that; I want us to increase our trade as equals, and share our future together.

And we will build that shared future on our shared history. Sweden's support for national independence and freedom from poverty and hunger has over the years evolved into a strong partnership.

We are partners in addressing regional and global challenges. We listen to one another. We share expertise. And we act. Together. This is why Sweden wants stronger cooperation between the AU and the UN. And why it is necessary to increase the African representation in the UN's Security Council.

One great and mutual commitment where we act, together, is the United Nation's Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

That's why I'm very glad that President Johnson Sirleaf, President Zuma, President Magufuli and President Caïd Essebsi, as well as other world leaders, have joined me in the informal high-level support group to mobilise strong political support for the important work of implementing the Agenda. Future generations will thank you.

These days are special to Swedish Social Democrats. It is almost exactly 30 years ago that our Prime Minister Olof Palme was murdered. Palme held his last speech at the People's Parliament against apartheid in Stockholm, just a week before he was murdered. Although his speech was filled with rage against apartheid, it also expressed faith. Faith in peace, development and justice. It expressed faith in Africa. It expressed faith in cooperation.

Today, I see this same faith and ambition in Africa's Agenda 2063 and its vision for Africa's advancement.

I am particularly happy to welcome the theme of the AU, the 'African Year of Human Rights with particular focus on the Rights of Women'.

I am inspired by the leadership on gender equality demonstrated by the African Union and in particular by you, Madame Dlamini Zuma. Together with President Kagame and President Mutharika, I am a champion for UN

Women's HeForShe campaign. I urge all men to join in – at work, in their home life and among their friends.

Together we can create a gender-equal society – it is as morally right as it is financially smart.

And I'm proud to say that Sweden, as a partner, will stand alongside you, in the fight against climate change and the quest to improve energy supply in Africa, in the promotion of better education and employment opportunities for young people, in the creation of better systems for migration, that are circular, safe and sustainable both for receiving countries and for those African nations who need their young and ambitious to develop their societies, and in the many more challenges we face together.

Our development cooperation will remain broad and reliable.

The future is always uncertain, but of one thing I am very sure: Sweden's solidarity, friendship and longstanding partnership with the peoples of Africa.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Addis Abeba, 30 January 2016

Published 04 February 2016 Updated 04 February 2016

Check against delivery.

Prime Minister Hailemariam and other representatives of the Government of Ethiopia, African Union Commission Chairperson Dlamini Zuma, President of the AU, President Déby
African Heads of State,
Secretary-General of the UN Ban Ki-moon,
Members of the African Union,
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,
Dear friends,

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to my colleague, Prime Minister Hailemariam, for this wonderful event, and the fine opportunity to speak to you all. It is a great honour to be the first Swedish Prime Minister to address the Heads of State and Government of the African Union, and a great privilege and pleasure to be back in Addis Abeba.

I was here a year ago and met with many of you. I was here again in July at the Financing for Development Summit. And now I'm back again. Addis is becoming like a second home to me, and due to the long, dark Swedish winters – I might need it!

As I return to Addis, I can see how fast things move around here! I am not only speaking of the new railway here in Addis, where Swedish consultants have been honored to play a part, but of the extensive and rapid development in general. In this sense, Addis is an example of Africa.

Great things are happening in many parts of this great continent. It makes me

want to learn, listen, understand and bring back to our cold north the message of an Africa of inspiration, growth and opportunities. I will tell them about hard work. Ambitions for progress. Impressive growth figures. And – not least – human development.

And my words will not fall on deaf ears. Your development has caught the attention of Swedish businesses, and many of them are ready to engage or expand in Africa. Emerging economies will soon drive the majority of the world's growth. I want my country to be part of that; I want us to increase our trade as equals, and share our future together.

And we will build that shared future on our shared history. Sweden's support for national independence and freedom from poverty and hunger has over the years evolved into a strong partnership.

We are partners in addressing regional and global challenges. We listen to one another. We share expertise. And we act. Together. This is why Sweden wants stronger cooperation between the AU and the UN. And why it is necessary to increase the African representation in the UN's Security Council.

One great and mutual commitment where we act, together, is the United Nation's Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

That's why I'm very glad that President Johnson Sirleaf, President Zuma, President Magufuli and President Caïd Essebsi, as well as other world leaders, have joined me in the informal high-level support group to mobilise strong political support for the important work of implementing the Agenda. Future generations will thank you.

These days are special to Swedish Social Democrats. It is almost exactly 30 years ago that our Prime Minister Olof Palme was murdered. Palme held his last speech at the People's Parliament against apartheid in Stockholm, just a week before he was murdered. Although his speech was filled with rage against apartheid, it also expressed faith. Faith in peace, development and justice. It expressed faith in Africa. It expressed faith in cooperation.

Today, I see this same faith and ambition in Africa's Agenda 2063 and its vision for Africa's advancement.

I am particularly happy to welcome the theme of the AU, the 'African Year of Human Rights with particular focus on the Rights of Women'.

I am inspired by the leadership on gender equality demonstrated by the African Union and in particular by you, Madame Dlamini Zuma. Together with President Kagame and President Mutharika, I am a champion for UN Women's HeForShe campaign.

I urge all men to join in – at work, in their home life and among their friends.

Together we can create a gender-equal society – it is as morally right as it is financially smart.

And I'm proud to say that Sweden, as a partner, will stand alongside you, in the fight against climate change and the quest to improve energy supply in Africa, in the promotion of better education and employment opportunities for young people, in the creation of better systems for migration, that are circular, safe and sustainable both for receiving countries and for those African nations who need their young and ambitious to develop their societies, and in the many more challenges we face together.

Our development cooperation will remain broad and reliable.

The future is always uncertain, but of one thing I am very sure: Sweden's solidarity, friendship and longstanding partnership with the peoples of Africa.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on Holocaust Remembrance Day

Published 29 January 2016 Updated 29 January 2016

Malmö Synagogue, 27 January 2016 Check against delivery.

Friends,

I would like to start by reading from an album that belonged to 16-year-old Ester Goldstein and which is full of messages from her family and friends. One message reads:

"Do good, enjoy beauty itself,
Love life, and don't be afraid of death,
Believe in God and a better future.

These words are written to you,
dear Ester, so that you remember Bella Lassoire,
15 September 1942, Berlin."¹

This album was donated to Yad Vashem in Israel by Ester's cousin David. It is now part of an exhibition displaying albums that belonged to children in cities, ghettos and concentration camps during the war.

Some of these children survived the war years.
But Ester was deported to Riga.
Her friend Bella was deported to Auschwitz.
Both were murdered in the Holocaust.

And the exhibition has been named after the words that recur in various guises in so many messages and wishes in the albums.

It's called: "Don't forget me."

* * *

And one of my strongest memories from when I visited Yad Vashem in 2012 was when I entered the children's memorial.

It is a dark and silent room, but the darkness is broken by memorial lights that feel like they are as many in number as the 1.5 million children who were murdered.

And the silence is broken by a voice which reads the name, age and origin of each and every one of them. One after the other.

I will carry this memory with me for the rest of my life.

* * *

The name Yad Vashem comes from the Book of Isaiah in the Old Testament.

In it, the Lord talks about those who act righteously, and says:

"Even to them I will give in my house and within my walls a memorial and a name" – which is yad vashem in Hebrew.

The piece ends with: "I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off."

I would like to thank you for having me here today to join you in carrying forward the memory of those who fell victim to the Holocaust, to continue to give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off, to say: "We will never forget you."

* * *

And the best way to honour the victims of the Holocaust is to combat the hatred we see in our everyday lives.

The Holocaust may be history, but the persecution of Jews is happening here and now.

Here in Europe, here in Sweden, here in Malmö, we are seeing anti-Semitic attacks against synagogues, against Rabbis, against women, men and children.

Abhorrent acts of violence, taunts, conspiracy theories, prejudices and threats.

And the terrible seriousness of these acts is emphasised by bloody terrorist attacks all over the world that are directly targeted against Jews and Jewish communities.

And the result is fear.

A fear of showing pride in one's Jewish identity, a fear of wearing a kippah or a Star of David, a fear that is even manifested in a desire to move to a different city or country.

This is a disgrace. A disgrace for all of Swedish society.

A disgrace that we all have to admit and free ourselves from.

This anti-Semitism cannot be met with anything other than zero tolerance.

If we have learnt something from history, it is that we cannot, must not, will not yield an inch to the demonisation of the Jewish identity and the harassment and attacks that occur as a result.

You must be able to feel safe in your homes, in your communities, in our streets and squares that belong to us all.

Whether you gather in joy or sorrow, one thing must always be there: safety in your own country, Sweden.

Friends,

Jewish culture is an invaluable part of Swedish culture,

your history is part of all our history,

your future must be part of all our future,

and ensuring your right to live your lives in safety and freedom here in Sweden is an unwavering duty for our country.

So wherever and however anti-Semitism appears, it must be fought.

* * *

My Government is not starting from square one.

Former Prime Minister Göran Persson founded the Living History Forum and the systematic teaching of the Holocaust in Swedish schools.

Former Minister for Integration Erik Ullenhag did some very good, often excellent, work for the rights of minorities.

I would like to continue this work and expand it.

This is being led by Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke and Minister for Home Affairs Anders Ygeman, but I also feel a personal responsibility for ensuring it succeeds.

Safety must be the focus.

State and religious communities are now working together to improve the safety of vulnerable communities and community premises, and the police have been tasked with working in closer dialogue with religious communities, both locally and nationally.

Religious communities can now also apply for a government grant for security staff and safety-enhancing measures – this is something I know was implemented after a dialogue with the Jewish Community here in Malmö.

The police have also received instructions about prioritising and combating hate crimes. The special groups against hate crimes in Malmö and Stockholm will be expanded, recruitment will soon be completed for a completely new group in the Western Region, and all seven police districts will now have the capability to deal with hate crimes.

These enhanced measures will be supported by a new IT centre which is in the process of being built, in order to target the crimes we see being committed online.

There is now a concerted effort under way in Sweden against violent extremism. Efforts to combat violent rightwing and leftwing extremist groups and Islamist extremist groups have been too fragmented and sporadic.

The national coordinator, Mona Sahlin, has received doubled resources to disseminate knowledge, prevent recruitment and radicalisation, and make it easier for people to defect.

In August, we also presented the new national strategy for preventing, thwarting and pre-empting terrorism, which strengthens the work of the Swedish Security Service and gives the Swedish Prison and Probation Service the task of stopping extremist recruitment in our prisons.

And a great deal of this work is being conducted in close cooperation with the opposition parties.

Safety must not be a bone of contention. We cannot protect ourselves

against everything, but together we must do all we can to protect ourselves.

* * *

But in the long term, safety is not built by guards, but by values.

It is created by cohesion and trust between people, by understanding for each other's history and culture, by an openness and joy about our individual similarities and differences.

Shneur Kesselman, who is the Rabbi here in Malmö and who has personally experienced terrible anti-Semitism in his day-to-day life, has on many occasions raised the need to work in schools so that the children who may be imbued with hatred from their home life or from the internet can encounter a contrasting picture and get on the right track.

I agree.

This is why the Living History Forum has been given a broader task – in addition to teaching about the Holocaust, it is also to conduct a major education initiative about intolerance, racism and anti-Semitism.

The Swedish Media Council is to extend and develop the No Hate Speech Movement campaign, which counters online hatred among young people.

The National Agency for Education is also to improve knowledge in Sweden's schools, train staff and produce support material so as to nip intolerance in the bud.

In addition, we are providing support to civil society organisations, such as the Swedish Committee Against Anti-Semitism, for training initiatives and visits to Holocaust memorials.

This national work is also being supplemented by all the local initiatives, such as investments in school visits, language cafés and dialogue forums, which have been organised here in Malmö.

Friends, the whole country must support this mission.

The battle against anti-Semitism, racism and intolerance is not a single project, not a one-off measure – it is an ongoing mission that we must pursue every day, every generation, in every part of our society.

* * *

And looking forward, I believe that one of the biggest tasks for my Government – and the whole of Sweden – will be to counter the growing polarisation of society.

Over the past decade, Sweden has been drifting apart. We are seeing greater differences between those who have a long and a short education, between rich and poor, between inner cities and suburbs, between urban and rural areas.

These differences also go deeper than they have for a very long time.

Changes in the media landscape mean that more and more people are selecting information that confirms their view of the world and does not call it into question.

Participation in democracy is decreasing and segregation between schools and residential areas means that few natural meeting places are created for people with different backgrounds.

So while the information age has given us fantastic opportunities to create understanding about other parts of the world, there are many people who do not have a clue about how their fellow human beings live just a few bus stops away.

* * *

This is dangerous. Very dangerous.

It is these social divides and this lack of knowledge about each other that extremist groups – be they rightwing extremists or violent Islamists – use to favour their own agenda.

And this is why we also need to counter ignorance and polarisation – in addition to investing in jobs, schools and housing that counter social divides.

We can do this by investing more in fighting intolerance and violent extremism, as well as in greater democratic participation, better education in terms of source criticism and the principles of citizenship, more meeting places across class divisions and a broader debate on what kind of society we want Sweden to be.

* * *

And I know that there is a broad will to tackle this work.

I have seen it in the demonstrations against racism, in the massive turnout following the Nazi attacks in Kärrtorp, in the anger, determination and hope in so many people's eyes.

I have seen it in the growing voluntary work, not least during the refugee crisis, in sports associations, in homework help, in the study associations that had more than 50 000 asylum seekers attending adult education classes last year.

I have seen it in the kippah walks, and when we formed a ring of peace around Stockholm's Great Synagogue, made up of young representatives of many different religions and groups, to say: if you attack one of us, you attack us all.

And I can see it here today.

Remembering the Holocaust and its victims has a central place in the defence of human dignity and democracy, as evidence of what can happen when humanity gives way.

And now as the survivors are getting older and passing away, the task for those of us still alive is all the more important. To carry the memories forward. To always keep a place of memory, a yad vashem, in our hearts. To talk about it, to each other and our children.

And to say: We know what happened.
We refuse to allow it to happen again.
We will never forget you.

¹ "Don't Forget Me" - Ester Goldstein's Personal Album



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Key note by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven address at World Economic Forum Session "Operationalizing the Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs)

Published 27 January 2016 Updated 27 January 2016

Davos, 20 January 2016 Check against delivery.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Bad news tends to dominate today's political agenda. We need to give these issues our full attention, of course, and find solutions.

But we should also feel encouraged. A few months ago, in New York and Paris, international leaders showed a common determination to take on the long-term challenges we face. I want to commend the Secretary-General of the United Nations for these tremendous achievements last year.

The 2030 Agenda adopted in September provides a solid platform for the policies needed to build equitable and sustainable societies. And to help ensure that the 2030 Agenda is not only adopted but also implemented, I have launched a High-Level Support Group with eight other world leaders to maintain the highest level political engagement.

The implementation of the global goals is also a high priority for the Swedish Government. And – I am pleased to say – for Swedish society. Swedish business, trade unions, CSOs and academia have been deeply engaged in the formulation and negotiations on the 2030 Agenda and are now preparing for its implementation.

Last Monday, I met almost 600 representatives of all sectors of Swedish society to discuss how we can best implement the 2030 Agenda. Let me take a minute to share with you some concrete actions we discussed.

Firstly, the Swedish Government has high corporate social responsibility ambitions. We have recently launched a National Action Plan for Business and Human Rights to better support Swedish companies' CSR efforts.

Secondly, we want to make greater use of public procurement to achieve the global goals. By enforcing sustainability requirements in public procurements, the Swedish contracting authorities will use their resources more responsibly. We are currently working on a National Procurement Strategy to clearly establish public procurement targets. A dedicated National Agency for Public Procurement has been established to provide support aimed at making procurements more sustainable.

My third example relates to environment policy. Sweden aims to have a fossil-free vehicle fleet by 2030 and, in the long term, to be powered by 100 per cent renewable energy. To speed up reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, a grants programme for local and regional investment to mitigate climate change was introduced last year. This will also create new green jobs.

We are now launching a national implementation scheme for the 2030 Agenda. It includes a designated national committee and specific assignments for a number of government agencies. We will invite municipalities, the business sector, trade unions, academia and civil society to contribute. For truly transformative results, early involvement of the local level is essential.

I look forward to exchanges of mutual learning about how to organise our work, both nationally and internationally. I believe that sharing best practices and concrete examples of collaboration, as we are doing here today, is the key to achieving great results for our countries, and thus for the world.

Thank you.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Opening remarks by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at World Economic Forum session "Sustainable Business – Advancing standards in global supply chains"

Published 27 January 2016 Updated 27 January 2016

Davos, 20 January 2016 Check against delivery.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We share a planet, we share a global economy – and we share an increasingly global labour market.

I am convinced that rights at work are fundamental prerequisites for the freedom of women and men. Decent working conditions are also key to sustainable businesses.

How can these rights and conditions be achieved? Through social dialogue between trade unions, employers and governments.

Let me give you an example.

The HIV pandemic has had devastating effects on working women and men and their families, and threatens fundamental rights at work.

In southern Africa, one important social dialogue project aims to prevent the spread of HIV and reduce its effects by informing workers in their workplaces. The main winners are the workers, whose improved health

means they can continue working. But the companies also benefit through increased productivity and reduced absenteeism. And society benefits too when health care costs fall.

Examples from my own country can also demonstrate the power of social dialogue.

In the early 1900s, Sweden was severely plagued by social conflicts, resulting in strikes and lockouts. We had one of the highest number of work days lost in the world. That changed when employers and trade unions struck a nationwide agreement in 1938, setting rules on how to conduct social dialogue and conflict resolution.

I hope that a new global concept can be developed where stakeholders join forces to promote joint solutions, while still representing their different interests. Each actor needs to pay attention to and take into consideration the aims and limitations of the others. This is what I call a Global Deal.

An approach of this kind can encourage cooperation between social partners. It could bring peace to the labour market, promote competition, and enhance inclusive growth and shared prosperity.

For states, a Global Deal implies promoting and respecting the ILO core conventions and ensuring the implementation of policies to promote productive employment and decent work. States should recognise the role of social dialogue in democratic governance and encourage concrete agreements through collective bargaining.

For employers, this means respecting these rights in practice, social responsibility and being prepared to negotiate locally, regionally or globally.

For trade unions, this means considering social responsibility when negotiating, but also contributing to the company's overall development.

A more equitable, sustainable and just world is not an altruistic objective but very much a shared interest of states, companies and workers.

I look forward to continuing working with ILO Director-General Guy Ryder and OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría to advance the Global Deal concept so that countries, companies and unions, like those represented here, can join in this effort.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at the launch of Sweden's action towards the Global Goals

Published 19 January 2016 Updated 19 January 2016

Stockholm 18 January 2016 Check against delivery.

Your Royal Highness,
Dr Nabarro,
Friends,

A very warm welcome to this launch of Sweden's action to implement the 2030 Agenda. It is particularly exciting to see so many here from so many sectors of society.

Because if there's one thing I know, it is that we get results when we work together – the business sector, trade unions, civil society, researchers, politicians and civil servants at all levels.

One of the success factors for the Global Goals and the 2030 Agenda is that so many have been involved in developing them.

This gives us strength as we move forward and begin to implement the goals.

Thank you for being here ready to take on this task. I very much look forward to hearing your thoughts and ideas about the work that lies ahead of us.

Friends,

"A quiet life on the peak of a volcano is illusory. In today's world everything concerns everyone."

These were the words of Václav Havel, formulated when the Berlin Wall fell and the world was in upheaval. Gone was the stalemate of the Cold War and a new era of global cooperation began. It was a time when world leaders and countries came face to face with the completely new challenges and new opportunities that globalisation presented.

The decade that followed was a time when the major future global issues were discussed at a string of world conferences, not least the Earth Summit in Rio, the Conference on Women in Beijing, the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen and the Conference on Population and Development in Cairo.

And it was those efforts that resulted in the Millennium Development Goals.

And I know that at the turn of the millennium, there weren't many who believed that those goals could be achieved.

We were used to the United Nations setting important goals and visions but we were also used to careless implementation of the decisions that were taken.

But the prophets of doom were wrong. We have proved that it is possible to change and improve the world. When there is willingness, when global leadership is strong and when the opportunities globalisation offers are seized.

At the end of last year, the American magazine The Atlantic wrote that 2015 was "the best year in history for the average human being".

And much of what was reported there relates to the UN Millennium Development Goals. Poverty was halved – five years ahead of the deadline. Today, nine out of ten girls and boys around the world go to school. Maternal mortality has fallen. Child mortality has fallen.

Billions of people have gained access to clean water. A global middle class is emerging where every second person has access to a mobile phone.

Friends, the world is not worse. It's better.

But we live in paradoxical times.

Alongside positive developments we see deepening wars and conflicts, terrorist attacks, an ongoing refugee crisis and serious environmental and

climate threats. This adds to our unease.

And despite the huge progress that has been made 800 million people are still living in extreme poverty. Ninety million children around the world are still suffering from malnutrition. Women across the globe still have less power, and poorer access to the labour market and education.

A lot of work remains to be done.

It was with this perspective – of challenges and opportunities – that the world's leaders gathered in New York in September last year and adopted the 2030 Agenda and its 17 global goals.

And it was recognising our common destiny that we gathered in December and agreed on a new binding climate agreement.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has expressed it well. "We are the first generation that can eradicate poverty. And the last that can put an end to climate change."

And the work is not to be done by someone else, somewhere else. It has to be done by all of us together. The goals make great demands on all countries and all actors. It is my ambition to see Sweden take the lead.

And there are two reasons for this.

1. It is morally right.

We have a responsibility towards others, and not just ourselves here and now. We have a responsibility towards people all over the world, but also towards future generations.

2. But it is also economically smart.

I want Swedish companies to be the ones to develop the new technology and solutions that the world is crying out for to reduce carbon emissions. Our country will benefit from being at the forefront of climate adaptation.

Sweden's strength lies in being an egalitarian and gender equal society, which not despite, but because of its solidarity and tolerance, is rich, modern and a world development leader. This is the Sweden we are striving to build. This is the Sweden we believe in.

And I know that there are plenty of ideas and solutions in Sweden.

Just over a year ago, I met Mehrdad Mahdjoubi when he was named

Technologist of the Year. I'm sure you have heard of him. He has developed the world's most advanced and efficient shower system, saving 90 per cent water and 80 per cent energy, and the shower water is cleaner than ordinary hot tap water. In addition, he has succeeded in turning his innovation into a business idea and set up a company called Orbital Systems. It is now ready for a global launch.

Many Swedish companies are well ahead. Scania and Volvo, working tenaciously for a low-emission green transport sector. H&M, one of the world's largest users of organic cotton and working for workers' rights.

There are more examples: Ericsson's digital solutions, ABB's development of smart grids and IKEA's goal to produce its own renewable energy and make it easy for us ordinary people to live greener lives with LED lights and solar panels.

I could go on because this is what I think is really exciting – when jobs are created through innovations that are turned into business ideas and reach new markets.

Sustainable business models give Swedish companies a competitive edge. This is Sweden's future. This makes a difference – in Sweden and in the world. And this creates jobs and growth.

Let me give you another example of leadership. Malmö – a municipality that has made the global goals its own. You are showing the way both on innovative environmental efforts and proposals to reduce health inequalities. And there are many more municipalities making important investments in sustainable development – Karlstad, Örebro, Lomma, Östersund and Borås to name but a few.

We have to take advantage of all the available knowledge and experience.

Three government ministers have particular responsibility for implementation. Minister for Public Administration Ardalan Shekarabi, Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin and Minister for Strategic Development Kristina Persson.

The Government will soon appoint a national delegation to facilitate and stimulate implementation. It will be tasked with producing a national action plan.

We will be assisted by a large number of government agencies that will

contribute their knowledge, such as SCB, which will help to develop indicators for the follow-up. This will make our work and the results concrete.

But what is most important is all of you here today, the breadth that you represent and the engagement you bring. Your knowledge is essential. Your work is crucial. We will do this together.

And what a historic opportunity to be a part of this process and make a difference.

We have a long to-do list. Let's get started.

Once again, a warm welcome to you all.



Speech

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on developments in Israel and Palestine

Published 06 December 2015 Updated 06 December 2015

Developments in Israel and Palestine are deeply troubling. October and November were the bloodiest months in more than a decade in Israel, the West Bank and East Jerusalem. In a situation where violence and hopelessness are increasing and the rhetoric is becoming more strident, it is even more important to uphold dialogue and diplomacy as our foremost tools.

Against this backdrop, it is unfortunate that statements on the situation in the Middle East by representatives of the Swedish Government are misunderstood and blown out of reasonable proportion. The most recent misunderstanding concerns the interpellation debate in the Swedish Riksdag on Friday. The Minister for Foreign Affairs did not, as alleged, say that extrajudicial executions occur in Israel; she talked in general terms about principles of international law concerning the right of self-defence and the importance of the principles of proportionality and distinction.

The situation in the Middle East is difficult enough without having to be encumbered by misunderstandings about anybody's intentions. And it is unfortunate when strong reactions are based on false premises.

The Government completely rejects violence against civilians. All acts of terrorism are despicable and must be universally condemned. We seek good relations with both Israel and Palestine. This includes our desire to deepen

and develop our relations with Israel.

The Government's support for a two-state solution in the Middle East peace process is based on the aim that Israel and Palestine will be able to live side by side in peace and security. Israel's security, and our bilateral relationship with Israel, are fundamental components of our commitment to the peace process. We in Sweden seek to be a friend to both Israel and Palestine, while expressing ourselves clearly on issues where there is disagreement.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at COP21

Published 30 November 2015 Updated 30 November 2015

30 November 2015, Paris. Check against delivery.

Mr President,
Mr Secretary-General,
Your Majesties and Royal Highnesses,
Distinguished colleagues and delegates,

I am an industry man. I started my working life as a welder. I know first-hand that with the right foresight, industry can bring about change, massively and fast.

In fact, the industrial revolution is what brought us here today. It gave us unprecedented wealth and growth. But it was also the starting point for an economy built on coal and other fossil fuels, and for unsustainable global warming.

We are gathered here today to accelerate a new green industrial revolution that will be ever as transformative as the one 250 years ago. But this time change must be global, it must build on renewables, and it must be just.

But just as before, change will be guided by innovations. The solar cell, combined with smart energy storage, might very well be the ‘Spinning Jenny’ of our time.

Winners will be societies at the forefront – not those that wait until the last minute. So I have set an ambitious goal for my country: Sweden will be among the first fossil free welfare nations of the world.

It is not only a matter of climate-altruism – it is also in our best economic interests. I want Swedish companies to develop the new emission-reducing products and innovations that the world is asking for. This will create jobs and export revenues.

Being a rich country, we have a head-start. Consequently, it is our duty to support those countries that did not cause the emissions, but are most vulnerable to its effects. Sweden is strongly committed to showing leadership. We remain the largest per capita donor to the Green Climate Fund. In addition, we will make substantial new contributions to the Adaptation Fund and to the Least Developed Countries Fund.

Altogether, Sweden is here to enter into an ambitious, fair and durable agreement. Our main priority is to keep global warming as far below two degrees as possible.

So let us not see Paris as an end, but as a beginning. Let us continue to raise the level of our ambitions. And let us be guided by this core belief: global climate action will not hold humanity back – it will propel us forward.

Thank you.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on Paris attacks

Published 14 November 2015 Updated 14 November 2015

Today Sweden mourns with the people of France.

The terrorist attacks we witnessed last night reek of a vile hatred and contempt for the value of human life.

We think of the victims and their families, the parents who have lost their children, the children who have lost their parents, the lives that will now never be lived. These are terrible hours for Europe.

* * *

One Swede has died, and we have received reports that another Swede has been shot and injured.

We are in touch with their families, and I want them to know that my sympathy, and the sympathy of the entire Swedish people, is with them. Our hearts are with you. The French authorities are still working, of course; this work is ongoing, so we do not yet have all the official answers.

* * *

Paris is a city many of us hold dear, as a symbol of exuberant culture, joy and freedom. An attack on Paris is an attack on Europe, on the free and democratic world.

Sweden stands side by side with France in solidarity at this time, and we have let France know that we stand ready to give them the support that is needed, for which they themselves express the need.

* * *

Today I convened the security policy council. The members of the council were briefed by the National Police Commissioner and the head of the Swedish Security Service, and I have passed on this information to the leaders of the other parties in the Swedish Riksdag.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has updated us on its consular activities to support Swedes in Paris. The Ministry also advises Swedes in Paris to follow developments closely in the media and to listen to the advice of the French authorities.

The Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs will also be convened in the next few days.

* * *

Today is a day for mourning, it is true. But also a day for resolve.

President Hollande has reported that these deeds were carried out by the terrorist group that calls itself the 'Islamic State'. And this group has indeed claimed responsibility. They also recently claimed responsibility for a horrific attack in Beirut, and carry out summary executions, rapes and torture in Syria and Iraq.

The Government has recently announced its intention to extend Sweden's training operation for the Kurdish forces that are fighting ISIL. And what has happened now reinforces the need for the entire international community to come together to oppose and combat this abhorrent sect.

* * *

EU foreign ministers will meet on Monday to discuss this. Sweden also believes that the EU should meet urgently at ministerial level to discuss the consequences of what has occurred, and determine what measures will be taken in the short and the long term.

* * *

Sweden has also recently taken clear steps to intensify its efforts to prevent, preempt and protect against terrorism, under the leadership of Minister for Home Affairs Anders Ygeman.

The national counter-terrorism strategy aims to

- counter radicalisation and recruitment to extremist and terrorist groups,
- reduce the capability and opportunity to commit terrorist attacks,
- maintain protection for individuals, and
- reduce the vulnerability of society to terrorist attacks.

This work is under continuous development. Measures are now being taken, for example, to prevent the misuse of Swedish passports. The Swedish Security Service will receive an increase of SEK 225 million in its appropriations up to 2018 to step up its counter-terrorism efforts. And legislation to make recruitment to, organisation of and financing of terrorist activities criminal offences will be in place by the end of the year.

These efforts are at the heart of the responsibilities of the Swedish state. The events we witnessed last night underscore the importance of intensifying and coordinating this work throughout the country.

All societies are vulnerable, but Sweden must persist in its work to reduce our vulnerability, independently and together with others.

I see this as one of my foremost responsibilities as Prime Minister of Sweden.

* * *

I would also like to speak directly to all those who feel afraid and worried right now. We are living just now in a time when we see an incredible amount of human suffering.

I, and the Government I lead, will work indefatigably so that you can feel safe and secure.

If you are wondering what you can do at this precise moment, you can do something as simple as to show your solidarity with the people of France in any way you wish. They need the support of the whole world.

And in these times, the most important thing of all is to remember and stand up for the values that are our beacon in the dark. Sweden is and remains a society that believes in democracy, freedom and equality between people. Terrorism can never shake these values, nor shall it ever do so.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Stefan Löfven at the Valletta summit on migration

Published 12 November 2015 Updated 12 November 2015

11 November, Valletta, Malta. Check against delivery.

Mr President, esteemed colleagues. I speak as the leader of a migrating country.

Many Swedes spend part of their lives outside Sweden, many young people see the world as their working place, and half of all graduated economy students have studied abroad. People travel and move all over the world. And they come back home again, bringing new ideas, new contacts and business opportunities. That's why we should facilitate circular migration, and lower the cost of remittances. That's why regular migration is key. And that's why migration can be one of the strongest imperatives for development.

I thank you all for being here today to decide a path forward for that imperative to be shared by Europeans and Africans alike.

The current global refugee crisis is a long way from this positive vision of migration. People are fleeing for their lives, and a great many lives are being lost at sea.

The right to seek asylum is a cornerstone of international law, but the refugee situation in several countries in Europe is becoming unsustainable.

This includes my own country. 10 000 people seek asylum every week in Sweden. That would correspond to half a million people seeking in asylum in the EU on a weekly basis. This has put us under severe pressure, and we are reaching our maximum capacity for migration. This is not a sustainable situation.

And even though this is a great challenge for many European countries, the

challenge is even greater for many African countries. We are seeing people put their lives in the hands of smugglers, who do not always place great value on a human life.

You are losing your young and your educated, those who should be building your societies for the future. That's why we're all in this together. That's why our cooperation is so crucial. We can only fight the root causes of the migration crisis together. We need cooperation that creates greater opportunities for studies, secures decent work and shared prosperity in all parts of Africa, and brings hope to the young.

Therefore, Sweden will be a founding and contributing member of the EU Emergency Trust Fund, as a part of our long lasting development partnership with the entire region.

We need cooperation that enhances capacity-building, protects children in mixed migration flows and reaps the positive economic rewards of migration.

And in order to achieve this, a credible policy on irregular migration and return is a must, because return arrangements and readmissions agreements remain necessary parts of a functioning migration system.

In short: We need cooperation for a migration that is both sustainable and safe – and out of free choice, not forced choice.

The path towards that goal is a long one. But this makes the steps we take today even more important. So let our work not merely result in words on paper, but also constructive action for many days to come.

Thank you.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Opening address by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Nordic Council thematic debate

Published 29 October 2015 Updated 29 October 2015

Reykjavik, 27 October 2015 Check against delivery.

Mr President, Esteemed Colleagues, Nordic Friends,

They travelled towards the north-west. They came from different countries, fleeing from conflicts, from oppression, from poverty and starvation. Many of them had only what they could carry, and had to try to build a new life for themselves and their families.

That is how this beautiful country was founded – the country we today call Iceland. That's why there is no better place to gather to discuss the greatest challenge currently facing the Nordic countries – the global refugee crisis.

We are all aware of the situation. Escalating wars, conflicts and oppression, combined with greater opportunities to move between countries, has produced the largest number of refugees since the Second World War.

All the Nordic countries have seen increased refugee flows, and my country now estimates that in 2015 alone, up to 190 000 people may seek asylum in Sweden. We have filled our refugee centres, hostels, old school buildings and public premises. Preparations are now being made for housing in tents.

People in Sweden have taken on the responsibility with immediate empathy. We have seen heinous, racist acts of violence, murder and arson. But Sweden's greatest contribution is defined by the struggle against racism, fundraising and volunteer work, resolution and humanism. We are proud of this.

The Swedish Government is also working around the clock to support municipalities, social workers, teachers and the police – who are doing a fantastic job – through national coordination, new legislation and increased resources. But in recent weeks, it has become clear that the Swedish reception system is nearing the limit of its capacity.

We previously fought for a more equal distribution of refugees across the EU, and we now request that Sweden be part of the EU's relocation scheme, so that people who apply for asylum in Sweden can be resettled in other EU countries.

Sweden will also apply for EU funds for the large number of refugees we have received. No one can doubt Sweden's humanitarian commitment, but our capacity is also limited. All countries must now take their full responsibility.

The time has come to acknowledge that refugee reception is facing a paradigm shift – from being a national issue to being an international issue. We in the Nordic countries must safeguard our openness to the world around us. This is – and will remain – one of our countries' greatest strengths. We must safeguard the right of asylum. It is a human right, and a right that we all want to know would apply if war one day came to us.

And the best way to safeguard both openness and the right of asylum is to have orderly and regulated immigration that does not give rise to shadow societies and that has broad public support.

And, in turn, the best way to safeguard orderly and regulated immigration is through the even distribution of refugee reception in Europe – and in the Nordic countries. It is therefore time for all Nordic countries to take their responsibility to enable an even distribution.

At the same time, we must take action against the causes of the refugee crisis. We must focus on efforts to create stability and security in the Middle East. This requires statebuilding, counter-terrorism activities, democratic development, water resources management and combating climate change. In these areas, the Nordic countries can make significant contributions.

We have extensive experience of mediation. That is why, in addition to helping in the fight against ISIL, we should also intensify our efforts to support Staffan de Mistura's peace mediation efforts in Syria and the creation of an international contact group consisting of key actors. We must

also clearly call for a stop to Russia's bombing of the armed opposition. There is no military solution to the war in Syria, only a political solution.

We are also prominent development cooperation partners. For example, next year, Sweden will launch a five-year regional strategy for the Syrian crisis. The strategy focuses on improving people's life chances in Syria and its neighbouring countries through their ability to provide for themselves, combatting sexual violence and enhanced capacity for statebuilding. But its impact naturally depends on the combined contributions of all actors – what we do together.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the face of all global challenges – whether they involve refugee issues, peace-making or the transition to a sustainable world – all countries must step up and take their responsibility.

And we do this in the Nordic region, guided by the principle that has always characterised our cooperation. We may be strong on our own – but we are always strongest when we stand together.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Stefan Löfven at Stockholm City Hall

Published 19 October 2015 Updated 19 October 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Stockholm, 19 October 2015 Check against Delivery.

Madam President, President of the Stockholm City Council, Mayor of Stockholm, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, friends,

I would like to extend my warmest thanks to the President of the City Council [Eva-Louise Erlandsson Slorach] and the Mayor of Stockholm [Karin Wanngård], for hosting this lunch in this remarkable building – the City Hall – one of Stockholm's most famous landmarks.

This is where the Nobel Prize Banquet is held on the 10th of December every year to honour the laureates for their outstanding discoveries, innovations and achievements. Brazil and Sweden are proud partners in innovation, science and research. Madam President, your visit is a testimony to our joint ambition to strengthen our bilateral cooperation in these fields. Stockholm is a small city by Brazilian standards – but one of the fastest growing cities in Europe. It attracts by virtue of its beauty, good services, but also by virtue of being innovative.

Your visit is an expression of our mutual ambition to expand our cooperation. One important aspect of this is our people-to-people relations – and not least, sports. I myself never miss a sports event if I have the time.

We have an Olympic year coming up and I am convinced that Rio de Janeiro will do a fantastic job of hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2016. I will follow it, rest assured.

Today, I am very pleased that athletes from the Swedish Olympic and

Paralympic national teams are joining us. I am sure they are very excited about the experiences that await them in Brazil. We are all looking forward to their achievements in Rio next year – and to ever closer ties with Brazil.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Stefan Löfven at Business Forum

Published 19 October 2015 Updated 19 October 2015

Stockholm, 19 October 2015 Check against delivery.

Madam President, Ministers, CEOs, business partners, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to welcome President of Brazil Dilma Rousseff to Stockholm today. It is a testimony to the close friendship between our Governments and nations.

I have had the privilege of visiting Brazil many times, most recently for President Rousseff's re-inauguration ceremony in January.

In my previous role as a trade union leader, I saw first-hand how important Brazil is as a partner for Swedish industry. Our partnership with Brazil is of the highest priority for my Government and this is also why our Minister for Enterprise and Innovation, Mikael Damberg, chose to visit Brazil in May with a large delegation.

We have a long-standing partnership. Swedish enterprises have been doing business in Brazil for decades, some even for a century. Others are new to the Brazilian market. All of you here are part of the broad bilateral relationship we enjoy today.

Former President Lula described our mutual interests well when he said that Brazil and Sweden complement each other: Sweden, a modern, international and knowledge-based economy and Brazil, a resource-rich, dynamic, emerging market and a platform for the rest of Latin America.

Let me focus on three key aspects of our bilateral relationship: trade, innovation and sustainability.

The global economy brings new opportunities and new challenges. Sweden is an exporting country and we will strengthen our position in the global market with a new and active business policy. We have recently presented an export strategy that will help boost exports and enhance the participation of Swedish companies in the global economy. It will also help attract investments to Sweden.

Open, predictable and transparent trade and investment regimes are key. Goods and services are no longer made in one country and shipped to another. Rather, goods and services are increasingly 'Made in the World'. Brazilian aircraft company Embraer and Swedish car manufacturer Volvo Cars are good examples of this.

I see great potential for trade between our countries. I would also welcome more Brazilian investments in Sweden. Swedish investments in Brazil have increased over the past few years and now amount to USD 4.5 billion. Stockholm is a business and financial centre and serves as a regional hub for many foreign companies. It can also serve as a springboard to the rest of Europe.

The President and I meet today to renew and strengthen the strategic partnership between our countries.

The Gripen agreement on joint development and production of 36 new generation fighter jets creates a lasting bond between our nations. This strategic project will deepen and broaden our relations across the board and have positive spin-off effects in other areas.

Innovation is one such area and it is high on my agenda. Our ambition is to make Sweden a world leader in the development of innovative products, services and business models through joint efforts by all relevant stakeholders. This is at the heart of the new National Innovation Council, where I meet with business, academia and civil society. Our competitiveness depends on our ability to create and make practical use of new scientific discoveries. In short: our capacity to innovate. Continuous innovation and adaptation to new circumstances have made Swedish companies globally competitive over the years. Today, the world is moving into a new industrial era where digitalisation will play a fundamental role. Last year, Stockholm was ranked as the city in Europe with most billion-dollar start-ups, and per capita second only to Silicon Valley as the birthplace of successful internet

companies. The importance of digital innovation cannot be overestimated and new digital solutions will be essential for industrial competitiveness. This is an area where we should explore future Brazilian-Swedish cooperation.

Innovation is about finding smart solutions to everyday problems. However, innovation is also about finding solutions to the major challenges of our time and being able to transform them into goods and services in the global market. Swedish companies should be the ones developing the innovations that the whole world is asking for at a time when we need new and better solutions to reduce emissions. It is good for the climate – and it is good for business.

With the challenges of climate change and the UN Climate Conference in Paris in mind, I would like to emphasise the importance of seeing sustainability as a driver of innovation and development.

A couple of weeks ago, Sweden launched a high-level support group for the implementation of the sustainable development goals in New York. I appreciate President Rousseff's engagement in the group with nine heads of government. However, if we are to achieve the goals, your involvement – private sector involvement – is crucial.

To attract investments and develop advanced products, a country needs a solid knowledge base. Today, we are pleased to welcome Brazilian students to Swedish universities. We are also strengthening our cooperation in research and development.

The rapid transformation of society will make the development of people's skills increasingly important. We can see that companies working proactively to promote diversity and gender equality have a stronger culture of innovation and perform better.

New ideas often arise and evolve when stakeholders with different backgrounds and skills meet.

I hope that today's Business Forum will stimulate new ideas and a productive dialogue on how business can both enrich and benefit from the privileged relationship between our countries.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Address by the Prime Minister at the 70th UN General Assembly

Published 30 September 2015 Updated 30 September 2015

New York, 30 September 2015. Check against delivery.

Mr President, Mr Secretary-General, Fellow Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sixty years ago, UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld said these simple words, summarising our task here today:

“The United Nations is an expression of our will to find a synthesis between the nation and the world, [...] to serve the world by serving our nation, and to serve our nation by serving the world.”

We will never forget Dag Hammarskjöld’s life, and we welcome a new resolution examining his death; but now, more than ever, we need to ensure that his idea of international solidarity lives on.

The current refugee situation is a global crisis, a global responsibility, and now also a global crisis of responsibility. The UN system, and all leaders of the world, need to come together to ensure that those fleeing from war and repression are treated in a safe, orderly and dignified way.

We should dramatically increase the number of resettlement places, expand legal avenues for migration, and base all our efforts on the principle of non-refoulement and the right to seek asylum. And it is extremely urgent that all countries of the European Union treat the people seeking refuge in the Union in a spirit of humanity, solidarity and shared responsibility.

Sweden will do its share. We are the largest per capita receiver of asylum seekers in Europe, and we are increasing our funding to UNHCR, which is in dire need of more resources. But this is something no country or continent can tackle alone. It’s time for us all to step up and solve this crisis. It is not

only our task. It is our duty – in the serving of our nations, and of the world.

To solve this crisis, we also need to stop the horrors in Syria. Extrajudicial executions, sexual and gender-based violence, atrocities that may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity cannot be tolerated by our international community.

Sweden supports the efforts to secure humanitarian assistance for the Syrian people. We stand behind Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura's proposal to form working groups with Syrian participation to put into operation the Geneva Communiqué. To support this process we want to see an international contact group comprising key international and regional actors. And time is of the essence. The Security Council and its major powers must shoulder this responsibility. This bloodbath must end.

Meanwhile, other conflicts should not be forgotten. A seven-year-old child in Gaza has already lived through three wars. Peace talks need to be resumed so that the State of Israel can live alongside a democratic, coherent and viable Palestinian State. Sweden has recognised the State of Palestine. We want to see a more equal relationship, to pave the way for the two-state solution that Israelis, Palestinians and a broad international community view as the right path to peace.

Sweden will also step up efforts for peacekeeping and crisis management.

We are contributing civilian personnel to missions in South Sudan, Afghanistan, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Middle East, and we have sent military personnel for the UN Stabilisation Mission in Mali and the international coalition to combat ISIL.

We stand ready to contribute to future UN missions and are continuing research on developed doctrines and methods for peacekeeping, to share within the UN.

Working to keep the peace also means following through on our mutual promises of disarmament:

- to pursue legal, practical and technical solutions to fully rid our world of its remaining 16 000 nuclear weapons;
- to finally destroy what remains of other inhumane arms, such as biological and chemical weapons;

- to realise the Arms Trade Treaty; and,
- to fight the spread of small arms and light weapons, including ammunition.

If we sway from these goals, humanity will suffer for our faults.

And if peace is more than the absence of war, peacebuilding is more than the direct prevention of military conflict. Lack of resources, rising sea levels and natural disasters have already wreaked havoc for women and men living in vulnerable states. Climate change can work as a conflict multiplier, threatening peace as well as our chances of achieving all of our Sustainable Development Goals.

We need a course of action to create a low-carbon and climate-resilient world economy. We must protect land and ocean ecosystems. It's not a choice, but a necessity for survival. The world must reach a fair, ambitious and legally binding agreement in Paris in December, which over time keeps the rise in global temperature as far as possible below two degrees Celsius.

And Sweden will play its part, becoming one of the first fossil-free nations in the world, and having no net emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050. We will be strong financial supporters of the Green Climate Fund and international climate action, to support adaptation and transfer of technology on a global scale.

The coming decade will also need to see major investments in the schooling, higher education and professional training of our young.

We need fair and equal societies, where the just contributions from those who have, finance the giving of knowledge and power to those who have not.

This is a foundation for peace that is too precious to neglect. And this is closely connected to the potential of gender equality. The barring of women from power and public debate, from work and education, from their human right to decide over themselves, including their bodies, reproduction and sexuality, is a global disgrace. It is time to once and for all get rid of structures that discriminate against and belittle people, on whatever grounds.

It is time to fully realise UN Security Council Resolution 1325, granting women their crucial role in peace and state building. It is time to see sexual violence as one of the most destructive weapons of all and to fight it with the full force of the international community.

And new times demand a new mindset. As several leaders of island countries have told me: “We’re not a small island nation, we’re a large ocean state”. To fully grasp the potential of the new world economy, we need to remove old colonial prejudice and false conceptions of large and small, North and South, East and West.

We should welcome and enhance the transformation and expansion of the global economy through free and fair trade, and create a Global Deal for decent work, while also working to free about 160 million child labourers and end modern slavery.

Sweden is taking concrete measures to maintain political support at the highest level for our common Agenda 2030, and we will continue to allocate 1 per cent of GNI to official development assistance. For me, words that are not followed by actions are not worth being spoken.

But the challenges for the international community also show the dire need for a strengthened and reformed UN. Sweden contributes resources, but we also want to contribute reforms. We want to make the UN more effective, transparent and fit-for-purpose. We will work to strengthen cooperation between the UN and regional organisations, not least the African Union.

Dear friends,

In 2017 it will be twenty years since Sweden last took a seat on the Security Council. Over the years, we have stood by those fighting for independence and dignity, and against repression, colonialism, apartheid and inequality. We now seek your confidence to champion the perspective of small and medium-sized states, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council.

We will strive tirelessly for a Council that can respond swiftly to the security challenges of our time; a Council that is more representative, transparent and effective. A reformed Council must reflect the realities of today, with adequate representation of Africa, Asia and Latin America, and we support efforts to limit the use of the veto.

And although we see distress, we also see hope. The agreement on the Iranian nuclear issue was indeed a victory for the idea of diplomacy and shared efforts creating shared progress. Our decision on the new Sustainable Development Goals will, if thoroughly implemented, have the chance to form another landmark in human history. And the upcoming climate summit in Paris will give us the opportunity to act: late,

but hopefully not too late.

Sweden is fully committed to these tasks. We believe that international solidarity is the first and foremost foundation for our shared peace and prosperity. International cooperation is the only way to transform this solidarity into substantial change.

2015 must be the essential milestone for global development and for future generations. So let's create that milestone, serving our nations – serving the world.

Thank you.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Address by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at the Leaders' Summit on Countering ISIL and Violent Extremism

Published 29 September 2015 Updated 29 September 2015

New York, 29 September 2015. Check against delivery.

Mr President, (Prime Minister al Abadi), Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Let me begin by thanking the United States for its leadership in countering ISIL.

The efforts of the Coalition to defeat ISIL must be complemented by solutions to the underlying political problems in Syria and Iraq.

In Syria, the root causes of the civil war and ISIL are political. A durable solution needs to rest on a political settlement. It is crucial that the UN efforts to find a peaceful solution are firmly backed by the international community. Let me be clear: in view of the unspeakable atrocities the Assad regime has committed, it cannot be a partner in the struggle against ISIL.

The immediate humanitarian needs in and around Syria are immense. Sweden is doing its share with 230 million US dollars in humanitarian support, including to Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan. But more is needed. I commend Kuwait for its humanitarian leadership in this regard.

Just as in Syria, Iraq's difficulties can only be overcome by political means. Military and stabilisation efforts in Iraq must be underpinned by an inclusive political process of national reconciliation. Prime Minister al Abadi has taken bold steps in this direction. The international community must support him.

In addition to Sweden's extensive assistance, and military training in northern Iraq, I am pleased to announce today that it is my Government's intention to make a substantial contribution of 4 million US dollars to the UNDP Stabilisation Fund for Iraq. My country's commitment to Iraq is strong - bolstered by the special relation we have with 2% of Sweden's population having roots in Iraq.

We need effective tools to prevent radicalisation. Democracy, human rights and equality are crucial components. Civil society organisations, religious leaders, social workers and teachers are examples of those who can make a difference on the ground. My Government recently adopted a national counter-terrorism strategy, with a special focus on prevention of radicalisation and recruitment.

The widespread and systematic brutality of ISIL and other groups, such as Boko Haram, against women and children is unacceptable. Gender equality is fundamental in preventing violent extremism in the long run. We need to find ways to enhance the role of women in countering violent extremism and terrorism. Sweden is ready to be part of such efforts.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Global Leaders Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment – A Commitment to Action (UN Women)

Published 27 September 2015 Updated 27 September 2015

New York, 27 September 2015. Check against delivery.

Co-chair, Excellencies, friends,

I am proud to lead the world's first Feminist Government, guided by the principle of international solidarity. Today, we all commit to the accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the achievement of gender equality no later than 2030, as set out in our new Agenda.

Gender equality can only be achieved if all social, economic and legal barriers to women's and girls' empowerment are removed. Gender equality is a fundamental matter of human rights – but it is also smart economics. By offering one half of our populations the same opportunities as the other half, we can double the talent pool and unlock enormous potential for prosperity.

And we know that actions do speak louder than words. Therefore, my Government is stepping up its actions to achieve gender equality this year: We will ensure that our national policies and national budget allocations contribute to gender equality. And we will ensure that our development and humanitarian aid is gender-sensitive across all areas of cooperation and support.

Fellow feminists,

The Beijing Platform for Action and the new 2030 Agenda are powerful action plans for equality, development and peace.

In this spirit, Sweden is taking action to strengthen women's contribution to peace and security: We will develop a network of women mediators, which within two years will be ready to assist peace efforts wherever they occur. The aim of this initiative is, however, not only to develop our own capabilities, but more importantly also to cooperate with female mediation networks from the global south.

We know that women's participation at all levels is vital to the success and sustainability of peace processes and peacebuilding efforts. Proactive leadership is needed to promote and include women.

In a world where women are dramatically underrepresented in peace negotiations and four out of ten peace agreements collapse within ten years, we need to act differently. For this generation, and for generations to come.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech at Global Citizen Festival

Published 27 September 2015 Updated 27 September 2015

New York, Central Park, 26 September 2015. Check against delivery.

I'm glad to be here, and proud to represent Sweden and the first feminist government in the world.

In a world where the 80 richest people own as much as half of the global population, we need to be dedicated to the hard work to end poverty, driven by the idea of international solidarity, and determined to achieve equality for all.

And access to sanitation, especially, is crucial for global equality, and for the rights and needs of women and girls.

So as a feminist, I make this pledge: Over the next 15 years, Sweden's 10 million inhabitants will support efforts to improve access to sanitation for 60 million people throughout the world.

Our country may be cold – but our hearts are warm. Our population may be small – but we will do our part for the greater good.

And I would like to thank you all for not being bystanders; thank you for showing that the spirit of citizenship can be global, and thank you for doing your part in the fight for human dignity.

Together, we will make a difference.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

The Prime Minister's speech at the roundtable discussion on economic growth and decent work

Published 26 September 2015 Updated 26 September 2015

New York, 26 September 2015. Check against delivery.

Thank you, co-chair.

I would like to address one crucial precondition for achieving inclusive and sustainable growth, and that is decent work for all, women and men, including for young people and migrant workers.

Decent work is crucial for each individual worker. But ensuring labour rights is very beneficial for responsible employers. Decent work increases productivity, competitiveness and economic stability. It creates a win-win-win situation – for workers, for employers and for societies.

As an example, I can give my own society, where independent and strong social partners have helped build one of the most innovative and equal economies in the world.

This relationship between sustainable development and decent work has been established in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and in the 2030 Agenda.

That's great. But how do we move forward and transform these affirmations into partnerships and policy actions? My answer is: through joint action between governments, trade unions and employer organisations. And to this end, I have proposed the concept of a Global Deal.

For states, the Global Deal concept means ratifying and respecting the ILO's core conventions, including the right to organise, the right to negotiate and

the right to strike, and recognising social dialogue as an essential part of the democratic form of government.

For employers and companies, it means respecting these rights in practice, taking their social responsibility and being prepared to negotiate agreements locally, regionally or globally.

For trade unions, it means cooperating and bearing in mind their social responsibility when they negotiate, but also contributing to the overall development of the company.

This Global Deal concept does not require new institutions. The ILO has a central role in promoting decent work globally. The OECD plays a leading role on the issue of inequality and economic growth. The World Bank, the IMF, the WTO, the B20 Coalition and ITUC can all play important roles as well.

The Global Deal is a concrete approach, a method, which would contribute to reaching SDG 8, also in Sweden. My Government has developed a national action plan for business and human rights, which includes a call for Swedish companies to engage in social dialogue, wherever they are operating in the world. I look forward to discussing the concept of a Global Deal here today.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech at the UN Sustainable Development Summit

Published 26 September 2015 Updated 26 September 2015

New York, 26 September 2015. Check against delivery.

Mr President, Mr Secretary-General, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,

I was a foster child. Ten months old I arrived by train to my new parents in the northern part of Sweden. I had the good fortune to be taken into a loving home and to be brought up in a society where the legacy from the past does not prevent a good future, a society where people take responsibility – not only for themselves but also for others.

The 2030 Agenda carries that same shared responsibility. It is grounded in the firm belief that poverty can and should be eradicated, that climate change can and must be stopped, that equal societies are better societies – and the foundation for a better future for all of us.

We have a new roadmap – it is universal. No country can shirk its responsibility. But governments' efforts alone will not be enough. Efforts are needed at all levels, across all sectors, and by all stakeholders.

That's why Sweden has launched an initiative with 9 world leaders in a high-level support group to bolster momentum for the implementation of the agenda.

The mission ahead of us as a global community is not only morally right, it is also economically smart. Because equality and development are two sides of the same coin.

When we promote gender equality, talent and strength are released.

GDP grows when more women work. Skills are unlocked when all girls and boys go to school.

We cannot afford to hold half of the population back. All legal, social and economic barriers to women's and girls' empowerment must be removed. When we promote decent work for all, competitiveness will increase.

Some say that this is a contradiction in terms. I say it is a win-win-win situation. A win for employees. A win for employers. And a win for our societies. With decent work that respects fundamental labour rights, we can increase both productivity and inclusive growth.

When we develop new solutions to reduce emissions, we will stop climate change and in doing so create new jobs.

My goal is for Sweden to be among the first fossil-free welfare nations, and I want Swedish companies to develop the climate-smart innovations that the world is asking for.

Our development cooperation will help to break the link between development and fossil-fuel dependence. We remain the key donor to the Green Climate Fund. We stay true to the goal of one per cent of our gross national income to ODA.

What we need now is determination and start fulfilling the goals. And in doing so we all gain something more. We return to the true purpose of society: to grant all girls and boys the simple things that I once was granted. A fair chance, an equal education, a decent job – a free life.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfvens address at the launch of the High Level Group on the implementation of the global sustainable goals

Published 26 September 2015 Updated 26 September 2015

New York 25 September 2015. Check against delivery.

Your Majesty, Your Serene Highness, the President of the General Assembly, Mr Mogens Lykketoft, the Deputy Secretary-General, Mr Jan Eliasson, Excellencies, Colleagues, Friends,

It is a great pleasure to have you all here this evening.

If there is one thing I've learned in life – from working on a factory floor, in unions in Sweden and internationally, and in politics – it is this:

People might not have the same values, the same ideology or the same outlook on life. But if they are willing to listen to each other, they almost always find that they share common goals.

And if they decide to work together towards those goals, side by side, they can achieve almost anything.

I believe that this summit expresses precisely this idea.

But, our actions will speak louder than words.

We need high-level political leadership to ensure that we keep up the momentum when this meeting is over.

This is why I have asked the leaders of eight other countries to join me in a political initiative for effective implementation.

Together, we will pledge to actively support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and we will encourage other world leaders to do the same.

We come from different backgrounds and we have different views on many things.

But we have come together, our goals are set, and we are determined to work side by side to achieve them.

As Nelson Mandela said: “It always seems impossible until it’s done”.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Statement of Government Policy

15 September 2015

Published 15 September 2015 Updated 15 September 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, The Riksdag, 15 September 2015

Your Majesties, Your Royal Highnesses,

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of the Riksdag,

What should our blue and yellow flag symbolise?

In the face of increasing polarisation and widening unease, we need to rally around what kind of Sweden we want to be.

What do we want to tell our children and grandchildren about the society they are growing up in?

What do we want to say when we are abroad and are asked about our country?

What do we want Sweden to stand for?

I believe in a Sweden that we build together, that is more than just a gathering of people in a geographic area – a community where we feel responsible for each other.

Where people's engagement and desire to work is what makes our society strong. Where we welcome people fleeing from war and oppression.

Where no one is left behind and no one is held back.

An open Sweden, where we strive to have the most advanced high-tech

companies, world-leading cutting-edge research and environmental technologies, as well as to be the most gender equal and egalitarian country in the world.

Because a cohesive and solidarity-based society is a prerequisite for a rich and prosperous country.

Sweden should be a country busy at work. Investments are now being made in new housing and infrastructure, in entrepreneurship and in educating and training people for employment. This is what will drive down unemployment.

The significant needs of Swedish schools are now being met through investment in the teaching profession, more staff, smaller classes and an equitable education system. This is how learning outcomes can be improved.

Climate change adaptation is now being accelerated because it is essential for the future of the planet and because it enhances our competitiveness and quality of life. This is how we are taking the lead on climate action.

This is our common project for the future.

This is how we are building a Sweden to be proud of.

Over the last parliamentary year, the parties in the Riksdag have entered into a number of important agreements. We now have broad consensus on the budget process, defence, arms exports, school grades, press subsidies, home loan amortisation requirements, military operations in Mali and Iraq, and ongoing effective collaboration on the pension system. This is a strength for our country. The cooperation Government would like to thank all those who have played a constructive role in these agreements.

Mr Speaker,

The security situation in our part of the world has deteriorated.

Russian aggression and the destabilisation of Ukraine pose the most serious challenge to the European security order since the end of the Cold War. Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea is a violation of international law. Borders must not be changed by force. Our support to Ukraine, both political and economic, will continue.

A modern total defence is being developed to respond to the challenges presented by the changing security policy situation. The cross-party agreement lays the foundation for the future direction of defence. Defence appropriations will be increased. Sweden's military capability will steadily increase. At the same time, our international cooperation is deepening. Swedish-Finnish cooperation is of particular priority. Sweden's non-participation in military alliances continues to serve our country well.

A broad initiative is under way to shape a policy for Sweden's security. The threats to our security are evolving and complex. Contemporary threats include terrorism, cyber vulnerability, epidemics and climate change. A number of parties are invited to take part in this work.

Sweden's candidacy for the UN Security Council is a concrete expression of the Government's desire to take on greater responsibility for peace and security. Sweden will promote active conflict prevention and early responses. Efforts to end ongoing wars and conflicts must be intensified. To achieve a two-state solution between Israel and Palestine, direct negotiations must begin.

Humanitarian operations must also be reinforced and made more effective. Sweden continues to be one of the world's largest humanitarian donors. We must be a strong voice in the world for freedom, peace, human rights and solidarity.

The war in Syria continues to cause immense human suffering. The Government condemns the Assad regime's far-reaching attacks against civilians and the barbaric acts committed by ISIL. The systematic violence perpetrated against women and children is particularly horrifying. More than 250 000 people have lost their lives. To reach a political solution, more pressure must be brought to bear on the Assad regime and the states that support it.

Sweden wants the EU to focus on playing a greater and more active role, in dialogue with countries in the region, and to constructively support the UN Special Envoy for Syria. Sweden wants to see an international contact group formed, comprising the United States, Russia, regional partners and the EU, to support UN efforts. And time is of the essence. The Security Council and its major powers must shoulder responsibility if this blood bath is to end.

Millions of people are fleeing from the war. More countries must do more to offer people protection. Sweden is increasing its support to the UNHCR relief operations on the ground. Rescue operations in the Mediterranean continue. Legal routes for people to seek asylum must be available.

Sweden stands up for the right of asylum. In times of crisis, this is more important than ever. Those fleeing war and oppression must be able to obtain protection in Sweden. Those without grounds for remaining must leave. Immigration in Sweden is regulated.

Responsibility for asylum seekers must be shared. In the EU, between the EU Member States. No country must be allowed to shirk its responsibility. And in Sweden, between the municipalities. No municipality must be allowed to shirk its responsibility.

Many people today are making important contributions. Teachers who are doing their utmost to give children a new start in Sweden. Football and bandy coaches who welcome new players to join the team. Volunteers who are helping with homework. This is how today's newly arrived people, just like those who once fled the dictatorship in Chile or the war in the Balkans, can more quickly become a part of our community and help to build Sweden. These are contributions that the Government applauds.

I will be convening a national action, 'Sweden together', to ensure more effective introduction. Municipalities, regions, civil society, the sports movement, religious communities, authorities, the business community, trade unions and others will be invited to develop the best solutions for successful Swedish reception.

The situation in many municipalities is strained. A major initiative is therefore being taken to ensure swifter introduction. Municipalities will be given increased resources to improve the teaching of Swedish for adults and education for children and young people. Central government compensation for reception of newly arrived immigrants will be significantly increased. Compensation for unaccompanied children and young people will be adjusted to make it more predictable and cost-effective.

All adults coming to Sweden must be able to find work and do their share. Swedish language instruction will begin at asylum centres. More will be invested in validation to more quickly identify people's skills. A fast track to the labour market is being developed.

This will enable people who have fled war and persecution to start a new life. This will make Sweden better prepared for demographic change. This will transform present-day challenges into an asset for Sweden.

Anna Lindh once reminded us of why the EU was originally created:

"Through economic cooperation and casual interaction, states that for generations had fought against each other were to prevent armed conflict in Europe. War is unlikely between countries that are interdependent – economically, socially and politically."

The refugee crisis, the economic crisis in Greece and the upcoming referendum in the UK pose a range of challenges to the European Union. Sweden is working for a strong and cohesive Europe that creates more jobs, increases gender equality and adopts an ambitious climate policy. Equal pay for work of equal value in accordance with laws and agreements in the country of employment is a principle that must apply throughout the EU. As a result of a Swedish initiative, several countries are now pushing to ensure that freedom of movement cannot be used to circumvent national laws and collective agreements. This is how a citizens' Europe can be created – a Europe that shows its worth in everyday life.

Mr Speaker,

Hard work lies ahead of us.

For several years, Sweden's productivity and competitiveness have fallen. The deficits in central government finances have grown. Unemployment has risen. Gaps have widened. School performance has declined. Environmental efforts have been accorded lower priority.

But efforts to reverse these trends have now begun. Our goals are ambitious. Employment and hours worked will increase to make Sweden's unemployment rate the lowest in the EU by 2020.

Responsible economic policy is the foundation. Keeping public finances in good order is a prerequisite for more jobs and sustainable welfare financing. Short-term tax cuts must take a back seat to long-term investments. The deficits will be tackled.

Step by step, the employment target will be achieved through Sweden's new

job agenda. The agenda has three parts.

The first consists of future investments.

A major housing policy initiative will be carried out.

Investment support targeting small and energy-efficient apartments will be introduced. A special stimulus will be introduced for rapid construction of more student housing. A construction bonus will be given to municipalities where new housing is built.

Railway and road maintenance will be increased throughout the country, from north to south.

Infrastructure investments leading to more housing, better freight transport and reliable commuting will be given priority. Investments will increase by more than 40 per cent by 2019.

Sweden will be one of the world's leading research countries.

During the year, a new research bill with a ten-year perspective will be prepared.

Climate adaptation will accelerate.

Environment and climate technology investments to strengthen companies' innovative capacity will be expanded. The 'Climate leap' investment support will target actions that have the greatest effect on climate emissions.

The second part of Sweden's new job agenda is an active business policy for more and growing companies.

A reindustrialisation strategy will be drawn up.

Industry-related research will be developed. Sweden will become a more attractive country for investments in modern industrial enterprise.

Government venture capital will be reformed to support innovative companies throughout the country.

Companies in start-up and growth phases of development will be given priority. The National Innovation Council has so far identified three collaborative programmes in life sciences, environmental and climate

technology, and digitisation.

A modern business policy will create jobs throughout the country.

The forest – ‘green gold’ – will contribute to more jobs and be used sustainably. Work on a national forestry programme will continue. Sweden’s potential as a destination for ecotourism and nature-based tourism will be used to advantage. A food strategy will be drawn up to increase production throughout the food chain and meet the demand for organic food. A regional reform will be prepared. Major investments will be made in broadband expansion. Support to basic commercial services in rural areas will be increased.

An export drive will be launched.

Exports will be facilitated for small and medium-sized enterprises. Sweden’s presence in growth markets will be strengthened. A coordination function, Team Sweden, will streamline and strengthen the State’s export promotion. An export strategy will be presented during the year.

Free and fair world trade will be promoted.

Negotiations between the EU and the US on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) will continue. The most ambitious outcome possible must be achieved, without jeopardising workers’ interests, environmental protection, or human and animal health. The agreement must respect democratic decisions.

The third part of Sweden’s new job agenda involves investments in job matching and skills.

There are 375 000 unemployed people in Sweden. At the same time, there are more than 80 000 vacant positions.

This is an enormous waste. Efforts to improve job matching and make use of all skills will now begin. No one’s desire to gain an education, improve their skills or progress in their career should be squandered.

A new adult education initiative will be launched, offering 50 000 new educational opportunities in 2016. More people will be given access to vocational higher education, folk high schools, higher education, and municipal vocational and adult education. In 2017, all adults will have the right to municipal adult education to complete upper secondary school and

qualify for higher education studies.

No young person should be condemned to long-term unemployment.

Young people should study or work. Sweden's municipalities are now set to provide young people under the age of 25 with education, work or work experience within 90 days. Trainee jobs and education contracts will be expanded.

Phase 3 will be wound down.

Labour market policy should not lead people into an occupational dead end. 'Extra jobs' will be introduced. Long-term unemployed people will be given the opportunity to study while retaining activity support.

Procurement must be used strategically.

It should be a requirement that long-term unemployed people be given a job or work experience. The Swedish Transport Administration is the first government agency to be given this task.

Participation and employment opportunities should be available to everyone, regardless of functional capacity.

Subsidised wages will be expanded. New jobs at Samhall will be opened up. Support to disability interest groups will be increased.

Through Sweden's new job agenda, the Government will invest in housing, infrastructure, research and climate. Cooperation will increase for more and growing companies. Steps will be taken to ensure effective labour market matching in Sweden. Everyone can – and must – contribute their strengths.

In a Sweden to be proud of, everyone who is able to work will do so.

Mr Speaker,

Many of us remember a special teacher.

A teacher who explained things that were hard to understand and challenged you when you were ready.

A teacher who expected great things of you and helped you achieve them.

A teacher who noticed you.

Teachers are key to reversing the trend in schools. But they cannot do it on their own. It will require hard work – from us as a society, and from all pupils and parents. The Government will focus on three areas: boosting learning outcomes, increasing equity and enhancing the attractiveness of the teaching profession.

Early action will be given priority.

Preschool groups will be made smaller. More staff will be employed in compulsory school to give teachers more time for pupils and to make primary school classes smaller. After-school care will be strengthened. More special needs teachers will be employed. A school development project will be developed to give teachers basic special needs tools. This is important, not least for children with neuropsychiatric impairment. A reading-writing-arithmetic guarantee for the early years will be drawn up.

Resources to schools will be allocated according to need.

Homework support and holiday school will be given to those who need it – not just those who can pay for it. Special initiatives will be undertaken in schools where conditions are difficult. Resources will be increased to municipalities that receive children seeking asylum. Head teachers will be bolstered in their role as educational leaders.

The quality of teacher training will be improved.

SEK 3 billion will be provided on an annual basis to increase teacher salaries. The national action for the teaching profession will continue. Digitisation of national tests and fewer administrative duties will give teachers more time for pupils.

Mental ill health will be combated.

No one should have to suffer discrimination, bullying, or other abusive treatment. This applies both at school and on the internet. Pupils must feel well to perform well. Racism and sexism must be combated. School health and welfare services will be augmented. Swedish schools must be safe and secure.

In a Sweden to be proud of, every child will flourish.

Mr Speaker,

More than 1.1 million square kilometres of Arctic sea ice have vanished. This is equivalent to the combined area of Sweden, Finland and Norway. Climate change is upon us. It is serious and it affects everyone – those of us living now and future generations.

Climate change can be curbed if we want to do so. Global warming must be kept as far below two degrees as possible. The threat of climate change is the critical issue of our time. Global greenhouse gas emissions must be halved by 2050.

The Government wants to take a climate leap that accelerates the transition to a more sustainable society.

By taking responsibility for our climate impact in Sweden, we will demonstrate leadership in the global arena. Investing in climate change adaptation will create new Swedish jobs.

Sweden will become one of the world's first fossil-free welfare countries. Emissions will be reduced at the rate necessary for globally sustainable development. The transition must be effective and provide long-term rules. Trains should be faster than cars and cheaper than air travel. A climate policy framework will be prepared.

Climate efforts require global leadership.

"We are the first generation that can put an end to poverty. And the last that can put an end to climate change."

These are the words of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. World leaders will meet in Paris at the end of the year to adopt a new climate agreement. Sweden is pushing for the most ambitious agreement possible. Development cooperation must contribute to a transition from fossil-dependent economies. At the same time, poor countries' resilience must be supported through climate change adaptation. Sweden will continue to be one of the main donors to the UN Green Climate Fund.

Sweden will also take a leading role in implementing the new UN Sustainable Development Goals. Poverty reduction, environmental and climate action, and peacebuilding go hand-in-hand. Sweden will lead the way with a coherent policy that takes into account the perspective of poor people, human rights and planetary boundaries. Work to meet the new Sustainable

Development Goals in Sweden will commence.

Sweden will have a fossil-free vehicle fleet.

Conditions for green cars will improve. New support will be introduced for electric buses. Investments in charging infrastructure and biogas will be enabled. The super green car rebate will be strengthened. The effect of environmental taxes will increase. New public transport will be enabled through urban environment agreements. Initiatives will be introduced to encourage more people to cycle.

The energy transition will continue and climate-smart housing will be encouraged. Cross-party cooperation in the Commission on Energy is crucial to creating a long-term energy policy.

Investments for 100 per cent renewable energy will lead the way. Ambitions will be raised. This will create impetus for technological development, economic development and jobs throughout Sweden. Electricity certificate system goals will be raised. Support to marine-based wind power will continue. The million home programmes will be upgraded and made energy-efficient.

Sweden will lead the way in environment action. The planetary boundaries must be respected. The environmental objectives must be met. Biodiversity, a toxin-free everyday environment and a healthy marine environment will be priorities.

The bar will be raised for biodiversity and ecosystem services. Initiatives for the protection and management of valuable natural habitats will increase. More natural forests will be protected. More marine reserves will be established. Opportunities for people to engage in outdoor activities and spend time in nature will improve. The appropriation for outdoor activity organisations will be increased.

Children should grow up in an environment free from toxic substances. The precautionary principle, the substitution of hazardous substances and the polluter pays principle are the basic premises. Phasing out chemicals that are harmful to people and the environment creates incentives for better alternatives. When EU regulatory frameworks are insufficient, Sweden will lead the way.

The foundation will be laid for a circular, bio-based economy that

contributes to the achievement of the environmental objectives. What is waste today will become a resource, inspiring new business opportunities. Hazardous toxins will be phased out of ecocycles. Materials will be reused to a greater extent.

The Government's Future Groups will provide long-term idea and policy development, combining competitiveness and job creation with ecological sustainability and social development.

In a Sweden to be proud of, we will take climate responsibility for future generations.

Mr Speaker,

Honourable Members of this assembly,

Do you know the story of Bridget? That fantastic picture book by Pija Lindenbaum about the girl who gets lost in the woods and comes across a pack of grey wolves? It is a tale about a little girl who finds great courage.

Few things are as important or as simple as reading to children. It can open up whole new worlds. The role of the school library in fostering young people's ability and desire to read will be promoted. Resources will be provided to increase staffing in school libraries.

Society is reflected in its arts and culture, which offer us a deeper understanding of ourselves and the age in which we live. Arts and culture should be available to people in their neighbourhood. Children's artistic creativity will be given priority. Free admission to state museums will be introduced. Resources will be given to cinemas in rural areas.

Additional resources will be injected into the sports movement to provide greater opportunity to engage in sport. Special measures will be taken to strengthen the sports movement's role in the introduction of new arrivals.

The Sami have special status as Sweden's indigenous people. The Government intends to increase Sami influence and participation, and will reinforce the role of the Sami Parliament.

Sweden must be a secure country in which we stand united. The insecurity and barriers caused by violence, hatred and crime must be forcefully

combated.

The fight against serious organised crime is intensifying.

Swedish Customs has been instructed to give priority to combating arms smuggling. Attempt, preparation or conspiracy to commit gross firearms offences will be criminalised. Targeted initiatives will be carried out in the most affected areas. The local police presence will increase. Recruitment to criminal gangs will be reduced through preventive measures. Defector support will be reinforced.

Preventive action to combat domestic violence will be strengthened.

Government grants for activities supporting victims of violence will be increased. Sexual offences legislation will be reviewed to strengthen the position of crime victims in the legal process.

Terrorism will be prevented, thwarted and preempted.

Travel to participate in terrorist wars will be criminalised. Passport abuse will be stopped. More effective tools will be put in the hands of law enforcement authorities. New resources will be injected into the Swedish Security Service. Collaboration will be enhanced between the police, customs and coast guard. Civil society preparedness must increase to meet new security threats.

When prejudices spread and hatred grows, when refugee centres are attacked, when Roma are assaulted and camps set on fire, when Jews, Muslims and Christians are attacked for their faith, and when LGBTQ people are met with hatred – this is when we must stand up for the equal rights and dignity of all people. The battle for democracy must be won and won anew. Each one of us shares this responsibility in everyday life.

A national plan to combat racism and hate crime will be drawn up. Preventive action to counter violent extremism will intensify. A national research programme on racism will be set up. Information security will be enhanced, and work to combat internet-based crime, abuse and threats will be intensified.

In Sweden, everyone must have the right to be exactly who they are. This must be a place that is safe for everyone, regardless of gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual

orientation or age.

Europe cannot accept anti-Roma sentiment. It is the responsibility of each Member State to ensure that its citizens are not discriminated against and to safeguard their social rights. Charity is not the way out of poverty. No one should have to beg on the streets. The solution is education and jobs.

An agreement to promote job opportunities and social security in the country of origin has been concluded with Romania. Talks with Bulgaria are under way to achieve the same goal. Law and order in Sweden will be upheld. Illegal settlements on public or private land will not be permitted. Hate crime must never be accepted.

Mr Speaker,

The gaps in Swedish society today are too large.

There is a five-year difference in life expectancy between those with relatively limited education and those with higher education. Elderly people are at risk in understaffed elderly care. This is not how our country should be. Insecurity and gaps are holding Sweden back.

The universal welfare system is unsurpassed at levelling out living conditions and creating security. Cutbacks will now be replaced with new investments. Our public funds must be used for their intended purposes. Staff knowledge and skills must be utilised. Let the professionals be professionals.

A commission for equitable health has been appointed.

People's health must not be determined by their socioeconomic status. The goal is to end avoidable health inequalities within a generation.

More resources will be injected into health care to ensure higher quality.

Initiatives will be implemented to improve cancer care. Mammography screening will be free. Maternity care will be improved. Resources will be provided to reduce mental ill health in young people. A women's health initiative will be launched.

The financial position of pensioners will be improved.

Tax on pensions will be reduced as a step towards equalising the taxation of pensions and wages. The tax gap will be closed entirely for pensioners with the lowest incomes. The housing supplement has been raised. Investment support for more housing for older people will be introduced. Staffing in elderly care will be increased. Work on a national quality plan will be launched.

Gender mainstreaming of all our policies is under way.

Women and men must have equal power to shape society and their own lives. The world's first feminist government is now implementing policies that increase equality between men and women.

Family policy will be strengthened so that all children are given equal opportunities in life.

The basic level of parental insurance will be raised. A modern parental insurance system will be designed that is adapted to today's labour market and serves the diversity of family forms, including non-nuclear families. A third month will be reserved for each parent.

An initiative will be launched to improve social care services for children and young people.

Society's protection of its most vulnerable is provided by a network of people, often social workers, who have long laboured in obscurity.

Fraud in welfare systems will be combated.

Work will begin to tackle the abuse of personal assistance services and subsidised employment. The welfare system must be protected from economic crime. A new anti-fraud delegation will be appointed. 19

A powerful package of measures will be drawn up to curb the rise in sickness absence rates.

No one's work should make them sick. A new work environment strategy will be presented. The maximum time limit for sickness insurance will be removed. Sickness insurance must lead people back to work, not into poverty.

Unemployment insurance will be improved.

The ceiling has been raised. Work is being initiated to ensure that more people are able to qualify and sign up for such insurance. A legislative proposal will be presented to stop the abuse of fixed-term employment contracts. Financial security leads to people having a positive outlook on change in the workplace. This is good for both the individual and for Sweden's businesses.

Mr Speaker,

We have begun our journey towards a society that stands united and where people are there for each other.

Step by step we are laying the foundation for a Sweden where more jobs are created and unemployment declines. No one will be left behind. Nor will anyone be held back. Because a society based on solidarity is also a successful society.

Step by step we are creating a school system in which our children are learning more. Each child is being challenged and is receiving the support they need. Because we know that an equitable school system leads to better learning outcomes.

Step by step we are raising our ambitions in climate policy. Because there is no other way forward if we are to curb climate change. And we know that this will prepare Sweden for the future.

This is what our blue and yellow flag should symbolise.

Together we are creating a Sweden to be even more proud of.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at World Water Week

Published 24 August 2015 Updated 24 August 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Folkets hus in Stockholm Check against delivery.

President Loeak, Prime Minister Ensour, Ministers, Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour for me to deliver the opening remarks at the 25th anniversary of the World Water Week. The impressive programme reflects the accomplishments that you have made.

I am always proud to welcome international guests to Stockholm: Beauty on Water, the Venice of the North. One third of the city is water. And the water is so clean that you can catch fresh fish in the middle of the city, just a few minutes' walk from here.

But it has not always been like this.

150 years ago not everyone had access to clean water. The surrounding lakes were polluted by waste and emissions from the local industries. People had to walk a long way to get clean water.

In 1927, an annual swimming contest, Riddarfjärdsimningen, had to be cancelled because the water was so polluted that it was a health hazard.

Let me mention a few milestones:

- In 1850, after a cholera epidemic, Stockholm started to build water pipes to improve hygiene.
- In 1861 Stockholm inaugurated the first water plant.

- In 1930 the first water treatment plant was built and from then on water – and life in the city – improved.

Because development goes hand-in-hand with access to clean water.

The story of Stockholm's water tells us several things: that water is key to development and health, that new technologies and innovations for water management have created jobs and growth. And it will continue to do so because of the growing demand for water but also for new smart solutions.

The most important lesson is that better living conditions, city life, industries, public transport, and a growing population need not result in water pollution.

Today, in Stockholm, we have safe, and excellent tap water. And we can take a swim in Riddarfjärden.

Even so, our job is not finished. We face new challenges in Sweden, such as emerging pollutants, pharmaceuticals and chemicals and the effects of climate change with heavy rainfalls and floods.

Water management remains a fundamental part of a modern society.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am fully aware that not all cities and countries have the water resources that Sweden has.

In ten years' time one third of the world's population will be living under water stressed conditions. With the world population projected to grow from 7 to 9 billion, the need for fresh water will increase by more than 50 percent.

These facts have led the World Economic Forum to place water crisis among the biggest threats that could impact our societies the most.

So, now when the international community is shaping a new sustainable development agenda, water management and allocation must be at its heart not only as a separate goal, but as an essential vehicle for development and health.

Ladies and Gentlemen Let me outline three major challenges ahead.

Firstly, water scarcity risks holding back development and economic growth.

The rapidly growing demand for water, especially in non-OECD countries, will put even more pressure on water supplies. Demands for water for

different purposes, such as food production, basic sanitation, and industrial and energy production must be made compatible with sustainable development and growth.

Part of the solution can be found in more effective management and new technologies.

Many innovations already exist but they do not reach developing and emerging countries. So we must support the best innovators, entrepreneurs, businesses, students, and organizations that can help solve the global water challenge. And we must make sure that new technologies also benefit the poor.

Secondly, the number of people without access to clean, fresh water is likely to increase.

The world achieved the millennium development goal for water five years ahead of schedule. Since 1990, more than 2 billion people have gained access to improved water and sanitation. That is encouraging and inspiring. At the same time, increased competition for fresh water risks hitting the poor and vulnerable hardest.

Official development assistance has an important role to play in minimising that risk. This is why Sweden's development cooperation has a special focus on access to sustainable water and sanitation solutions for people living in poverty.

Another priority is women and children. In many societies, women and girls are traditionally responsible for domestic water supply and sanitation. They are more seriously affected by lack of access to water and inadequate sanitation and hygiene conditions.

Thirdly, when competition for water increases, so does the risk of conflict and war.

Numerous conflicts around the world have been triggered by degraded access to water. Disputes over water systems increase the potential risk of social tension, political instability and intensified refugee flows.

There is a clear need for a transboundary approach to peace, conflict and regional development.

Ladies and gentlemen, Climate change is no longer about the future. People

and countries are already feeling the impacts.

The low-lying shores of the Marshall Islands are already severely affected. President Loeak, I share your quest for a global, fair and legally binding agreement that keeps global warming as far below 2°C as possible.

Water is one of the resources most severely affected by climate change.

You all know the consequences. It will increase rainfall, change sea levels, reduce the reliability of monsoons, prolong drought in semi-arid areas and reduce water storage in snow and ice.

A strong deal at the climate change conference in Paris is crucial for a stable and predictable global water system.

No country or society can escape the impact of climate change, but the poorest and most vulnerable will suffer the most. I hope that we can all join forces to make the Paris outcome as strong as possible.

We need to use all available tools: trade, investments, exchange of ideas and knowledge, cooperation with businesses, civil society, between governments and with the international community.

This interaction between science, business and politics is the key new solutions and innovations and making them available around the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen, We are all different in many ways, but we have one thing in common: We cannot live without water. Sweden remains committed to ensuring availability and sustainable management of water for all.

I wish you all a successful conference.

Thank you.



Speech

ODA – still a crucial source in financing for development

Published 15 July 2015 Updated 15 July 2015

The Third International Conference on Financing for Development Addis Abeba, Ethiopia, 13-15 July 2015
Check against delivery.

Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates,

It is a great honour to welcome you to this event on the importance of official development assistance, ODA, as a crucial source of financing for sustainable development.

To be sure, ODA is one of many financial resources needed to implement the sustainable development goals.

However, when it comes to the alleviation of poverty and sustainable development, ODA is and will remain a particularly important and strategic instrument. It is a unique source of financing.

ODA can be used in a catalytic manner to mobilise further resources for development and improve impacts, strengthening the ability of governments to attract and administrate other financial flows.

It can help to create an enabling environment for the private sector and attract long-term sustainable investments.

It is also a key to ensuring a clear poverty focus for investments and enhancing the ability of poor people to take a more active role in changing their lives and benefiting from economic development.

The new universal development agenda requires that we all take our

responsibility.

Sweden will continue to dedicate 1 per cent of its gross national income to ODA.

And we believe that existing commitments on ODA, including the UN target, should be reaffirmed and honoured in practice. We must reverse the declining trend of ODA to help stamp out poverty.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development: Global Partnerships for a Transformative Agenda for the Least Developed Countries

Published 15 July 2015 Updated 15 July 2015

The Third International Conference on Financing for Development, Addis Abeba, Ethiopia, 13-15 July 2015.
Check against delivery.

Mr President of Benin,
Mr Prime Minister of Ethiopia,
Honourable Ministers,
Distinguished Delegates,

It is a great honour to co-sponsor this LDC high-level event.

We appreciate the unique character of the LDC group, representing a broad spectrum of countries in special situations which require sustained engagement.

The world is changing dramatically, and fast.

There is good news – the world's middle class is growing. Extreme poverty has been reduced by half. More children than ever before are in school. Maternal mortality has been reduced. More people have access to safe water.

But there is also bad news. There are more conflicts and war in the world than in a long time. Inequality is rising, both within and between countries.

Wealth is increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few. The world's richest 80 people own assets worth as much as is owned by half of humanity.

Closing the gap is of overriding importance today.

Social division costs lives, it creates wars and forces people to flee their homes. Social division also weakens growth, it hampers creativity and innovation.

I know, you know, today even economists know: equal societies perform better.

There are so many reasons to strive for equality, both nationally and globally. A special focus must be on those in the greatest need.

Because it is the morally right thing to do, but also because it is the economically smart thing to do.

When formulating the new goals for sustainable development, we would do well to put a strong focus on the challenges that the countries in the LDC group are facing.

Experience has shown that the Millennium Development Goals failed to secure sufficient support for the poorest and most vulnerable countries.

Let us not repeat this failure.

Sweden's development cooperation is well attuned to the challenges that the poorest and most vulnerable countries are facing. We allocate 1 per cent of GNI to ODA, and well above 0.20 per cent of our GNI to LDCs.

This conference should deliver a compelling package of commitments to support LDCs.

It should include increased ODA for LDCs, with an ambitious timeline, and it should include commitments and measures in areas such as trade, infrastructure, resource mobilisation and, not least, the building of accountable and effective institutions.

Let us use the commitments in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as a basis

for further action.

True, we need partnerships. But most of all, we need a commitment, political and financial, to support those countries – the LDCs – who need it most.

That is the solidarity which, at the end of the day, must underpin our global efforts to root out poverty and craft a sustainable future for all.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech

Financing for gender equality – results and good practices

Published 15 July 2015 Updated 15 July 2015

Mr Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr President of the World Bank Group, Madame Executive Director of UN Women,

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

I wish to thank UN Women and the World Bank Group for organising this important event.

I am honoured to reflect, with you, on how we can enhance one of the smartest development investments of all: the investment in gender equality.

And I am impatient. There is no time for complacency. Because we have to be honest: gender equality is still a distant goal.

However, fortunately for us feminists, 2015 is a year of political opportunities. A year in which we can close the gap between talking and doing.

We have celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. A universal stock-taking exercise that injected energy into our mission.

Here and now in Addis, and later in New York, we have a chance to set the world firmly on course towards actually achieving gender equality. And we cannot afford to waste that opportunity.

The first requisite for action is to understand why investing in gender equality is so smart.

In Sweden, if women had the same employment rate as men and worked as many hours, GDP would increase by 12 per cent. Similar or even higher rates could be achieved in most countries if work was gender equal.

Gender equality is not only morally right. It is also an extremely potent development and growth booster.

So what should we do? A good starting point is the draft Action Plan we are discussing here and now.

The Plan's philosophy is that, first of all, we must level the playing field. We must stop the political, economic and legal discrimination against women and girls.

Because if we fail, financial flows and opportunities will continue to be structurally tilted to favour men and boys.

Women's rights are human rights, and human rights are women's rights.

Being safe is a human right – and an essential element of an enabling environment for women's economic empowerment. All forms of violence affecting women and girls must be stopped.

Gender-based violence is a huge – and universal – development obstacle. A man-made, fully reversible obstacle.

Another element of an enabling environment is women's equal rights to economic and productive resources, including property, credit and other financial services. Governments must ensure that women enjoy equal rights in this area.

My background is in the male-dominated manufacturing sector. I have seen first-hand how businesses improve through the equal participation of women in the workforce, workplace and in decision-making.

In Sweden and Europe we have not completed –sometimes not even initiated – the reforms we need to achieve gender-equal work.

Women still work part-time more than men. They earn less. And they still do most of the unpaid work at home.

To increase the participation of women in the labour market, we therefore need social reforms. Paid parental leave. Family welfare, for children and the

elderly. And training and education.

Indeed, education deserves particular emphasis.

Because the gender differences in education between girls and boys, women and men, are particularly large and a particular obstacle to development.

But also because hardly any investment yields higher returns than ensuring the right of girls to attend school. Investing in the education of girls is self-evidently beneficial – a low-hanging fruit for any government dedicated to development.

The investment level also mirrors the commitment of a country to actually achieve gender equality. Where are you putting the resources?

Friends,

Gender-responsive budgeting is the next frontier. It is how we move from words to deeds as we empower women and girls.

It is a highly rewarding gender mainstreaming enterprise. To ask ourselves – how does this particular allocation contribute to gender equality?

The Swedish Government has started to systematically pose this question, as we plan, budget and implement all political reforms.

True, we dedicate specific resources to specific gender equality actions.

But it is through the integration of a gender perspective across all sectors that we can correct structurally gender-skewed public spending and services.

I challenge all actors involved in sustainable development to practice gender-responsive budgeting: fellow governments, the UN system, the World Bank Group, civil society, academia, business and everyone else.

This is a joint challenge and opportunity. And I believe our efforts in this area could advance faster.

We could be more precise and more bold. Be more impatient – with ourselves.

Why? Because it is we, here and now, who must show leadership. Act as we

preach.

Make sure that we invest in gender equality. That we direct our resources to empower women and girls, to the benefit of all.

As Nobel Laureate Malala Yousafzai said: “We cannot succeed if half of us are held back”.

Thank you.



Speech

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development

Published 13 July 2015 Updated 13 July 2015

The Third International Conference on Financing for Development, Addis Abeba, Ethiopia, 13-15 July 2015
Check against delivery.

Mr Secretary-General, Honourable Heads of State and Government,
Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates,

There was plenty of scepticism when we set the Millennium Development Goals. But for the last 15 years they have been the blueprint for the global community. They have helped us to pool our efforts. They have helped us to focus. And they have spurred progress.

On fighting AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis. Getting more children than ever before to school. Reducing maternal mortality rates. Giving more people access to safe water. And of course, more than halving poverty among the developing countries as a whole.

Goals matter.

So let's set strong new sustainable development goals. Let's spur progress again. Let's seize the opportunities in front of us.

With the summits in Addis Ababa, New York and Paris, 2015 is an unprecedented opportunity to set the world on the right path towards a sustainable future.

With the new goals, we will add important new aspects of development. We must combine economic development, social inclusion and environmental sustainability.

This is the path to fairness in the world, to security and prosperity for all.

In the long run it's not just a matter of giving and receiving – traditional official development assistance. It's also a matter of working together in partnership to achieve good things, through trade, investments, exchanges of ideas and knowledge, through cooperation with business and civil society, between governments and in the international community.

I would like to underscore the multi-stakeholder character of our endeavour, including the valuable participation and contribution of civil society.

Because this interaction between science, business, society and politics will give birth to new solutions, innovations, and will carry them out in the world.

We know much of what needs to be done. So it's time to close the gap between knowledge and action and bring all good forces together to create a globalisation that works for all.

In doing so, I think we should have three priorities that are key for a successful development agenda.

First, we need to increase legitimate financial flows and curb illicit flows.

Financing for development is, ultimately, about believing in each other. Investing in each other. For that, we need more financial resources.

National tax revenues are the basis for common welfare and for poverty reduction. Huge amounts of money are lost today in tax evasion and capital flight – money that could be used to build societies.

That's why we need to fight illicit financial flows and create an enabling environment with well-functioning and accountable institutions. A particular focus on how to increase overall financial flows to the least developed countries is essential.

ODA is not the answer to how to finance the new development agenda. But that is no excuse for failing to respect the UN target on ODA. There is still an urgent need for substantial, effective and predictable ODA, especially in the least developed countries.

It is important that the Addis Ababa Action Agenda underlines the continued need for and unique role of ODA. I can assure you that Sweden will continue to allocate 1 per cent of our gross national income to ODA every year. We urge others to also set targets and timelines, and fulfil their promises.

Second, we need to understand that women are key to sustainable growth.

Evidence shows that ensuring women equal opportunities helps build societies, democracies and economies.

Investing in women and girls reduces poverty. Women spend 90 per cent of their income on the family's health and education. Men spend 30 to 40 per cent.

Gender equality also improves growth. In Sweden GDP would increase by 12 per cent if women had the same employment rate as men and worked as many hours.

Therefore, empowerment of women and girls should be an integral part of all development goals and of the agreement on financing for development. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda must provide a strong basis for action.

Because gender equality is as financially smart as it is morally right. Just like social equality.

Third, we should take steps towards a new green economy.

We should integrate sustainability in all its aspects in all development finance. Create incentives and mechanisms to direct financial flows into sustainable energy and infrastructure. Introduce a high and fair price for carbon dioxide.

And we need to pull together, to create a sustainable way of living, eating and working so that our children and grandchildren can have a safe planet with equal opportunities for a good life.

Sweden is willing to do its part, promoting green growth and supporting the establishment of a new green economy at a global level too.

But each and every one of us is needed, to understand, act, and never rest in our work for sustainable societies, and with that, a sustainable world.

Excellencies,

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda is not the end of a process. It is the beginning.

Now is when the hard work starts, turning the commitments into real change. It will require action at all levels – national, regional and global – and by all actors – public and private.

I truly hope that, years from now, we will look back at 2015 and say that this was the year when the international community decided to make a change.

This was the year we all acted in response to the global challenges we were confronted with, to the benefit of all.

Or, to borrow from Mahatma Ghandi: This was the year we decided to be the change we wanted to see.

Thank you.



Speech

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

Published 13 July 2015 Updated 13 July 2015

The Third International Conference on Financing for Development Addis Abeba, Ethiopia, 13-15 July 2015
Check against delivery.

Mr Minister,
Mr Secretary of State,
Mr Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Having a job and an income is an important key to every person's freedom. A job enables us to provide for ourselves and our families. It gives us independence and even a sense of pride.

At least, this is how it ought to be. But we know this is not the case for many millions of working people around the globe.

Many jobs are scandalously underpaid. The widespread problem of precarious work creates uncertainty and denies workers social benefits and the right to organise.

People are exposed to terrible risks in their workplace. Children are cynically forced to work in inhumane circumstances. Every year, two million people die at work. Two million people – every year!

This happens in the pursuit of profit. But a world that builds on the exploitation of people is neither ethical nor profitable. On the contrary.

We need to make work decent. It's a win-win-win opportunity. If

fundamental union and workers' rights are respected, both productivity and growth will increase.

If we reduced deaths and accidents in the workplace by just a quarter, we would unlock resources corresponding to one per cent of the world's GDP.

How can we achieve this?

One important tool could be a partnership, for decent work, that I call a "Global Deal".

Globalisation has opened up the world, spread knowledge and technologies, and lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty over the past few decades.

But true globalisation rests on the idea of sharing.

We share a planet, we share a global economy, and we increasingly share a global labour market.

For this reason, we also share the task of finally taking responsibility for global working life.

And the seeds of a solution are already there – when representatives of labour and capital meet to ensure fair conditions for employers and employees alike, to the benefit of both – and of the society they work in.

What I hope can be developed is a new global concept, where various stakeholders can see the benefits of joining forces to promote joint solutions, while still representing their different interests.

For states, it means ratifying and respecting the ILO's core conventions, thereby recognising the right to organise, the right to negotiate and the right to strike.

For employers and companies all around the world, it means respecting these rights in practice, taking social responsibility and being prepared to negotiate agreements locally, regionally or globally.

For trade unions, it means cooperating and bearing in mind their social responsibility when they negotiate, but also contributing to the overall development of the company or the organisation.

And it means states recognising the social partners and social dialogue as

integral parts of the democratic form of government, and encouraging concrete agreements through negotiations.

This concept of shared responsibility between all stakeholders is the core of the “Global Deal”.

Indeed, decent work is part of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Countries would undertake to include full and productive employment and decent work for all as a central objective in development strategies. References to the ILO and its conventions would strengthen this objective.

I believe that a Global Deal between the stakeholders, as a sort of partnership for decent work, would make a valuable and concrete contribution to sustainable development in all three of its dimensions.

The Global Deal does not require new institutions, it merely gives the existing institutions new tasks.

The ILO, with its tripartite structure, has a central role. The ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation provides a solid foundation for this work.

Needless to say, there is scope for important contributions from the OECD, the WTO, the IMF and the World Bank.

Bringing about cooperation between parties based on mutual respect and shared objectives is not always easy.

On the contrary, it requires that all parties involved are willing and determined.

It will not go quickly.

But the advantages of choosing this path must be obvious to everyone.

Instead of paralysed workplaces, we will have more stable and growing economies.

Instead of labour that is repressed and silenced, we will have people who believe in what they are doing and want to contribute to its success.

Instead of a global economy that is stagnating for want of purchasing power, we will have more equal and free individuals who dare to invest and consume.

And we will more rarely have to pull people out of the ruins of collapsed factories. Instead, we will let everyone in our three billion-strong labour force be part of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable global economy that does not repress anyone.

This is the target I want to set for a Global Deal. A handshake and partnership bringing us closer to the objective of decent work for all.

Thank you.



Speech

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at The Third International Conference on Financing for Development: Global partnership and the three dimensions of sustainable developmentt:

Published 13 July 2015 Updated 13 July 2015

Addis Abeba, Ethiopia, 13-15 july 2015 Check against delivery.

Honourable President, Honourable Ministers, Madame Chairperson, Mr Secretary-General, Mr Commissioner, Madame Executive Director, Distinguished Delegates,

The new sustainable development agenda will require a global partnership in the true sense of the word. Or rather, many partnerships.

Partnership

A distinct feature of this third conference on financing for development is the impressive participation by different stakeholders. It speaks to the broader understanding we have, today, about who can contribute to sustainable development.

As we look for more sources of financing for development, we look for more stakeholders. And partnerships become the vehicle to harness resources and capacity.

Because in the long run it's not just a matter of giving and receiving – traditional official development assistance. It's also a matter of working together in partnership to achieve good things, through trade, investments, exchanges of ideas and knowledge, through cooperation with business and civil society, between governments and in the international community.

This interaction between science, business, society and politics will give birth to new solutions and innovations. And bring good forces together.

One field of promising interaction is in the greening of our economies and societies. We need to establish an environment where green partnerships can flourish.

Make it simple and easy to make the good choices – and difficult and expensive to make the bad ones. Create incentives and mechanisms to direct financial flows into sustainable energy and infrastructure. Introduce a high and fair price for carbon dioxide.

This requires cooperation, partnership and rules.

Global deal

Another area with partnership potential is decent work for all.

I know the power of joining forces, when representatives of labour and capital meet and agree on fair conditions in the labour market. With decent work, respecting fundamental labour rights, we can both increase productivity and promote inclusive growth.

- If we reduced deaths and accidents in the workplace by just a quarter, we would create resources corresponding to one per cent of the world's GDP.

- If we let more women into working life, GDP growth would keep rising even faster.

- If we have good working conditions, people work better and achieve more.

There are opportunities here that the world cannot afford to ignore.

What I hope can be developed is a new global concept, where the various stakeholders in the labour market can see the benefits of joining forces to promote joint solutions, while still representing their different interests.

I like to call it a Global Deal.

Coherence

Excellencies,

You can't give with one hand and take back with the other.

National policy on trade, migration, environment, fisheries, agriculture, and so on, should be analysed with regard to the possible impact – positive and negative – it might have on development efforts elsewhere.

When Sweden adopted a national agenda for policy coherence for sustainable development ten years ago, it was a step forward. It applies to all national policies and all ministries. Today, more are using this concept.

To be sure, coherence is complex to manage in the world of partnerships. But partnerships also make coherence more essential. Because we must ensure that our actions leverage development efforts – and never frustrate them.

The new development agenda demands partnership. We must work together to succeed. It also requires coherence. We cannot treat today's challenges one by one, as isolated issues.

In this approach lies the opportunity for change, for new solutions, innovations and true justice.

Thank you.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven's speech at the high-level meeting on fair conditions in the labour market

Published 25 June 2015 Updated 17 May 2016

Brussels, 25 June 2015 Check against delivery.

Friends and Colleagues,

Charles, Xavier, Mark and I would like to welcome you to this roundtable discussion. The issues are complex and points of view differ.

Let me give you mine: Europe needs open markets and fair working conditions – together. Some say this is a contradiction in terms. As I see it, it is a win-win-win situation. A win for employees. A win for employers. And a win for our societies.

Together, they contribute to inclusive and innovative societies. And strengthen productivity and competitiveness.

We all know the reality: - Workers from the EU, and also from other parts of the world, are not always paid what they should be. They are too often exposed to dangerous situations, because no one takes responsibility for safety at their workplaces. - Rogue companies put reputable companies out of business through unfair competition. And the result is that we lose both productivity and competitiveness.

None of this is acceptable. Not financially, not morally, not in any way.

So what should be the way forward?

We need to show that the European Union can improve people's working lives. This is essential to maintaining legitimacy and the confidence of European citizens.

We should strengthen workers' rights, stop unfair competition and the abuse of regulations. We must stand up for the principle of equal pay for equal work.

And we should strengthen the dialogue with the business community and smooth the path for reputable companies so that they can grow and create new jobs.

All this should be done, knowing that there is no 'one size fits all' solution. Methods for regulating national labour markets vary between Member States. And that is a good thing.

I appreciate the Commission's efforts, both in enhancing the social dialogue and preparing a Labour Mobility Package. I urge you to be ambitious.

We, the leaders, must also make sure we follow this up in our discussions on growth and employment at an upcoming European Council meeting.

I am now eager to hear your views and thoughts on how to advance this pressing matter.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech at EAT Food Forum

Published 02 June 2015 Updated 02 June 2015

Stockholm 2 June Check against delivery.

Thank you very much for inviting me. I appreciate the opportunity to be here and am happy you chose Sweden and Stockholm for this important forum.

Last year I met my friend and colleague, Jonas Gahr Støhre, at the World Economic Forum. We noted that there has been a major shift in the debate.

We compared the present with the situation 25 years ago.

At that time, equality was a word very much owned by Social Democrats. It was seen as something unrealistic and even wrong.

This has changed. And that was obvious in Davos.

Equality is now acknowledged as a driving force for development, as a means to create innovative societies. Today, even economists warn against social division. For one simple reason: equal societies perform better. So my message here today is: if we want to improve health and sustainability, we must perform better on equality.

There is good news – the world's middle class is growing. Extreme poverty has been reduced by half. The first Millennium Development Goal was reached before schedule.

But there is also bad news. Inequality around the world is rising. Wealth is increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few. The world's richest 80 people own assets worth as much as the 3.5 billion poorest people's. It is beyond comprehension.

Yesterday I met with the President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, he reminded me of Mahatma Gandhi's words. "The world has enough for

everyone's need, but not enough for everyone's greed.”

And we can see this trend in Sweden as well. Inequality has risen more than in the rest of the OECD, and this has affected productivity and sustainability. It has affected health.

Take the metro here in Stockholm, take the red line. Get on in Danderyd and get off in Vårby gård. This is a trip that takes 42 minutes. Life expectancy drops four years between these two stations.

And the health gap continues to widen in Sweden. This is due to social and economic inequality.

My point is – closing the gap is key.

I would like to mention two initiatives that we, as a government, have prioritised at national level to promote health and sustainable food production.

First, we are committed to eliminating the health gap within a generation. A national commission for equitable health will be appointed shortly. Efforts to improve public health will be strengthened, as will follow-up. There will be a clearer division of responsibilities in the public sector. Prevention must be included. We will tackle the social determinants of poor health.

Second, we will present a new Swedish food strategy. This strategy will cover the entire food chain, from primary production all the way to the consumer. We have the resources for sustainable food production. We have know-how, we have high environmental awareness. We have a lot of land and clean water. Based on these good conditions, Sweden can produce safe and high quality products. And we can do it sustainably. Our aim is to increase food production and make the rural areas in Sweden more viable. This is a win-win strategy.

The challenges we face at national level are mirrored globally in several ways.

Food is lost – up to 30 per cent. In high income countries because we throw food away (often edible food), in low income countries because of losses in the production chain.

Obesity is now a bigger health risk globally than malnutrition. But many

developing countries actually have a double burden – undernourishment and overweight.

In all countries a lot of food production contributes to climate change and environmental damage.

Initiatives for better health and food security must be taken both nationally and globally. And they need to be addressed together.

Cooperation between science, policy, civil society and business will lead the way not only for decision-making, but for new solutions and innovations, and more sustainable food production.

If we do this right we can create new jobs while promoting better health and sustainable development. We can do what our late Foreign Minister Anna Lindh once said about youth unemployment and climate change: “From two problems, we create one opportunity”.

This year these issues will be brought to the United Nations Summit to adopt the post-2015 agenda in September and to the climate change negotiations in Paris in December.

We have a momentum for new commitments. Development should include everyone. It should be sustainable, because we owe that to future generations. It should be equal, because this is as economically smart as it is morally right.

Thank you very much.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Address to the plenary session of the Eastern Partnership Summit on 22 May

Published 22 May 2015 Updated 25 May 2015

Check against delivery.

Dear colleagues,

Let me begin by stating this simple fact: overall, the Eastern Partnership is a success. A lot of hard work has been put into uniquely comprehensive Association Agreements, visa facilitation and liberalisation processes. We have broadened and deepened sectorial cooperation. We have created a strong foundation for our shared future.

The Partnership has built stronger ties between our countries. It has served as a driver of often difficult reforms. It has also helped to concentrate minds in the EU and it has made this part of Europe a subject in its own right and not just a 'shared neighbourhood'. I am certain that this change is permanent. Our Summit meetings are proof of this growing mutual solidarity and support.

The continued success of our partnership is in our hands. It is essential for its credibility to start turning solemn declarations and agreements into practical reality. We must enhance our reform efforts.

For this work to be sustainable, we need to increase the engagement of citizens and civil society.

We must increase understanding and public support. To achieve this, we need to focus more on areas of immediate concern to citizens. They include the fight against corruption, the rule of law and human rights, protection of the natural environment and improved conditions for trade, investments and

work. All of this will also make societies more resilient to internal and external efforts to undermine security and sovereignty.

In our cooperation until now, we have largely failed to address the situation of more than half of the population. Sweden's experience has shown us that greater inclusion of women in the workforce and decision-making has positive effects, across the board, not least in terms of stronger economic performance. Increasing the participation of women is both that is economically smart and well as morally right, and it is a task we have to take on together.

Our participation here today is a confirmation of what our Joint Declaration says about the conviction that security, prosperity and democracy on our continent can only be achieved through cooperation. We are facing formidable challenges: climate change, poverty and social exclusion, threats to the security architecture of our continent.

We Europeans will be much better equipped to tackle these and other challenges if we cooperate and integrate more, not less. Today's meeting should reinforce that understanding. The door to much deeper relations between us must remain open.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Address to the plenary session of the Eastern Partnership Summit on 22 May

Published 22 May 2015 Updated 25 May 2015

Eastern Partnership Summit in Riga 22 maj 2015
Check against delivery.

Dear colleagues,

Let me begin by stating this simple fact: overall, the Eastern Partnership is a success. A lot of hard work has been put into uniquely comprehensive Association Agreements, visa facilitation and liberalisation processes. We have broadened and deepened sectorial cooperation. We have created a strong foundation for our shared future.

The Partnership has built stronger ties between our countries. It has served as a driver of often difficult reforms. It has also helped to concentrate minds in the EU and it has made this part of Europe a subject in its own right and not just a 'shared neighbourhood'. I am certain that this change is permanent. Our Summit meetings are proof of this growing mutual solidarity and support.

The continued success of our partnership is in our hands. It is essential for its credibility to start turning solemn declarations and agreements into practical reality. We must enhance our reform efforts.

For this work to be sustainable, we need to increase the engagement of citizens and civil society.

We must increase understanding and public support. To achieve this, we need to focus more on areas of immediate concern to citizens. They include

the fight against corruption, the rule of law and human rights, protection of the natural environment and improved conditions for trade, investments and work. All of this will also make societies more resilient to internal and external efforts to undermine security and sovereignty.

In our cooperation until now, we have largely failed to address the situation of more than half of the population. Sweden's experience has shown us that greater inclusion of women in the workforce and decision-making has positive effects, across the board, not least in terms of stronger economic performance. Increasing the participation of women is both that is economically smart and well as morally right, and it is a task we have to take on together.

Our participation here today is a confirmation of what our Joint Declaration says about the conviction that security, prosperity and democracy on our continent can only be achieved through cooperation. We are facing formidable challenges: climate change, poverty and social exclusion, threats to the security architecture of our continent.

We Europeans will be much better equipped to tackle these and other challenges if we cooperate and integrate more, not less. Today's meeting should reinforce that understanding. The door to much deeper relations between us must remain open.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech at the Brookings Institution

Published 31 March 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

The Brookings Institution, Washington DC, USA 31
mars 2015 Check against delivery.

Thanks to Brookings for inviting me here. The Brookings Institution is exactly that: an institution. Always at the forefront of thinking, a temple of policy debate.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to have this opportunity to reflect on a favourite subject of mine: how we can make globalisation work for everyone – and in a time of turmoil.

Let me start with a banal observation: interdependence is a fact of life. It is a human condition: a feature of humanity. But we can make choices about the nature of our interdependence. Should it be informed by solidarity and empowerment – or by domination and belittlement? Asking ourselves this question is how I believe we should approach globalisation – the most powerful process of interdependence to date. Globalisation involves choice. We can shape it.

2015 is a year of important meetings for globalisation. World leaders will be called upon to make crucial decisions about the future of our planet. I will focus these remarks now on some of the main political global challenges and opportunities that I see ahead of us, this year and beyond.

The first challenge concerns the bedrock of our global and international order: abiding by the rules. For a relatively small country like Sweden, right over might is essential. And for us, a recent example of what can go wrong can be found in Ukraine. I visited Ukraine earlier this month. Almost a year had passed since Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol. This was a clear breach of international law – against the UN Charter and against

the Helsinki Final Act. Since then, Russia has pursued its strategic objective, using what is known as hybrid warfare in Eastern Ukraine. That objective seems to be to deny Ukraine the right to make its own choices. But I am confident that Russia will, ultimately, fail to achieve this objective. The Ukrainians I met have made up their mind. They want to decide on their own future. They do not accept an order arbitrarily drawn up in terms of geopolitical spheres of interest.

Furthermore, Russia's aggression and conduct transcend Europe. This is, ultimately, a global concern. It has to do with the rule of law, of international law. Because through the illegal annexation of Crimea and the war in Eastern Ukraine, Russia is contesting the basic rules and norms of international co-existence. When that happens, we must stand firm. We have done so, with a strong and unified transatlantic response to Russia and the separatists, including sanctions. At the end of the day, abiding by the rules is a peaceful way of managing interests – and interdependence. Making international law and rules count is the best insurance policy against violent conflict such as we have seen in Ukraine.

A challenging and urgent task, connected to this, is to combat violent extremism. This includes the dramatic increase in foreign fighters joining ISIL in Iraq and Syria. We appreciate the efforts and leadership of the United States in this field, including the recent conference here in Washington.

Another area in which the job is far from done is disarmament and non-proliferation. Indeed, today is an important day. We are eagerly awaiting news from Lausanne on the nuclear talks with Iran – a diplomatic endeavour that Sweden wholeheartedly supports. The threat of nuclear weapons is indeed a stark reminder that life on Earth is fragile and finite. Sweden will work for the abolition of such weapons.

Which leads to my second globalisation challenge: realising that our space here on Earth is shared – and acting upon this insight.

Take growth – economic growth. It keeps every leader in the world busy. And rightly so: if you cannot deliver growth – and jobs – you will soon be out of office. But growth can only be sustained if it is ecologically and environmentally sound. The jobs of the future are green. Shouldering this responsibility is also crucial for security. If we don't, conflicts over scarcity will steadily increase, with serious humanitarian consequences. Dependency on fossil fuels, in Europe and elsewhere, makes us vulnerable. Renewables

are the smartest way to energy security. This is what the Climate Summit in Paris in December should be about. The sooner we invest in greening our economies and societies, the lower the long-term costs and the greater the benefits.

We stand at a crossroads in 2015. We have to make changes to keep the planet below the two-degree target. And there is a choice. Climate change is real. We need forward-looking, bold leadership to tackle it. The same holds true for the third globalisation challenge – and opportunity! – that I wish to raise today. This is about delivering free and fair trade.

This subject is close to my heart. I have a background in manufacturing. Between 2006 and 2012, I was chairman of the largest Swedish labour union for industrial workers. I represent a country where trade accounts for half of GDP. It ranks among the most competitive economies in the world. So you will not be surprised to hear that I am a staunch supporter of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, TTIP. It holds so much promise for the two largest economies in the world.

However, trade should not translate into a competition with ever lower salaries or lower labour, health and environmental standards. Competition should revolve around innovation, research and development – it should be about being better, not cheaper. The uncertainty or risk in this is exactly why many are wary of globalisation. It can be associated with a race to the bottom, which in turn offers fertile ground for easy answers, bigotry, isolationism and populism.

TTIP is not the solution to everything. But it is an opportunity to get trade agreements right: to start making trade free and fair. And to that, I would also like to add 'open'. The bilateral trade talks that are now under way are not the endgame. Rather, they should contribute to further multilateral cooperation under the WTO.

The European Union and the United States should now seize the chance to set global standards, to make our economies fit for the 21st century. If we do not, others will get there before us!

In my own country, this is not just the Government's view. Swedish business and labour organisations are also strong supporters of trade. And this is essential. Trade agreements, struck between governments, must uphold labour, environmental and health standards. But we need acceptance also from the social partners, from business and from workers. I think of this as a

global deal, or handshake, between stakeholders and social partners. Yesterday, at a session at the United Nations on decent work, I had an opportunity to expand on this idea. It's not a single contract. It's a concept to manage working conditions in a global economy. The philosophy is simple: employers' and workers' representatives meet to ensure fair conditions to the benefit of both – and of the society they work in. They still, of course, represent various interests. But cooperation between social partners can bring peace to the labour market, economic stability and shared prosperity. I am an optimist and reformist. I really believe we can make the world's three billion-strong labour force part of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable global economy. In that way, we can all grow together.

A good place to start is China. On Sunday, I arrived here in the United States straight from Beijing. As I understand it, the Chinese economy is now entering a new phase. It is starting to consolidate, with an increasing share of growth stemming from consumption rather than exports. This development brings opportunities, including for the improvement of working conditions. Workers are becoming more cognisant of their rights and claiming them. Employers are more mindful of their social responsibilities. I noted this with great interest during my visit. But a great deal remains to be done.

And that leads me to the fourth and final challenge: making globalisation – and our world – more inclusive. Take the spiralling inequality, a global trend that affects us all. There are many reasons to combat this. First, of course, on moral and ethical grounds – the conviction that inequality is unjust. Another reason is that inequality works against social progress. It causes reduced democratic and civic participation, for example.

A third reason has attracted particular attention in global economic forums. Evidence from the OECD and others shows that inequality hampers growth. For example, it keeps many low-income households from pursuing education – which sets them on the opposite path to where the jobs of the future are.

Inequality is, to put it plainly, bad economics. This trend of inequality could – and should – be reversed. The ways to do so will vary according to circumstances. However, I must insist that there is one task that all nations, societies and economies have in common. And that is to target the greatest, most entrenched inequality of all: that between the sexes. To address what former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton so aptly describes as “the great unfinished business of the 21st century”.

I am proud that the Swedish Government is the first in the world to declare itself a feminist one. In practice, this means that gender equality is at the core of government business. From gender-responsive budgeting to feminist foreign policy.

Twenty years after the landmark Beijing Conference, the world is still embarrassingly far from gender equality on almost every count: political representation, economic empowerment and social norms. This is a monumental denial of rights, and also a waste of talent. This is not a concern only for some, but for everyone: women and men, girls and boys. That is why I have joined the global UN-led campaign HeForShe, and I encourage others to do the same. More men and boys must get involved.

Later this year, in New York, leaders have an opportunity to advance a global equality agenda. The Sustainable Development Goals to be set at the United Nations in September must catalyse and deliver irreversible, substantial and sustainable progress for gender equality. They should also put us firmly on the path to reducing social inequality.

Which brings me back to where I started this morning. What should be the nature of our interdependence in a globalised world?

My answer is: solidarity and empowerment – not domination and exploitation. We can choose rules over might; sustainable prosperity over fossilised shortsightedness; gender equality over structural discrimination; and decent work for all over a race to the bottom. We really can make globalisation a process of togetherness. In which we grow and trust each other, and in which everyone benefits. That is a choice that we have.

Thank you for listening.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at The ECOSOC Session

Published 30 March 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

New York, USA 30 mars 2015 Check against delivery.

Mr President, Mr Vice-President, Mr Deputy Secretary-General,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to be here today, together with all of you, for a segment with an impressive list of both topics and participants. I certainly look forward to our discussion. Let me start by stepping back in time. Reshma, a seamstress in a garment factory, saw the light of day again, after 17 days. Helped by rescue workers, she emerged from the rubble, having survived on dried goods and water. But more than 1 100 of her colleagues died in that factory in Dhaka, when it collapsed in April 2013.

This tragedy was not a unique event. Two million people die at work every year. It happens everywhere, including in Sweden. Every day, we see people exposed to terrible risks in their work, we see trade union members persecuted and killed, we see children forced to work in the most cynical and inhumane manner, we see migrants exploited under horrific conditions. This is done in the pursuit of profit. But a world that builds on the exploitation of people is neither ethical nor profitable. On the contrary. With decent work, respecting fundamental union rights, we can both increase productivity and promote inclusive growth. If we reduced deaths and accidents in the workplace by just a quarter, we would create resources corresponding to one per cent of the world's GDP. If we let more women into working life, GDP growth would keep rising. There are opportunities here that the world cannot afford to ignore. Social justice is both ethically right and economically smart.

It is time to make globalisation work for everyone. Globalisation has opened up the world, spread knowledge and technologies, and lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty over the past few decades. But true globalisation rests on the idea of sharing. We share a planet, we share a global economy, and we increasingly share a global labour market. For this reason, we also share the task of finally taking responsibility for global working life.

And the seeds of a solution are already there - when representatives of labour and capital meet to ensure fair conditions for employers and employees alike, to the benefit of both - and of the society they work in. What I hope can be developed is a new global concept, where various stakeholders can see the benefits of joining forces to promote joint solutions, while still representing their different interests. It is a concept where each actor also pays attention to and takes into consideration the motives and aims and restrictions of other parties.

A new concept of this kind would encourage cooperation between social partners that could bring peace in the labour market, promote competition, and enhance economic stability and shared prosperity. It is a concept that also builds on the social partners taking their respective responsibilities, as governments also would do, while at the same time recognising what is best for the common interest.

It means, for states, ratifying and respecting the ILO's core conventions, thereby recognising the right to organise, the right to negotiate and the right to strike. It means, for employers and companies all around the world, respecting these rights in practice, taking their social responsibility and being prepared to negotiate agreements locally, regionally or globally. It means, for trade unions, cooperating and bearing in mind their social responsibility when they negotiate, but also contributing to the overall development of the company or the organisation. And it means states recognising the social partners and social dialogue as essential parts of the democratic form of government, and encouraging concrete agreements through negotiations. This concept of shared responsibility between all stakeholders could lead to a real win-win-win situation. It is the core of what I would like to call a Global Deal.

And this does not require new institutions, merely new tasks in the strong international forums that we have already created. The ILO, with its tripartite structure, has a central role, but needs to be equipped to lead the work at global level. The ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair

Globalisation provides a solid foundation for this work. I also see scope for important contributions from the OECD, the WTO, the IMF and the World Bank.

In this very building, an agenda is now being negotiated to meet today's and tomorrow's great challenges, to eradicate poverty while saving the only planet we have. What I'm referring to, of course, are the negotiations on the sustainable development goals (the post-2015 agenda) and how they are to be financed and implemented (Financing for Development).

The adoption of the new sustainable development goals and the new financial framework must not be seen as the end of a process. On the contrary, it is the starting signal for more intense, and absolutely essential, efforts to achieve increased sustainable development at global, regional and national levels. This will require us all to work together. It will require practical and concrete approaches. I believe that a Global Deal between the stakeholders will make an important and concrete contribution to the work on sustainable development in all three of its dimensions.

Bringing about cooperation between parties based on mutual respect and shared objectives is not always easy. On the contrary, it requires that all parties involved are willing and determined. It will not go quickly. Rather, it is an initiative that must be sustained throughout the coming decade. But the advantages of choosing this path must be obvious to everyone. Instead of paralysed workplaces, we will have more stable and growing economies. Instead of labour that is repressed, worn out, silenced, we will have people who believe in what they are doing and want to contribute to its success. Instead of a global economy that is stagnating for want of purchasing power, we will have more equal and free individuals who dare to invest and consume. And we will more rarely have to pull women like Reshma out of the ruins of collapsed factories; instead, we will let her and everyone else in our three billion strong labour force be part of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable global economy that does not repress anyone. This is the target I want to set for a Global Deal. This is the initiative I would like you to be part of. It is a self-evident part of the world I want to engage in for future generations.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech at Boao Forum for Asia in Hainan, China

Published 28 March 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Boao Forum for Asia in Hainan, China 28 mars 2015
Check against delivery.

Mr President, Mr Chairman, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the invitation to speak here today. Sweden's relations with the Asian region are strong. Sweden was the first Western country to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, and we are proud to celebrate the 65th anniversary of our relationship this year. We were also among the first Western countries to recognise Vietnam, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

Most countries in the world have benefited from globalisation. The rapid growth here in Asia has brought enormous benefits - reduced poverty and rising living standards. Globalisation brings countries together. It promotes strengthened political, economic and commercial contacts, and also people-to-people exchanges. The distance between Asia and Europe has never been shorter than now. Because we are a global community, we also share global challenges. In the upcoming months, some of these will be addressed. We have the UN Summit on a new post-2015 sustainable development agenda, and the Paris Conference on Climate Change. I will make three points in this connection.

First: The post-2015 development agenda must be a joint effort. We will need the creativity and commitment of civil society, of a responsible and sustainable business sector, and – most importantly – of citizens. I have therefore asked my post-2015 team to consult widely with civil society and the business community on how they can contribute. Another key is resources. Official development assistance remains important, especially for

low-income countries. Sweden will continue to use 1 per cent of its GNI to ODA. We urge other developed countries to also honour their commitments.

Second: When I was in Beijing yesterday, I thought about the ground-breaking World Conference on Women, held there 20 years ago. To recognize gender equality as key to the world's future is long overdue. Overcoming gender inequality must be at the centre of the post-2015 goals, as a human right, but also to achieve sustainable development. Significant economic gains can be made when women are able to develop their full labour market potential. Raising the female labour force rate to male levels would, for instance, raise GDP in the United States by 5 per cent, in Japan by 9 per cent, in Sweden 10 per cent, and in Egypt by 34 per cent.

And third: There is great potential, everywhere, to cut emissions whilst improving economic performance – with positive effects for health, poverty reduction and energy security.

Many countries have taken important steps to curb emissions. Like China has already done, all countries ought to present national contributions to the climate conference in Paris. Sweden has a target of reducing emissions by 40 per cent by 2020. We aim for a new climate policy framework that stretches until 2050. Our experience is that very clear climate objectives help mobilise stakeholders such as businesses and cities. We have also seen good results from using economic instruments to reduce emissions, such as a carbon tax of 150 USD per tonne. Such instruments can reduce environmental impact, improve health, and promote innovation and green investments - resulting in green jobs. I am convinced that what we agree in Paris in December, will result in an ambitious commitment to our common goal: to keep the global temperature increase below two degrees.

These three issues are all interlinked – cooperation between all sectors in society; ensuring gender equality; and halting climate change. All are fundamental to ensure sustainable development. And all are discussed in depth here at the Boao Forum for Asia. Thank you all for making that possible.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

A European Union of the People

Published 23 March 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

University of Gothenburg 23 mars 2015 Check against delivery.

Many of the grand statements throughout history have been poetic. But one of the most important sentences in post-war Europe was as bone dry as it was powerful: “The French Government proposes that Franco-German production of coal and steel as a whole be placed under a common High Authority, within the framework of an organisation open to the participation of the other countries of Europe.”

These words are from the Schuman Declaration, which was presented on 9 May 1950. The backdrop was war. The Franco-Prussian War of 1870 and the First World War were both fuelled by conflict over the same lands and resources.

But when Europe stood among the smouldering ruins of the Second World War, beside the newly dug graves of millions upon millions, and as it witnessed the beginnings of renewed economic conflict – Europe chose a new path. West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer is reported to have said to his staff: “Das ist unser Durchbruch” – this is our breakthrough.

* * *

But the strength of the European Coal and Steel Community was not its rules and regulations. On the contrary, it did not achieve all of its goals. No, the breakthrough was not mainly economic – but political. Europe chose cooperation rather than conflict. And now, 65 years later, it is perhaps all too easy for Swedes to forget what this cooperation has created. In a country that has enjoyed peace for 200 years, we do not realise how truly strange and marvellous this European era of peace has been. When we travel by train down through Europe – on holiday, to study or to work – we perhaps do not remember the time when the carriages would be stopped at night by passport officials, when each country was like an isolated island, when distrust and doubt characterised European relations. What we now take for

granted would have seemed like utopia for the founders of the EU.

I remember the first time I visited the restaurant of the European Parliament and saw Germans, Greeks and Portuguese all eating together in this the melting pot of cooperation. Just as I can now sit in working meetings of the European Council and see leaders of countries – that were once sworn enemies – call each other David, Angela, Helle, Bohuslav and roll up their sleeves to work together. And this work has been fruitful. Just look at your own lives. Your dreams of studies and a career can now easily encompass an entire continent. Your supply of food and clothes is more secure, the air you breathe is cleaner, the societies you live in are freer, safer and more democratic, simply because we Europeans chose cooperation rather than conflict.

Therefore I am also proud to say: Yes, I am a European. I believe in the European Union. I believe in the strength of a cooperative community.

* * *

But precisely because I believe in the EU, I also know that the EU must change. The EU has bureaucratic, economic and democratic failings. But you are all well aware of the EU's challenges. What I want to talk about are the EU's opportunities. I became politically involved because I believe that the idea of the equal value of all people can only be realised through free and equal societies in which you and I have the same opportunities in life.

And to create such free and equal societies, cooperation and solidarity are required – between people, between countries. I view the EU as an important instrument, precisely for creating this type of cooperation, this type of international solidarity between people, so that freer and more equal societies are made possible. And the breakthrough that the EU needs today is an EU that gets closer to the people it was created to serve. An EU that focuses on employment, security and sustainability – and creates forms of cooperation that make change possible. It is only by so doing that we can feel that the EU provides added value. That the Union is for us, not we for the Union. It is only by so doing that we can resist the divisive populism and fascism that is seeking a foothold in Europe. It is only by so doing that we can create an EU of the People. I would like to talk about the reforms we want to focus on in order to achieve this by talking about an app, a telephone and a baby's bottle.

* * *

I would like to begin with the application that has spread to computers, telephones and TV systems around the world. There are probably even advanced fridges that can run the software. I'm talking about Spotify. Those

involved in launching Spotify must have had an admirable stubbornness. They had to negotiate with each country, one by one. And that took time. Five years after its release, Spotify was only available in half of all EU Member States. Spotify has done well. But what about all those who are still struggling? All the goods and services we haven't heard of, just because the people making them cannot reach a wide enough circle of customers? This is why we want to have a strong internal market; one that links our economies and creates the trade volumes required to enable companies to specialise and grow.

Spotify in particular also illustrates the need for a digital internal market, in which regulations are harmonised and privacy respected. And while we make it possible for private companies to invest and grow, politicians must do their fair share of the work.

We support the Commission's investment plan, in which we want to see research and innovation prioritised. But we also need to boost the measures against youth unemployment so that the European Investment Bank and the European Social Fund can create more study, trainee and work opportunities for young people. Everyone in your generation must be offered opportunities. You must be able to show what you can do. To test the limits of your knowledge. I know you are ready to take on Europe, and I know Europe needs your strength!

* * *

And we must stop shutting women out of the labour market! One third of all women of working age in the EU woke up this morning without a paid job to go to. In some countries, the number is as high as half. In some quarters, views on the role of women in the labour market seem to be as old as the EU itself. What is required is childcare, parental leave, equal pay for equal work, a more balanced division of power, and an end to the violence that destroys women's lives. Jobs and gender equality go hand in hand, and an EU of the People should stand up for both!

* * *

Strengthening the internal market, which is one of our greatest successes, must not mean introversion. On the contrary! The EU must be open to the rest of the world. We should continue to be the world's biggest aid partner, and at the same time stand up for global free trade. Sweden is a trade-dependent and trade-loving country. Free trade with rest of the world leads to growth and jobs across the country.

But, if the EU does not create new trade routes, the rest of the world will not wait for us. They will merely increase their trade with other regions. We therefore want to see ambitious, ethical and comprehensive trade agreements

with the United States and Japan, and a continued strengthening of the WTO's legitimacy in world trade. We must make it easier to trade, invest and grow throughout the EU, while at the same time standing up for employees' rights, the environment and democracy. I am part of a labour movement, which, together with the liberal political movement, has fought for more than 100 years for free trade as one of the world's main weapons against poverty. And when the icy winds of protectionism blow, we will continue to stand up for free trade, today and in the future.

* * *

That was quite a long tangent from just one app, so I would now like to move on to the telephone. When I was chair of the Metal Workers' Union of Sweden, I sometimes received phone calls informing me that workers had died. I was often also given a short description of how the accident had happened, and despite the modernisation of our workplaces, people can still die in the most horrific ways. And so you were faced with the fact that a person was now dead. And you think about the silence that will spread throughout the workplace. You think about how they are going to tell the family. You think: why did this have to happen again?

And this also affects Europeans who come to Sweden to work. Those known as 'posted workers' are involved in one fifth of the accidents that occur at Swedish workplaces, despite the fact that they represent a significantly smaller proportion of the labour force. We can't go on like this. There is no natural law stating that an open European labour market should make people's working conditions worse. We want to strengthen freedom of movement, but this is not at odds with standing up for workers' rights.

On the contrary – if we are to an EU of the People, we need the Union to be used to improve people's working lives. We want to create good order in the European labour market, in which we strengthen employees' rights, in which we stop social dumping and the exploitation of regulations, and in which we stand up for the principle of equal pay for equal work.

* * *

This brings me to my third point, about the baby's bottle. Although I am enjoying talking to you here today, I have to admit that my greatest joy in life is spending time with my family's grandchildren. Playing with them, reading to them, having a little chat. But this is also why I share the dread that parents must feel when they discover that what they have been putting into their child's mouth can be dangerous, hormone-disrupting even. But this was what happened when we understood the risks of Bisphenol A, which has been found in babies' bottles, baby food jars and plastic beakers. And this is what often happens in environment and climate issues. First you are

appalled. Then you get angry – and then you take action to create the sustainability that our children deserve. And we are now working to eliminate the environmental toxins that are a threat to people, not least through the chemicals regulation REACH, which Margot Wallström helped to develop. We also want to create an energy union that strives to achieve the EU's climate objectives, and we want to invest in energy efficiency measures and recycling to ensure that we do not live beyond the planet's limited resources. But the major, decisive work must of course take its cue from the international climate negotiations in Paris in December. In Paris, the EU must ensure that the world agrees on forceful climate objectives, together with a concrete action plan to achieve them. The world has to choose which path to take – and the EU must take the lead. We must phase out fossil fuels. We must create jobs by producing sustainable homes, industries and transport. And we must engage the world in an action programme that keeps us below the decisive two degrees of global warming. This, if anything, would show that the EU can be a citizens' EU.

And this, dear friends, is the only way we can look our children and grandchildren in the eye and say: We saw what was happening. We refused to allow it to happen. And we chose to act before it was too late.

* * *

Dear friends, I have just come from the European Council, where foreign affairs – and particularly the situation in Ukraine – were top of the agenda. The EU Common Foreign and Security Policy is an extremely important tool, enabling us to speak with one strong voice. The EU needs to stand up for human rights wherever they are threatened, support Ukraine in light of Russia's military aggression, strengthen its role in the Middle East and North Africa, normalise relations between Serbia and Kosovo, stay open to new members that meet the requirements, and jointly build a safer and more prosperous neighbourhood.

We also need to create greater security in all of our countries for those Jews and Muslims who are afraid to pray or openly show their faith, and we need to work across borders to fight terrorism and organised crime. We need to create security for the refugees risking their lives just a few kilometres off Europe's coast, and we need to get more EU Member States to take responsibility for receiving refugees. We need to improve the situation of the Roma and break the chains of poverty and discrimination that are forcing them to beg. It is a question of respect for the dignity of every human being, which we will never abandon.

* * *

While we strengthen our global commitment and our common security, we

also need to create more jobs and growth, ensure good working conditions and strengthen gender equality, international solidarity and environmental protection. These are the Swedish Government's priorities for the EU. Together we must create an EU that is better at delivering on its promises instead of constantly delivering new promises. We must create an EU that does not take more power for the sake of power, but that shows how it can use reforms to place power in people's hands to create a better life. And we must create an EU that shows its value in our everyday lives, not through grand statements but through real change.

I say 'we'. This is important. The EU is not 'them'. The EU is us. And it is we, in Sweden and Europe, who will determine the future of the EU. Many of you in this room will play decisive roles in this work, as you are studying to lead the institutions of Sweden and the EU in the future, perhaps even to be my successor, who knows? I say 'we' because we are the ones who have to do this. We are the ones who need to use the time ahead of us to shape an EU of the People, which creates a better everyday life for you – and a better world for us all. It is a difficult task indeed. But, as students, you know that the most difficult tasks are sometimes also the most rewarding.

Thank you.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Strengthening Ukraine's economy through EU integration and reforms

Published 11 March 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Kyiv School of Economics 11 mars 2015 Check against delivery.

First of all, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to visit Kyiv and the Kyiv School of Economics.

Sweden has been a supporter of this school for a long-time, and it's an honor to finally visit here together with my distinguished colleague Mr. Aivaras Abromavicius.

Being here in Kyiv, I remember and honour the people who lost their lives, in the Yanukovych regime's violent crackdown on protesters in Independence Square.

The Maidan movement started as a peaceful manifestation in support of Europe, justice and reforms. It was met with brutal violence from a corrupt and ruthless regime that wanted to cling to power at any cost. The violence led to the tragic deaths of more than one hundred people, but also to the fall of the regime. Maidan became a beacon of hope for change, and a better future for Ukraine.

That hope is still alive today. But we know that the vision of a prosperous and reformed Ukraine is perceived as a threat in other parts of Europe. Over the last year, Russia has illegally annexed Crimea and by arming and supplying so-called separatists, has subjected Ukraine to acts of aggression that have so far claimed the lives of more than 6 000 people. Almost 1.5 million people have been forced to flee from their homes. The responsibility for this lies with Russia.

Sweden and the EU have supported the diplomatic efforts to uphold Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty and to bring an end to the conflict. By supporting Ukraine, we keep the hope of change alive and show that aggression and the use of force will never pay off or be accepted in Europe in our time. Today, Maidan goes by the name of Euromaidan to honour the strong wish of the Ukrainian people to belong to Europe. Let me assure you that for Sweden there is no doubt that Ukraine is a part of Europe and has a clear place in Europe. We share a future. We share ideals, and hope.

That is why EU integration is the main focus for our cooperation with Ukraine. The Association Agreement including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area between Ukraine and the EU is the most far-reaching agreement that the EU has ever signed with a third country.

Once Ukraine has fulfilled all commitments under the agreement, the logical next step would be to prepare an application for full EU membership. That may still be some time in the future, and would require hard work and efforts by Ukraine. But let me assure you that Sweden stands fully behind Ukraine's vision of an ever closer relation with the European Union.

In Ukraine, you know better than anyone what needs to be done. Reforms will be needed to improve the rule of law and the business climate, enforce EU standards

and fight corruption at all levels. Such reforms require a strong political will and a determination to go against some vested interests. But the gain will be plentiful:

In the 20 years from 1992 to 2012 the GDP per capita in Latvia grew by 340 percent as they step by step became part of the European union. Ukraine, which had a higher GDP per capita than Latvia in 1992, grew only by some 40 per cent in the same period. In the area of trade and investments, all evidence from countries like Poland, the Baltic States and Serbia show the value of closer integration in the EU.

It's the largest integrated market in the world, with 500 million consumers and a combined GDP of 12 900 billion EUR (2012), representing one fifth of world GDP.

We realize that the challenging situation in Ukraine means that support is needed urgently.

From Sweden's perspective we have tried to find a balance between short-term stabilizing efforts and long-term support of reforms. Sweden's cooperation with Ukraine goes back a long time, and we are committed to remaining your partner.

Swedish has made a seven year commitment to allocate at least of 25 million euro in support of reform in Ukraine.

We have a continuous dialogue on where this support is most useful to you. You know better than anyone what reforms should be pursued, and our support is based on your needs and priorities.

I want to give you some examples of what we do, and would welcome your thoughts on other areas where support could be needed. I would like to bring up decentralisation, energy efficiency and gender equality.

First of all: Decentralisation.

In our view, decentralisation is the key for substantial change and a strong and developed democracy.

It would bring power closer to the people in Ukraine, and promote important reforms in many fields.

For example: Local authorities need to have more decision-making and budgetary powers in order to restructure the energy sector.

That brings us to my second point: Energy efficiency.

The need for energy efficiency goes further and beyond decentralisation.

The waste of energy is one of the heaviest burdens on the Ukrainian economy. Ukraine uses almost three times more energy per unit of GDP than the EU average. For the energy efficiency projects to be viable and efficient, it is essential that Ukraine launches a far-reaching reform of its entire energy sector, including tariffs.

And third: Gender equality.

Our focus is to support women's economic and social empowerment.

Combating violence against women is an essential part, as well as further strengthening of women's rights and continued efforts to eliminate obstacles to prevent the full advancement of women. The objective should be to integrate gender equality in all dimensions of society, which would also generate higher economic growth.

Gender equality and more women in the work force is a crucial contributor to a society's wealth and welfare, and has built Sweden's prosperity for many decades.

Finally, let me say this:

You, as students, are the future of this great nation.

You will be the ones who will carry these necessary reforms forward and contribute to a better society and a new future of Ukraine and Europe. EU integration entails, as you all know, comprehensive and sometimes difficult reforms.

But I am sure your country is ready and willing to take on this challenge, and Sweden stands ready to fully support you on this journey. We stand behind you in support of your right to make a free, sovereign choice on what kind of society you want to integrate. We do not impose anything on anyone. We do not tell you what is in your interest.

We respond to your requests and aspirations – including the aspirations you so clearly showed on Euromaidan a year ago.

That is and will remain our guiding principle, today and over the coming years, so that our countries can share a greater prosperity and freedom.

Thank you.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech at 'The Ring of Peace'

Published 27 February 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Raoul Wallenbergs torg, Stockholm, 27 februari 2015
Check against delivery.

Dear friends, the Jewish tradition of Bat Mitzvah celebrates a girl's entry into the adult world.

It is a celebration of love, tradition and joy.

Of hope and expectations for the future.

A Bat Mitzvah was being celebrated when the synagogue in Copenhagen was attacked.

I think of the children in the synagogue who were forced to flee down to the cellar when Dan Uzan, who was on guard, was shot dead.

I think of the children in Paris who know that four people were killed in their kosher shop.

I think of the children in Sweden who are now forced to see armed guards when they go to school.

Friends, we can never ever accept this!

It is time for this to stop!

And we can all see what is happening in our society.

We see anti-Semitism, the despicable hatred against Jews, the taunts, the conspiracy theories, the attacks, people not daring to wear a kippah or Star of David.

We see Islamophobia, women in veils being harassed in the underground, people facing prejudice, racism and hatred.

We see Afrophobia and the terrible racial theories that live on.

We see homophobia, transphobia, attacks on anyone who wants to and dares to break the norms.

We see antiziganism, discrimination and violence against Roma, people pouring water on them, setting fire to their camps, spitting in the face of their fellow human beings.

Now it is up to us to choose which society we want to have.
Now it is up to us to stand up for freedom of religion and freedom of expression.
Now it is up to us to show that Sweden is the strongest bastion of solidarity; we will never allow hatred to rule our lives here!
Never!

We are now introducing major initiatives to create security for everyone in Sweden, regardless of who you are or where you come from.

We are working with the faith communities to increase security.

We have instructed the police to focus on hate crimes.

We are strengthening educational measures in schools and society as a whole.

But however much we invest, we will only be successful if we have everyone's personal engagement and commitment.

We need you, all of you who want to and dare to stand up for what you believe in.

All of you who are demonstrating that although we may have different faiths, we share the same values.

We believe in the strength of democracy, we are convinced of the equal worth of all people and the indivisibility of their human rights, we know that our open society is worth defending.

We say what it says in the appeal of the Muslim Council of Sweden, the Christian Council of Sweden, the Hindu Mandir Society, the Swedish Buddhist Cooperation Council, the Church of Sweden, the Swedish Bahá'í Community and the Official Council of Swedish Jewish Communities:

We refuse to hate! We refuse to hate!

We love this country and we refuse to hate the fellow human beings we share it with!

And I am so pleased and proud that you are here today.

You are taking the responsibility that is the responsibility of all of us as fellow human beings.

This is the way it should be.

Building bridges, between people, between religions, between generations.

This is how we can create a new wave of openness and solidarity that is so much bigger and so much more powerful than hatred, and that sweeps across our entire nation.

Sophie Scholl, the German girl who stood up to the Nazis and was murdered for doing so, once said:

“How can we expect fate to let a righteous cause prevail when there is hardly anyone who will give himself up undividedly to a righteous cause?”

Friends, today we stand up for a righteous cause, for freedom of religion, for democracy – and we will never capitulate!

Thank you.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech given at Raoul Wallenbergs torg on Holocaust Remembrance Day, 27 January 2015

Published 27 January 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Raoul Wallenbergs torg, Stockholm 27 januari 2015
Check against delivery.

I would like to begin by thanking you, Hannes, for your recitation.
I saw the play Our Class before coming here today.
It is a work of art that attempts to describe the indescribable.
How people, neighbours, classmates can be pitted against each other, and the horrors that occur when we no longer acknowledge what is human in humanity.

The monologue belongs to Abram, who is a survivor.
He emigrated to the United States before the day on which the Jewish population of his village were forced into a barn by their neighbours.
The barn was then set on fire.
This really happened, in a village in Poland.
Initially, the story was hushed up.
But we know the truth thanks to the testimonies of survivors.
And when we gather on Holocaust Remembrance Day, it is to pass on these testimonies.

We must give a voice to the lost fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters – all of those loved ones listed so despairingly by Abram.
The immediate and extended families, the villages, the towns.
Where no one was left to bear witness.
Those who survived are also getting older and older, and their legacy must

be carried forward by new generations.
So it is up to us.
We must never forget,
never deny,
never minimise this gaping wound in the history of humanity.

And today, we must also listen to the voices of those under threat.
We must hear the boots of the fascists who once again march in our midst.
We must see the terrorist attacks against Jews in Toulouse, Brussels and Paris, the persecution of the Roma in Hungary and Romania, the harassment of homosexuals in Russia – this unreasoning hatred of our fellow human beings that has spread throughout Europe.
And we must assume the task of doing everything in our power to fight it.

And Sweden is not exempt from these horrors.
It is time that we spoke plainly about what is happening.
It is time that we learn from history, and never allow hatred to gain a foothold in our society.
Some 5 500 hate crimes are reported in Sweden every year.
Threats and attacks that are antisemitic, racist, homophobic, islamophobic in nature.
Prejudice and conspiracy theories spread and are left unopposed.
Synagogues and mosques are vandalised.
Roma camps are burned down.
And just last week we once again heard testimonies of the persecution of Jews in Malmö.
People who no longer dare to wear the Star of David or a yarmulke.
Parents who do not feel safe sending their children to school.
Survivors like Hédi Fried who say: “Now I am scared again.”
As Prime Minister, as a Swede, as a human being: I refuse to tolerate this in silence.
Everyone should be safe to practise their faith, express their identity and exercise their culture in Sweden.
As a society, we cannot accept anything less.

This is why the police have now been instructed to prioritise hate crime, and they will soon present to the Government campaigns aimed at combating the threats and hatred that destroy people's lives.
It is why we must stop the young men at risk of becoming radicalised, both using preventive action and through repressive measures and by criminalising their behaviour.

And it is why we must continue to cooperate with all vulnerable groups to jointly create the security for everyone in Sweden to be able to display their identity and culture – freely and openly.

The threats and the hatred are a disgrace to Sweden.

In our country, every person should be able to wear their origins with joy and pride.

And this is a task for which we must all take responsibility.

A few years ago I visited Yad Vashem, a monument and archive in Israel dedicated to remembering the Holocaust.

And more than anything else, I remember how I felt when I stepped into the Children's Memorial, where the names of the 1.5 million murdered Jewish children are recited.

Today, the Minister for Culture, the Crown Princess and the Speaker of the Riksdag are representing Sweden at a ceremony of remembrance at Auschwitz, which was liberated seventy years ago today.

But all of these places,

all of these memorials,

all of these things:

they do not bear knowledge within them.

It is we human beings who must do that.

Many concentration camps were demolished at the end of the war.

Furnaces were destroyed. Barracks were torn down. And parade grounds are now covered with grass.

It is we who walk on that grass today, we who are alive, who must tell the story of what happened.

This is a task to which Sweden is committed, through the declaration adopted by more than 50 countries at the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust in 2000.

Thus we are now redoubling our efforts to reach out to children and young people, to combat prejudice and spread knowledge about the Holocaust.

We will support the work of faith communities, organisations and schools to strengthen democratic awareness and counteract polarisation, threats and violence.

And the Living History Forum will continue the work that began with the 'Tell ye your children' project with a new major national educational project against antisemitism and racism.

As the inscription by the gas chambers at Auschwitz reads:

“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”

This is Sweden's duty.

But it is also our duty as human beings, to pass the survivors' stories on, and to respond to the cries for help of those under threat.

Raoul Wallenberg, after whom the square we stand in today is named, recognised this duty, and he is a great role model in our efforts.

He responded to the Nazis' industrial-scale murder in Budapest with his own large-scale rescue apparatus, producing Swedish protective passports that saved tens of thousands of Jews.

In a war in which fanatical ideology and national interests claimed millions of victims, his ideology was unyielding humanism, his interest the will to live.

You and I can continue Raoul's legacy.

And in all this darkness, I still find hope in the knowledge that society can be changed.

As the Russian writer Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn wrote:

"The line separating good and evil passes not through states, nor between classes, nor between political parties either – but right through every human heart, and through all human hearts.

This line shifts. Inside us, it oscillates with the years. And even within hearts overwhelmed by evil, one small bridgehead of good is retained."

These lines come from *The Gulag Archipelago*.

And I know that hatred, contempt and prejudice are not a given in society. Just because they have shaped our history does not mean that they have to destroy our future.

So, on this day of remembrance, let us promise one another that we will work together for a more open Sweden.

Because we know that there is a bridgehead of good in every heart, that there is a light in every darkness, and that we have the tools in our hands to build a more free society for us all.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech

Speech at launch of UN Women "HeForShe IMPACT 10x10x10 Initiative"

Published 23 January 2015 Updated 27 February 2015

World Economic Forum, Davos 23 January 2015 Stefan
Löfven, Prime Minister Check against delivery.

Excellencies, panellists, participants,

I know from experience the force of gender equality. My background is in the male-dominated manufacturing sector, and I have seen first-hand how businesses improve through equal participation of women in the workplace and in decision-making.

This is why gender equality should be core government business - because it is both morally right and economically wise. Many of the challenges our societies face require structural changes in gender relations. If we fail, our societies will remain chained by gender stereotypes and we will see development arrested.

The new universal agenda for sustainable development post-2015 provides a unique opportunity that we must seize. We must take real steps for the advancement of women and girls in all areas of society.

Firstly, the political participation and representation of women needs to increase at all levels: in local councils and national parliaments, but also in peace processes and climate negotiations. We are still embarrassingly far from equality in terms of representation.

Secondly, the economic empowerment of women must be promoted. Shutting women out of economic activity is probably the biggest waste of

opportunity and talent in our world.

We need to reform tax and benefit systems, ensure women's full participation in the labour market and enhance women's access to resources, including land and capital and financial services.

Thirdly, we must address the root cause of gender inequalities: unequal power relations.

Harmful practices and violence against women and girls are ultimately about subordination. So is denying women and girls the right to decide over their own bodies and sexuality.

We must have zero tolerance for violence against women, and safeguard the human right to control one's own body. I also strongly believe in the empowering force of education, as shown by the inspiring example of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Malala Yousafzai.

But change, particularly of entrenched social norms, requires strong leadership and firm political commitment - and the active involvement of us all.

That's why today's event is important. It underlines the fact that gender equality is not a concern for some, but everyone. Making the sustainable development goals gender equal - in design, purpose, execution and follow-up - will benefit all of us: women and girls, men and boys.

The Swedish feminist government is committed to working with others to achieve this. And I commit, by the power of my office and my personal conviction, to do my share.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech at launch of UN Women "HeForShe IMPACT 10x10x10 Initiative"

Published 23 January 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

World Economic Forum, Davos 23 januari 2015 Check
against delivery.

Excellencies, panellists, participants,

I know from experience the force of gender equality. My background is in the male-dominated manufacturing sector, and I have seen first-hand how businesses improve through equal participation of women in the workplace and in decision-making.

This is why gender equality should be core government business – because it is both morally right and economically wise. Many of the challenges our societies face require structural changes in gender relations. If we fail, our societies will remain chained by gender stereotypes and we will see development arrested.

The new universal agenda for sustainable development post-2015 provides a unique opportunity that we must seize. We must take real steps for the advancement of women and girls in all areas of society.

Firstly, the political participation and representation of women needs to increase at all levels: in local councils and national parliaments, but also in peace processes and climate negotiations. We are still embarrassingly far from equality in terms of representation.

Secondly, the economic empowerment of women must be promoted. Shutting women out of economic activity is probably the biggest waste of

opportunity and talent in our world.

We need to reform tax and benefit systems, ensure women's full participation in the labour market and enhance women's access to resources, including land and capital and financial services.

Thirdly, we must address the root cause of gender inequalities: unequal power relations.

Harmful practices and violence against women and girls are ultimately about subordination. So is denying women and girls the right to decide over their own bodies and sexuality.

We must have zero tolerance for violence against women, and safeguard the human right to control one's own body. I also strongly believe in the empowering force of education, as shown by the inspiring example of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Malala Yousafzai.

But change, particularly of entrenched social norms, requires strong leadership and firm political commitment – and the active involvement of us all.

That's why today's event is important. It underlines the fact that gender equality is not a concern for some, but everyone. Making the sustainable development goals gender equal – in design, purpose, execution and follow-up – will benefit all of us: women and girls, men and boys.

The Swedish feminist government is committed to working with others to achieve this. And I commit, by the power of my office and my personal conviction, to do my share.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Speech at the Swedish-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce

Published 03 January 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

São Paulo, Brazil 3 januari 2015 Check against delivery.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to be here today at the Swedish-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce. Brazil carries a special meaning for me. My many trips to this fascinating country have enriched me both professionally and personally.

Today, Brazil is one of the major emerging economies and a confident global player. Brazil is by far Sweden's largest export market in Latin America, and we are proud to be one of Brazil's strategic partners.

To me and to my Government, it is obvious that we should give Brazil the highest priority. We are committed to strengthening our strategic partnership and our bilateral economic and business relations. For these reasons, I have taken this (important) opportunity to visit Brazil.

Swedish industry has a long tradition and a strong presence in Brazil. Our trade relations go back to the late 19th century. Today, more than 70 000 people are employed in more than 200 Swedish subsidiaries and Sweden-related companies.

These are impressive numbers by any standard. And we can still refer to São Paulo as one of Sweden's biggest industrial cities. As President Lula said during his state visit to Sweden in 2007: "São Paulo really is Sweden's best factory after Sweden itself".

Traditionally, Swedish manufacturing companies have dominated our presence here in Brazil. Today, I am happy to see that our commercial ties

with Brazil are growing, as both our economies evolve.

A number of Swedish high-tech companies are now operating in Brazil, not least in the life sciences sector. And music streaming service provider Spotify and electronic payment provider iZettle are examples of Swedish service companies that are exploring the Brazilian market.

I want to thank Swedish business representatives in Brazil for your contributions to the rich and diversified bilateral relations that we enjoy today.

But, there are other Swedish companies that we are also very interested in – they are the ones that are not here yet. The size of the Brazilian market provides great opportunities for most Swedish businesses with an international focus.

However, especially our small and medium-sized enterprises may not be aware of these opportunities – or may hesitate to take such a big leap. Here, my Government has the ambition to do more.

My Government intends to develop an export strategy. This strategy will help to boost exports, increase Sweden's attractiveness for investment and exchange visits, raise the share of exporting firms and enhance the participation of Swedish companies in the global economy.

We have already started the process. But I want to emphasise that the strategy should be developed in close cooperation with the Swedish business community and Swedish companies.

Yesterday, I met with President Rousseff in Palacio Planalto. We had an excellent discussion on how to develop our bilateral strategic partnership in areas such as political dialogue, trade and investment, innovation and the environment.

We agreed that our relations are entering a new phase. One important reason is the recently signed contract between the Brazilian Air Force and Saab of Sweden covering the development and production of 36 Gripen NG fighter aircraft.

The Gripen contract is a joint strategic project, involving a significant share of technology transfer. Developing and producing Gripen here will reinforce Brazil's already strong position in the global aviation market.

It will also deepen and broaden our relations across the board, and will have

many positive spin-off effects in other areas, for many years to come.

Sweden has a long tradition of internationally successful industrial and technological companies – Saab is only one example. There are many reasons for Sweden's success.

One fundamental factor is the general understanding in Sweden, traditionally shared by industry and the trade unions, that technological progress and increased productivity are essential to ensure that Swedish industry remains competitive in world markets.

Today, Sweden is one of the most innovative countries in the world. Sweden's research and development expenditure (R&D) as a percentage of GDP is among the highest in the world. The largest share of R&D in Sweden is conducted in companies.

Innovation is key to our competitiveness and attractiveness. Our innovation capacity plays a major role in our ability to create jobs, achieve economic growth and provide welfare.

Innovation is very high on my Government's agenda. We will establish a National Innovation Council, which I will lead.

Our ambition is to make Sweden a world leader in developing innovative products, services and business models through strong engagement and joint efforts by all relevant stakeholders in business, academia, government and civil society.

We will seek a holistic approach that includes all relevant policy areas. Also, facilitating the development of environmentally sustainable technologies and innovations is one of the primary goals.

Historically, public sector and industry collaboration in Sweden has been an important driver of innovation. We would like to see this collaboration enhanced.

My Government has also announced its intention to develop a re-industrialisation strategy for Sweden – in close dialogue with the business sector.

The main aim of the strategy will be to create more favourable conditions for companies to locate more of their advanced industrial manufacturing and R&D in Sweden.

To achieve this, we will renew efforts to enhance key factors such as supply of know-how, skills development, research and innovation, and improved access to capital for industry.

The strategy forms an integral part of our Government's overall employment goal – to have the lowest unemployment rate in the EU by 2020.

(Yesterday I listened to president talking about Patria educadora in her inauguration speech) I understand that Brazil is also increasingly investing in education, research and innovation. I am pleased that Sweden is a partner to Brazil in these important areas.

For example, earlier this year our Embassy arranged the third and very successful Swedish-Brazilian innovation week in a number of cities throughout Brazil.

We are also one of the countries participating in the Science Without Borders programme, the scholarship programme launched by President Rousseff a few years back.

I believe that expanding cooperation with Brazil on research, development and innovation is a true win-win situation that will pay off both in the short and long run.

I also discussed trade with President Dilma yesterday. As we know, global trade patterns are constantly evolving, and today trade is largely conducted within global value chains, where different stages of the production process are located across the world.

Inputs are traded between countries, assembled somewhere, and the final product traded again.

Moreover, value chains highlight the need for services, sometimes called the 'glue' of global value chains. In fact, trade in services today accounts for a large share of world trade.

The growing fragmentation of production across borders highlights the need for countries to have an open, predictable and transparent trade and investment regime.

Today, tariffs, non-tariff barriers and other restrictive measures impact not only foreign suppliers, but also domestic producers. Restrictions on the movement of people performing services abroad also hamper trade. The world economy today needs every stimulus to spur global growth.

Removing barriers to trade through trade agreements is one such stimulus.

I want to promote free trade both multilaterally and through bilateral free trade agreements – But a free trade based on social justice and respect for democracy, where countries compete with good products and services – not bad working conditions and low salaries.

We can finally see some positive results in the WTO multilateral trade negotiations. And hopefully, we will soon be able to see some progress in the EU-Mercosul negotiations too.

While this requires political leadership both in Europe and in the Mercosul countries, it also needs the support of business communities.

Free trade between our regions would be of mutual benefit and boost growth, employment and innovation in all our countries.

This visit has once again confirmed the excellent relations that Sweden and Brazil enjoy. And I see potential for even stronger relations in the years to come. I invite you all to be part of the exciting journey we are embarking on.

Thank you.



Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Address at panel debate 25 years of the CRC: is the world a better place for children?

Published 20 November 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

New York, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 20 november 2014 Check against delivery.

Your Majesty, Excellencies, Partners and Friends,

Thank you for letting me share this moment of celebration with you.

The rights of the child are of great importance to Sweden and to the new Government that I lead. Immediately upon taking office, we began work to incorporate the Convention on the Rights of the Child into Swedish law. Our commitment is to seek all possible ways to improve children's enjoyment of their rights – locally, nationally and globally.

Is the world a better place for children today, 25 years after the adoption of the Convention?

Undoubtedly, much has changed for the better:

- The Convention is the most ratified human rights treaty in the world.
- Infant mortality is clearly declining.
- School enrolment is rising, not least for girls.

But in other areas, there is still cause for alarm:

- Only nine per cent of the world's children have legal protection against domestic violence.
- Tens of thousands of children under the age of 18 continue to serve in armed forces.

- There are over 160 million child labourers worldwide.
- 1.2 million children are trafficked each year - many for purposes of sexual exploitation.

These outrages are a call to act. Far too many children live under conditions that wipe out their smiles.

We must make the world safe for our children. It is our collective duty. This means that all forms of violence and abuse towards children must be eliminated.

We cannot wave the banner of humanity if we deceive the most defenceless and vulnerable among us, our children, by being violent towards them - or by tolerating such violence.

Thirty-five years ago, Sweden decided to ban domestic violence against children. Other countries have followed, but there are still more that haven't. Violent discipline against children is still a general practice in many countries – all over the world, my own continent included.

We need to work through law reform and the promotion of positive parenting. We also need to raise awareness, to change public attitudes and behaviour. To be successful in this new drive for child protection, governments need to join hands with civil society, religious leaders and media.

The right to education is necessary to make progress – and make it sustainable. Education is the most effective weapon we have in the fight against poverty. It is also a powerful tool to make societies more equal and to unlock the potential of all. We cannot spare any effort to make education universal, for girls and boys.

I believe that children have a right to hope, to a future full of promise. I see this as a right in itself – for our children to claim, and us to provide.

I grew up in a foster home. And I thrived. I know what it means to be offered a future, a hope, a promise. And I know what it entails to be denied it. That is why joining you today is so rewarding, personally and politically.

Of course, we have heard presentations of facts and data that contrast starkly with the principles of the Convention. But we have also taken good note of examples and solutions.

My own conclusion is this: the vision of a better world for children, which lies at the heart of the Convention, can indeed come true. We need to focus our minds and feel the call of duty to future generations. Get inspired and get on with delivering concrete improvements for them – so that every child smiles.

This is a commitment we should rally round. And that is how I'd like to celebrate this day.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

World's Children's Prize Ceremony 2014

Published 29 October 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

We have heard about the fantastic work of three Child Rights Heroes today, heroes who are fighting for a better world for children, and for us all.

Malala Yousafzai, John Wood and Indira Ranamagar – I would like to congratulate you on behalf of the Swedish Government, and the Swedish people.

Your work is truly inspiring, and a tribute to the spirit of mankind.

The World's Children's Prize programme has educated and empowered more than 36 million children, and taught them their rights and the promise of democracy.

The prize spreads a light of hope where rights are violated. It turns children into enthusiastic agents of change.

And to all the children who have led this ceremony, and to the millions of schoolchildren who have participated in the World's Children's Prize programme – I promise you this:

We will always be with you in our shared fight for a world where the rights of the child are universally respected.

Let us tirelessly continue our work, so that every child can be safe, educated – and free.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Prime Minister's Office

Remarks at High-Level Conference on Employment in Europe, Milan, 8 October 2014

Published 08 October 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

High-Level Conference on Employment in Europe, Milano 8 oktober 2014

Mr President, dear colleagues,
Thank you for the kind words of welcome.

I am very pleased to be here today, and to discuss the most pressing issue currently facing us: the lack of jobs.

I could think of no better event to make my first appearance among you as Prime Minister. And I am very much looking forward to working closely with all of you.

My Government, which came into office only last Friday, has made jobs and employment its top priorities.

We have set ourselves an ambitious goal: to have the lowest unemployment rate in the EU by 2020.

Let me say some words on how we plan to tackle this challenge.

Firstly, by investing in people.

The key to results in employment is education, skills acquisition and life-long learning.

My Government therefore intends to ensure that every young person completes secondary education and to improve the quality and range of higher education.

This will contribute to unlocking the potential and talent of our young

people, which is a major task facing us all.

My Government will also introduce a 90-day guarantee for unemployed young people.

Every young person will be offered a job, an internship, a trainee position or an education programme within a maximum 90 days of being unemployed. I am very proud to deliver this reform.

* * *

Secondly, we need competitive economies to create more jobs.

Trade is essential to drive growth, as is innovation.

My background is in manufacturing and I understand its importance in a modern economy.

I have therefore set up an Innovation Council under my direction, for cooperation and coordination in the area of innovation policy. My Government aims to increase the share of GDP devoted to research and development.

Growth must also be sustainable.

We should boldly embrace the smart greening of our economies and societies.

The jobs of the future lie in saving our planet.

We must look more to renewable energy sources.

Important discussions await us on this issue, but it is worth recalling the long-term implications for competitiveness and job creation.

* * *

Thirdly, we must be serious about the participation of women in the labour market.

Closing the gap between male and female employment rates would increase EU growth considerably – by more than 12 per cent by 2030, according to some estimates.

The current under-utilisation of women in the labour force represents an erosion of human capital.

This is something the EU cannot afford.

Sweden was pleased to join many other Member States, as well as the Italian Presidency, in writing a letter to the Commission on this subject.

It called for more attention to be given to gender equality in the Europe 2020 Strategy.

The headline target of 75 per cent employment for women and men by 2020 will only be reached if there is a clear and stronger commitment to gender equality.

We hope this will inform the review of the strategy.

* * *

In closing, I believe that we have avenues and tools to address the challenge of youth unemployment.

The Europe 2020 Strategy and the European Semester provide opportunities to make progress on many of the issues raised by us today, particularly on growth-enhancing measures.

Nevertheless, one size seldom fits all.

Expansion of labour, decent work for all and structural reforms all require national action if they are to be effective and legitimate.

Sharing our experience, as we are doing today, is a great way to enhance our understanding and to increase the effect of our policies.

I am pleased to now be part of this effort.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Joint Statement on UN Common Agenda report

Published 10 September 2021 Updated 20 September 2021

Today UN Secretary General António Guterres launched his Common Agenda report.

The report comes at a key moment for the future of multilateralism and it sets out a bold plan for how we as a global community must tackle the climate crisis and loss of bio diversity, pandemics, inequality and other existential crisis we are facing today and will have to deal with tomorrow. We stand before the threat of breakdown or the opportunity of breakthrough. We must seize this opportunity to build a better future.

We, Costa Rica, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, South Africa, Spain and Sweden are deeply dedicated to a reinvigorated rules-based system of international cooperation, with a stronger and a more inclusive UN at its core. At the upcoming meeting of the UN General Assembly, we will send a clear strong signal that we cannot wait. We must urgently step up our actions to strengthen the global health architecture, tackle the planetary emergency more forcefully, ensure inclusion, equality participation and justice, strengthen peacebuilding and our ability to tackle new threats and build a more open and inclusive multilateral system where youth, civil society, private sector, academia and others have a space at the table.

We, the undersigned, commit to support the efforts of the Secretary-General and the United Nations to translate the ambitious agenda he has just presented into reality. We will provide our full support to efforts to strengthen international cooperation and get ready to tackle the big challenges of our time together. We will respond to the voices of young people, who clearly and rightfully demand that we act to ensure that this

opportunity - to strengthen international cooperation for the greater good - is not lost. This is the call of our times.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

Published 20 January 2021

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, 20 January 2021

Today, Joe Biden was sworn in as the 46th President of the United States, and Kamala Harris as Vice President. I warmly congratulate President Biden and Vice President Harris. The Swedish Government looks forward to close cooperation with their administration.

The Presidential election campaign and the period thereafter have been dramatic. The storming of the Capitol was an assault on democracy that showed what polarisation, populism and extremism can lead to – even in well-established democracies. At the same time, it is important to note that, in the end, democracy and the rule of law proved stronger than the forces that attempted to overturn the election results: the US institutions fulfilled their constitutional roles in the election process, and the new President has now been installed.

President Biden is facing several major challenges, not least with regard to the pandemic and the economy. The difficult task of uniting a divided country is something the President must do together with US society as a whole. I know Joe Biden from his time as Vice President, and I am certain that he is the right person for this job. The importance of unifying the nation and looking forward were also key themes in President Biden's inaugural address.

Our relations with the United States are of central importance to Sweden, including for our security and prosperity. The Swedish Government sees great opportunities for further broadening and deepening the excellent cooperation between our countries, not least concerning multilateralism, democracy, new technologies and security in our neighbourhood. In the

wake of the pandemic and climate change, Sweden and the United States can, together with others, lead a green transition that creates jobs for the future.

I look forward to close cooperation with President Biden and his administration. We have an important and shared task ahead of us – for democracy, peace, security, prosperity, the climate and multilateralism.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the developments in Washington D.C.

Published 07 January 2021

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, 7 January 2021

Deeply worrying developments in Washington, D.C. This is an assault on democracy. President Trump and several members of Congress bear substantial responsibility for developments. The democratic election process must be respected.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Joint statement by the Members of European Council

Published 30 October 2020

We, European Leaders, are shocked and saddened by the terrorist attacks in France.

We condemn in the strongest possible terms these attacks which represent attacks on our shared values.

We stand united and firm in our solidarity with France, with the French people and the Government of France – in our common and continued fight against terrorism and violent extremism.

We call on Leaders around the world to work towards dialogue and understanding among communities and religions rather than division.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the developments in Belarus

Published 18 August 2020

I take a very serious view of the developments in Belarus. The presidential election of 9 August was neither free nor fair, and I condemn the violence and arrests used against peaceful demonstrators, for which the Belarusian regime and authorities are responsible.

The extremely widespread demonstrations we have seen in Belarus in recent days show very clearly that the Belarusian people do not accept the announced election result, and are seeking democratic change and reform.

Before the election, the Swedish Government made it clear that the election must be conducted in accordance with international standards.

Since the election, we have been a driving force in the European Union for resolute action, including sanctions targeting those responsible for electoral fraud and abuses.

The EU has acted decisively and has begun drawing up targeted sanctions. On Wednesday, an extraordinary meeting of the European Council will be held on Belarus, and I will continue to push for an active and clear EU response.

We stand united with the Belarusian people, and fully support their right to decide over their own future and freely elect their leaders. It is vital that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Belarus and the will of the Belarusian people are respected by all.



Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union

Published 31 January 2020

- As of midnight tonight, the United Kingdom will no longer be a member of the European Union. No country has ever left the EU, and I deeply regret that the UK is now doing so. The UK has been our close partner in the EU, and it has contributed to making the EU safer and stronger.
- Now that the day of withdrawal is upon us, it is time to look ahead and take the next step in our relationship. Sweden, and the EU, will continue to have strong ties with the UK. This is important for our economy, our security and our development in Europe.
- Even though a large and important country is leaving the EU, the EU remains strong. This is important for Sweden. Being a member of the EU is of great importance to Sweden: it makes us safer and more prosperous, and is better for our economy. As a country that strongly depends on exports, the single market – with the free movement of goods, services, capital and people – is vital to Sweden. It gives Swedish companies direct access to the world's largest market – contributing to jobs, growth and increased welfare in Sweden.



Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement in connection with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven's telephone call this evening with Iran's President Hassan Rouhani

Published 12 January 2020

The Prime Minister conveyed Sweden's condemnation of the shooting down of passenger flight PS 752. He stressed that the relatives of those affected are entitled to a swift explanation of responsibility for the shooting down, and that Iran must take full responsibility, including in relation to those affected. President Rouhani promised that Iranian authorities would fully cooperate.

The Prime Minister noted that Iran's admission provides the basis for a comprehensive and transparent investigation that must clarify all of the circumstances surrounding the shooting down. The national experts that Sweden and the other affected countries are entitled to send must be given full insight into the investigation. The Prime Minister also emphasised the close cooperation between the countries affected.

The Prime Minister expressed his deep concern about the Iranian missile attack earlier in the week, which also targeted the international presence in Iraq, in which Sweden is participating, and he noted that any attack on international troops must be condemned. The Prime Minister urged Iran to exercise restraint and take concrete measures to reduce tensions in the region. He also emphasised the role the EU could play in supporting de-escalation, regional dialogue and political solutions.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement from PM Stefan Löfven regarding the Ukrainian passenger aircraft

Published 11 January 2020

Statement from PM Stefan Löfven regarding the Ukrainian passenger aircraft .

Here in Sweden, and around the whole world, people are grieving for the victims of the aircraft crash outside Tehran on 8 January. I feel strongly for all of those who have lost a relative.

Iran has assumed responsibility for the aircraft being shot down. Iran has stated that the aircraft was shot down by mistake. This statement provides the basis for a comprehensive and transparent investigation, which must shed light on all of the circumstances surrounding the crash. The relatives of those affected are entitled to a full explanation of responsibility for the crash. We demand that Iran cooperates without restrictions in the continuing investigation, and that the affected countries are given the opportunity to participate using their national expertise and are given full insight into the investigation.

I take a very serious view of the statement Iran has now given. The fact that the aircraft was shot down is terrible and horrifying. Shooting down a civilian aircraft - regardless of whether or not this was a mistake - is an action that must be condemned and for which Iran must take full responsibility, including in relation to those affected.

Sweden is in close contact with the other countries whose citizens were killed in the crash, and yesterday a group was established at foreign minister level (the International Coordination and Response Group for victims of Flight PS752) together with these countries. I will ensure that the group

quickly establishes contact in light of the statement from Iran. We also have the support of the EU in our demands for a full investigation and for Iran's cooperation in this.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement on the information regarding the crash of the Ukrainian passenger aircraft

Published 10 January 2020

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven's statement on the information regarding the crash of the Ukrainian passenger aircraft.

I spoke yesterday with Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and this morning with the United Kingdom's Prime Minister Boris Johnson in light of the very serious reports that the Ukrainian passenger aircraft may have been shot down by an Iranian missile. We agreed that these reports further increase the need for a swift, complete and transparent investigation.

We agreed that the countries affected need to have the opportunity to contribute their national expertise and be given full insight into the investigation.

We also agreed on the importance of close cooperation between all countries affected.

I also spoke earlier yesterday with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky. Ukraine is a key actor in cooperation between the affected countries and we will have close contact with Ukraine during the investigation.

It is crucial now that all parties work towards reducing tensions in the region. My thoughts go to the victims and their families.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Telephone discussion between Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan

Published 18 September 2019

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven today received a telephone call from Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan. The call mainly focused on the situation in Jammu and Kashmir. Mr Löfven highlighted the messages recently conveyed by the EU on developments. Among the points he emphasised were the need for de-escalation and bilateral dialogue between India and Pakistan to reach a political solution, and the importance of including the people of Jammu and Kashmir in discussions and decisions about their future. Finally, Mr Löfven brought up the importance of combating terrorism.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven congratulates H.E. Boris Johnson on his appointment as Prime Minister

Published 24 July 2019

I congratulate H.E. Boris Johnson on being appointed Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Relations with the United Kingdom are important for Sweden, not least in the areas of trade and security, cultural exchange, and research and education. I look forward to close and trustful cooperation with the new Prime Minister.

We hope that the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU is concluded in an orderly way. I also look forward to further developing and strengthening the excellent relations Sweden already enjoys with the United Kingdom.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the election of Ursula von der Leyen as President of the European Commission

Published 16 July 2019

I welcome the approval of Ursula von der Leyen as President of the European Commission. It was high time there was a woman in this key position. It is positive that the leadership of the EU institutions is now being put in place so that we can continue the work on the crucial issues for our future, such as jobs, climate change, migration and security.

The Government will now initiate discussions with the incoming President on the Swedish Commissioner and the distribution of portfolios. We will of course contribute to the creation of a gender-balanced Commission.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by the Prime Minister on the plane crash outside Umeå

Published 14 July 2019

"It is with great sorrow that I have learned about the plane crash outside Umeå. My thoughts go to the victims and their families at this difficult time. The Government is in close contact with the relevant authorities, and it is now important to investigate the cause of the crash," said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by the Prime Minister in connection with the terrorist attack in New Zealand

Published 15 March 2019

”A horrific terrorist attack has been carried out targeting people at Friday afternoon prayers in Christchurch, New Zealand. This is a heinous attack directed at an open society, the aim of which is to create fear and division. It is in such difficult times as these that community is the most important. I would like to express my solidarity with New Zealand and show that we are on their side. My thoughts go to the victims, their families and loved ones,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by the Prime Minister concerning the plane crash in Ethiopia

Published 10 March 2019 Updated 22 March 2019

“I have sent Sweden’s deepest condolences to Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed following the horrific plane crash in Ethiopia. We mourn together with all those who have lost their loved ones today,” said Prime Minister Stefan Löfven in a statement concerning the plane crash in Ethiopia.



Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the passing of President George HW Bush

Published 01 December 2018

George HW Bush was President of the United States of America during a time of important transition in the world. He was politically active throughout the post-war years, and led the United States during one of the greatest periods of upheaval of our time – the fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of the Cold War and the break-up of the Soviet Union. During these decisive years, new forms of cooperation could be attempted between former adversaries. President Bush's attitude contributed to a stability in Eastern Europe that would otherwise probably have been difficult to achieve.

President Bush believed in the UN and multilateralism as the best way forward. In the latter years of his life, he took a clear stand in favour of common sense, and against increasing polarisation.

President Bush will be remembered for his deeds, and for his humility, his humour and his fundamental decency. Our thoughts and condolences go to the President's children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, and to the entire American people.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the situation in Syria

Published 18 September 2018

The immediate threat of a large-scale military offensive against Idlib now, seems to be over. This hopefully means that an unprecedented humanitarian disaster has been averted. This comes after Russia and Turkey have agreed to establish a demilitarised zone. The detailed contents of the agreement remain unclear.

In the United Nations Security Council, Sweden has been pushing for a ceasefire, the protection of civilians and respect for international humanitarian law. We will continue our efforts in the Security Council and in the EU to prevent a military offensive and avoid any disastrous developments. What is now required is full respect for international law and the understanding that only a political solution can create sustainable peace.



Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the conflict in Syria

Published 15 September 2018

The Syrian nightmare has been going on for more than seven years. An offensive against Idlib is likely to spark another humanitarian disaster. Three million people, including one million children, are trapped in Idlib.

Despite this, the Syrian regime and its allies are preparing a large-scale military offensive. Sweden continues to call on the Astana guarantors – Russia, Iran and Turkey – to do everything possible to prevent this offensive. I fully support UN Secretary-General António Guterres, who, in the strongest terms, has warned of a bloodbath and stressed that it is imperative to protect civilians. Sweden is making a major contribution to humanitarian efforts. The UN recalls the need for global preparedness to deal with the severe humanitarian consequences of an offensive.

I have spoken to UN Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura about the situation in Syria and specifically in Idlib. Sweden supports Staffan de Mistura's work and the international efforts to urge those responsible to prevent an offensive, protect civilians and de-escalate the violence. I have also spoken to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, who underscored the importance of creating scope for further negotiations.

As a member of the UN Security Council, Sweden is pushing for a peaceful solution to the conflict in Syria and for the protection of civilians. But ultimately, the responsibility lies with the Syrian regime and its allies, not least Russia and Iran.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Joint Press Statement from the Summit between India and the Nordic countries

Published 17 April 2018

Visit of H.E. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, to Stockholm 16-17 April 2018.

Today in Stockholm, the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of Denmark Lars Løkke Rasmussen, the Prime Minister of Finland Juha Sipilä, the Prime Minister of Iceland Katrín Jakobsdóttir, the Prime Minister of Norway Erna Solberg and the Prime Minister of Sweden Stefan Löfven held a Summit hosted by the Swedish Prime Minister and the Indian Prime Minister.

During the Summit, the Prime Ministers pledged to deepen cooperation between the Nordic countries and India, and focused their discussions on key issues related to global security, economic growth, innovation and climate change. The Prime Ministers reaffirmed the importance of free trade as a catalyst for achieving inclusive growth and realising the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Prime Ministers acknowledged that innovation and digital transformation drive growth in an interconnected world and underpin a growing engagement between the Nordic countries and India. The role of the Nordic countries as global innovation leaders was underlined. The Nordic approach to innovation systems, characterised by a strong collaboration between public sector, private sector and academia, was discussed, and synergies were identified with India's rich pool of talent and skills.

The Summit emphasised the Indian Government's strong commitment to innovation and digital initiatives as key to prosperity and sustainable

development, with national flagship programmes such as Make in India, Startup India, Digital India and Clean India. Nordic solutions in clean technologies, maritime solutions, port modernisation, food processing, health, life-sciences and agriculture were mentioned. The Summit welcomed the Nordic Sustainable Cities Project aimed at supporting the Smart Cities Program of the Government of India.

The Prime Ministers noted that the unique strengths of India and the Nordic countries offer immense opportunities for trade and investment diversification and mutually beneficial collaboration. During the talks, the importance of the rules-based multilateral trading system as well as open and inclusive international trade for prosperity and growth was underlined. The Ease of Doing Business practices were emphasised as a priority for both the Nordic countries and India.

The Prime Ministers acknowledged that terrorism and violent extremism are major challenges for the international community. They discussed global security, including cyber security, based upon their shared values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and their commitment to uphold the rules-based international system. They also discussed export control and non-proliferation. The Nordic countries welcomed India's application for membership of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group and reaffirmed their commitment to work constructively within the Group with the aim of reaching a positive outcome at the earliest opportunity.

The Prime Ministers reaffirmed their support for the United Nations and the Secretary-General's reform efforts to ensure a UN fit to support Member States to deliver on Agenda 2030 and took note of his proposals to strengthen the UN, including in the areas of development, peace operations, peacebuilding and conflict prevention. The Nordic countries and India reaffirmed the need for reform of the UN Security Council, including its expansion in both permanent and non-permanent seats to make it more representative, accountable, effective and responsive to the realities of the 21st century. The Nordic countries agree that India is a strong candidate for a permanent seat in a reformed Security Council expanded with both permanent and non-permanent members.

The Prime Ministers reaffirmed their full commitment to implementing the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development as well as the ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement. They agreed to continue efforts to develop cleaner energy systems, renewable energy and fuels, increased energy efficiency and technologies for cleaner energy production. The Prime

Ministers noted that women's full and meaningful participation in political, social and economic life is key to inclusive development and agreed to promote the empowerment of women.

The Prime Ministers agreed that a strong partnership can help spur innovations, economic growth, sustainable solutions and mutually beneficial trade and investments. The Summit emphasized the importance of strong people-to-people contacts through education, culture, labour mobility and tourism – all areas where the Nordic countries and India see a continuous increase in both interests and numbers.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Sweden-India Joint Action Plan, agreed by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Published 17 April 2018

Visit of H.E. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, to
Stockholm 16-17 April 2018.

At the invitation of Prime Minister Löfven, Prime Minister Modi paid an official visit to Stockholm on 16-17 April 2018.

Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Löfven met on 17 April and recalled their Joint Statement issued in Mumbai in 2016, welcomed progress so far on its implementation and reconfirmed their commitment to the Joint Statement as the overall political framework for cooperation.

India and Sweden share values of democracy, rule of law, respect of human rights, pluralism and a rule-based international order. Both Prime Ministers reiterated their commitment to dialogue and cooperation on key international issues of mutual concern, including climate change, Agenda 2030, international peace and security, human rights, gender equality, humanitarian issues, international trade. The Prime Ministers underlined the urgency to step up global efforts to combat climate change, and emphasized their common continued commitment to the Paris Agreement. Both sides agreed to continue security policy dialogue at the level of National Security Advisors, in line with the Joint Statement.

Both Prime Ministers agreed to close cooperation in the UN, and other multilateral fora. They took note of the UN Secretary-General's reform efforts to ensure a UN fit to support Member States to deliver on Agenda

2030. They also reaffirmed the need for reform of the UN Security Council, including its expansion, to make it more representative, accountable, effective, and responsive to the realities of the 21st century. Prime Minister Modi thanked Prime Minister Löfven for Sweden's support to India's candidature for non-permanent membership of United Nations Security Council (2021-22) and for Sweden's support to India's permanent membership of a reformed and expanded United Nations Security Council.

Both Prime Ministers expressed their commitment to support and strengthen global export control, non-proliferation and disarmament objectives and looked forward to close cooperation in these areas. Prime Minister Löfven welcomed India's recent accession to the international export control regimes, including to Australia Group (AG), Wassenaar Arrangement (WA), Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), and The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC), and expressed support for India's membership of the Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG).

Both Prime Ministers called for greater unity and stronger international partnership to counter terrorism, disrupt terrorist networks and financing, and to prevent violent extremism. They emphasized that the global counter terrorism legal framework should be regularly updated to address the changing threat of terrorism with strength, and underscored that any measures taken to counter terrorism comply with international law. In this regard both countries called for an early finalisation of the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT).

To further promote bilateral cooperation, they decided on the following India-Sweden Joint Action Plan, under which India and Sweden, through relevant ministries, agencies and actors, aim to:

Innovation

- Initiate a multi-stake holder Innovation Partnership for a Sustainable Future, underpinning our mutual commitment to drive prosperity and growth and address societal challenges such as climate change and sustainable development through innovation.
- Carry out dialogue and cooperative activities in the field of intellectual property rights under the MoU signed between the Swedish Patent Registration Office and the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion of India.

Trade and investment

- Encourage trade and facilitate investment in both directions, such as Sweden's investment in India through 'Invest India' and Indian investment in Sweden through 'Business Sweden'.
- Encourage the work of the India-Sweden Business Leaders Round Table (ISBLRT) to further strengthen India-Sweden business cooperation within inter alia smart cities, digitization, skills development and defence, and to move its relations, ideas, partnerships and recommendations forward.

Smart Cities and Next Generation Transport

- Exchange knowledge and explore cooperation on smart cities, including transit-oriented urban development, air pollution control, waste management, waste-to-energy, waste-water treatment, district cooling and circular economy, including through dialogue and capacity building.
- Exchange know-how and explore cooperation in the areas of electro-mobility as well as renewable fuels.
- Exchange know-how and explore cooperation in the area of railways, such as railway policy development, safety, training and operation and maintenance of railways.

Smart, sustainable and renewable energy

- Engage and seek mutual collaboration on the demonstration and development of smart grid technologies such as smart metering, demand response, power quality management, distribution automation, electric vehicle/charging infrastructure as well as renewable integration, through research, capacity building, policy cooperation and learning on market design prerequisites including business models.
- Expand research, innovation and business cooperation on new innovative energy technologies through the India-Sweden Innovations' Accelerator, focusing on technologies to utilise renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Women's skills development and empowerment

- Encourage joint efforts towards women's empowerment by skilling

employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for women through projects such as “Kraftsamla” - a project undertaken by Swedish and Indian actors in Pune, Maharashtra which provides skills training for women in jobs suitable for industry such as forklift drivers, warehouse managers, assembly operators and more.

Defence

- Explore the finalization of a bilateral agreement on exchange and mutual protection of classified information for cooperation in the defence area.
- Enhance Indo-Swedish dialogue on defence cooperation. Proceed with India-Sweden defence seminars in India and Sweden in 2018-19 and explore, together with the ISBLRT, opportunities for investment in Defence Production Corridors in India.
- Encourage industry partners to develop supply chains for small and medium sized enterprises (SME) with major Defence & Aerospace Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs).

Space and science

- Acknowledge the importance of bilateral cooperation on space research, technology, innovation and applications. Encourage the space agencies and other space entities to enhance space cooperation under the Memorandum of Understanding, particularly in Earth observation, planetary exploration and satellite ground station activities, through inter alia an Indo-Swedish Space Seminar and a visit by an Indian delegation to Swedish space establishments.
- Explore possible collaboration between the European Spallation Source (ESS), hosted by Sweden, and Indian partners.

Health and Life Sciences

- Enhance collaboration on the priority issues identified in the field of health, such as health research, pharmacovigilance and anti-microbial resistance, under the Memorandum of Understanding in the field of health care and public health.

Follow-up

- The Indo-Swedish Joint Commission on Scientific and Economic Affairs, Foreign Office Consultations and other relevant bilateral fora and Joint Working Groups will oversee the implementation of this Action Plan.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Joint Declaration on Sweden-India Innovation Partnership for a Sustainable Future

Published 17 April 2018

The governments of Sweden and India hereby agree to deepen our collaboration in the field of innovation through a strategic innovation partnership. The innovation partnership represents a step-change in India-Sweden science and innovation collaboration, underpinning our mutual commitment to drive prosperity and address global challenges such as climate change and sustainable development through innovation.

The partnership sets the framework for future cooperation to jointly tackle societal challenges including innovation driven challenges on cross sectoral issues with multi-stakeholder/agency participation from both countries. The partnership will cover co-operation across a wide spectrum, from the creation of effective innovation systems to the commercialisation of new technologies. The partnership is based on the principles of co-funding, co-development and co-creation, towards mutual benefits, making full use of our complementary strengths. The partnership will deepen the long and fruitful relations between our countries, building upon the Joint Statement between our Prime Ministers issued in Mumbai 2016 and the Joint Action Plan agreed in Stockholm in 2018. Existing MoUs in areas such as science and technology, sustainable urban development, biotechnology, energy, environment, space, and health and disease prevention will play an encompassing role in the partnership.

Sweden and India will explore ways to increase the impact of our bilateral

cooperation in innovation, science and technology, at multiple levels and by engaging stakeholders from government, agencies, industry, enterprises and academia. We also agree to encourage innovation funding agencies and industry to develop joint programmes and calls, in dialogue with relevant stakeholders.

The Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation in Sweden, together with the Ministry of Science and Technology in India (Department of Science and Technology and Department of Biotechnology) are the leading partners for developing collaboration within the partnership, including, but not limited to, the following areas and activities:

Areas for collaboration

- Smart cities and transportation including e-mobility
- Smart industry, digitalisation, start-ups and IPR issues
- New materials and advanced manufacturing
- Space and aeronautics
- Circular and bio-based economy including biomaterials
- Health and life sciences including biomedical devices

Activities to deepen our cooperation

Sweden-India Innovation Dialogue

Both countries will explore how to optimize the formal bilateral collaboration mechanisms, to increase synergies between policy areas and enable exchange of experiences and best practice regarding innovation policies and the creation of innovation ecosystems. This will include establishing a Sweden-India Innovation Dialogue with key innovation stakeholders from relevant line ministries and agencies to provide overall strategic direction for innovation policy development. The dialogue will be supported and advised by an Expert group.

Sweden-India Partnership Development Activities

Both countries will organise Partnership Development Activities (PDA) in the identified areas of collaboration, to enable information dissemination and promote networking of key research agencies, industry players, enterprises, R&D institutions and other funding agencies to identify common challenges

and develop joint projects. The PDA will also be a forum for communicating and showcasing the wide range of existing Indo-Swedish innovation activities.

Sweden-India Joint Industrial R&D Projects

Both countries will jointly commit to co-funding for support of bilateral innovation projects. Both countries will launch challenge-based joint industrial R&D and technological innovation projects to address challenges and opportunities identified by both sides. The projects will be funded on an 'n+n model' that combines funding from government and businesses. The joint funding will increase the impact and concrete deliverables of the innovation collaboration by investing in jointly developed projects, making full use of the comparative strengths of our industries and innovation systems.

Sweden-India Start-up Collaboration

Both countries will explore opportunities for start-up innovation collaboration, to accelerate the transition of research and technology development into commercial propositions. The start-up collaboration can be based out of existing structures in India, and may include the creation of an incubator exchange program for Swedish and Indian start-ups, including incubator managers, as well as offering a forum to facilitate cooperation between incubators and technology clusters. The start-up collaboration may result in the creation of bilateral innovation challenges for start-ups in Sweden and India. Both countries will also encourage activities to bring the innovation clusters in Sweden and India together.

Research and Innovation Infrastructure and Testbeds

Both countries will explore the establishing of mechanisms to facilitate mutual access to research and innovation infrastructure in both countries. This may include collaboration between testbeds and the creation of open innovation arenas, new testbeds and living labs, within the areas for collaboration mentioned above.

The way ahead

The implementation of the innovation partnership will be supported by a roadmap document that will be developed by the Swedish Ministry of

Enterprise and Innovation together with the Indian Ministry of Science and Technology (Department of Science and Technology and Department of Biotechnology) in consultation with other line ministries, as appropriate. Meetings will be set up on a regular basis throughout 2018 and onwards, with due involvement and support from both sides. Joint activities will be coordinated between agencies designated by the Indian government and the Swedish government. To ensure a comprehensive approach with maximum impact, relevant institutional and government stakeholders on both sides, as well as business representatives, research institutes and academia will be invited to contribute to these activities, as appropriate.

Progress in the implementation of the partnership will be reported to the Ministers of Swedish Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation and the Indian Ministry of Science and Technology in 2020, for review and assessment.



Statement from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement in relation to the anniversary of the murder of Zaida Catalán

Published 12 March 2018

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström.

One year ago, Zaida Catalán and Michael Sharp disappeared. They were later found brutally murdered in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The loss has been deeply felt. In Sweden, Zaida was important to many people. Before becoming an international civil servant, she had been a youth leader of one of the political parties now in government. Indeed, she was always on a mission to change the world for the better; to make it more just, equal and dignified. She was energetic, with contagious enthusiasm and an unwavering commitment to her ideals and service.

Since day one, the Swedish government has worked to ensure that the murders are fully investigated, and the perpetrators brought to justice. We support the work of the follow-on mechanism appointed by the Secretary-General to assist Congolese investigative authorities. Further international investigation may be necessary. And if so, we will call for it and work to ensure it is carried out. No stone should be left unturned in this work.

This is important not only for the sake of achieving justice for Zaida and Michael. It also matters because they worked for the UN, as members of a group mandated by the Security Council. The safety of sanctions experts must be ensured, because this must never happen again. For this reason, Sweden took the initiative to include a specific criterion related to sanctions expert in the sanction regime for the DRC. Work is also underway within the UN system to review security routines for experts in the field. Sweden will

continue to promote human rights and democratic development in the DRC,
to carry forward the legacy of Zaida and Michael.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

Published 10 December 2017

I am outraged by the attack on the synagogue in Gothenburg yesterday and that violence against Jews was incited at a demonstration in Malmö. There is no place for anti-Semitism in Swedish society. The perpetrators must be held to account. All democratic forces must now work together to build a tolerant and open society in which everyone feels safe.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

Published 25 September 2017

This evening, I congratulated Angela Merkel on her victory in the German elections. I look forward to continuing to develop our close cooperation – bilaterally, in Europe and globally. It is important to continue this work together for a strong and democratic Europe.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Congratulations from Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

Published 01 September 2017

“We are delighted today to hear that Princess Sofia, Prince Carl Philip and big brother Alexander have a new addition to their family. I offer my warmest congratulations to the growing family,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

Published 18 August 2017

I am appalled that yet another European city has been affected by grief and worry following what is feared to be a terrorist attack. My thoughts are with those whose relatives have died or been injured and all of those who have not yet been able to make contact with their loved ones.

We are following developments closely. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is in contact with the Embassy in Madrid and the Consulate in Barcelona, which are ready to assist Swedes on the ground.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Joint Nordic letter to President Trump regarding the Paris Agreement

Published 01 June 2017

Today the Nordic heads of government have sent a joint letter to US President Trump regarding the future of the Paris Agreement

1 June 2017

His Excellency
Mr Donald J. Trump
President of the United States of America

Dear Mr President,

In Paris, in December 2015, global leaders made a commitment. To our children. To future generations. To the world.

We must reduce global warming. The effects are already visible in all parts of our planet. It is of crucial importance that all parties stick to the Paris Agreement.

We strongly urge you to show global leadership – and to make the right decision.

With the very best of intentions.

Your Nordic Friends,

Lars Løkke Rasmussen
Juha Sipilä

Bjarni Benediktsson
Erna Solberg
Stefan Löfven



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven concerning the attack in Manchester

Published 23 May 2017

Last night the world witnessed a horrific attack, targeting children, young people and their parents on their way home following a concert in Manchester. This was a brutal and senseless act that breaks the heart of everyone with any human empathy. We mourn the dead; our thoughts go to the families whose loved ones did not come home, and to those whose lives have been changed forever. Sweden shares the shock and outrage of the British people.

British police are treating this as an act of terrorism. The Swedish Government is following the situation closely and is in close contact with the British authorities. We stand ready to assist in any way we can in this dark hour.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by the Prime Minister of Sweden on the result of the French election

Published 07 May 2017

- We congratulate Emmanuel Macron on his victory in the French presidential election. This is a victory for the French people and for European cooperation. New opportunities will now open up for the proactive agenda needed to strengthen the EU, including more jobs and fair working conditions, a stronger climate policy and a functioning asylum system in which everyone takes responsibility.
- Cooperation between Sweden and France is strong. The Government will now forge new ties with Macron's government and work with them to advance European cooperation.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on Drottninggatan, Stockholm, 8 April

Published 08 April 2017

– Today is a day of mourning. The whole of Sweden is grieving the victims of yesterday's horrific attack. Four people have died and 15 are injured.

The aim of this kind of attack is to spread fear and hate. Over the last twenty-four hours, Sweden has also shown itself at its best. We have helped each other, supported each other, and opened up our homes. This shows that there is a strength in Sweden that nobody can take away from us.

The Swedish Security Service and Swedish Police work around the clock to prevent and deter this kind of act. But sadly, it is simply not possible to guarantee that they will never happen. The Government has implemented a range of measures to combat terrorism and violent extremism. In the period ahead, we will need to take further measures, both at national level and at EU and international level. We will do everything in our power to ensure that people feel safe in Sweden. And Sweden does not stand alone. Condolences are arriving from people all over the world; they are with us, and we are with them.

A memorial ceremony will be held at 12.00 on Monday 10 April. In connection with this, a minute's silence will be held. Today, the whole of Sweden mourns. But we will get through this – together.

We are very grateful for the expressions of solidarity and condolences from around the world after yesterday's attack in Stockholm.



Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven in connection with the incident in Stockholm

Published 08 April 2017

Today we have suffered a horrific attack in the heart of our capital. At 14.53 a truck ploughed down Drottninggatan in Stockholm and into Åhléns department store. We know that four people have died. Many more are injured. An entire country is united, in mourning, anger and resolve.

Firstly, to those of you who today are mourning a loss or are worried about someone who is injured, I want you to know that Sweden is by your side.

The police have reinforced their presence throughout the country and in strategic locations, and report that a person has been apprehended. The National Task Force is in operation. The Swedish Armed Forces are on heightened alert. The Government has gathered together. We have been keeping up-to-date and ensuring that the authorities have the resources they need and are supporting them in their efforts. We have also decided to strengthen border controls. We still urge everyone to be vigilant and to follow the information from the police.

The police are investigating this as a likely terrorist attack. If it is a terrorist attack, and regardless of whether it was carried out by an organisation or a lone perpetrator, the aim of terrorism is to undermine democracy. To sow discord between people, so that more people will begin to hate and distrust one another. But those kinds of acts will never succeed in Sweden. We know that our enemy is this kind of vile murderer – not one another. We will use all of Sweden's strength to track you down. Our message will always be clear: You cannot suppress us. You cannot control our lives. You will never win.

We are not alone. Leaders from all around the world have sent their messages of sympathy. At this difficult time Sweden is also showing its strength. The police, hospitals and rescue service personnel are working hard to help and ensure security for others. People in Stockholm have opened up their homes and workplaces to each other and displayed compassion, warmth and respect. You make Sweden proud.

I know that many are now worried and frightened. Many of us tonight are hugging those we love more tightly. The Government and I will work tirelessly to ensure your security. Take care of each other. Together we will take care of Sweden.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

Published 07 April 2017

Sweden has been attacked. All indications are that it was a terrorist attack. Our thoughts are with the victims, their families and those injured.

The Government is being kept up-to-date and is doing everything it can to assist the relevant authorities in their work. I encourage everyone to be vigilant and to pay attention to the information from the police.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement on 5 April by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven regarding the chemical weapons attack in Syria

Published 05 April 2017 Updated 06 April 2017

The war in Syria is a shameful stain on humanity.

Yesterday, in Idlib province in Syria, there was an attack on a rebel-controlled area. There are strong indications that this was the worst attack using chemical weapons since August 2013, when the Security Council decided that all such weapons should be eliminated in Syria. This attack must be added to other war crimes carried out during the conflict in Syria.

There are no words to describe the images of parents trying to save their children from being suffocated by the poisonous gases.

Today, the Security Council will consider a resolution condemning the attack, requiring a rapid international investigation of the chemical weapons attack and underlining the importance of holding those responsible to account. Sweden will do everything we can to ensure the resolution is adopted.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the UK's intention to withdraw from the EU

Published 29 March 2017

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the UK's intention to withdraw from the EU.

Prime Minister Theresa May intends today, 29 March, to notify the European Council of the United Kingdom's intention to withdraw from the EU. The notification will start the clock ticking and the UK will leave the EU when an agreement on the withdrawal takes effect, but not later than two years after the notification unless the European Council unanimously decides to extend the deadline.

"The UK has been a close and valuable partner in the EU. We regret the UK's decision to leave the EU, but it's good that the negotiation process can now begin after quite a long waiting period. I welcome the constructive approach in Prime Minister May's letter. I would like to see orderly and results-oriented negotiations, and want our relationship with the UK to be as positive and mutually beneficial as possible even after the withdrawal. This is important for the UK, the EU and for Sweden," says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

"Sweden's key priorities are a good financial agreement where the UK pays for commitments made, and a good solution for the EU citizens who have exercised their right to settle in the UK, and vice versa. In the future relationship between the EU and the UK, we want trade relations to be as favourable as possible, and we want effective cooperation to continue in other areas, including security," says Mr Löfven.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

Published 29 March 2017

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the death of Zaida Catalán in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

It is with great sorrow and dismay that I have learned that Zaida Catalán was killed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Zaida Catalán, employed by the UN as a humanitarian expert, was there to strengthen peace in the country. This task is crucial for creating greater security in the entire region and inspiring hope in a country long plagued by violence and destruction.

Zaida Catalán worked tirelessly for peace and justice, and risked her own life to save others. We mourn the fact that one more person has lost their life in the service of the UN and of peace; we share the sense of loss and despair with her family and friends, while also feeling a deep sense of gratitude for her work.

We must now find out what happened to Zaida Catalán, her colleagues and the others affected. The UN and the Democratic Republic of the Congo must investigate this incident and hold those responsible to account. Sweden is naturally ready to assist in this work.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the events in Berlin and Ankara

Published 20 December 2016 Updated 20 December 2016

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the events in Berlin and Ankara.

"Appalling events have taken place this evening. In what may have been an attack in Berlin, innocent people were killed and injured as they prepared to celebrate Christmas. In Ankara, the Russian Ambassador has been murdered in an attack on the freedom for diplomats to safely represent their countries. Two more terrible outrages are added to the roster of 2016.

"This evening, my thoughts go to all of the families and friends who are grieving, and to the countries affected. The Government is following the situation closely. We are in close contact with both the German and Turkish authorities, and we currently have no information indicating that any Swedish citizens have been injured in the attacks."



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement

Statement from the Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the outcome of the US presidential election

Published 09 November 2016 Updated 09 November 2016

This is an election outcome that many people feel concerned about but that we have prepared for.

Sweden has a long tradition of cooperation with US governments, regardless of party political affiliations, and the Swedish Government will contact the administration that takes office at an early stage to safeguard Swedish and European interests, and to promote global security and stability.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the death of Shimon Peres

Published 28 September 2016 Updated 28 September 2016

With the death of Shimon Peres, Israel has lost a legendary leader and the world has lost a champion of peace. Shimon Peres was part of the generation who founded modern Israel. He will be remembered for his decades as a leading political representative in Israel for peace between Israelis and Palestinians.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister on the events in Turkey

Published 16 July 2016 Updated 16 July 2016

The situation in Turkey is serious and continues to be of great concern. The military coup appears to have failed but the situation still doesn't seem to be completely under the control of the Turkish Government.

I understand that many Swedes in Turkey are worried and afraid in these uncertain circumstances. The Swedish Government is working with the relevant authorities to ensure that you can feel safe and secure. At this point in time, we have no information regarding Swedish casualties, but those who are in the country are urged to contact their families and keep themselves updated. The Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs' advice against all unnecessary travel to Turkey remains in place.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven concerning the events in Nice

Published 15 July 2016 Updated 15 July 2016

The reports from Nice are horrific. This is an attack on innocent people and at the same time it is an attack on our open and democratic society. I would like to convey my deepest condolences to the people of France. My thoughts tonight are with the victims and their loved ones.

The Government is following the situation closely. We are monitoring the scale of the attack and how Swedes in the area are affected by the events.



Statement

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the results of the referendum in the United Kingdom

Published 24 June 2016 Updated 24 June 2016

It is now clear that the people of the United Kingdom have voted to leave the European Union. We respect their decision, but it is a serious one - primarily for the people of the UK, who had a great deal to gain by remaining, but also for the EU.

Sweden will now lose an important partner in the EU. We have often pursued issues together, not least important trade issues. The UK will remain an important partner for Sweden in its new role outside the EU.

The Swedish Government's starting point is responsibility for Sweden. What we need now is stability and a long-term approach. The fact that the UK is leaving the EU will have major repercussions. But we remain convinced of the importance of European cooperation. Our need for effective European cooperation has never been greater. This is particularly true for Sweden, which is a small, export-dependent country. The EU offers us greater opportunities to resolve the problems of our time, but it also enhances the conditions for more jobs and higher growth. And it safeguards peace and security.

At the same time, the debate and campaigning in the run-up to the referendum should serve as a wake-up call for Europe. They elicited stark polarisation and disturbing nationalism. This shows that EU cooperation must be developed and improved.

We must be able to demonstrate that our cooperation is actually capable of

tackling our common challenges in the way that people expect it to. We must have fair conditions in the European labour market. Climate and environmental challenges know no borders. And all EU Member States must take responsibility for the refugees fleeing to Europe.

Our cooperation must always inspire the confidence of our peoples. We must build an EU for the people, by the people, with the people – an EU that delivers in people's everyday lives.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the murder of British parliamentarian Jo Cox

Published 16 June 2016 Updated 16 June 2016

Statement 16 June 2016

My fellow party colleague has been killed in a heinous attack. The murder of Jo Cox is an attack on democracy because it is an attack on a person serving it. This is why it concerns all of us who believe in a free society. My thoughts are with Jo Cox's family and her colleagues.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Joint statement on the occasion of the State Visit by President Michelle Bachelet to Sweden, 10-12 May 2016

Published 10 May 2016 Updated 10 May 2016

Joint statement by President Michelle Bachelet and Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

Considering the solid and historic bilateral ties of friendship between Chile and Sweden and the proximity of the 200th anniversary of bilateral relations;

Reaffirming the importance both countries attach to the preservation of peace and international security, democratic principles, the promotion of human rights and social justice, and the rule of law;

Stressing their readiness to cooperate on strengthening multilateralism, the preservation of peace and international security, disarmament and non-proliferation, sustainable development and environmental preservation;

Reaffirming an interest in furthering partnership, in particular in the fields of trade and investment, science, technology and innovation, sustainable energy, climate change, sustainable development, welfare policies and cultural exchange, to the benefit of the Chilean and Swedish societies;

The Government of the Republic of Chile and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden have agreed as follows:

I Regular bilateral consultations

Chile and Sweden will continue to hold regular political consultations to

develop and identify opportunities for closer bilateral cooperation as well as joint action in the international arena.

II Trade and investment

Chile and Sweden reassert their commitment to expand and diversify bilateral trade, boost investment flows and enhance their dialogue on global and bilateral economic and commercial issues.

Chile and Sweden welcome the Chile-Sweden Business Forum on the occasion of President Michelle Bachelet's State Visit to Sweden, with the participation of private and public companies and governmental institutions. Chile acknowledges the permanent support given by Sweden to the process of negotiating the modernisation of its Association Agreement with the European Union. Both countries recognise the importance of the participation of Sweden as an observer state to the Pacific Alliance, which paves the way for future cooperation with the member countries of the Pacific Alliance.

III Corporate Social Responsibility

Sustainable business, including respect for human rights, is of growing importance in the international debate. Export-oriented countries like Chile and Sweden should work together to promote sustainable business around the world. Social dialogue between the parties on the labour market is of crucial importance when doing business in a responsible way.

Chile and Sweden have strengthened their collaboration on Corporate Social Responsibility by signing a Memorandum of Understanding in which human rights, social dialogue, environmental issues and anti-corruption are given special attention. In this regard, both countries also stress the importance of the Global Deal initiative launched by Sweden and sustainable business as a comparative advantage for companies.

IV Cooperation in the area of welfare

Chile and Sweden have reaffirmed their satisfaction with and commitment to their cooperation in the area of welfare by signing a Memorandum of Understanding.

Both countries share a strong ambition to achieve equitable and gender-

equal welfare systems/societies for their citizens. Gender equality, health care, public health, geriatric care and the rights of children are examples of areas where Sweden and Chile could share experience and learn from each other.

V Green technologies and innovation, sustainable urban development, and sustainable infrastructure and public procurement

How cities are planned, and how transportation, housing and industry are coordinated, is very important for a healthy environment, sustainable growth and good quality of life for citizens. New innovative solutions, such as bio-based fuels for public transportation, could strengthen development in both countries. By utilising organic waste for the production of biogas, a perceived problem can be transformed into a resource.

By signing a Memorandum of Understanding, both countries have also committed themselves to exploring opportunities for cooperation in the field of sustainable energy, with the ambition of accelerating the transition to a clean energy future.

Both countries welcome Chile's signing of a Declaration of Intent regarding a Global Stars pilot call as part of the process of becoming an associated member of EUREKA, a network that promotes transnational research, development and innovation collaboration.

VI Sustainable mining and green technologies

The mining industry is of great importance in both Chile and Sweden in terms of exports, growth and job creation/employment.

Chile and Sweden have signed a Memorandum of Understanding promoting bilateral cooperation related to sustainable and innovative mining. The priorities for cooperation are improved efficiency and profitability, innovation, mining skills development and industry. It will encourage the establishment of contacts between government and professional operators in the private sector.

VII Sustainable forest management

Both Chile and Sweden have unique forest resources. Sustainable forest

management contributes to both countries' shared effort to tackle climate change and achieve sustainable development.

The countries have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to further develop their collaboration in the area of sustainable forest management. Bioenergy, wood construction, research and innovation, the participation of smallholders and forest owners, and gender equality are strategically important areas of collaboration.

Both countries welcome the agreement signed between the Chilean Development Cooperation Agency (CORFO) and the SP Technical Research Institute of Sweden to coordinate activities aimed at facilitating and promoting joint projects related to wood construction systems.

VIII Cooperation on science, technology and education

Both sides reaffirm their mutual interest in strengthening bilateral cooperation in the field of research and higher education.

The parties took note of the agreement between the universities of Lund and Uppsala and the University of Chile and the Pontifical Catholic University to organise academic forums open to researchers from both countries.

IX Working holidays

Chile and Sweden have signed a working holiday agreement. With this agreement in place, young people will be able to travel more freely and improve their knowledge of a different language and culture. The agreement creates possibilities for the individual and strengthens the ties between our countries.

X Cooperation on cultural exchange

Chile and Sweden reassert their interest in working towards expanding bilateral cultural exchange based on mutual cultural dissemination in creative areas such as literature, music and cinema.

XI Cooperation on triangular development cooperation

Chile and Sweden affirm their preparedness to work together for sustainable development in third countries where cooperation projects of mutual interest are identified.

XII Implementation

At the regular bilateral political consultations, Chile and Sweden will take stock of progress made in implementing the agreements announced today. The two countries may decide to establish joint additional steering groups to monitor implementation in specific areas.

Annex 1

Examples of possible joint actions as a follow-up of the State Visit

- Chile-Sweden Business Forum will allow the establishment of new contacts and the possibility of increasing trade and investment.
- Participation of the Swedish Ambassador for CSR in a seminar on Business and Human Rights to be held in Santiago de Chile at the end of May 2016.
- Continue collaboration and exchange of experiences regarding CSR practices, enhanced social dialogue in the labour market [Global Deal] and implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
- Explore an exchange and collaboration between SENCE and the Swedish Public Employment Agency.
- Exchange of information and experience in the planning, formulation and implementation of public policies in the area of health. Learn about how to deal with the progressive ageing of the populations. Carry out a visit to Sweden by a Chilean delegation.
- Visits of experts and professionals to learn about the public policies, policy implementation and best practices implemented to counter the consumption of drugs.
- Exchange of information to promote women's participation in decision-making spheres.

- Study visits to learn about support and assistance in healthcare for the elderly and persons with dementia, including the gender perspective.
- Explore possibilities of cooperation between public sector actors at central and local government level regarding activities to safeguard the rights of the child, including the role and work of the Ombudsman for Children in Sweden.
- Promote cooperation between the Ministry of Justice of Chile and Fryshuset in issues related to the social inclusion of young people.
- Visit to Sweden during the second half of 2016 of a delegation from the Ministry of Energy to study what Sweden is doing in energy efficiency and renewable energy.
- Visit to Sweden by a delegation from INFOR to study possible cooperation with Skogforsk Institute.
- Implementation of the MOU signed by CORFO and the SP Technical Research Institute.
- The first meeting between the universities of Lund and Uppsala and the University of Chile and the Pontifical Catholic University will be held in the city of Lund in 2017, initiating a close scientific cooperation between Sweden and Chile oriented towards joint societal challenges.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the terrorist attacks in Brussels

Published 22 March 2016 Updated 22 March 2016

Brussels has been hit by terrorist attacks, and although the scale is not yet fully known, it is an attack on our democratic Europe. We will never accept terrorists attacking our open societies.

The Swedish Government is following the situation minute by minute.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Joint statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Published 15 February 2016 Updated 15 February 2016

Visit of H.E. Mr Stefan Löfven, Prime Minister of Sweden, to India from 12-14 February 2016

New Momentum, Higher Ambition

1. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Stefan Löfven met in Mumbai on 13 February on the occasion of the Make in India Week.
2. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the growing vigour in relations between the two countries. Both Prime Ministers recognized how the respective strengths and character of the two countries and economies together underpin the great potential in the bilateral partnership. They noted that India's economic development and rise as a global power has created new opportunities to further deepen and extend this partnership to foster economic growth and inclusive development in both countries as well as to meet global challenges. The Prime Ministers agreed to scale up bilateral relations and committed to a close bilateral dialogue at all levels.
3. They welcomed the successful State visit of the Honourable President of India to Sweden in 2015. They appreciated the revival of the NSA-level bilateral dialogue and welcomed the commitment of the counterparts to develop a roadmap for a deepened engagement on issues of mutual strategic interest. They further looked forward to the next round of Foreign Office Consultations and the next bi-annual ministerial meeting of the Indo-Swedish Joint Commission on Economic, Industrial and Scientific Cooperation.

A growing Economic Partnership

4. Prime Minister Modi welcomed the high-level business delegation accompanying Prime Minister Löfven. Both Prime Ministers noted with satisfaction the upward trend in bilateral trade and investments.

5. Prime Minister Löfven welcomed the 'Make in India' initiative. The two Prime Ministers noted with satisfaction that Swedish companies had been Making in India for many decades and had created employment opportunities directly and indirectly for approximately 1.2 million people. They agreed that the 'Make in India' initiative had improved conditions for these companies to expand and deepen their investments. Prime Minister Löfven welcomed the Indian government's efforts to improve the Ease of Doing Business. The leaders noted with satisfaction the favourable result of the recent Sweden Business Climate Survey, where 80 % of Swedish companies in India shared their intent to invest further in the coming years.

6. The two Prime Ministers committed to a continued dialogue within the framework of the Joint Commission to enhance the environment for doing business in their respective countries and further facilitate and promote bilateral economic cooperation. Both Prime Ministers supported a stronger business-to-business dialogue between the two countries and welcomed the creation of an India-Sweden Business Leaders' Round Table.

7. The two governments underlined the particular importance of information technology and digital industries in both countries as a key driver of growth and prosperity. Prime Minister Löfven welcomed the "Digital India" initiative of the Indian Government. Recognizing the potential benefits of expanding and deepening cooperation in this area, both sides endorsed the creation of a new Joint Working Group on Digital Technologies and Economy.

8. Prime Minister Löfven welcomed India's "Smart Cities" programme. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the launch of the Joint Working Group on Sustainable Urban Development under the MoU signed in 2015 and agreed to encourage their companies and government agencies to support the development of Smart Cities. They looked forward to the finalization of a Joint Action Plan, focusing on digital land management, solid waste management and urban transport. In the context of the MoU, the Swedish side also expressed interest in focusing on one or more cities for development as smart cities.

9. The two Prime Ministers noted that Sweden is recognized as one of the leading nations in the world in innovation and that India has a vast pool of

talented professionals and is known for its world-class engineering. They agreed that this creates synergies to be explored by both business and government partnerships. Prime Minister Löfven, chairman of the Swedish National Innovation Council, extended an invitation to an Indian delegation to visit Sweden for a bilateral Sweden-India Innovation Dialogue.

10. The two Prime Minister welcomed the ongoing bilateral cooperation in Education and the many new academic partnerships that were agreed during the visit to Sweden of the President of India.

11. The two Prime Minister took note of the active cooperation in Science & Technology under the inter-governmental agreement and welcomed the new programme launched between India's Department of Science & Technology and the Swedish Research Council on collaborative research projects, with support from other Swedish governmental agencies.

12. The two Prime Ministers recognized the great potential for exchange in the area of Transport and Infrastructure and agreed to explore a deeper collaboration. They welcomed the finalization of the text of a MoU on Co-operation in the Rail sector and acknowledged the potential business opportunities for the rail industry as well as opportunities of cooperation in research and education in the sector.

13. The Prime Ministers expressed their appreciation for the ongoing cooperation under the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Environment, signed in November 2009. They looked forward to future cooperation within the Indo-Swedish Working Group on Cooperation in the field of Environmental Protection.

14. The two Prime Ministers emphasized the importance of skills development to prepare young people for the jobs of the 21st Century and noted with satisfaction the important contribution made by the skills development programmes of Swedish companies in India. They encouraged the companies to consider opportunities to scale up skill development to cover larger number of people. Both sides also noted the mutual benefits of facilitating labour mobility.

15. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the ongoing cooperation under the Memorandum of Understanding on Health, covering a large variety of areas including maternal and child health and public health policy as well as antimicrobial resistance. The Prime Ministers also recognized the potential business opportunities in the health sector and looked forward to the next

meeting in the Joint Working Group, in March, as an occasion to further strengthen bilateral cooperation.

16. The Prime Ministers welcomed cooperation under the Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Swedish National Space Board (SNSB) signed in 1986 and agreed to intensify collaboration in space science, exploration of the solar system, earth observation, climate and environmental studies and efficient use of space-related resources available in India as well as in Sweden such as satellite ground stations.

Cooperation on Defence matters

17. It was agreed that India and Sweden will enhance dialogue on Defence in key areas. They welcomed progress in the Joint Working Group under the MoU on Defence including plans for India-Sweden defence seminars in India in spring 2016 focusing on aviation, maritime security as well as combat training and simulation in the army domain. The two prime ministers acknowledged the potential for successful collaboration and agreed that under the rubric of Make in India, cooperation possibilities between their respective defence industries could be identified and taken forward appropriately, including in the field of aviation.

People-to-people ties

18. Both sides recognized that enhancing awareness of each other's cultures boosts people-to-people ties and welcomed reciprocal festivals of 'Namaste Stockholm' in Sweden and Sweden-India Nobel Memorial Week in India. Both sides welcomed the designation of 21st of June as the International Day of Yoga by the UN General Assembly and recalled that all member states of United Nations had agreed to "observe this day in an appropriate manner and in accordance with national priorities, in order to raise awareness of the benefits of practising yoga".

A deepened dialogue on Global Affairs

19. Both Prime Ministers agreed to a deeper bilateral dialogue on UN Issues at both capital and UN-Mission-level. They reiterated the need for urgent reform of the United Nations Security Council through an expansion in both categories of membership, to make it more effective and representative of the contemporary geo-political realities. Prime Minister Löfven expressed the view that it would be inconceivable that an important global actor such

as India not be a Permanent Member of an enlarged Security Council and said that he will seek Parliamentary support for this view. The two countries called for forward movement in the Intergovernmental Negotiations on United Nations Security Council reform, and stressed their commitment to initiate text-based negotiations within the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly. Prime Minister Modi reaffirmed India's support for Sweden's candidature for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council for 2017-2018.

20. In their joint efforts to strengthen global non-proliferation and disarmament objectives, India and Sweden committed to work towards India's further participation in the multilateral export control regimes.

21. The two prime ministers recognized the common interest in preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism and the benefits of a closer dialogue and mutual exchange of information and good practices. They looked forward to an exchange of visits of their respective Special Envoys, with a view to explore agency level cooperation, capacity building, countering violent extremism experience sharing, and cooperation in developing an international framework against terrorism including elaborating and finalizing a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

22. The Prime Ministers are committed to promote human rights online, cyber security, combat cybercrime, and develop a common understanding on international cyber issues and support an open, inclusive, transparent and multi-stakeholder system of internet governance as well as the application of international law in cyberspace. In this regard, both sides agreed to explore cooperation among relevant agencies through a second round of bilateral consultations on cyber issues.

23. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the Paris Agreement and its objective to hold the global temperature increase well below 2°C and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C. Addressing climate change and promoting secure, affordable and sustainable supplies of energy are shared strategic priorities for India and Sweden, and the Prime Ministers welcomed the active ongoing collaboration under the Memorandum of Understanding on Sweden-India Renewable Energy Cooperation and the announcement by the Swedish Energy Agency to contribute US Dollars 5 million towards funding for research and pilot projects in India in 2016-2018.

24. The two Prime Ministers also welcomed the adoption of the "Agenda

2030 for Sustainable Development" and committed to supporting its implementation. They recognised the universal, indivisible and integrated nature of the Agenda 2030 which balances the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, the social and the environmental.

25. Based on long democratic traditions in both countries, the two Prime Ministers expressed a continued commitment to democracy, rule of law, promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. They welcomed the fruitful cooperation between the two countries on strengthening the role of democratic governance globally, both through the UN, and its subsidiary bodies including the Human Rights Council, and through organizations like International IDEA.

26. The two Prime Ministers agreed on the need to continue and step up efforts to ensure gender equality, respect for women's and girls' rights, and empowerment of women and girls in all spheres of life.

27. The two Prime Ministers shared the conviction that the international humanitarian response system must be strengthened and in this context noted the problems of providing timely assistance and relief to people affected by natural disasters and crises. They welcomed the recent India-Sweden Joint Statement to the UN General Assembly on the Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations. They looked forward to the upcoming World Humanitarian Summit on 23-24 May in Istanbul, and stressed the need for constructive and inclusive outcomes.

28. The two Prime Ministers agreed on the need to tap the full potential of the EU-India strategic partnership, and welcomed the intention of the two sides to hold a summit in 2016. They also welcomed the prospect of resumption of talks on the India – EU Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA).

29. Both the Indian and Swedish side remain committed to the WTO and a transparent, fair and predictable global trade regime.

Other issues

30. The two Prime Ministers also discussed other issues of regional and global interest.

31. Prime Minister Löfven invited Prime Minister Modi to visit Sweden on

mutually convenient dates, to be decided through diplomatic channels.

13 February 2016, Mumbai



Statement from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Today we celebrate the United Nations' 70th anniversary and Sweden's UN membership

Published 24 October 2015 Updated 24 October 2015

Today we celebrate United Nations Day. And we are doing so in a world that is more uncertain than for many years and in which the United Nations is needed more than ever. Global crises and challenges require common solutions.

Sweden is ready to assume its share of responsibility. This is why Sweden is strengthening its engagement in the UN and why we are seeking a seat on the Security Council for 2017–2018.

Sweden's UN policy contributes to peace, security, sustainable development and gender equality. It is part of a solidarity-based foreign policy and a means for responding to crises that affect us.

Sweden is one of the top contributors to the UN. We contribute personnel to peace operations, aid, climate financing and humanitarian assistance. Our contributions also include engagement, resources and ideas.

We also set clear requirements for a modern, effective, transparent and legitimate United Nations that is equipped to meet future challenges and take advantage of future opportunities.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven's statement in response to the violence in Trollhättan

Published 22 October 2015 Updated 22 October 2015

22 October Following the dreadful acts of violence that have occurred, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will travel to Trollhättan this afternoon to meet the people concerned and show his sympathy.

“This is a dark day for Sweden. My thoughts go out to the victims and their families, pupils and staff, and the entire community that has been affected. There are no words to describe what they are going through right now. We share in their grief and we will ensure that they are given all the support they need,” says Mr Löfven.



Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Joint France-Sweden statement

Published 18 September 2015 Updated 18 September 2015

Stockholm – 18 September 2015.

1. Our bilateral relationship is rich in economic, cultural and human terms. Our friendship is deeply rooted in a common history and has been reconfirmed at the recent State Visit to France by H.M. King Carl XVI Gustaf and H.M. Queen Silvia. The ties between our two countries have never been stronger than they are today. A deepening of our dialogue, based on common values, confidence and mutual understanding, will help us find concrete answers. Our cooperation will be carried out in an open, flexible and pragmatic manner. It will be responsive to evolving events, challenges and opportunities.

2. At European level, we are pursuing the same goal of working in an inclusive way for a Europe of growth and jobs, a Europe that invests in its future and its youth by promoting an ambitious social model. We want Europe to step up its efforts to find a common solution to the migration crisis. We want Europe to play a leading role in the fight against climate change and we are committed to an ambitious outcome for COP21. We want an influential Europe that promotes sustainable development as well as prevents and resolves conflicts in a spirit of solidarity and assistance as its response to crises.

3. Sweden and France share a common vision regarding international relations. Our countries are deeply committed to promoting the United Nations and working together for peace, security and human rights. We will promote closer collaboration in the area of development cooperation. Our countries are convinced of the importance of combating terrorism.

4. Determined to strengthen our partnership and convergences at European level, we have decided on the following measures:

a) To increase our efforts to respond to the migration crisis situation by

advocating increased responsibility and solidarity among all Member States. It is crucial that all Member States fully apply to the agreed asylum acquis. Improving the European asylum procedures and reinforcing the harmonisation of national rules will, in due time, lead to a truly common European asylum system. Another important component of a comprehensive, balanced and long-term EU migration policy is increased resettlement. In the run up to the conference concerning the Western Balkans and the Valletta Summit on migration, we will address international protection and asylum, prevention and the fight against migrant smuggling, cooperation with countries of origin and transit and mobility opportunities, focusing on development effects, root causes of irregular migration and return issues.

b) To foster initiatives to boost competitiveness and growth in Europe and increase the number of jobs through investment, innovation, free trade agreements, better regulation, structural reforms and sound public finances. At EU level, the investment plan will contribute to increase investments and improve the investment climate, particularly for small and medium-sized businesses. A joint effort will be undertaken, in cooperation with representatives of the French and Swedish business sectors and public institutions, to find the best ways to promote innovation and competitiveness.

c) To take joint action to promote social convergence in Europe, including protecting workers' rights, encouraging mobility while ensuring a sustainable level of social protection through the portability of social rights, and promoting women's labour market participation as important factors for growth, employment, competitiveness and social justice. We are committed to promoting a common view, as regards the improvement of working conditions and, preventing social dumping within the EU, as expressed by Austria, Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands in a joint letter of 18 June to the European Commission, in which we welcome the initiative to start a 'targeted review' of the Posting of Workers Directive. We call on Swedish and French social partners to support these common endeavours by working together.

d) To strengthen our cooperation in preventing extremism and fighting radicalisation, for example in schools, youth detention centres, prisons and on the internet and social media. A French-Swedish seminar will take place on 18 September in Stockholm to exchange views on the best ways of fighting radicalisation, and Mona Sahlin, the Swedish National Coordinator against Violent Extremism, will be invited to visit France as part of the work

to identify key partners among local authorities and civil society.

e) To continue our strong mobilisation in fighting climate change, with the aim of achieving a legally binding and universal climate agreement at the Paris Climate Conference in December 2015 that, over time, contributes to keeping global warming below two degrees. The full mobilisation of civil society and the promotion of a positive agenda, at local and national level, both from the public and the private sector, will be a key point. We encourage Swedish and French think tanks to provide us with new ideas on 'green solutions'. We will continue to consult one another and exchange good practices on eco-friendly solutions for buildings, all modes of transportation, and green and smart cities.

f) To continue to promote a strong European foreign policy. We will jointly identify ideas to feed into a new EU global strategy. We will seek progress in the Middle East peace process and promote a strong EU engagement in our southern and eastern neighbourhoods. Together, we will enhance multilateral cooperation through the United Nations and advance shared objectives, such as our cooperation in promoting safe and secure developments in Mali.

Representatives of our Governments will meet, as appropriate, to further the objectives of the deepened dialogue.



Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven on the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

Published 07 August 2015 Updated 07 August 2015

It is now 70 years since the atomic bomb fell on Hiroshima. The human race was then faced with a new weapon of mass destruction that had wiped out two cities, killed hundreds of thousands of people and maimed many more.

There was a false belief that these weapons would make us safe. This belief still exists. The threat of nuclear weapons around the world remains. This is why the fight for disarmament and non-proliferation of these diabolical weapons must be intensified. Security is created through people feeling safe, not scared. It relies on cooperation for our common survival, not threats of mutual destruction.

This anniversary is an occasion to pause and reflect. We are remembering so that we can continue to work tirelessly for a world free of nuclear weapons. We honour the victims by doing our utmost to ensure that the suffering that came in the wake of the atomic bomb is never repeated. We must never forget Hiroshima and Nagasaki.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War

Published 08 May 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Over the next few days, people around the world will gather to remember and honour the victims of the deadliest conflict humanity has ever seen.

We have a joint responsibility to preserve the memory of the Holocaust and the unprecedented human suffering caused by the war. It is up to us to pass on the importance of protecting democracy, human dignity and human rights to future generations.

By defending our fundamental values, we can create peaceful, open and inclusive societies. By safeguarding the European and international cooperation that emerged from the ashes of destruction, we can tackle the threats to peace that we see today.

Like so many others who are now taking time to remember, we know that humanity's best means of honouring the victims of the past is to shape a future in which the events of the Second World War will never be repeated.



Statement from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement on the first anniversary of Yanukovych regime violence against protesters in Independence Square in Kyiv

Published 22 February 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Today we remember and honour the people who lost their lives in the Yanukovych regime's violent crackdown on protesters in Independence Square in Kyiv. Over the last twelve months, in violation of all international law, Russia has annexed Crimea and via so-called 'separatists' subjected Ukraine to acts of aggression that have so far claimed the lives of more than 5 000 people. Almost 1.5 million people have been forced to flee from their homes. The responsibility for this lies unequivocally with Russia.

Sweden and the EU have supported the diplomatic efforts to uphold Ukraine's and territorial integrity and sovereignty and to bring an end to the conflict. The Minsk agreements have been important in creating a basis for a political solution to the conflict. However, the continuous breaches of the ceasefire negotiated in Minsk just over a week ago indicate that Russia and the separatists are still not ready to lay down their arms. By abiding by and pursuing the sanctions that have been adopted, the EU and the rest of the world must now show Russia that aggression in eastern Ukraine will come at an increasingly high price. By supporting Ukraine, we keep the hope of change alive. We also demonstrate that aggression and the use of armed force will never pay off or be accepted in our time.



Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Written statement following discussion with European Council President Donald Tusk

Published 19 February 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

I spoke today with the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk. The backdrop to our discussion was the fact that the ceasefire in Ukraine, which entered into force on Sunday 15 February, has obviously been broken by the separatists supported by Russia, in particular through their continued offensive against the town of Debaltseve.

Ukraine's withdrawal as part of the agreement reached on 12 February on implementation of the earlier Minsk agreements is welcome. I spoke with President Tusk about the talks that took place earlier today between the President of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko, the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, the Federal Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel, and the President of France, François Hollande. President Tusk and I fully support the efforts made by Chancellor Merkel and President Hollande. What is required now is immediate and concrete steps, by the separatists and Russia, to put the ceasefire into effect and withdraw heavy weaponry.

I confirmed to President Tusk that the Swedish Government wished to see a continued readiness on the part of the EU to introduce broader and extended economic sanctions. I also stated that it was important to give Ukraine further support in the country's difficult economic situation and to continue to facilitate Ukraine's reform efforts.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by the Prime Minister in connection with the demonstration in Copenhagen this evening

Published 16 February 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

The attacks in Copenhagen, which have taken the lives of two people and injured five, targeted the freedom of expression and the Jewish community, and are an attack on us all.

Free speech and freedom of religion are fundamental to our democracy and must always be defended. We will never give in to terrorism and never tolerate the hate crimes and attacks against Jews that we see in the world around us and in Sweden.

Accordingly, right now the Swedish Government is stepping up its efforts, taking action both to suppress and prevent extremism, whatever its source, and to protect the right of all citizens to make their voice heard and to freely manifest and exercise their faith, identity and culture.

This evening I am travelling to Copenhagen to demonstrate together with all the people and elected representatives who want to show their support for those affected, their abhorrence of violence and extremism, and their unyielding determination to defend democracy.

In this dark hour it is even more important that we come together, across national borders and party lines, and stand up for the open society and for one another.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven concerning the attack in Copenhagen

Published 14 February 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Our open and democratic society has once again been attacked, resulting in injuries and loss of life. My thoughts go to the family of the deceased and to the injured police officers.

I have spoken to Danish Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt on the telephone this evening, and offered our condolences and received information on the situation. We also agreed that we would continue to keep in close contact.

There is every indication that this is a political attack, and therefore an act of terrorism. In this situation, I would like to express my solidarity with the Danish people and emphatically condemn all attempts to silence free debate.

Together we must stand up for freedom of expression. Nothing must be allowed to stifle freedom of speech.

Swedish police are now undertaking special measures both to raise the level of alert in our own country and to give Danish police any support they may require.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Statement by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven concerning the attack in Paris

Published 07 January 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

“I condemn the appalling attack that took place in Paris today. My thoughts go to the victims and their families.

“It was a repulsive attack on the foundations of democracy and underlines our responsibility to always stand up for freedom of expression and freedom of the press.

“I will send a telegram of condolence to President François Hollande and offer our support to France in this difficult time.”



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister's comments on Swedish Armed Forces analysis of intelligence operation in Stockholm archipelago

Published 14 November 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

Welcome to this press conference. This week, the Swedish Armed Forces have reported to the Government on the results of the intelligence operation conducted in the Stockholm archipelago just under a month ago.

The Government's assessment is that the contents of the report should be made public as far as possible without compromising Swedish security interests.

This report, then, states that the Swedish Armed Forces, with the highest degree of certainty in its assessment, considers itself able to confirm that a violation of Swedish territorial waters occurred in October.

The report also states that it has not been possible to establish the nationality.

The Government considers this information extremely serious and also of course challenging.

The purpose of Sweden's security policy is to protect our country's territorial integrity and our national independence.

Securing the country's borders is one of the absolutely foremost responsibilities of any government.

Needless to say, safeguarding our territorial integrity enjoys the broad and unquestioned support of the Swedish Riksdag. The proposals of the Defence Commission can also be seen from precisely this perspective.

Many hypotheses can no doubt be advanced, now that this report has been made public.

But as a government and as responsible politicians, we must act above all, and solely, on the basis of facts. And I do not hesitate to speak out with great seriousness in response to the report of violations of our territorial sea.

We do not know who is behind the reported violation. But let me say this, loud and clear, to those who are responsible:

This is completely unacceptable.

We will not have any foreign underwater activities in our waters.

We will strengthen our capability to detect and identify anyone engaged in unlawful business in Swedish territory.

We demand respect for Sweden's borders.

The Government I lead has taken office at a time of increased tension, both globally and in our own neighbourhood. The threats to our security have multiplied and vary somewhat in nature.

On the African continent, a deadly virus is spreading. It has rapidly taken the lives of thousands of people, and its spread has so far proved impossible to stop.

Greenhouse gas emissions are occurring everywhere on the planet on such a scale that, if not stopped, they risk destroying the conditions for all human life on Earth.

In Syria and Iraq, IS terrorists are engaged in violence of unparalleled savageness, cruelty and ruthlessness. The fact that Swedish citizens are also participating in these atrocities adds to the tragedy. How their experiences will have marked them by the time they return home – if they return home – is also an important question.

In Ukraine, the Russian Federation has annexed Crimea in blatant contravention of international law, and in addition to this is providing shameless support to separatists in the eastern part of the country.

The security policy situation, in a broad sense, has clearly deteriorated. And the report that the Swedish Armed Forces have now delivered naturally does nothing to diminish fears for the future.

I do not – and let me stress this – want what I say to be understood to mean that any acute danger exists right now. Many forces are also moving to check these threats, and we in Sweden, as much as anyone, support and encourage them.

However, in my opinion, security policy issues, in a broad sense, need to be treated in a more coherent manner, at both international and national level.

Since 1945, as everyone knows, the United Nations Security Council has exercised an overarching responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. But seldom has the need to tackle the major threats to peace and security through joint action been so apparent.

In Sweden as elsewhere, there is reason to take a more concerted approach to security issues. A security policy council will therefore be set up at the Government Offices that will meet regularly to coordinate the management of issues relating to Sweden's security. I myself will lead the council, which will also include the Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Defence, and the Minister for Home Affairs. Other ministers will also take part in the work of the council when necessary, as will certain state secretaries, as well as any government agencies that may sometimes be directly concerned.

We have a good tradition in our country of seeking broad consensus on security policy issues. As Prime Minister, the approach I will adopt and use will be to inform the parliamentary opposition about events that may affect our security. I will therefore initiate more regular information meetings with representatives of the parties represented in the Riksdag. In line with this ambition, this morning the Government informed the party leaders or their deputies about the report that has now been made public and the measures that the Government is taking.

It is very difficult to detect a subsurface vessel. The Swedish navy is not the only one to know this; it is a general experience over many decades.

Sweden has a coastline as long as the entire east coast of the United States. No naval force in the world can control such an area in a way that guarantees one hundred per cent that no unauthorised party finds its way in under water.

But what we can do is to increase the risk of detection.

Anyone considering entering Swedish territory unlawfully should also be aware of the enormous risks involved for those who may be directly involved in such violations. We will defend our territorial integrity with all the means at our disposal. And I would like to remind everyone that the Swedish Armed Forces have all the authority needed in a critical situation to prevent a foreign vessel from escaping, including as a last resort military force.

Sweden is a peaceful country. We do not belong to any military alliances and have managed to keep out of wars for 200 years. But we have always demanded respect for and asserted our territorial integrity. And I wish to say, in no uncertain terms, that this remains true today.