



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Stockholm Ministerial Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament and the Non-Proliferation Treaty

Published 11 June 2019

Ministerial declaration, Stockholm, 11 June 2019.

We, the participating states – Argentina, Canada, Finland, Ethiopia, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland – to the Stockholm Ministerial Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), met today to discuss how nuclear disarmament can be advanced.

We are one year away from the 50th anniversary of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The treaty has been undisputedly successful in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, laying the foundation for significant reductions in nuclear arsenals and facilitating the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. It has also established an international safeguards system and fostered the creation of nuclear-weapon free zones. Notwithstanding those successes, the role of nuclear weapons has been increasing recently against the background of a deteriorating international security environment.

Qualitatively new capabilities are being developed, spurred on by new technology. The gradual downward trend of the global nuclear arsenal, from its peak in 1986, should not be reversed. A potential nuclear arms race – which would serve no one's interest – must be avoided.

Regional proliferation challenges add further complexity to the state of affairs. Our firm objective remains the denuclearization of the DPRK in a

complete, verifiable and irreversible manner in accordance with all relevant UNSC resolutions. Meanwhile, the multilaterally endorsed nuclear deal with Iran (JCPOA) – a key achievement of the global non-proliferation regime – is in a precarious state.

We reaffirm our support for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East, in line with the 1995 Resolution and the outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

With its near universal membership, the NPT has been indispensable for global peace and security for five decades. Together we must ensure the future of this landmark treaty. In less than a year from now, States Parties will gather in New York to review the implementation of the NPT and chart the way forward. The Review Conference offers us an opportunity to deliver upon our collective commitments and, in particular, work towards advancing implementation of the disarmament pillar. We should seize that chance and contribute to breaking the deadlock.

Our governments will do their utmost to this end. From different regions and security contexts, we are united in our belief that constructive political and diplomatic engagement is essential to build the trust necessary for progress towards our shared goals.

The high-level meeting of the UN Security Council on 2 April showed unified and strong support for the NPT, which was further expressed in an agreed press statement.

Emphasising the mutually reinforcing character of the three pillars of the NPT, we stress the necessity of further progress on the disarmament pillar.

Contributing to such efforts will be our focus in the year ahead. Our approach will be ambitious yet realistic. We seek in 2020 an outcome that reaffirms the role of the NPT as the cornerstone of the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime. It should give real meaning to this by identifying stepping stones for the implementation of Article VI of the Treaty, building on the commitments made during a series of Review Conferences, notably in 1995, 2000 and 2010.

Recognising the highly challenging character of the global security environment, our discussions today covered a wide range of issues, including more transparent and responsible declaratory policies, measures to reduce

the role of nuclear weapons in doctrines and policies, ways of enhancing transparency and of reducing risks of any use of nuclear weapons, strengthened negative security assurances, work on nuclear disarmament verification and the importance of addressing the production of fissile material.

All these areas offer concrete opportunities to reduce international tensions and improve global security. They could provide us with important stepping stones, as confidence-building measures, that pave the way for further progress in the years to come. In this context, we noted that the extension of the New START would be a key contribution to preserving strategic stability.

Our efforts are also a response to the United Nations Secretary General's call to bring disarmament and non-proliferation back to the top of the international political agenda.

Moving forward, our governments – building on the Stockholm Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament and the NPT – will be reaching out to the wider NPT community. It will be of particular importance to work with the nuclear weapon states, whose full commitment and constructive engagement will be essential for success in 2020. Our shared goal is a world free of nuclear weapons.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Communiqué at Ministerial Strategic Dialogue on UNRWA on 12 April in Stockholm

Published 12 April 2019

Foreign Ministers H.E Margot Wallström of Sweden and H.E Ayman Safadi of Jordan hosted a ministerial strategic dialogue in Stockholm today to discuss sustainable ways to support the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Participants included representatives from Egypt, France, Germany, Japan, Kuwait, Norway, United Kingdom, the European External Action Service and the European Commission. The meeting was attended by UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl, who presented UNRWA's continued vital programmes to assist over 5 million Palestinian refugees despite the financial challenges which the Agency faced in 2018.

Participants stressed that UNRWA's programmes are a critical component for regional development, stability and security in the interest of all. They emphasized the importance of these programmes in offering protection and vital development support to over 5.4 million Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank, including east Jerusalem and Gaza.

Participants expressed appreciation for all partners who helped the agency to overcome its budget deficit last year, thus ensuring that UNRWA was able to

maintain the educational, health, relief and key development services to refugees.

Participants support the Agency's call for a renewed international commitment for 2019, which will show once again that political and financial support is key to regional and international stability. UNRWA serves such an important objective through sustaining hope among Palestine refugees by running schools for over half a million boys and girls, 8.5 million primary health care consultations and life-saving emergency assistance to 1.5 million Palestinian refugees affected by conflict and humanitarian crisis, particularly in Gaza and Syria.

Participants discussed which concrete measures could be taken to raise international awareness about UNRWA's vital role and operations, including in regional groups and high-level international meetings.

Participants underlined that UNRWA must continue to operate in fulfilment of its UN mandate until a durable and just solution to the refugees issue is found in accordance with relevant UN resolutions, including resolution 194, and within the context of a comprehensive solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on the basis of the two-state solution.

Participants also agreed to invite all donors to actively support UNRWA, notably through multiyear financial commitment and core financing, to help the Agency bridge the 2019 funding gap and ensure sustainable financial support in 2020 and beyond.

Participants concur that high-level events, such as the pledging conference in New York in June, and an extraordinary ministerial event at UN General Assembly opening session in September, should urge partners to step up their commitment to the wellbeing of Palestine refugees and to their human development, primarily by ensuring that all UNRWA programmes continue uninterrupted.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Joint statement from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in France and from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Sweden

Published 08 March 2019

Today - on the International Women's Day - the Government of France and the Government of Sweden are proud to announce our joint decision to develop a common strategy for combating human trafficking for sexual exploitation in Europe and globally.

Trafficking is a grave human rights violation of which the majority of detected victims are women and girls. The majority of them are being trafficked for sexual exploitation. The overall number of victims has drastically increased in tandem with the unprecedented rise in irregular migration and forced displacements, notably as result of armed conflict, persecution or human rights violations. War, lack of economic opportunity, discrimination and gender-based violence further expose vulnerable individuals to abuse, particularly in situations where erosion of the rule of law allows traffickers to operate with impunity.

France and Sweden are both committed to fostering comprehensive inter-agency strategies and action plans in their own countries to tackle the challenge of human trafficking as well as to develop international cooperation in this area. The two Governments confirm their intention to support the “Blue Heart” international campaign awareness raising initiative to fight human trafficking and its impact on society and encourage all other States to join.

The main focus of our common strategy will be the need to reduce the demand for girls and women in prostitution, in Europe and globally. The reason for this is the clear nexus between trafficking for sexual exploitation and prostitution. A nexus that is well described in numerous studies and also highlighted by the European Parliament in resolution (2013/2103(INI)) on sexual exploitation and prostitution and its impact on gender equality. Trafficking for sexual exploitation will continue as long as there is a demand for girls and women in prostitution. Therefore, focusing on reducing demand will be an important measure for combating trafficking for sexual exploitation, for combating violence against women and children and for enhanced gender equality.

France and Sweden have taken a clear position against normalizing prostitution as work. Our view is that prostitution should always be perceived as an exploitation of someone's vulnerability – thus prostitution should never be considered a job. To consider prostitution as legal 'sex work', decriminalizing the sex industry in general and making procuring legal is not a solution to keeping women and children in vulnerable situations safe from violence and exploitation, but has the opposite effect and expose them to higher level of violence, while at the same time encouraging prostitution markets — and thus the number of women and children suffering abuse — to grow.

France and Sweden together with several other countries have introduced legislation where the purchase of sexual services constitutes the criminal act, not the services of a person in prostitution. The person in prostitution is instead offered assistance to exit prostitution. This type of legislation, that focus on the sex buyer, has proven effective both to diminish demand and to diminish prostitution. The results in Sweden, where the legislation has been in place for twenty years, are very positive; demand has decreased substantially, there are few people in prostitution and Sweden is considered a market of low interest for trafficking for sexual exploitation. In 2016 a regulation similar to the Swedish legislation was enacted in France, introducing the criminalization of the purchase of sex, the full decriminalization of persons in prostitution, and the creation of a nation-wide public exit, protection and assistance policy for victims of prostitution, pimping, procuring and trafficking. The French government firmly believes that this legislation will prove as effective in France as in Sweden.

The French legislation has recently been challenged but on the first of February this year the French Supreme Court validated the constitutionality of the law. At the same time a survey that was undertaken in France by Ipsos

showed that 78% of French people support the 2016 Act and that 74% of French people think that purchase of sex is a form of violence.

All countries in the world have agreed to do everything they can to achieve the goals in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Several goals target human trafficking, gender equality, sexual exploitation and violence against women and children. Both our countries are convinced that criminalizing the purchase of sex would be a very important step towards achieving these goals. We will therefore put this agenda in the forefront of our common advocacy for combating trafficking for sexual exploitation in Europe and globally.

Margot Wallström, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs at UN Human Rights Council's 40th session

Published 27 February 2019

Geneva, 26 February 2019 Check against delivery

Thank you, Mr President, High Commissioner, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

When the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was drafted, 70 years ago, there were only two women members of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

These were the celebrated Eleanor Roosevelt and the Indian writer and independence activist Hansa Mehta.

When the phrase “all men are brothers” was proposed, Mehta objected. She noted that this could be used by some to exclude women.

Instead, she insisted on an expression that recognised the equality of women and men, which resulted in the first article: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”

Everywhere and always, all humans are entitled to equal rights.

Today – in a world where democracy and the rule of law are being contested and undermined across the globe – I think it is fair to ask: what happened?

This story about Hansa Mehta captures the three areas that will be the focus of my address today: firstly, democracy and its decline; secondly, women’s rights, and thirdly, the need for multilateral cooperation.

Decline of democracy, freedom of expression, religion or belief

Mr President,

For the first time in decades, more of the world's people now live in countries with authoritarian tendencies than in countries making democratic progress.

Democracy means more than the right to vote in free and fair elections. A democratic society lets its citizens participate in policy making and political discussion. It safeguards their freedom of expression and opinion. It has a lively debate. It is socially and economically fair.

Today, researchers see a decline in all these dimensions of democracy. We can see it in our own country reports on human rights, democracy and the rule of law, which now cover 135 countries.

Strong-arm leaders are centralising political power and suppressing dissenting and minority voices. Parliamentary and judicial independence is being undermined in attempts to weaken checks and balances. Minorities and marginalised groups are being wrongfully blamed.

Human rights defenders, journalists and artists are being named enemies of the state and are suffering from threats, harassment and violence. In 2018, 321 defenders in 27 countries were killed for their work. This was the highest number ever recorded, according to data from Front Line Defenders. 53 journalists were murdered.

A number of Swedish citizens have been jailed or abused in other countries because of their opinions or beliefs. Sweden will never accept this. We continue to work for their release.

Our government has named the defence and promotion of democracy worldwide a top priority for our foreign policy.

This means that we will support democracy where ever it can grow, and be vocal when democracy is undermined.

It means standing up for the right to freedom of expression, opinion, political dissent, religion or belief.

And it means targeting the social and economic injustices that are making people lose faith in our democratic institutions.

Women's rights

Mr President,

Secondly, as Hansa Metah pointed out, we cannot disregard half the population. Women's rights are human rights.

Five years ago, Sweden launched its feminist foreign policy. In everything we do, we ask whether women have the same rights, representation and resources as men.

Women and girls rarely have the same rights – to schooling, to work, to marry or divorce freely. They are rarely equally represented in decision making – in government, parliaments or businesses. And they rarely have access to the same resources, be they medical care, education or a fair share of state budgets.

I specifically want to mention women's sexual and reproductive health and rights. Unsafe abortions, birth complications or harmful practices such as female genital mutilation can lead to death. We must strengthen access to comprehensive sex education for all. And we must combat child, early and forced marriages.

Multilateral cooperation

Mr President,

Thirdly, I want to raise the issue of multilateral cooperation.

It is essential that we defend multilateral institutions that monitor and report on human rights issues.

Sweden strongly supports this Council as the premier body for human rights issues that draws attention to serious human rights violations and protects and strengthens human rights. We will continue to defend the independence of the human rights system and urge all states to fully cooperate with the

Office of the High Commissioner and the mandate holders.

Human rights are a central element of international law. They are legal obligations and commitments undertaken by states. We must constantly counteract all attempts to weaken and relativise human rights and their universality. Human rights are not something to pick and choose from. Religion, customs or traditions are not excuses to undermine these rights.

We do not choose to promote democracy and human rights out of national self-interest, we do it because every individual should be entitled to govern their own future.

Mr President,

Democracy, women's rights and respect for the multilateral order are indeed being challenged.

The trends are visible in many countries that are represented here today.

Let me encourage you to turn this development around.

Let us not fall into distrust and polarisation. Let us embrace diversity, and address these urgent matters together. Let us be self-confident enough to accept dissent and opposition. Let us unite in defence for democracy and human rights.

That is our responsibility – to present and future generations.

Thank you.



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Joint Declaration on Venezuela

Published 04 February 2019

On January 26th, various Member States urged Mr. Nicolás Maduro to take the necessary legal steps for democratic presidential elections to be announced within 8 days. On that same day, the EU High Representative / Vice President issued a statement on behalf of the 28 EU Member States, also calling for the urgent holding of free, transparent and credible presidential elections and indicating that, in the absence of an announcement on the organization of fresh elections with the necessary guarantees over the next days, the EU would take further actions, including on the issue of recognition of the country's leadership, in line with article 233 of the Venezuelan constitution.

Sweden along with Austria, Belgium, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom takes note that Mr. Nicolás Maduro has chosen not to set in motion the electoral process. Subsequently, and in accordance with the provisions of the Venezuelan Constitution, they acknowledge and support Mr. Juan Guaidó, President of the democratically elected National Assembly, as President ad interim of Venezuela, in order for him to call for free, fair and democratic presidential elections.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, H.E. Margot Wallström, at the Geneva Ministerial Conference on Afghanistan 28 November 2018

Published 28 November 2018

I would like to begin by thanking the Government of Afghanistan and UNAMA for having organized this conference as an important political follow up to the successful donors' conference two years ago in Brussels. Today we have an opportunity to start turning the path of Afghanistan in a different, more peaceful and better direction.

One year ago, I visited Kabul and Herat. We met with people in the midst of conflict. I was struck by their continued struggle, day after day, to make ends meet. I was impressed that despite hardship and violence, they worked hard to strengthen their local communities. One small example: during our visit we were even invited to a very modest movie screening, showing that culture can endure even where people have limited means.

Next year will mark the 100th anniversary of independence for Afghanistan. Too many of these years have been filled with chaos and war.

A number of issues will be decisive for the future of the people of Afghanistan, in particular the young and hopeful.

First, the peace process. Sweden welcomes the renewed efforts towards a political settlement in Afghanistan. The invitation by President Ghani to talks without precondition is an important step forward. It should be supported.

But, peace is more than a political declaration. A successful peace process must include the fundamental role of the women of Afghanistan. Although some progress has been achieved in strengthening the role of women in Afghan society over the past 17 years, more needs to be done.

Second, the elections. Free and fair elections are essential parts of a democracy. The turnout in the recent elections seems to have been significant considering the security situation. By going to the polls, voters showed their commitment to democracy and desire for peace. But operational and organizational shortcomings were apparent and must be addressed.

Thirdly, progress in the reform process will be key to sustained development and the agenda is long. We are happy to see the anti-corruption framework improving but it needs implementation. The National Action Plan for SCR 1325 is moving on and needs to be integrated in national programs through the regular budget. Investments in health care and education have meant a lot to both girls and boys but more must be done. The expansion of education, especially empowering young girls, has a tremendous potential to make a positive long-term change for Afghanistan.

Finally, Sweden's development cooperation commitment is strong and long-term. Afghanistan is our single largest development partner and our present commitment extends through 2024. We have also increased our contribution to the humanitarian efforts and we have men and women participating in the Resolute Support Mission.

We will continue to be a good friend of Afghanistan and continue to support efforts towards a sustainable and inclusive development also after a peace agreement has been achieved – working together to make the next 100 years of Afghanistan brighter.

Thank you



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Joint statement by the five Nordic Foreign Ministers

Published 31 October 2018

We, the Foreign Ministers of the Nordic countries – Sweden, Norway, Finland, Iceland, and Denmark – met today in Oslo.

We have noted with great concern the information by our Danish colleague on the recent foiled assassination plot in Denmark by an Iranian intelligence agency. At this moment, we express our full solidarity with our Danish friends and partners.

We take the matter extremely seriously. Such activities are completely unacceptable.

We deplore any threat to Nordic security. It is important that the Nordic countries stand shoulder to shoulder, when faced with threats against our societies.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish Statement at the UN Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security

Published 25 October 2018

National statement delivered by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on behalf of Sweden at the United Nations Security Council Open Debate on Women Peace and Security: Promoting Implementation of the WPS Agenda and Sustaining Peace through Women's Political and Economic Empowerment, 25 October 2018, New York.

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary General, dear colleagues and friends,

Maybe you know that when the formal peace talks between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) opened in Havana, Cuba in November 2012, only one of the 20 negotiators around the table was a woman. A year later, civil society leaders organized a first-ever National Summit of Women and Peace and out of that summit came a clear demand for an inclusive peace process. Two years later women comprised 20 % of the government's negotiating team and 43 % of the FARC delegates.

So, what happened? By organizing themselves, these women contributed in crucial ways to the peacemaking effort, including by broadening the agenda. Women addressed some of the primary grievances of affected communities such as land restitution and the right to justice and reparation for victims. Women furthermore negotiated local cease-fires, and thereby improved the local security situations in towns and villages across the country.

In addition, because of demands by female negotiators and civil society, FARC undertook several confidence-building measures, such as an apology process and the release of child soldiers, which allowed the process to continue. This increased accountability. Finally, women built coalitions and rallied public support in favor of the peace talks. By repairing relations in communities affected by the conflict, women and civil society laid the groundwork for peace-building efforts necessary for the agreement's long-term success.

The peace agreement in Colombia is a model when it comes to inclusion. Women were key for success in the peace process, and their continued involvement will be key in the implementation of the peace process and for consolidating the peace.

Mr President and Mr Secretary General,

Thank you very much for your report, Secretary General. I think it made chilling reading partly, but it was also an enormous challenge put on us. I also thank you for your "to do list" that you presented here - the things to do for the UN system but also for us as Member States. I really hope that we will all bring it with us back home and start to implement it.

We welcome the focus on participation in this year's debate, and wish to thank Bolivia for putting emphasis on political inclusion and economic recovery. We also thank Randa Siniora Atallah, the Executive Director of UNWOMEN, and the Secretary General for all their valuable input.

Participation is not about counting heads but about having influence. About being recognized as party to the peace. About making sure that women's and men's situations are taken into consideration when making plans for the economy, for the infrastructure, for the justice system.

This is evident in the Sahel, where decreasing livelihood opportunities are directly linked to the risk of conflict, and women play a role as agents of change. I had the pleasure of visiting this region this summer together with distinguished colleagues from the UN and the African Union.

As you have heard already: in the Lake Chad region, where people are facing a food and nutrition crisis, we heard how the shrinking lake and growing insecurity have had severe consequences for people who

traditionally have sustained themselves by fishing activities. The fisher women we met in the village of Bol told us that they wished for only three things: bigger boats, better nets – and to not get raped.

Many of the women and girls we met had suffered from violence and inequalities, and are now seeking to use their experiences to transform societies and structures. We were encouraged to see that women were coming together in networks to address the challenges they face, including sexual and reproductive health and rights and access to basic social services.

Mr president,

The role women have played and continue to play in Colombia and the Sahel respectively demonstrate the very apparent need for including women in all aspects of decision-making, and how this in turn leads to more sustainable peace.

That is why we, as a member of this council, have consistently asked - where are the women? We will only ever be effective if we translate the women, peace and security agenda into concrete action and tailor responses to the specific situations on our agenda.

This has yielded results: All political and peacekeeping missions now have a Women, Peace and Security mandate. Discussions in the council are better informed, mandates are more precise, decisions are more inclusive and the number of CSO-briefers has increased considerably, leading to better input. In July, for the first time - but hopefully not the last – there was gender parity among briefers to the council.

However, agreements in the Security Council or advancements in our work do not automatically translate into changed realities on the ground. There needs to be a shift in mentality, a shift in analysis, and a shift in action.

First of all, making tangible progress requires ownership and accountability at the highest levels of leadership in the UN system as well as among us Member States. In the UN, Special Representatives and Special Envoys should be measured on how they implement and deliver on women, peace and security.

Second, the agenda must be taken seriously in the field. Senior gender expertise in political and peacekeeping mission should be strategically positioned.

Third, A gender dimension need always be taken into account throughout strategic planning processes in conflict contexts, and never become an add-on or an afterthought. Such approaches must permeate all sectors, whether military, police or civilian.

Fourth, missions must also step up efforts to engage with civil society, not least women's organizations.

Fifth, we need better analysis. Conflict analysis that inform decision making must include gender equality. Much work remains to make women's and men's situation visible in each setting. Gender disaggregated data in reporting from the field should be a minimum, including in the reports to this council.

Sixth, and last, peacekeeping and political mission budgets must be gender responsive. We have shared more detailed recommendations on all of these aspects with the Secretary General.

Mr President,

We still witness too many peace processes where the absence of women is apparent. This should no longer be accepted. I have realized that there are four myths on gender in peace mediation that we need to dispel once and for all.

The first myth is that there are distinct 'women's issues'. While conflict affects women and men differently, that does not mean that certain topics are relevant for one gender only.

The second myth is that peace process starts at the negotiating table. Women are usually invited when formal talks are already convened, long after pre-negotiations, consultations and agenda-setting have already started. In the earlier phases, a broad range of perspectives about the drivers of conflict and peace are most needed.

The third myth is that mediation is "political magic in smoky rooms", or as somebody said "men in fancy hotels". Mediation is not some political game played by charismatic, mysterious personalities. Such narrow view of mediation risk closing the door to many skillful women.

A group of people that challenge this myth are in the audience today: the representatives from five regional women mediator's networks. They bring incredible experiences as negotiators, mediators, political decision makers,

civil society leaders and experts and must be recognized and drawn upon by the UN and member states.

The fourth myth is that we need more evidence. Women frequently need to justify their participation by presenting evidence of the benefits of women's participation. Male counterparts never have to do that. Women should be able to participate simply because it is their right.

I believe that inclusion of women mediators from all around the world will change the dynamics of peace processes.

Finally Mr president,

No woman needs to be “given a voice”. Everyone has a voice. What is needed is more listening. Sweden had the pleasure of hosting the first ever multi stakeholder Forum on WPS earlier this week, where security council members had the opportunity to listen to more than 50 civil society representatives. Among the many themes that were raised, representatives from civil society stressed the need for addressing root causes, investing in protection of human rights defenders, and addressing gender equality within economic recovery efforts. They also called on the Security Council to act as a role model, and as an “influencer” within the system.

Mr President,

Empowering women and increasing women's political participation is one of the most effective tools for advancing global peace and security. It's also a prerequisite for preventing sexual and gender based violence, which sadly still affects an appalling number of women every day. We salute the heroic efforts of Nadia Murad and Denis Mukwege, the winners of the Nobel Peace prize 2018, who treat, speak up for, and seek justice for women who fall victim to such violence. Their work, as well as the work of thousands of activists, peacebuilders and women human rights defenders around the world should be an inspiration to us all.

In conclusion, let me pose a challenge to all of you ahead of 2020. In two years' time, Security Council Resolution 1325 will turn 20. By then, we need to ensure that the commitments we have made matter. Let us collectively pledge – politically and financially - to ensure that the agenda becomes a priority and a reality.

I thank you for your attention.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish Statement at the UN Security Council Briefing on North Korea

Published 27 September 2018

National statement delivered by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on behalf of Sweden at the United Nations Security Council Briefing on non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea, 27 September 2018, New York.

Thank you, Mr President,

Dear colleagues, as I believe you all vividly remember, when world leaders gathered here in New York for the General Assembly one year ago, tensions on the Korean peninsula were alarmingly high and dangerous.

Since then positive, historic progress has been made and we now have a new momentum. But substantial challenges remain, and as much as we would like it, this is neither a quick nor a simple process, and it will take time. Unity of this Council has been decisive for the progress made so far, and continued unity will be critical. Your personal engagement, Secretary Pompeo, is very important, and we thank you for that.

Mr President,

The Security Council has shown strong resolve regarding the situation on the Korean peninsula, adopting numerous substantial resolutions by consensus. Sweden has contributed to these efforts, including by consistently pushing for diplomatic solutions. Our resolve must now be geared towards making further progress with a two-pronged approach.

Firstly, we need to effectively implement the existing sanctions until the demands of this Council are met. There are widespread violations of the sanctions regime in a range of areas, including arms exports, petroleum trade and financial transactions. We call on all Member States to fulfil their obligations and ensure full implementation.

There is no doubt that the responsibility for the dire humanitarian situation in the DPRK fundamentally rests with its government. At the same time, there are concerns about indirect negative impact of sanctions. Enhanced efforts are therefore needed to ensure that the humanitarian exemptions are safeguarded. A generation of North Koreans must not be lost due to malnutrition and lack of medicines.

Secondly, we must continue to encourage and support diplomatic efforts. Progress in the inter-Korean dialogue is very encouraging. Important agreements, including most recently at the summit in Pyongyang last week, have been achieved.

The summit between the United States and the DPRK in Singapore in June was indeed significant. All parties must now work to maintain momentum, and build trust and confidence. A step-by-step approach is needed to achieve complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation. For the DPRK, this means translating its commitments into concrete undertakings without delay. It is important that the IAEA is given a role early in the process.

Creative diplomacy will continue to be critical. The parties should explore ways to move from the armistice towards a peace agreement. The need for regional collaborative arrangements, including on security, as we've heard others say here, is evident.

An international framework that deals with all different aspects and can contribute to sustainability is essential. We welcome the support of the UN Secretary-General and the UN system. My country, with its presence in Pyongyang and as a longstanding member of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, the NNSC, will continue to assist diplomatic efforts.

Mr President,

The situation on the Korean peninsula has far-reaching implications for

international peace and security. It is also vital for good neighbourly relations in North East Asia. Recent progress has shown that it is possible to diffuse tensions through dialogue and cooperation. This should be recognised by the Security Council, and the newfound opportunity should be seized. We must now work together and stay united towards a peaceful, prosperous and nuclear-weapons-free Korean peninsula.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish Statement at the UN Security Council Briefing on Maintenance of International Peace and Security: Non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Published 26 September 2018

National statement delivered by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström, on behalf of Sweden, at the United Nations Security Council Briefing on Maintenance of international peace and security: non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, 26 September 2018, New York.

Madam President,

After listening to all countries around this table I hear support that multilateral and diplomatic solutions are urgently needed to address the challenges of today. International peace and security, and preventing conflict and terrorism, is rightly high on our agenda.

I therefore thank you, Madam President, for convening this important meeting on non-proliferation.

Madam President,

We have been asked to comment on four themes in this briefing - sanctions efficiency, capacity to implement, non-state actors, and weapons of mass destruction.

I think that the answer to all these four issues is close multilateral cooperation.

The world would certainly be a much more dangerous place without the existing treaties and agreements of the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

Yet, that multilateral framework for non-proliferation and disarmament depends on our continuous commitment to collective solutions.

In many parts of the world we see modernization of nuclear weapons arsenals, increased missile capacities, the threat of chemical weapons use and a normalization in the rhetoric surrounding all weapons of mass destruction – history has shown us too many times that such steps forms a pathway to catastrophe.

The nuclear weapons states bear a particular responsibility in upholding and making good on the commitment inherent in the NPT of a nuclear weapons-free world. To this end the review conference in 2020 must pave the way for enhanced disarmament and non-proliferation commitments. Equally, Sweden reiterates the call on all States to sign and ratify the CTBT.

Madam President,

The NPT is the common tool towards disarmament and non-proliferation but let me today also focus on three specific issues - the challenges to the Iran nuclear agreement, the DPRK's development of nuclear weapons, and the recurring use of chemical weapons.

First, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the Iran deal, is a historic achievement. It is a concrete example of effective diplomatic non-proliferation efforts. This agreement prevents nuclear proliferation in Iran, but also aims to avoid ripple effects in the region. As the IAEA confirms, Iran continues to fulfill its nuclear obligations under the agreement. As long as that is the case, the JCPOA effectively curtails Iran's ability to develop nuclear weapons.

This is why Sweden, together with the rest of the EU, deeply regrets the

United States' unilateral withdrawal from the agreement – a decision with far-reaching consequences that makes our world more unsafe. And frankly, what are the alternatives to this agreement?

In undercutting a concrete multilateral non-proliferation tool, it dangerously undermines our joint non-proliferation efforts elsewhere.

Together with our EU partners, we will try to mitigate the adverse effects of the US policies. Sweden, and the rest of the EU, will continue to foster broad relations and dialogue with Iran, including on issues such as human rights. Iran's role in the region and missile activities are clearly a matter of concern. These concerns can and should however be addressed separately and not at the expense of the JCPOA. Security in the Middle East region can only be achieved through diplomatic solutions and enhanced cooperation, not through further polarization and isolation.

Remember we have tried this before, for decades isolation has been tried and it does not work.

Secondly, the DPRK's nuclear weapons program has been a major threat to the global non-proliferation regime. Recent diplomatic efforts deserve our full and active support. The continued progress in the Inter-Korean dialogue is very encouraging, and the summit between the United States and the DPRK in Singapore in June was indeed significant. All parties must now work to maintain momentum and take positive steps.

For the DPRK this means that commitments must be translated into legally binding undertakings. The IAEA should be given a role early in the verification of the denuclearization and disarmament process.

The Security Council and the international community must continue to stand united.

Thirdly, the use of chemical weapons is a serious violation of international law. Every violation undermines established norms and risk eroding the international taboo on these weapons. This is a very serious and worrisome development. The use of chemical weapons is morally abhorrent and can never be accepted.

In Syria, the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism has confirmed that chemical weapons were used repeatedly by the Syrian Arab Republic and by Da'esh. We supported the decision to task the OPCW to identify the

perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons in Syria. While a mechanism established by this Council would have been preferable, the issue was too important to be allowed to be blocked. This does however not free this Council from its responsibility to ensure that those responsible are held to account.

In Salisbury a targeted murder was attempted using a nerve agent. Such assaults are absolutely unacceptable, and we call on Russia to fully cooperate with the investigations.

Madam President,

We must never lose sight of why we are making the efforts to eliminate these horrific weapons. Until now we have not talked about the victims. I have myself met with survivors of nuclear weapons attacks and I will never forget their stories. Victims of chemical weapons have shared similarly accounts. It is important to listen to such personal experiences to understand what it is we are fighting for. It has strengthened my resolve to step up efforts for non-proliferation and disarmament.

Weapons of Mass Destruction is clearly a global threat that we must address together. Only through multilateral solutions, including by this Council, can we effectively prevent the use of these repugnant weapons. The multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament framework is also a key pillar of the international rules-based order. We owe this to the survivors and victims of past attacks, and we owe it to future generations.

Thank you madam president.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Humanitarian disaster in Idlib must be avoided

Published 05 September 2018

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström

The conflict in Syria is one of the greatest humanitarian catastrophes of our time. Hundreds of thousands of people have died, and more than half of the country's population has been forced to flee since the start of the conflict in 2011. Time and again, the Syrian regime has shown that it is prepared to go to any lengths to force the population into submission, without any respect for human life and suffering.

This year, we have seen how the de-escalation areas, which were agreed upon by the Astana guarantors (Iran, Russia and Turkey) have been recaptured one at a time by the regime and its allies, with enormous humanitarian consequences as a result. Much now indicates that the regime is preparing a large scale military offensive against Idlib, the last remaining de-escalation area.

The Astana guarantors have failed to deliver on their promise – a de-escalation of the violence in Syria. It is high time they lived up to their commitments. At their meeting in Tehran on Friday, they must find a way to avoid further escalation.

As the UN Secretary-General stated, protection of civilians in Syria must now be given priority and a peaceful solution must be reached. The UN and the Security Council must take preventive action to avoid a new humanitarian disaster in Syria. Civilians must be protected from the effects of war, in accordance with the parties' obligations under the rules of international humanitarian law.

Sweden and Kuwait share the responsibility as co-penholders in the UNSC for the humanitarian situation in Syria. Together, we are now doing everything in our power to try to protect the estimated 3 million people in Idlib. We know from previous experience that this is a very difficult task, but we are prepared to take our responsibility.

Margot Wallström

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström at the UNSC Debate on Climate-Related Security Risks

Published 11 July 2018

National statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden Margot Wallström, on behalf of Sweden, at the United Nations Security Council Debate on Climate-Related Security Risks, 11 July 2018, New York.

Madam Deputy-Secretary-General, Ministers, Distinguished colleagues,

I am honored to chair today's debate on climate related security risks. I am a bit taken by the previous speaker, and I really thank the briefers for their statements this morning. Their testimonies, although from different perspectives, say one thing: the security risks associated with climate change are real. Minister Janabi has told of how Iraq is grappling with harsh weather conditions and intense droughts that will affect the country's fragile security. Hindu Oumarou Ibrahim has vividly described the challenges facing pastoralists in the Lake Chad Basin as ecosystems, and with them also old power-structures, shift.

Let me also thank the speakers representing groups of affected countries who will share their experience with us. A special thank you to His Excellency President Baron Waqa of Nauru, for being here today.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Last week, I met with these women and men who are dealing first-hand with the everyday consequences that a changing climate is having on peace and

security. They are migrants and refugees displaced as a result of drought or floods. They are the breadwinners no longer able to feed their families because, much like Lake Chad itself, their traditional fishing or farming livelihoods have evaporated, giving rise to tensions.

They are women leaders working in their communities to prevent youth from becoming victims of radicalization by groups that prey on the vulnerable. They do not have a choice to ignore these realities; neither do we.

And, the link between climate and security continues to be a priority for Sweden on this Council.

It is time for the Security Council to catch up with the changing reality on the ground. It's been seven years since we last debated climate and security.

And, it is past time for us to deepen our understanding of how climate change interacts with drivers of conflict. I will be practical. I believe there are four areas that needs to be addressed:

Firstly, in order to properly address threats to peace and security, and to guarantee the Council's future efficiency, we need a better understanding of climate related security risks. We have made an important start over the last 18 months, by recognizing the adverse effects of climate change on stability in the Lake Chad Basin, West Africa and the Sahel.

Secondly, we need improved tools, analysis and reporting from the field to better address climate-related security challenges. The PRST on climate and security adopted seven years ago, asked for better reporting. However, that knowledge and information gap continues to exist, and urgently needs to be filled.

To be able to make informed decisions on how best to respond to the conflicts on our agenda, we must have all the information on what is driving them. This includes how a changing climate is contributing to these conflicts. Climate risk assessments should be part and parcel of relevant reporting to the Security Council. How climate risks interact with social, political, and economic factors as well as gender dimensions should be taken into account.

It is clear that climate risk has the potential to play an ever-increasing role in driving future conflicts. We need to invest in early warning in order to better understand where these potential vulnerabilities lie. To this end, we would

welcome regular forward looking regional and global reporting from the Secretariat on climate related security risks.

Thirdly, to deliver on all of this, an institutional home for these issues within the UN system is needed, we hope that Amina Mohammed might be the mother of this home, maybe under the leadership also of a special representative, with responsibility for bringing together information from all relevant UN agencies. Reporting and analysis should also draw on available research from outside the UN system, maybe through a network of universities and research institutes.

To this end, I am pleased to announce the launch of a Stockholm-based knowledge hub for Climate Security later this summer. This hub will increase collective understanding of these issues and will be available to the UN and other actors by providing evidence-based analysis.

An enhanced understanding of climate-related security risks and how to address them in the Security Council should not and will not duplicate responsibilities of the General Assembly or other UN bodies. Instead, it will ensure all UN bodies deliver on their respective mandates to the best of their ability – and that the system collectively delivers on more than the sum of its parts.

Fourthly, and lastly, in framing our response, we need to look to the countries on the front line, and learn from their experience and also from good practices.

For example:

Nepal and Sudan, with UN support, are taking steps to address climate related risks through pilot projects that map climate related security risks, with the aim of identifying resilience building interventions and programming.

The Lake Chad Basin Governors' Forum established this year to enhance joint efforts towards building peace and fostering sustainable development across the region, has confirmed the importance of applying a holistic approach to complex and interlinked security challenges including climate change.

Led by the African Union Commission, the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel initiative is a truly integrated project for climate, security and

peace which aims to halt desertification, boost food security and resilience to climate change, whilst creating jobs. This is conflict prevention and sustaining peace in practice.

We must capitalize on this knowledge on the ground and integrate it in our efforts to end conflict and sustain peace.

Regional organizations, such as the AU and the EU, as well as within the Pacific Small Island Developing States, the Alliance of Small Island States, and CARICOM, are already providing momentum to the international response to climate related security risks.

It is now imperative that the United Nations catches up, and takes the lead in facilitating and coordinating global efforts, working with regional partners and other stakeholders.

The Secretary-General's Climate Summit in September 2019 represents a pivotal moment to make progress on this issue. The concrete steps I have mentioned today should work towards guaranteeing that climate-related security risks are on the agenda at this summit.

Dear colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finally, the threat that a changing climate presents to our societies and to international peace and security cannot be underestimated. It has already created a new reality for the communities I met in the Sahel. To realistically and meaningfully respond to their needs; to address the conflicts of today; to meet the calls from Hindou and others; and to prevent the conflicts of tomorrow, we too can no longer afford to ignore this threat.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish statement at the UNSC Briefing on Peace and Security in Africa

Published 10 July 2018

National statement delivered by Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden Margot Wallström on behalf of Sweden at the United Nations Security Council Briefing on Peace and Security in Africa, 10 July 2018, New York.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Yesterday morning, the Deputy Secretary-General, the African Union Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security, and I arrived in New York from Niger. It was my privilege to join Amina and Binta on the AU-UN joint high-level mission focused on Women, Peace and Security in the Sahel. It is now my pleasure to welcome my travel companions to today's meeting.

As others have done already, I would like to thank the Governments of Niger and Chad for their generous hospitality, and the inspiring women and men we met during our mission for sharing their stories with us.

I would like to make three points following our mission.

Firstly, on the overall challenges in the region; secondly, how we address the interrelated nature of these challenges; and thirdly, that all of this is not a women's issue – it is a peace and security issue.

Dear colleagues,

First, the countries we visited and the Sahel region are located between hope

and despair.

HOPE, because the Sahel is blessed with abundant human, cultural and natural resources, for example solar energy, offering tremendous capital for rapid growth. It is also the most youthful region of the world with 64,5 percent of the population aged less than 25 years.

Hope was inspired also by the women and girls we met, who had moved from victims to survivors to agents of change. By youth, who look at their futures with confidence, despite their difficult circumstances.

And, by the vibrant and determined civil society organisations working to improve the lives of men, women, girls and boys across the region. We also heard from the governments of Chad and Niger about their efforts, together with other countries in the region, to promote regional stability and combat terrorism, including through the Multinational Joint Task Force and the G5 Sahel Joint Force.

But also DESPAIR, because of chronic underdevelopment, terrorism and violent extremism, a lack of respect for human rights, and the negative effects of climate change. 24 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance, and the growing insecurity has worsened vulnerabilities. Today the national budgets are used to finance security concerns, as we already heard; with less money available for education and health. These challenges affect women and men, boys and girls, differently. Women often bear a disproportionate burden.

In the Lake Chad region, where people are already facing a food and nutrition crisis, we heard how the shrinking of the lake and growing insecurity have had severe consequences for people who traditionally have sustained themselves by fishing activities. However, now, women are learning to fish – the said before the fish were big and the men did the fishing, now they are small and we can do the fishing. The fisher women we met in Bol told us that they wished for only three things: bigger boats, better nets – and to not get raped. This simple request illustrates the conditions under which they live, marked by poverty as well as by sexual and gender-based violence.

In both Chad and Niger, we met with civil society representatives who described challenges such as a lack of female candidates for public offices, inadequate health care and difficulties in ensuring education for girls. In Niger, we heard that three out of four girls will be married before turning 18,

with devastating consequences, as Ms Diop has already said. We met with women religious leaders and discussed efforts to prevent radicalization and end the practice of child marriage. And we were encouraged to see that in both countries, women were coming together in networks to address the challenges they face, including sexual and reproductive health and rights and access to basic social services.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Secondly, this joint mission encompassed all aspects of the United Nations work – peace and security, human rights, humanitarian assistance and development. And, it was once again clear to me, during our mission, how these areas of work overlap.

The many challenges in the Sahel cannot be dealt with separately, but rather require joined up political strategies and integrated responses. The United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel and its support plan are key tools at our disposal to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the AU's Agenda 2063. Gender equality and women's empowerment is one of the strategy's five key priorities.

We must spare no effort in ensuring implementation. We need to expand the choices and opportunities available for women, from an early age. This means ensuring education for girls, addressing restricting traditional and related social norms and fighting poverty. It means going back to basics, starting where we can make a difference.

Yet, the resources needed to fully address the challenges in the region are woefully inadequate. We need to step up our efforts to mobilize support and strengthen national capacities to respond to inequalities, fight impunity, create sustainable livelihoods, and empower and educate women and girls. Aid needs to be gender-sensitive, taking into account the different situations of women and men and promoting equality.

Thirdly, our visit also underlined that all of this taken together is not solely a women's issue – it is a peace and security issue.

In the Lac region of Chad, we were deeply moved by Halima, who had been married away as a 15-year-old child and then trained by Boko Haram to be a suicide bomber. She lost both her legs when the suicide vests of some of the girls who had been trained with her exploded as they entered a busy market.

Today, Halima is a paralegal and actively engaged in the prevention of violent extremism, as well as a powerful symbol of the many roles of women in peace and security.

The increased use of female suicide bombers - two-thirds of suicide attacks in 2017 were carried out by women or girls - illustrates the cruel way in which terrorists seek to exploit the perceived "goodness" of women to maximize harm – in terms of victims of suicide bombings, but also for communities and families.

This is disastrous given women's role as pillars of families, societies and communities. Societies could collapse. But women are fighting on. We have to empower and educate girls and women, and we have to end child marriages.

To fight terrorism, there is no doubt that we need to adopt a gender-sensitive and human rights based approach – whether we are talking about the prevention of radicalization, counter-terrorism operations or providing support to victims.

Finally, let me end by answering the question of why this is a matter for you around this table – a matter for the UN Security Council. Essentially because their destiny is also our destiny.

So what can and must we do. In two years, Security Council Resolution 1325 will be 20 years old.

I want to put the following challenge to the UN system and all Member States: By 2020, ensure that UN peacekeeping and political missions fully deliver on the women, peace and security agenda.

The Security Council has a critical role to play. This includes by ensuring:

- that women's voices are heard around peace negotiation tables,
- that women's voices are heard in this chamber,
- that mission mandates include a women, peace and security perspective,
- that gender posts in missions continue to be funded, and women, peace and security taskings adequately resourced and prioritized,
- that gender is systematically included in mission reporting and monitoring.

We must all set the same challenge for ourselves. And, you can count on Sweden to do its part to support this effort. To start, we will continue to ensure that civil society perspectives are heard in this chamber.

For the annual 1325 debate, we commit to host a civil society forum. We also commit to supporting the Secretariat to build capacity for enhanced gender responsive reporting. Only then will we gain a full understanding of the challenges and the most effective responses.

Let us continue and intensify our efforts to support the countries in the Sahel on the issues we have discussed today. I commend the African Union and the UN for joining forces and deepening their partnership on women, peace and security.

Missions like the one undertaken last week should become annual events, and every Security Council meeting should consider the women, peace and security perspective as an essential part of our work to end conflicts. I have no doubt that, if we were to do so, our motto of more women, more peace would become a reality.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on violence in Gaza

Published 15 May 2018

I would like to express my deep dismay, shock and sadness at the violence and the rising death toll among Palestinians protesting in Gaza, where Israeli forces have once again used live ammunition against civilians. Yesterday, more than 55 people were killed and over 2 200 were injured.

Both sides have a responsibility to de-escalate the situation. The right to pursue peaceful protests must be respected, while those leading the protests need to avoid provocations and the use of violence.

I call on Israel to respect the right to peaceful protest. Every state, Israel included, has a right to defend its borders, but all measures taken must be proportionate and Israel's forces must exercise maximum restraint in their use of live ammunition. As the occupying power, Israel has a responsibility to protect Palestinian civilians. Furthermore, it is imperative not to put children in harm's way. An independent and transparent investigation is urgently needed, as called for by the UN Secretary-General.

The ongoing violence is taking place against the backdrop of a dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, the continued occupation of Palestine, a stalled peace process and yesterday's opening of the US Embassy in Jerusalem.

Both sides need to urgently refrain from violence and commit to returning to peaceful negotiations, aiming for a two-state solution based on international law and relevant UN resolutions, with Jerusalem as the shared capital of both states. In Gaza, humanitarian needs must be met.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström regarding Guatemala's request that the Swedish Government recall its Ambassador to Guatemala

Published 11 May 2018

Guatemala has requested that the Government recall our Ambassador to Guatemala, Anders Kompass. This is very unfortunate. We are now going to seek further explanation from the Guatemalan Government and then decide on a course of action. In this case, as in other similar cases, the Government will keep its comments to a minimum. Sweden's views and action on issues regarding human rights and anti-corruption are well known.



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on President Trump's decision to withdraw the United States from the Iran nuclear deal

Published 09 May 2018

It is now clear that President Trump has decided that the United States will withdraw from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly known as the Iran nuclear deal. President Trump's decision is deeply regrettable. It risks seriously undermining international peace and security architecture. The decision also risks negative repercussions for global non-proliferation efforts. The Swedish Government will now closely study and analyse the effects of the decision – bilaterally, in the EU and in the United Nations Security Council. President Trump's announcement on the introduction of new sanctions is particularly concerning. It is, however, too soon to determine its full consequences. We continue to stand united with the EU in our full support for the deal and its implementation. Sweden and the EU will work to preserve the JCPOA. It is now important that the deal continues to be respected and that Iran

continues to fulfil its commitments. There is also strong EU support for broad and close relations with Iran, including on issues concerning the human rights situation. This is about doing what best promotes the forces of good in Iran and yields the best results. In parallel, although we view Iran's ballistic missile programme with concern, this must be handled separately from the JCPOA. The 2015 nuclear deal was negotiated over a period of 10 years and is one of the greatest successes of our time for diplomacy, peaceful conflict resolution, prevention of armed conflict, disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The JCPOA has been endorsed by the United Nations Security Council. Provided the JCPOA is implemented, the threat of Iranian nuclear weapons development is averted during the period the deal applies. The International Atomic Energy Agency recently confirmed that Iran is living up to its commitments, which has been welcomed by the Swedish Government and the EU. The deal also reduces tensions in the region and the risk of armed conflict. There is currently no alternative plan. In a time of conflict in the Middle East, we must avoid further uncertainty and polarisation. The international community must take constructive steps to reduce the tension and find political solutions to ongoing conflicts.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish statement at the UN Security Council Briefing on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace

Published 26 April 2018

National Statement delivered by H.E. Ms Margot Wallström, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sweden, at the United Nations Security Council Briefing on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, 25 April 2018, New York.

Thank you Mr President,

I will begin with some thanks to you Mr President and the Peruvian Presidency for hosting today's meeting and, to you, Secretary-General also for your statement; and Secretary-General, you know that you have our support, our full support.

Let me also thank our briefers, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, Mr. Dan Neuculescu, and of course African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, Smaïl Chergui.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the members of the Security Council for their participation in the Secretary-General's retreat at the estate of Dag Hammarskjöld at Backåkra last weekend. Thank you for taking the trouble to come.

Now, the 25th of April is a special day because we commemorate the pimperl revolution, which ended dictatorship in Portugal, and colonial rule

in many lusophone countries. It set Portugal on the path to European integration, joined by Spain and Greece.

Indeed, this example, which inspired a generation of Europeans, including me, compels us to reflect on the fabric of sustaining peace.

And fostering the same commitment to sustain peace, that inspired leaders following two devastating world wars, could hardly be more pressing. In 2016, more countries were affected by conflict than at any time in nearly 30 years. The types of security challenges have become more complex, and are often interrelated. Once ignited, such conflicts can take years to quench – requiring investments in peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, resilience, peacebuilding and development. Not to mention the cost in human lives and human potential. This, if anything, provides a strong incentive for us to increase investments in prevention. Can we afford not to prevent conflicts?

Mr President,

The Secretary-General has made sustaining peace the overarching purpose of the reforms to the UN system and his follow-up report to the resolutions of 2016 offers a clear roadmap.

Now we must move to action.

So today, let me just shortly outline three core commitments that are needed to operationalise the Sustaining Peace agenda:

First: to boost equality and inclusive national ownership.

Multi-dimensional poverty, abuses and violations of human rights and growing inequality are challenges increasingly influencing the situations that appear on this Council's agenda. Addressing exclusion and structural discrimination is therefore critical for prevention.

Importantly, no peace is sustainable, just or legitimate if it shuts out half the population. The full and effective participation of women in peace and security is core Council business. Not for the sake of women, but for the sake of peace and security. Gender equality benefits all.

Likewise, violations and abuses of human rights erode trust within societies and are root causes of conflict. Human rights are not optional extras. Building inclusive societies requires states to abide by their obligations under international law, to respect, protect and promote all human rights – civil,

political, economic, social and cultural.

Second: improve early warning and commit to preventive action.

Within this Council we must establish a practice of early discussions on situations at risk of escalating into violent conflict, as we heard examples of before here, with a view to preventing them from emerging.

There are a number of tools at our disposal that would allow us to engage in early action and these include the Peacebuilding Commission, the Ad Hoc Working Group on conflict prevention and resolution, and the many informal meeting formats at the Council's disposal. We must utilise them.

We need independent, authoritative and candid advice from the Secretary-General based on comprehensive analysis. This includes analysis on new and emerging threats, such as climate change, in fact not new, that's true, but emerging to improve our collective understanding, strategic planning and response.

And thirdly, target drivers through collaborative action.

If conflicts have multiple drivers, then no single action alone can prevent them. Cross-pillar cooperation and a system-wide approach are essential. This means going beyond sharing individual country plans to being jointly accountable for delivering a common goal. It means true collaboration that delivers enhanced synergies and lead to results that are greater than the sum of the individual parts.

Furthermore, as we heard already, to enhance our partnerships with regional and sub-regional organizations. They are the eyes and the ears on the ground, they understand their neighbours, and can intervene when we cannot.

The Peacebuilding Commission is a vehicle for collaborative action and partnerships. It is uniquely placed to convene international actors for coordinated and strategic responses for sustaining peace. So we can unlock the full potential of the Commission – for more informal and frequent interactions between the Council and the Commission. The catalytic role played by the Peacebuilding Fund has been extremely useful and Sweden therefore intends to double our support to the fund.

So Mr President,

In conclusion, preventing violent conflict is a Charter obligation. The sustaining peace approach allows us to improve this Council's ability to do its part in delivering on that responsibility. And today, we as Member States must play our part, by mustering the political will and wholeheartedly supporting the Secretary-General and his vision of putting conflict prevention at the centre of this organization.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström at the High-Level Meeting on Sustaining Peace

Published 24 April 2018

National statement delivered by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on behalf of Sweden at the United Nations General Assembly opening of the High-Level Meeting on Sustaining Peace, 24 April 2018, New York.

Mr President,

First of all thank you very much for bringing us together in this high-level meeting on Sustaining Peace. This week offers an excellent opportunity to advance this important agenda.

A significant breakthrough in the twin resolutions on Sustaining Peace in 2016, recognizing that efforts to sustain peace were necessary not only at the end of a conflict, but long beforehand, through the prevention of conflict and addressing its root causes.

The real test is to translate this into change on the ground. As we all know it requires continued strong political commitment at the highest level, from all countries, north and south, small and large.

I would like to outline three core cases, as I would like to call them, for operationalizing the 'Sustaining Peace' agenda:

First: The economic case: Invest in peace.

Second: A sovereignty case: Which means Prioritize inclusion.
And thirdly: The regional case. Support reform for prevention.

1. And if I start with The economic case for preventing violent conflicts it is undisputable. It can save up to tens of billions of dollars per year.

And that is reason enough to review our investment portfolios on peace and security. And what does it mean for the UN?

The financially largest part of the UN is the development system. The 2030 Agenda offers an integrated framework to address the economic and social drivers of conflict, and to build stable societies, including through focusing on institutions, human rights and the rule of law.

And to be agile and relevant in-country, we need to provide adequate, predictable and sustainable resources. Sweden is one of the largest contributors to UN development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. We are currently in the process of entering into multi-year agreements with the funds and programs, with continued ambitious and even increasing levels of Swedish core support.

Core funding is an investment in peace.

We should heed the Secretary-General's call for a quantum leap in the Peacebuilding Fund.

This year, we intend to contribute approximately 24 million US dollars to the fund. Sweden will more than double its core support in 2018, with an increase of approximately 12 million US dollars. We are examining the possibility of having a multi-year funding agreement with the fund.

2. The second case has to do with fighting inequality. In the 1970's, Sweden's then Prime Minister, Olof Palme, told the General Assembly that "equality within nations is a prerequisite for equality between them". And I think that still rings true. Building inclusive societies is fundamental for sustaining peace.

And therefor, equality must be at the forefront of our efforts. Exclusion and discrimination are root causes of conflict that are often overlooked. We have to address all dimensions of inequality. This includes frank discussion about discrimination based on race, religion, gender, sexual orientation and income inequalities as well as other mechanisms of oppression.

Investments in capacity and legitimate national institutions, can also bring

strengthened sovereignty. Sustaining peace and avoiding a relapse into conflict entails reaching inclusive political solutions and addressing the root causes of conflict.

That is why we have heard already, several of the before speakers before me have said the same thing, empowering women, youth and children is critical for sustaining peace, and indeed core peace and security business.

Harnessing their potential increases the resilience of all societies – and benefits all, women and men, girls and boys. Investing in youth and children today, prevents the conflicts of tomorrow.

3. Finally, advancing the sustaining peace agenda requires political will. We must be open to change.

The beneficiaries of our work are not in NY, but at country-level. And my country therefore fully supports the principles for reform articulated by the Secretary-General: a country-level and people-centered perspective, gender parity, decentralized responsibility and decision-making, and reformed budget procedures.

Key to push coherence and avoid fragmentation is an impartial, independent and empowered UN resident coordinator; driving implementation of a UN development assistance framework that can rally all members of a UN country team to accompany national efforts on Agenda 2030. I call on fellow Member States to go the extra mile in the current negotiations on the UN Development System, particularly on the financing aspects.

A stronger coordination between development, humanitarian and conflict prevention efforts in the field is so important.

Lastly, the UN cannot – and should not – do it alone. Partnerships at the regional and sub-regional levels for early warning and conflict prevention have proved invaluable. ECOWAS is a case in point. Their well-developed infrastructure should be sustainably supported.

Mr President,

In conclusion, we Member States carry an immense responsibility. That responsibility is to turn the promise of Sustaining Peace into a reality that touches the lives of those living under the shadow of conflict and violence. However, peace is never inevitable. It is clear –that if we want peace, we

must prepare for peace.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström regarding the strikes in Syria last night

Published 14 April 2018

The conflict in Syria has killed hundreds of thousands of people. Millions of people have been forced to flee, families have been torn apart and lives have been shattered. The conflict has involved atrocities and violence by the Syrian regime and its allies. The use of chemical weapons is the most horrific weapon of war used in the Syrian conflict. Chemical weapons are prohibited and their use is a serious threat to international peace and security. Sweden understands the anger that has been provoked by the horrendous attacks committed in Syria.

We regret that the United Nations Security Council, not least because of the Russian veto, has not been able to agree on how the use of chemical weapons in Syria should be stopped by political means and in accordance with the UN Charter. The United States, the United Kingdom and France took military action in Syria last night aimed at deterring the use of chemical weapons.

Efforts to achieve a political solution and ensure compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention continue. It is now important that the conflict does not escalate, that the UN-led process continues and that the Security Council takes its responsibility under international law. This is the only way we can achieve lasting peace in Syria.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Margot Wallström in support of the United Kingdom

Published 15 March 2018

I have spoken tonight with my British colleague Boris Johnson and conveyed my wholehearted support. I emphasised that Sweden has unequivocally condemned the use of the nerve agent against Sergei Skripal, his daughter and other civilians on UK soil. I reiterated our solidarity with the UK, as a partner in the EU and close friend to Sweden.

Sweden has noted Theresa May's assessment that the nerve agent in question has been identified as the type developed as a chemical weapon in the Soviet Union and later taken over by Russia, and that Russian involvement in this attack seems highly likely. We have also been clear that all use of chemical weapons is unacceptable.

Moreover, we have supported the UK's request that the matter be raised in the United Nations Security Council today. We support the UK's demand that Russia explain how this nerve agent came to be used in a murder attempt in the UK.

It is essential that those responsible for this attack be brought to justice.



Government Offices of Sweden

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 Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Security Council to gather at request of Sweden and Kuwait to discuss implementation of resolution on the humanitarian situation in Syria

Published 09 March 2018

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström

I welcome the UN Secretary-General's positive response to the request by Sweden and Kuwait to update the UN Security Council on 12 March on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2401. In the resolution, a unanimous Security Council demands a cessation of hostilities throughout Syria to allow emergency relief to reach those in need and enable medical evacuations to be conducted. The meeting on Monday will take place two weeks after the adoption of the resolution, and I expect the UN to update the Council on the resolution's implementation and present proposals for any measures that need to be taken.

The parties, and those with influence over the parties, must do considerably more for the resolution's implementation. Sweden will continue to conduct intensive diplomatic efforts in New York and in capital cities throughout the world to contribute to this goal. We will leave no stone unturned.

I welcome the efforts of the UN and its partner organisations to ensure that humanitarian aid reaches those in need. The fact that medical equipment was removed from convoys this week by the Syrian authorities is not only deeply outrageous, it also contravenes international law.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström

Published 24 February 2018

I welcome the Security Council's adoption today of the resolution put forward by Sweden and Kuwait for a cessation of hostilities in Syria. This will be beneficial for Syria's civilian population, who must be given a respite from the horrors of this war. Hospital and schools must not be the target of bombs.

The purpose of the cessation of hostilities, which will last for at least 30 days, is to enable humanitarian aid to reach the civilian population in the country and to facilitate medical evacuation. A temporary cessation of hostilities improves the chances of humanitarian and medical assistance reaching those in need.

The resolution also requires all parties to respect international law, including humanitarian law and human rights.

I also welcome the fact the Security Council succeeded in reaching agreement today – this is a gain for the legitimacy and credibility of the Council. Sweden will continue to work to ensure that the Council takes its responsibility.



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden and Kuwait to present resolution in UN Security Council on humanitarian situation in Syria

Published 13 February 2018

After seven years of war, the violence and suffering in Syria continue. A peaceful solution appears remote. Despite efforts to reduce the violence, recent weeks have been among the bloodiest since the conflict began. Thousands of people have lost their lives, tens of thousands have been forced to flee, and hospitals and schools have been bombed.

The humanitarian situation remains one of the worst the world has seen, with millions of displaced people, many of them still in Syria. The vulnerability of women and children remains a matter of concern. The situation of the humanitarian organisations continues to be difficult, and they are often denied access to the many people in need in Syria. When international law, including humanitarian law, is violated on a daily basis, it is our duty to act.

For this reason, Sweden and Kuwait – at the request of the humanitarian actors – are presenting a resolution in the UN Security Council to bring about a ceasefire, an end to sieges and attacks against civilians, hospitals and schools, guaranteed humanitarian access and medical evacuation of those most in need in Syria. Sweden and Kuwait have a particular responsibility for the Security Council's work on humanitarian issues in Syria in light of our role as penholders. In this role, last December Sweden and the then two co-penholders, Egypt and Japan, helped ensure that a resolution allowing continued cross-border humanitarian assistance to Syria was passed.

It is now essential for the international community to take collective action to achieve, in a first stage, a ceasefire and guarantee access for the humanitarian organisations so as to provide protection and provisions to the civilian population. At the same time, it remains clear that the only way to

reduce the suffering is to find a sustainable political solution to the conflict. In this regard, all actors must actively and constructively support the UN-led peace process in Geneva and try to find a solution to the conflict in line with Security Council Resolution 2254. Countries that hold particular influence over the parties, not least the countries behind the Astana Agreement, have a special responsibility to end the suffering.

Sweden will continue to support the efforts of UN Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura to find a political solution. In addition, we will continue to support, through humanitarian support and long-term development assistance measures, those affected by the conflict and forced to flee. However, the situation on the ground is so desperate that urgent action is required. It is our duty to try to reconcile disagreements in the Security Council and reach consensus on the importance of bringing the violence to an end and ensuring the delivery of the humanitarian assistance. Gaining support for the resolution will not be easy – but we must try.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Margot Wallström regarding the detention of the Swedish citizen Gui Minhai

Published 05 February 2018

The continued detention of the Swedish citizen Gui Minhai in China is a very serious matter. The brutal intervention in January against a Swedish support operation was conducted in spite of repeated assurances from the Chinese authorities that Mr Gui was free at that time. China's actions were in contravention of basic international rules on consular support. The current situation also raises questions about the application of the rule of law, including the prohibition of arbitrary deprivation of liberty. We demand that our citizen be given the opportunity to meet Swedish diplomatic and medical staff, and that he be released so that he can be reunited with his daughter and family.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Margot Wallström on the death sentence against Ahmadreza Djalali

Published 05 February 2018

Sweden demands that the death sentence against Ahmadreza Djalali is not enforced, and has repeatedly protested against the sentence together with the other EU Member States. This is being reiterated to senior Iranian representatives today. Sweden's position with regard to the death penalty is well-known. It is an inhuman, cruel and irreversible punishment. Sweden and the rest of the EU condemn its use in all its forms.

In light of the news that the death sentence has been confirmed, the Iranian Ambassador was summoned to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs today.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement in connection with the detention of Swedish citizen Gui Minhai

Published 23 January 2018

Statement by the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Margot Wallström

We take a very serious view of the detention on Saturday of Swedish citizen Gui Minhai, with no specific reason being given for the detention, which took place during an ongoing consular support mission.

China's Ambassador in Stockholm was summoned to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs both on Saturday and yesterday.

As has been clear from media reports, Mr Gui Minhai was at the time of his detention in the company of diplomatic staff, who were providing consular assistance to a Swedish citizen in need of medical care. This was perfectly in line with basic international rules giving us the right to provide our citizens with consular support.

The Chinese authorities have assured us on numerous occasions that Mr Gui Minhai has been free since his release having served a sentence for a traffic-related offence, and that we can have any contact we wish with our fellow citizen.

We expect the immediate release of our fellow citizen, and that he be given the opportunity to meet Swedish diplomatic and medical staff.



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement on the vote in the UN General Assembly on the resolution concerning Jerusalem

Published 22 December 2017

The UN General Assembly voted on Thursday 21 December on a resolution concerning Jerusalem. The vote was important as it was intended to reaffirm Jerusalem's special status. Sweden voted in favour, and we are pleased that a clear majority of the UN's 193 Member States did the same.

Sweden's vote for the resolution is a vote for international law and for peace. As long ago as 1947, Jerusalem was given a special legal and political status by the UN. The issue of the city's status can only be resolved through negotiations between Israel and Palestine, based on international law. The EU has clearly reaffirmed its view of Jerusalem as a final status issue and as a future capital of two states. In these uncertain times, it is more important than ever that Sweden continues to stand up for the international rules-based system, which it does in all contexts.

I hope that the widespread attention the issue has recently generated can help put the need for a two-state solution back in the spotlight. Our goal – with two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security, and with Jerusalem as the capital of both states – remains firm. Active engagement from the countries in the region and the world at large is necessary to make progress on this issue. The UN has a key role to play in this work.



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Wallström regarding the Security Council's extraordinary meeting on Jerusalem

Published 08 December 2017

The UN Security Council convened today for an emergency meeting on Jerusalem at the request of Sweden, Bolivia, Egypt, France, Italy, Senegal, the UK and Uruguay. The fact that a majority of Council members requested the meeting, including all EU Member States on the Security Council, shows the seriousness with which the international community views the status of Jerusalem and the statement by the United States.

The US statement of 6 December recognising Jerusalem as Israel's capital is not in line with international law and UN Security Council resolutions, and risks leading to strong reactions and greater instability in an already turbulent region. All final status issues, including Jerusalem's status as a future capital of both states, must be resolved through negotiations between the parties and not through unilateral action by the parties or others.

The Security Council was united today in calling for calm and restraint. All parties must refrain from the use of violence.

The Security Council has a responsibility for the peace process. All credible efforts to restart the peace process must be supported. Sweden calls on all stakeholders to engage in efforts to achieve peace.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement concerning US statement about Jerusalem

Published 06 December 2017

The Government deeply regrets the US statement about Jerusalem. The UN has given Jerusalem a special legal and political status, which the Security Council has called upon the international community to respect. There is a risk that this statement may lead to strong reactions and greater instability in an already turbulent region, and have long-term strategic consequences for the peace process.

The EU has clearly stated its view of Jerusalem as a separate entity and as a future capital for two states. EU foreign ministers have emphasised that the EU has never recognised Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem and that achieving a lasting peace requires resolving the status of Jerusalem through negotiations. The US statement does not affect the position of the EU and Sweden concerning Jerusalem's special status. It is of the utmost importance that all states respect and safeguard this status.

Sweden's long-standing commitment to a two-state solution remains. We are working to ensure that Israel and Palestine can live side by side in peace and security. All final status issues, including Jerusalem's status as a future capital for both states, must be resolved through negotiations between the parties and not through unilateral action by the parties or others.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Wallström regarding political developments in Cambodia

Published 17 November 2017

The Swedish Government takes a very serious view of today's decision by the Supreme Court of Cambodia to dissolve the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), the country's main opposition party. The CNRP received 43.8 per cent of the vote in local elections in 2017. The recent repressive measures against the opposition, the media and civil society organisations represent a serious setback for democratic development and human rights in Cambodia.

Sweden and the EU made our position against these political developments clear at an early stage. In our view these developments seriously restrict the democratic space in advance of Cambodia's general election in July 2018. Free and fair elections are a cornerstone of democracy. Elections in which the main opposition party is not allowed to participate cannot be regarded as legitimate.

The Swedish Government urges Cambodia to allow the political opposition, the media and civil society organisations to operate freely.

In light of these adverse political developments, the Swedish Government will review the forms of our engagement in Cambodia.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement - Catalonia

Published 30 October 2017

The Swedish Government fully supports the efforts taken by the Spanish Government and its institutions to safeguard the constitutional order in Catalonia in accordance with the rule of law and with respect for citizens' rights. The election to be held in Catalonia on 21 December will hopefully pave the way for a return to the constitutional order and a return to normality.

The unilateral declaration of independence adopted on Friday in the now dissolved Parliament of Catalonia violates the Spanish Constitution and is therefore illegal under Spanish law. As Sweden has already pointed out, the matter of Catalonia's status in Spain is an internal Spanish matter, and a solution must be sought within the framework of the Spanish Constitution.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Margot Wallström regarding North Korea's latest missile launch

Published 15 September 2017

Sweden condemns North Korea's latest missile launch. Firing a second missile over Japanese territory is a very serious act that further escalates tensions. We share the concern that is felt in Japan and other countries in the region.

It is extremely important that the UN Security Council meets today. Unity in the Security Council is crucial to enable the international community to continue to respond vigorously and collectively. It is vital that all countries now fully implement the sanctions adopted by the UN Security Council.

North Korea should immediately fulfil its international obligations and begin phasing out its nuclear weapons and missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the crisis in Rakhine State, Myanmar

Published 14 September 2017

At the initiative of Sweden and the United Kingdom, on 13 September the United Nations Security Council held an extraordinary meeting on the crisis in Rakhine State in Myanmar. The situation has deteriorated further in recent weeks, with almost 400 000 people being forced to flee to Bangladesh. According to UNICEF, 80 per cent of those people are women and children.

I am horrified by the continued violence and the reports of abuses and violations of human rights. Accounts of the disproportionate and excessive use of violence by the military and security forces are deeply troubling. This must stop. Humanitarian support must be allowed to reach those in need of protection and assistance. As is always the case in crises and conflicts, women and children are among those suffering most.

Thorough, independent investigations of the abuses and violations of human rights must be allowed, and those responsible must be held to account. The fact-finding mission appointed by the UN Human Rights Council must be given access to the area and allowed to meet the people affected.

Bringing about a long-term solution to the conflict means tackling its root causes. The Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, led by Kofi Annan, has presented important recommendations. The government of Myanmar should immediately implement these recommendations, and Sweden stands ready to support Myanmar to this end.

I welcome the leadership of the UN Secretary-General and his letter to the members of the Security Council of 2 September, urging active endeavours to prevent further suffering in Rakhine and increased efforts to prevent further escalation of the crisis. Sweden today contributed to the Security Council condemning the violence in Rakhine that has forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee, calling for an immediate de-escalation of the violence, and emphasising the importance of humanitarian assistance reaching the entire population without discrimination. Sweden will continue to work to ensure that the Security Council remains abreast of developments in Rakhine.



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the UN Security Council's resolution on North Korea

Published 12 September 2017

Sweden welcomes the resolution on North Korea adopted today by the UN Security Council. It is very important that the Security Council has been able to respond forcefully and that the Security Council remains united.

Sweden condemns in the strongest terms the test of a nuclear device conducted by North Korea on 2 September. This is a serious breach of the country's international obligations, UN Security Council resolutions and the principles set out in the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). North Korea's actions are a threat to international peace and security.

Sweden urges North Korea to immediately cease its provocative actions, fulfil its international obligations and begin phasing out its nuclear weapons and missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

It is now more important than ever to take measures to reduce tensions and the risk of misunderstandings and mistakes. We share the concern of the countries in the region.

In the longer term, the situation can only be resolved through peaceful means. It is therefore of great importance to continue to encourage dialogue and confidence-building measures.



Statement from Peter Hultqvist

Joint statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström and Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist

Published 04 September 2017

A treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons was adopted at the UN General Assembly in July this year. Sweden has long been active on the issue of nuclear disarmament. This is why it is important for the Government to support the UN's work on a treaty of this kind. We will soon appoint an inquiry to look into all of the consequences of the treaty, including for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and Sweden's defence policy cooperation. The forms for this inquiry will be presented shortly.

Sweden's security policy remains firmly in place. Our non-participation in military alliances serves us well. National defence capability will be strengthened while our defence and security policy cooperation continues to be developed. Our foreign and security policy works through diplomacy, mediation, conflict prevention and trust-building measures. This increases Sweden's ability to promote détente and stability both in our neighbourhood and globally.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs on North Korea's test of a nuclear device on 3 September 2017

Published 04 September 2017

Sweden condemns the test of a nuclear device conducted today by North Korea. This is a serious breach of the country's international obligations, UN Security Council resolutions and the principles of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). North Korea's actions are a threat to international peace and security.

Sweden urges North Korea to immediately cease its provocative actions, fulfil its international obligations and begin phasing out its nuclear weapons and missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

It is very important that the UN Security Council assembles to discuss this latest development.

It is now more important than ever to take measures to reduce tensions and the risk of misunderstandings and mistakes. We share the concern of the countries in the region.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement on the situation in Guatemala

Published 30 August 2017

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström and Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin.

The Swedish Government regrets the decision to expel the Commissioner for the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG), Ivan Velásquez, which was taken by the country's President Jimmy Morales on Sunday. Under Commissioner Velásquez's strong and active leadership, the Commission has had a central role in efforts to counter corruption and strengthen the rule of law in Guatemalan society.

Sweden is the second largest donor to the CICIG, whose work is now held up as a model in the region and globally. Support to the CICIG is a central component of Swedish development cooperation with Guatemala, which partly aims to strengthen civil society in the country and promote a strengthened democracy and increased respect for human rights.

It is of the utmost importance that Guatemala's government protects the rule of law and fundamental democratic principles in this situation. We stand united with large sections of the international community in our intention to continue to support the democratic forces in Guatemala and to strengthen respect for human rights.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs on North Korea's latest missile test

Published 30 August 2017

North Korea's latest missile test over Japanese territory is a serious development and a clear provocation. We particularly share Japan's concern.

It is very important that the UN Security Council assembles immediately to discuss the latest development.

We urge North Korea to refrain from further provocative actions. North Korea should immediately fulfil its international obligations and begin phasing out its nuclear weapons and missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

It is now more important than ever to take measures to reduce tensions and the risk of misunderstandings and mistakes.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on developments in Turkey

Published 11 August 2017

Developments in Turkey are very worrying and the negative trend we have been seeing for several years now has recently accelerated. Sweden is working constantly to strengthen respect for human rights in Turkey. Sweden has for a long time been pursuing a policy of critical engagement with Turkey. The dialogue with Turkish representatives has increasingly involved critical messages concerning the deterioration of respect for human rights and the rule of law. In its contacts with Turkish representatives, both in Stockholm and in Turkey, the Government intends to continue presenting clear standpoints concerning developments.

This includes Sweden's firm view that measures against terrorism must not restrict fundamental rights and freedoms.

Recent developments concerning respect for human rights and the rule of law – not least the detention of opposition politicians, journalists and human rights activists – have added to increasing concern about this trend. These developments are also a reason for deeper commitment, both bilaterally and through the EU.

Read the human rights report about Turkey (in Swedish)

Bilaterally, we continue to provide support to actors working within the ever-shrinking democratic space. The negative trend we have seen in recent years concerning respect for human rights and the rule of law in Turkey strengthens our conviction that these are the areas in which we should continue to focus our support. We continually review the forms for this and who our cooperation partners are.

The Government is also pushing for the EU to jointly present its view of the

situation in Turkey. We work in similar ways in other multilateral forums too, such as the Council of Europe. Relations between Turkey and the EU will change if the current negative trend continues. Sweden intends to ensure that the situation in Turkey is discussed as soon as possible between EU foreign ministers. The cases of two detained Swedish citizens have received media attention recently. Everything we do is not outwardly visible – what we do and say is always determined by what we think will most benefit each individual case.

Since Ali Gharavi was detained, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) has been working intensively on the case. We expect Turkey to release Ali Gharavi if the basis for the accusations cannot be clarified.

The MFA has requested to meet the Swedish citizen who has been detained in Barcelona, Spain. The ground for his detention is an international arrest warrant from Turkey. The MFA has confirmed that he has a lawyer and is working to gain clarity on the accusations.

The MFA also receives a great many questions about our consular work in general. More than 200 Swedes are currently being detained abroad. Even if you are a tourist or temporary resident in another country, you are subject to the laws and the judicial system that apply in that country.

However, there are some possibilities for Sweden to play a certain role. If you are arrested by the police abroad, you have the right to contact your country's embassy. Through our embassy or consulate, we can monitor on the ground that the detainee has access to a public counsel and request to visit the person in prison. We can also contact relatives – if the person arrested so wishes. Providing advice and support to Swedes in emergency situations is a key task for our embassies.

We cannot intervene in another country's legal proceedings, but we can ensure that a trial is held in accordance with general principles of law. In our contact with the country in question, we can ask questions and point to shortcomings. In exceptional cases, when we have reason to believe that the trial is not proceeding as it should, we can ask to be present during a trial. This is of course more difficult with countries that do not uphold the rule of law and do not share our fundamental values. Another factor that sometimes complicates consular matters is dual citizenship. This can mean that Sweden does not gain access to, or information about, a Swede in an emergency situation.



Statement

Government's views concerning the developments in Turkey.

Published 21 July 2017

In light of the current debate, I would like to present the Government's views concerning the developments in Turkey.

The Government often calls attention to Turkey's human rights violations in the forums where we believe that results have the greatest chance of being achieved, such as in the EU and the Council of Europe. We call attention to the situation of human rights defenders, civil society actors and others, and work to ensure that EU Member States continue to act together so that respect for human rights and the rule of law in Turkey is restored. Sweden also provides assistance to strengthen the capacity of civil society, the media and other agents of change in Turkey. Another important task for Sweden's reform support is to ensure that gender equality issues receive greater political priority and that the double vulnerability of women human rights defenders is highlighted.

Ever since Ali Gharavi and nine other people were arrested and imprisoned, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has worked tirelessly on the case. Our actions are always guided by what we believe is best for the Swede and his fellow prisoners.

I would like to report on some of the political and diplomatic steps we have taken. Our Consulate-General in Istanbul is in touch with Ali Gharavi's lawyer and went to the trial earlier this week, which however was held behind closed doors.

The Swedish Embassy in Ankara has demanded to visit him in prison. We have also had meetings with Turkish representatives, both in Ankara and the Turkish Embassy in Stockholm. The State Secretary for Foreign Affairs has also met with Gharavi's relatives and is in close contact with them, as the

Ministry for Foreign Affairs always is in consular cases.

One of the people detained is a German citizen, and we are cooperating closely with Germany. I spoke yesterday with my German colleague and decided that we would express our criticism and our demands together to the Turkish Government in Ankara. The Government also communicates that the EU, in its dialogue with Turkey, address the case of Gharavi and the other detained human rights activists and journalists. We will also take every opportunity for discussions between the EU and Turkey, on both these specific issues and the general human rights situation in the country. We have also raised these cases in the OSCE. The work in the Council of Europe, of which Turkey is a Member State, is also key.

In our contacts with Turkish representatives as well, we will continue to present our messages with regard to developments in Turkey, particularly concerning respect for human rights and the rule of law. We have been doing this for some time and intend to continue to do so as long as necessary. Open and good dialogue with Turkey is essential to successfully convey our messages.

Ali Gharavi and his colleagues have now been detained for more than two weeks. Unless the grounds for the charges can be clarified, I expect Turkey to release them as soon as possible.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on the arrests in Turkey

Published 20 July 2017

The Government takes a very serious view of the arrest of the Swedish human rights activist Ali Gharavi and the continued detention of him and the other activists arrested in Turkey on 5 July. We are working very intensively to establish some clarity concerning the arrest and are clear in our expectations of Turkey. It is our understanding that Mr Gharavi was in Turkey to take part in a peaceful seminar on internet freedom and human rights, and we have urged Turkey to promptly clarify the grounds for the accusations against him. We continue to work in close cooperation with Germany.

The Government is very concerned about developments in Turkey, not least in terms of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law. These detentions are a continuation of an extended period of measures against representatives of human rights organisations. A thriving civil society, as well as free media and a free opposition, are prerequisites for a pluralistic and democratic society.

The Government regularly expresses its concern over developments in Turkey to Turkish representatives in Stockholm and Ankara. We also push for these issues to be addressed in other contexts, such as in the EU and the Council of Europe. We will continue to exert pressure both bilaterally and together with other countries.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström regarding recent developments in Venezuela

Published 06 July 2017

The Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs is following the increasingly violent developments in Venezuela with growing concern. Yesterday's violent actions against the democratically elected National Assembly mark an escalation of the crisis and constitute a deeply troubling attack on democracy.

The situation in Venezuela has been discussed at the meeting of EU foreign ministers, and EU Member States have firmly stated that the use of force is not a solution to the political crisis and tensions in the country. It is highly regrettable that the country's security forces are doing nothing to stop the violent acts of armed pro-government groups, the so-called 'colectivos'. The Government should listen to the country's Attorney General, Luisa Ortega Diaz, who has demanded that the security forces should intervene to stop the violence. At the same time she has criticized the security forces for the use of excessive force.

Elections to the Constituent National Assembly will be held on 30 July, with a view to revise the country's constitution. The decision to establish this new institution has been widely criticized and unfortunately appears to be yet another attempt to undermine the position of the elected parliament.

The deteriorating humanitarian and human rights situation in Venezuela is alarming. We have been forced to witness human rights violations worsening, as demonstrators have been killed and imprisoned. I am also very concerned about the shortage of food and medicine that is becoming

increasingly acute and hits the most vulnerable the hardest. There are reports of infants dying of malnutrition, and many are talking about a humanitarian crisis.

The international community must act in unison to find a solution. As my EU colleagues and I recently stated, it is important that a date is set for national elections and that political prisoners are released in order to restore political stability in the country.

Sweden calls on all parties to respect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. We will also continue our work to enable the EU and other international actors to assist through humanitarian efforts aiming to meet the increasingly urgent needs of the Venezuelan people.

Margot Wallström
Minister for Foreign Affairs



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström concerning information about a new North Korean missile test

Published 04 July 2017

The information about a new missile test by North Korea is very alarming. It is still not clear whether this involved an intercontinental ballistic missile. The test launch is a violation of several Security Council resolutions and contributes to further increasing tensions in the region. These activities must cease. We encourage North Korea to begin a complete, verifiable and irrevocable dismantling of its nuclear and missile programmes. The UN Security Council should address this matter as soon as possible. This latest development underscores the need for dialogue to find a peaceful solution. All parties must help take steps in this direction.

Margot Wallström
Minister for Foreign Affairs



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs following the OPCW report on the chemical weapon attack in Khan Sheikhoun on 4 April 2107

Published 30 June 2017

I condemn in the strongest terms the use of nerve gas in Khan Sheikhoun on 4 April, as confirmed in a report by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) today. This is the first time since the atrocious attack in Al-Ghouta in August 2013 that nerve gas has been used in the armed conflict in Syria, and once more the lives of numerous civilian victims have been claimed.

I welcome the thorough and professional work of the OPCW and look forward to the investigation and identification of those responsible that will now be carried out by the OPCW-UN joint investigative mechanism (JIM). The use of chemical weapons in Syria is unacceptable, and violates international law. Those responsible must be brought to justice. Impunity is not an option.

Sweden will monitor the issue closely and contribute to the deliberations in the OPCW, the EU and the UN Security Council.



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministers Wallström and Koenders express their shock at the latest reports from UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) that the number of suspected cholera cases in Yemen has exceeded 200.000, with an estimated 5000 new cases every day

Published 27 June 2017

"The speed with which the epidemic is spreading is particularly worrisome. Especially children are at risk, already accounting for half of the registered cases to date, and about a quarter of the recorded fatalities. It is appalling to see yet another humanitarian crisis added to an already catastrophic situation, with 17 million Yemeni's depending on external aid for their survival, more than 7 million people at the brink of starvation and over 2.2 million children acutely malnourished and particularly vulnerable."

"The humanitarian situation is a direct consequence of more than two years

of conflict which have severely affected access to health, water and sanitation systems. We call on all conflict parties to grant unhindered access to humanitarian organizations and people in need of assistance and recall the obligation under International Humanitarian Law to remove any obstacles and bureaucratic hurdles and to facilitate rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need."

However, humanitarian aid cannot alone solve the crisis. A political solution, where women are included throughout the process, is the only way to reach long term and sustainable peace and development. It is important to mainstream gender equality as women's involvement increases effectiveness of humanitarian assistance and changes of successful peace agreements. Sweden and The Netherlands will engage partners to renew the call for an immediate cessation of hostilities to ensure the humanitarian access the country so desperately needs. A cessation of hostilities monitored by the United Nations as a first step towards the resumption of peace talks under UN leadership. All international and regional actors need to engage constructively with Yemeni parties to enable a de-escalation of the conflict and a negotiated settlement that respects the independence, unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yemen. Both ministers recall the recent UN Security Council Presidential Statement calling on parties in Yemen to engage constructively in a good-faith effort for conflict resolution.

Parties to the conflict must allow commercial flights into Sana'a airport and unlock the economic potential of the country and its people. All airports (including Aden) and ports across the country need to function properly, and salaries of civil servants including medical personnel need to be paid. In this regard, both ministers recall the Security Council's call on all parties to engage constructively with the Special Envoy's latest proposals for increasing commercial and humanitarian shipments through Red Sea ports including new arrangements for the management of Hodeida port and city.

Sweden and The Netherlands also recall the recent UN Security Council Presidential Statement calling for immediate mobilization of the funds pledged to Yemen at the Geneva pledging conference of 25 April 2017, hosted by the United Nations Secretary-General together with the governments of Sweden and Switzerland, and full funding of the United Nations 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan for Yemen as part of a coordinated international response to the crisis. The Netherlands continues to support UNICEF and WHO with unearmarked contributions of over EUR 23 million in addition to humanitarian funding for Yemen of EUR 20 million in 2017 alone. Likewise Sweden continues to support UNICEF and WHO

with unearmarked contributions of over EUR 63 million in 2017 in addition to humanitarian funding for Yemen of EUR 23 million in 2017 alone.

"We remain deeply concerned about the continued allegations of violations and abuses of international human rights and applicable international humanitarian law by all parties to the conflict. We recall that the reported attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, funerals, population centers and markets are unacceptable. So are the continued recruitment of children, the abduction of civilians and alleged violations of political and civil rights, and the significant increase in reports of sexual and gender-based violence. We urge all parties to the conflict to fully respect international human rights and humanitarian law. We continue to strongly support the call for an international independent investigation into all alleged violations and abuses, with a view to ending impunity for crimes committed by all parties to the conflict."

Margot Wallström, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sweden

Bert Koenders, Minister of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Written statement on the release of Johan Gustafsson

Published 26 June 2017

I am extremely pleased to be able to announce that today Johan Gustafsson has been able to return to Sweden and reunite with his family.

Johan's situation has affected many of us, and extensive efforts have been made to secure his release.

In particular, the Government would like to highlight the effective collaboration between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Swedish Police Authority National Operations Department and other Swedish and foreign authorities.

This collaboration has now resulted in Johan being able to return home.

I would like to urge everyone to show consideration for Johan and his family and to respect their wishes concerning when and whether they will choose to make a statement.

Margot Wallström
Minister for Foreign Affairs



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement regarding Palestine - 50 years since the Six-Day War

Published 10 June 2017

This week marks 50 years since the 1967 Six-Day War, which resulted in Israel's occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, Gaza and the Syrian Golan. This occupation has resulted in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians as well as Syrians. As UN Secretary-General António Guterres has stated: "The occupation has shaped the lives of both Palestinians and Israelis. It has fuelled recurring cycles of violence and retribution. Its perpetuation is sending an unmistakable message to generations of Palestinians that their dream of statehood is destined to remain just that, a dream; and to Israelis that their desire for peace, security and regional recognition remains unattainable."

The international community remains clear in its stance on the occupation and the need for a two-state solution. The UN Security Council has declared that Israel must leave the territory occupied in 1967, and that settlements in occupied territory constitute a flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of the two-state solution. The EU has emphasized that the only way to resolve the Israeli/Palestinian conflict is through an agreement on a two-state solution that ends the occupation which began in 1967.

Sweden's long-standing engagement on the Middle East Peace Process is based on international law. An independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian state, living side by side with Israel in peace and security, and with Jerusalem as capital of both states, is needed for a sustainable two-state solution. This, and the aim of making the parties less unequal, was the main reasons why Sweden decided to recognise the State of Palestine in 2014. But we also wanted to give hope particularly to the young Palestinians, hope that a solution is not a fading vision but a reality that can be reached. As a member of the EU and currently also of the UN Security

Council, we are engaging to make sure the international community fulfils its crucial role and implements the UNSC resolutions. Sweden is also working with civil society in both Palestine and Israel on the crucial role of civil society in the two-state solution and in a resumed peace process. For sustainable peace, inclusiveness is key, and civil society, women and youth must be involved.

The 50 year mark also reminds us of the responsibilities of the international community and that it should accompany the parties to solve the conflict and reach a final status solution. Ending the occupation through meaningful negotiations is the only way forward. And, it is a matter of great urgency.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström regarding recent events in Macedonia

Published 30 April 2017

Newly elected Speaker of Parliament in Macedonia must be respected. The Speaker was elected by the parliamentary majority and I look forward to cooperating with him. Sweden strongly condemns the shocking acts of violence which followed his election on Thursday. This is totally unacceptable in a democracy and the persons responsible have to be brought to justice.

The next step now is to form a new government as soon as possible in Macedonia, where early parliamentary elections were held mid December. The door to EU stands open for the countries of Western Balkan, including Macedonia. Urgent reforms are needed in the country and there should be no obstacles for the majority in the parliament to form a new government.



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström

Published 28 April 2017

Tensions on the Korean Peninsula are high. The situation is of great concern for the region and for the wider world. There is a heightened risk of mistakes, misunderstandings and miscalculations.

Today, the UN Security Council met at ministerial level to discuss the situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) under the chairmanship of US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson. There was unanimity amongst Council members on the need to continue to put pressure on the DPRK regime, to effectively implement Security Council sanctions, and that the DPRK must immediately undertake a complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantling of their nuclear and missile programme. Council members also stressed the need to reduce tensions on the Korean Peninsula, and for a comprehensive political solution to the situation.

Sweden unequivocally condemned the DPRK's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programme, and echoed calls for its immediate dismantling. We stressed that sanctions must be fully implemented, but that sanctions alone will not resolve the situation on the Korean Peninsula.

Sweden underlined the urgent need for intensified and creative diplomatic efforts. The DPRK must re-engage in a credible and meaningful dialogue with the international community. We must be prepared to consider both new and previous proposals and agreements. Sweden is ready to do its part.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement from Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström

Published 07 April 2017

The chemical weapons attack against civilians in Syria was abhorrent. Last night, under Swedish leadership and together with nine other countries on the Security Council, we tried to agree on a resolution on a serious investigation of this outrage so that those responsible could be held to account. We regret that it was not possible to reach an agreement among the permanent members. We are willing to continue this work.

It is unclear whether the missile attack last night represents a new US policy. It is important that action is supported by international law, but last night's missile attack also raises issues of how this can be compatible with international law.

The issue must therefore return to the Security Council, which must take responsibility for achieving a sustainable political solution. There is already excessive armed force in Syria. It is high time that the Syrian people are allowed to determine their own future.



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström comments on the MONUSCO resolution

Published 31 March 2017

I welcome the UN Security Council's adoption today of a resolution extending MONUSCO, the UN peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

This UN force plays an important stabilising role in the extremely fragile political, humanitarian and security situation in the country. The terrible crime against Zaida Catalán and her colleagues, while she was carrying out her UN assignment for peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, shows that the challenges facing the country continue to be enormous.

In light of reports of human rights violations and increasing levels of violence, it is of great importance that the Security Council has agreed to give the initiative a robust, effective and updated mandate with two clear priorities: protection of civilians and support to the political process.

At Sweden's initiative, the Security Council has also stressed the importance of women being given a voice and of the UN strengthening its efforts to attack the root causes of conflict, including the need for good and democratic governance.

The Security Council makes clear that a political solution is essential and that the Congolese Government bears the ultimate responsibility for protecting its own people and for security in the country.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström

Published 29 March 2017

Today, many of us are mourning the death of Zaida Catalán. My thoughts go first and foremost to her family, who have suffered great uncertainty and last night received this terrible news. We share their loss and despair. Our thoughts also go to the US national and the Congolese nationals who have been affected.

Zaida Catalán lost her life while working for the United Nations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Her work was characterised by courage and engagement. As the Prime Minister and I said earlier, it is now imperative that the incident be investigated without delay and that those responsible can be held accountable.

The Government and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will do everything we can to actively assist in the forthcoming investigation. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has also had a meeting with the Swedish Police, who have today initiated a preliminary investigation. We are in close contact with the United Nations in New York and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo through the UN MONUSCO mission, and also with US representatives. We are also in dialogue with the Congolese authorities, who are responsible for investigating crimes committed on their territory. A number of meetings with these parties have been held today. In all our talks we emphasise the importance of a proper and prompt investigation.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs will continue to remain in close contact with Zaida Catalán's family.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement of Government Policy in the Parliamentary Debate on Foreign Affairs 2017

Published 27 March 2017

On Wednesday 15 February 2017, Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström presented the Statement of Foreign Policy to the Riksdag. Check against delivery.

Mr/Madam Speaker, Honourable Members, Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sweden and the world are experiencing a paradoxical time of rapid and significant change.

Ten years ago, the number of displaced people was half of today's 65 million. Syria was a tourist destination. Russia had not attempted to change the borders of Georgia and Ukraine by force.

China's economy was a quarter of the size it is today. Brexit was an unknown term. There were no tweets from the President of the United States because Twitter had only just been created.

Rapid global change can spread liquid fear – and at the same time lay the foundation for crucial progress. For every minute I speak, some 120 people are lifting themselves out of extreme poverty. The Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda provide a roadmap for a sustainable future. Thanks to the peace agreement in Colombia, South America can become a continent of peace.

There is a legend that serves as a parable for these times, when amidst the darkness there are glimmers of light.

A grandfather says to his grandchild: "There is a battle between two wolves inside me. One is evil; he is arrogance, ego, lies and despair. The other is good; he is peace, compassion, truth and hope. This battle is inside us all."

The grandchild asks: "Which wolf wins?" The grandfather replies: "The one you feed."

In difficult times, Sweden's foreign policy rests on a solid value-based foundation of human rights, democracy and multilateral cooperation. Simply putting one's own country first would be selfish and unwise. What is good for the world is good for Sweden.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

After the war ended in 1945, a multilateral world order was created, founded on universal values. As global 'centres of gravity' shift, the world order we have become accustomed to is being challenged. Norms, power balances and global stability are being affected.

To navigate today's global challenges we need to consider how peace, freedom and reconciliation can be achieved in our part of the world. This is why the European Union remains so important to us, and the Government will work vigorously for an EU that is cohesive and principled.

Developments in the EU and in the world around us are putting the European project to the test. Economic recovery is uneven; xenophobic and populist forces have gained ground.

Later this year, our Prime Minister and the President of the European Commission will host a summit in Gothenburg on fair jobs and growth. We need a more social Europe, with functioning labour markets, effective and sustainable social protection systems and improved social dialogue.

Migration issues have become increasingly important and the EU must act together for a sustainable European asylum system based on a fair sharing of responsibility by all Member States. We need to sharpen the focus on the root causes of displacement and on conflict prevention, and increase support to the UN Refugee Agency and the International Organisation for Migration.

The Government regrets that the United Kingdom has chosen to leave the European Union, and we want our good relations to continue. When negotiations begin we will act on the basis of what best serves the common European project and Swedish interests.

The EU is our most important foreign policy arena. The EU Global Strategy will play an important role in crisis management capacity using both civilian and military means. Sweden will actively seek to strengthen the Common Security and Defence Policy. We welcome the strengthening of EU-NATO cooperation, and we want the EU to work even more closely with the UN.

The Government gives priority to both a stronger Eastern Partnership and continued enlargement processes in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

Cooperation with Turkey remains strategically important for the EU, but developments in the country in terms of human rights, respect for the rule of law, and the situation of the opposition and the media are deeply worrying. The peace process to resolve the Kurdish issue must be resumed. This would contribute to peace and security both in Turkey and regionally.

The reunification of Cyprus is within reach. We encourage the parties to continue their efforts to achieve this goal.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Common security – building security in collaboration with other countries and organisations – is a cornerstone of Sweden's security policy.

Sweden's foreign and security policy builds on cohesion in the EU and on increased cooperation on a broad front: in the Nordic region and the Baltic Sea region, in the UN and the OSCE, with NATO and via a strong transatlantic link.

Sweden's security policy remains firmly in place. Our non-participation in military alliances serves us well, and contributes to stability and security in northern Europe. It requires an active, broad and responsible foreign and security policy combined with enhanced defence cooperation, particularly with Finland, and credible national defence capabilities.

Sweden will not remain passive if another EU Member State or Nordic country suffers a disaster or an attack. We expect these countries to act in the same way if Sweden is affected. Our country must therefore be in a position to both give and receive support, civilian as well as military.

Our first line of defence consists of a foreign policy that we pursue through diplomacy, mediation, conflict prevention and confidence-building. This increases Sweden's ability to promote détente and stability both in our neighbourhood and globally.

Conditions for protecting the population and maintaining critical infrastructure have changed. Military threats, armed conflicts, cyber threats, terrorism, violent extremism and organised crime create continuous risks in an increasingly complex and interconnected world, but pandemics, antibiotic resistance and natural disasters also affect Sweden's security. To respond to these developments, in January the Government adopted a national security strategy based on our national interests.

Modern society is increasingly dependent on a secure energy supply and robust transport and infrastructure. Climate change is a threat to human existence. Inequality, environmental threats, water issues and resource scarcity are other long-term challenges. The implementation of the strategy is a priority and lays the foundation for enhanced security efforts.

The brutal terrorist attacks around the world underscore the need for deeper cross-border cooperation based on solidarity. International cooperation also facilitates efforts to prevent radicalisation.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

In view of the serious international situation, the Government is urging global actors such as the United States, China, India and Russia to take greater responsibility – both towards each other and towards the rest of the world.

Russia's behaviour, when manifested in military action, disinformation and influence operations, remains aggressive and increases tensions. Our response is guided by principles and values, is firm, clear and long-term, and fosters EU unity. The foundation of our approach is a desire to stand up for international law and the European security order.

Domestic political developments in Russia are also regressive, with authoritarian rule, civil society under pressure and a lack of respect for human rights.

Sweden needs a broad approach in relation to Russia. We will maintain a political dialogue, take a long-term view, urge Russia to pursue cooperation rather than confrontation, and promote people-to-people contacts. And we will do so without compromising our principles-based stance.

Sweden condemns Russia's aggression towards Ukraine and its illegal annexation of Crimea. The sanctions must remain in place for as long as the

reasons for their introduction remain. By supporting Ukraine's reform efforts and standing up for the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity under international law, we will contribute to its aspiration to move closer to the EU.

This year, Sweden will take over the Chairmanship of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States. We want to see a Baltic Sea region characterised by respect, trust and security. Cooperation to increase security and tackle challenges such as environmental threats will be promoted, along with better conditions for regional development and contacts between citizens.

Sweden enjoys, and will continue to enjoy, close relations with the United States. Relations with the new US administration remain important for our trade and our security. But the White House's actions raise questions about the role of the United States in the world.

We believe that Sweden, the EU and the US have everything to gain from working for a rules-based world order, from standing up for our common norms and values, and tackling global challenges together.

This is how we will act – with our neighbours, in a coordinated manner within the EU, and with other like-minded countries.

Canada is becoming an increasingly important partner for both Sweden and the EU, not least through the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the Strategic Partnership Agreement.

Our aim of renewing contacts with Latin America has been welcomed in the region, and in the next few months we will present an action plan for increased cooperation.

Asia is the growth engine of the global economy, and major investments are being made there in the technologies of the future. Our engagement in Asia aims to contribute both to sustainable development and to democracy and respect for human rights.

Relations with China are developing, but the regional security policy tensions and democratic and human rights situation are a cause for concern.

Sweden's cooperation with India is deepening. The EU's free trade negotiations with several ASEAN countries are welcome, and we are working for an ambitious agreement with Japan.

Sweden continues to work for Afghanistan's peaceful and sustainable development. We are maintaining our civilian and military engagement, and we support women's participation in peace and reconciliation processes.

In 2017, the Government intends to adopt a new strategy for development cooperation with Myanmar. It may contribute to peaceful, inclusive and democratic developments in the country, including for the Rohingya minority.

Sweden's strong ties to the countries of Africa are being further developed as the demand for diversified trade and modern development cooperation increases.

Concrete contributions to peace, security and development are being made via our long-term development cooperation, but also through our troop contribution to MINUSMA in Mali and our participation in EU operations in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. We are strengthening our partnership with the African Union and the sub-regional organisations in efforts to prevent armed conflict.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

The Syrian regime and its allies have employed a brutal military strategy. Sweden is engaged in helping to find a long-term solution, in part by giving women a voice in the peace process. Our extensive aid comprises both immediate emergency relief and long-term support, including to neighbouring countries that have taken in a large number of refugees.

The UN must play a central role. Our seat on the Security Council offers a forum in which we can work for a ceasefire, humanitarian access, a return to peace negotiations, and accountability for war crimes, serious violations and the use of chemical weapons.

In the first half of this year, the Government intends to produce a new five-year aid strategy for Iraq. Our contribution to the Global Coalition against Daesh will double, from 35 to 70 people.

This year marks 50 years of the occupation of Palestine. Sweden continues to work for a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and will appoint a special envoy.

When I visited Palestine in December it was noticeable that hope can turn to despair, and this features heavily in the consultations that Sweden is holding

with almost 150 Israeli and Palestinian civil society organisations.

Security Council resolution 2334 on the Israeli settlements, and the international conference held in Paris in January, could, in the best-case scenario, create the conditions for a renewed peace process and a two-state solution.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Sweden's feminist foreign policy is producing results for women, girls and entire societies.

Our efforts have contributed to some 20 countries drawing up laws and proposals to strengthen gender equality, to hundreds of thousands of women and girls avoiding unsafe abortions and unwanted pregnancies, to some 90 local communities abandoning the practice of female genital mutilation and to 65 countries and organisations making commitments to combat gender-based violence. Sexual and reproductive health and rights will be an even higher priority.

A new national action plan for the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security, our Chairmanship of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, a strategic initiative on dialogue and peace processes, and a women's mediation network are some of the elements of our work for peace, security and sustainable development.

The fact that we were elected to the UN Security Council by such a wide margin is a testament to the Government's global policy. During Sweden's Presidency in January, it became clear that UN Secretary-General António Guterres supports our ambition for the UN to promote peacebuilding and conflict prevention, dialogue as a tool, and the active participation of women in peace processes.

We are a critical friend of the UN, working for a reformed and more transparent Security Council. A more modern, more effective and gender-equal UN system is crucial. We will spearhead the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, both globally and in Sweden. All policy areas must contribute to a sustainable and fair world.

The aim of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is a world free of nuclear weapons. Any move away from this aim must be

prevented, and nuclear-weapon states have a particular responsibility in this context. The Government welcomes the fact that a clear majority of the world's countries have taken a stand for negotiations on a global nuclear weapons ban.

The nuclear accord with Iran is of crucial importance to non-proliferation efforts. North Korea is defying the international community with its nuclear weapons ambitions.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Sweden is and will remain a global leader in development policy. Our SEK 6.5 billion in humanitarian aid makes us the world's seventh largest donor in nominal terms. Peacebuilding and statebuilding are at the heart of Swedish aid: without peace there can be no development.

The oceans play a crucial role in the global climate system; if current trends are not halted, by 2050 there will be more plastic than fish in the sea. In June, Sweden and Fiji will host the first major UN conference on saving the global marine environment.

Alarming climate change reports reach us with increasing frequency. In 2017, Sweden and the EU must demonstrate leadership in the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Sweden will be one of the first fossil-free welfare nations. Our contributions to climate action in developing countries are among the largest in the world and thereby play a significant role in other countries' transition.

The Government has reinforced action for sustainable development and cooperation in the Arctic, where in November last year the sea ice shrank by an area twice the size of Sweden.

We are working for better global responsibility-sharing and governance on migration and refugee issues. The fight against human trafficking is being stepped up.

The Government stands firm in its intention that development aid will reach 1 per cent of Sweden's gross national income during this electoral period. The principles that will underpin our development cooperation have been presented to the Riksdag in a written communication.

And should anyone wonder whether these investments are worth our taxpayers' money, I say: have you calculated the cost of war, poverty and

the death of our oceans?

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Greater equality in the labour market, decent working conditions, increased productivity and inclusive economic growth are important objectives for Sweden. The Prime Minister's Global Deal initiative is being followed up in cooperation with the ILO, the OECD and others.

At a time when protectionism is on the rise and free trade is being called into question, Sweden is standing up for free and fair global trade with the WTO multilateral trade system as the backbone. The Government will push for the EU to conclude progressive free trade agreements that safeguard social rights, environmental protection, animal welfare and human health.

Sweden is one of the world's most competitive countries, and its exports employ almost one and a half million people. Seventy-one per cent of Swedish exports go to the EU. We are thus contributing to deepening the EU single market. We want to dismantle trade barriers, benefit from the free movement of goods and services, harness the opportunities offered by the increasingly digital economy, and thus promote new business models and greater innovation. Our foreign trade continues to be strengthened by Sweden's export strategy, regional export centres and Team Sweden.

Sweden will maintain strict and effective export controls of military equipment, and the Government will present a bill on this in the first half of this year to tighten the export regulations to non-democracies.

Support to Swedes in emergency or crisis situations abroad and work on individual consular cases are perpetual activities of the Swedish Foreign Service that are always a priority, regardless of the level of public attention a matter receives.

Our efforts to strengthen respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law were presented in the written communication submitted to the Riksdag in December. New country-specific reports on the situation in all regions of the world will be presented in the first half of this year.

These reports highlight issues such as the right to reasonable remuneration for work, discriminatory legislation, violence against women, racism, and discrimination on grounds of ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc.

Free speech is under attack around the world; journalists and human rights defenders are being imprisoned and persecuted. Sweden supports those affected and works to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice.

Mr/Madam Speaker, Honourable Members,

In 2016, 'post-truth' was named Word of the Year by Oxford Dictionaries.

Both functioning democracy and constructive cooperation between states require us to speak with, and not about, each other, to honour agreements and to allow ideas to compete. They also require us to respect science, facts and the media, and to acknowledge each other's wisdom.

I would therefore like to conclude the Statement of Foreign Policy by thanking the Left Party for continually reminding us about the troubling developments in Turkey.

That Sweden must emphasise human rights in its contacts with the rest of the world is something the Liberal Party never lets us forget.

In the battle against what may be humanity's worst invention – nuclear weapons – we can count on the Centre Party.

The Moderate Party is and has been a driving force when Sweden stands up for free trade.

And throughout the years, Swedish aid has had a dependable friend in the Christian Democrats.

The Government does not share the basic values or world view of the Sweden Democrats, and cooperation is out of the question, but we respect your place in the Riksdag.

Thank you to all the driving forces in civil society and in popular movements. Your efforts on the ground and in shaping public opinion make a difference in these difficult times.

We will meet again in searching conversations about how Sweden can contribute to a world founded on human dignity, where despair is conquered by hope.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Margot Wallström regarding the Dutch election result

Published 16 March 2017

We congratulate the VVD Party and its leader Mark Rutte for again becoming the largest party in the Dutch parliamentary election.

The election result shows that the Dutch people have rejected populism and instead voted in favour of an inclusive and open society. Sweden and the Netherlands both work for openness, human rights and a strong Europe.

We look forward to a new government being formed and to cooperation with the Netherlands continuing to be developed and deepened, both within the EU and globally.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström regarding today's vote in the UN Security Council on a resolution on accountability for chemical weapons use in Syria

Published 28 February 2017

I deeply regret the Russian and Chinese veto against the resolution on chemical weapons use in Syria that was submitted today to the UN Security Council with the support of the Council's majority. Accountability is an important principle, and the Council has a special responsibility to act on the conclusions of the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) that both the Syrian regime and the terrorist organisation Daesh have used chemical weapons repeatedly in the conflict. The Swedish Government condemns all use of chemical weapons in the strongest terms; it is totally unacceptable, in violation of international law, and may constitute war crimes or crimes against humanity. Moreover, Syria has acted in non-compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention. The Swedish Government will continue to promote accountability for

serious international crimes committed in connection with the Syria conflict, through active engagement in both the United Nations and the European Union. Last week, for instance, we decided to contribute SEK 2 000 000 to the UN Trust Fund for the JIM.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement on President Trump's reference to Sweden

Published 20 February 2017 Updated 20 February 2017

It is good that we received clarification yesterday of what President Trump meant when he mentioned Sweden in a speech. We maintain continuous diplomatic contacts with US representatives, and in these contacts we keep them informed of the situation in Sweden in various areas.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sweden's embassies work continuously to disseminate an accurate and fair image of Sweden. Unfortunately, we are seeing a general upward trend in inaccurate information.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement regarding Israeli decision to confiscate privately owned Palestinian land

Published 07 February 2017 Updated 07 February 2017

The Government condemns the Knesset decision yesterday to illegally confiscate privately owned Palestinian land. The decision is a flagrant violation under international law and Security Council resolution 2334, and raises serious doubts about Israel's willingness to reach a two-state solution. If the decision is implemented, it will seriously undermine the two-state solution. The UN, the EU and the Quartet (the UN, the EU, the United States and Russia) have repeatedly called on Israel to abandon its settlement policy and promote a meaningful peace process.



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement on Israel's decision concerning settlement units on occupied territory

Published 01 February 2017 Updated 01 February 2017

The Swedish Government strongly condemns the Israeli announcements made of plans for a total of more than 6 000 settlement units on occupied territory. The settlements constitute a flagrant violation under international law and contravene Security Council resolution 2334 on Israeli settlements, adopted on 23 December 2016.

In the resolution, the Security Council repeated its demand that Israel immediately freeze all settlement activity. The issue was discussed again in the Security Council on 25 January under the Swedish Presidency. The international community is united in its view that the settlements are illegal, and a serious impediment to the two-state solution. The announcements also contravene the express recommendations made to the parties by the Quartet (UN, EU, US and Russia).

The fact that some of the settlement units are planned in East Jerusalem is highly problematic. As long ago as 1947, Jerusalem was given a special legal and political status by the UN, which all countries should respect. It is important not to pre-empt the results of peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine, and to protect Jerusalem's future status as the shared capital of two states.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on the new rules for entry to the United States

Published 01 February 2017 Updated 01 February 2017

"We welcome the clarification of how the new rules for entry to the United States are to be applied, and the fact that Swedish citizens – including those with dual citizenship – can travel to the US. Nonetheless, we still take a critical stance on the decision to completely ban entry for citizens of seven countries, and for refugees."



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement on the adoption of a Security Council Presidential Statement on the Democratic Republic of Congo

Published 04 January 2017 Updated 04 January 2017

On 4 January, the Security Council adopted a statement welcoming the political agreement signed on 31 December in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Sweden welcomes the broad political agreement, mediated by the Catholic Church, on a path to political elections in the DRC. Under the terms of the agreement, President Kabila will not seek a third term, the constitution will not be changed, and elections will be held in 2017.

All parties must now help ensure that the agreement is implemented in an inclusive manner. Agreement must be reached as soon as possible on outstanding issues, including the timetable for implementation of the agreement and vital follow-up mechanisms. The effective participation of women and men in the political process must be ensured, in accordance with their fundamental rights and freedoms, including freedom of expression, freedom of association and freedom of assembly.

The constructive role played in the DRC by the African Union (AU) and other regional actors remains crucial. Bilaterally, through the EU and as a member of the UN Security Council, Sweden will continue to work actively for peaceful development and democratic elections in the DRC.



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on the situation in Aleppo

Published 15 December 2016 Updated 15 December 2016

After months of siege and indiscriminate bombing of the civilian population, the opposition in the eastern parts of Aleppo have lost, but the violence continues. According to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, at least 82 people have been killed in extrajudicial executions since 11 December. UNICEF has reported that 100 unaccompanied children are trapped in a building, under heavy attack in east Aleppo. Thousands of people are fleeing the indiscriminate bombing. An agreement on evacuation of the last of the rebels appears to have been impeded following objections from Iran. The Syrian regime and its allies are responsible for the atrocities now being committed.

The conflict in Syria has been characterised by extreme violence and atrocities in violation of the law of war and probably constitute war crimes. The Syrian regime, with Russian support, has bombed civilian areas indiscriminately; hospitals and schools have been subjected to targeted attacks, as was a humanitarian convoy. We also condemn the besieged opposition's shelling of western Aleppo, even if the proportions are not comparable.

We cannot allow this to happen without reacting strongly. In the immediate perspective, the international community must continue to demand that the

fighting ceases, the siege is lifted and humanitarian organisations are given full access to those in need. In the longer perspective, we must take action to ensure that those responsible for the atrocities are held to account for their actions. We must actively collect evidence and testimonies, and ensure that accountability can be demanded. Sweden will look over the possibilities available to us for stepping up prosecution of war crimes at national level and in cooperation with other EU countries.

Sweden has provided some SEK 2.3 billion in humanitarian aid since 2011 and is currently working to assist refugees and communities that receive refugees with long-term support through our Syria crisis strategy, which encompasses SEK 1.7 billion over five years. We have also supported the UN's efforts to find a peaceful solution and have sought to ensure that women and civil society can take part in a peace process. We have taken in some 120 000 asylum seekers from Syria. However, it is clear that what is happening in Syria is a global responsibility. We will continue to pursue issues related to Syria during our membership of the UN Security Council.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on the arrests in Turkey

Published 04 November 2016 Updated 04 November 2016

The arrest of the two leaders of Turkish opposition party People's Democratic Party (HDP), Figen Yüksekdağ and Selahattin Demirtaş, and a number of other party members early this morning is extremely worrying. This cannot be regarded as an isolated incident but rather as a continuation of measures taken against representatives of the HDP. We expect these democratically elected representatives to be released. These arrests risk fueling existing tensions in the country. They follow earlier arrests of civil society and media representatives, most recently of the editor-in-chief of the Cumhuriyet newspaper. Media freedom and opposition are essential for a pluralistic democratic society. The attacks on these groups therefore send an ominous signal.

It is important that Turkey return to normalisation and that the dialogue between the opposition and the Government is resumed. A return to the peace process with the PKK is essential for the country's continued democratisation and stability in the region. It is important that the EU Member States act together to ensure that human rights and the rule of law are upheld in Turkey.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the result of the referendum in Colombia

Published 03 October 2016 Updated 03 October 2016

The result of the referendum in Colombia announced overnight leaves no one unmoved. We now hope that the talks at the highest level between the yes and no sides will lead to an agreement in favour of a peaceful solution to the armed conflict that has affected so many women, men and children. I welcome the fact that all parties have indicated their willingness to continue the peace talks.

I visited Colombia only last week on the occasion of the signing of the peace agreement. The discussions I had there, including with women who had been affected by the conflict, made it clear that peace and reconciliation are the only way forward.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the bombardment of Aleppo

Published 27 September 2016 Updated 27 September 2016

The indiscriminate bombardment of eastern Aleppo by the Syrian regime and Russia on Friday and Saturday has reached horrific heights and must stop. Incendiary bombs and bunker-busting bombs are being used and the civilian death toll is high. The images of children being dug out of the rubble and of overwhelmed hospitals with blood-covered people lying in a heap on the floor are unbearable.

Sweden supports the UN Security Council taking urgent further steps to address the brutality of this conflict, and particularly the assault on Aleppo.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement regarding attack on humanitarian convoy in Syria

Published 20 September 2016 Updated 20 September 2016

I am deeply disturbed by the news that a humanitarian convoy has been bombed, in what appears to be a deliberate attack, in Urm al-Kubra last night. The attacks on the convoys belonging to Syrian Red Crescent in Urm al-Kubra is completely unacceptable and may amount to a war crime.

The important work of humanitarian organizations must be respected and cannot be hindered by violence. International humanitarian law states that medical personnel and civilians must be protected and that states have an obligation to investigate alleged violations of humanitarian law.

This callous attack was not only an attack on the convoy with aid for suffering Syrians or the courageous aid workers and civilians who so senselessly lost their lives. This was also an attack against neutral humanitarian assistance everywhere. Impunity against these crimes must end immediately. I call on the parties to immediately implement Security Council resolution 2268 to allow humanitarian agencies rapid, safe and unhindered access throughout Syria by most direct routes, allow immediate, humanitarian assistance to reach all people in need, in particular in all besieged and hard-to-reach areas. All parties must immediately comply with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law as applicable.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Arctic Council: A Forum for Peace and Cooperation

Published 19 September 2016 Updated 19 September 2016

A joint statement from Ministers of the Arctic States on the occasion of the Arctic Council's 20th anniversary.

On September 19, 1996 in Ottawa, the Arctic Council was established as a high level intergovernmental forum to enhance cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States with the active involvement of Arctic indigenous peoples and other Arctic inhabitants on common Arctic issues. Today, we celebrate twenty years of Arctic cooperation and look forward to a long term future of peace and stability in the region.

Over the past twenty years Arctic cooperation has come a long way, from ground-breaking studies and reports to the realization of programs and projects with important concrete outcomes. Continuing our long term efforts to address climate change impacts in the Arctic, we recognize the need for urgent global action based on the 2015 Paris Agreement. Our work aims to improve the well-being of Arctic residents, protect the Arctic environment, and promote sustainable development throughout the region including maintaining the cultural heritage and livelihoods of Arctic indigenous peoples.

Arctic cooperation encompasses all aspects of life and activity in the region. The Arctic Council is at the forefront of this cooperation and has become the most important body for promoting a positive agenda and coordinating joint action on all vital issues in the region. The success of the Arctic Council can also be attributed to the active participation of the indigenous Permanent Participants.

The Arctic Council has played a leading role in delivering world-class scientific assessments, addressing the impacts of globalization and climate

change, and facilitating cooperative responses to these challenges. The Council's work has contributed to the conclusion of the International Maritime Organization's "Polar Code", the "Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants," the "Minamata Convention on Mercury" and others.

The Arctic Council has engaged in many important joint actions such as the "Framework Plan for Cooperation on Prevention of Oil Pollution from Petroleum and Maritime Activities in the Marine Areas of the Arctic," the "Framework for a Pan-Arctic Network of Marine Protected Areas," the "Framework for Action on Black Carbon and Methane," and the "Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program," and is promoting mental wellness across the Arctic. The launch of the Project Support Instrument in July 2014 is further facilitating protection of the Arctic environment by providing financial support to pollution mitigation projects.

Two legally binding pan-Arctic agreements concluded under the auspices of the Arctic Council, the "Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic" and the "Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic," are important developments and have strengthened Arctic cooperation.

The Arctic Council has facilitated the creation of additional structures for regional cooperation and interaction such as the University of the Arctic, the Sustaining Arctic Observing Networks forum, the Arctic Coast Guard Forum, the Arctic Economic Council, and the Arctic Offshore Regulators Forum.

Recognizing our special responsibility and leadership role in ensuring environmental protection and sustainable development, we consider cooperation under the auspices of the Arctic Council as an opportunity to encourage constructive input from accredited observers and other interested stakeholders.

On this twentieth anniversary of the Arctic Council, we the Arctic States reaffirm our commitment to the principles of the Ottawa Declaration, to work together and with the indigenous Permanent Participants, and to promote prosperity, development, and environmental sustainability for the benefit of generations to come.

For Canada, Stéphane Dion, Minister of Foreign Affairs

For the Kingdom of Denmark, Kristian Jensen, Minister for Foreign Affairs

For Finland, Timo Soini, Minister for Foreign Affairs

For Iceland, Lilja Alfreðsdóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs

For Norway, Børge Brende, Minister of Foreign Affairs

For the Russian Federation, Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs

For Sweden, Margot Wallström, Minister for Foreign Affairs

For the United States of America, John F. Kerry, Secretary of State



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement from the Minister for Foreign Affairs regarding North Korea's fifth nuclear test

Published 09 September 2016 Updated 09 September 2016

Sweden condemns the nuclear test that North Korea is reported to have conducted and which follows a number of provocative missile launches this year. The Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organisation's (CTBTO) monitoring mechanism is analysing the incident.

North Korea's defiant behaviour this year involving serious and provocative actions jeopardises international peace and security. The situation on the Korean peninsula is serious and the latest test further aggravates it.

Sweden urges North Korea to cease activities that aggravate the security situation, and to fulfil its international obligations and respect the UN Security Council's resolutions and the principles of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Sweden supports this morning's statements by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, and the CTBTO's Executive Secretary, Lassina Zerbo.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström

[Link to the statement by Lassina Zerbo](#)

[Link to the statement by Federica Mogherini](#)



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs concerning the UN Security Council debate on the joint UN-OPCW report on incidents involving the use of chemical weapons in Syria

Published 31 August 2016 Updated 31 August 2016

Yesterday, the UN Security Council discussed the report of the UN/OPCW Joint Investigatory Mechanism, regarding the responsibility for the repeated attacks with chemical weapons in the conflict in Syria since 2014.

The report states unequivocally that the Syrian regime is responsible for at least two attacks with chemical weapons, and that Da'esh is accountable for at least one such attack. It is now up to the international community to take action, and to make sure that those responsible are brought to justice. The use of chemical weapons is unacceptable and must not be perpetrated with impunity.

I welcome the report, to which Sweden has contributed financially and also technically through analyses performed by the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI) in Umeå and the National Forensic Centre (NFC) in Linköping.

Sweden will continue to monitor the issue and contribute to its continued treatment.



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden has been elected to the UN Security Council

Published 28 June 2016 Updated 28 June 2016

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on the election of Sweden to serve on the UN Security Council 2017-2018.

On Tuesday Sweden was convincingly elected to the United Nations Security Council. Six months ago we were considered to be out of the running. Today we have a seat on the Security Council. This is a great victory for Swedish foreign policy and Swedish diplomacy.

For a government that stands for solidarity and cooperation, a seat on the Security Council is an acknowledgement that a global policy for sustainable peace and development pays off. For the United Nations, this means that one of its largest donors is taking its engagement and ideas, along with its demands for reform and change, into the organisation's innermost room.

During our two-year term, we will take our share of responsibility for international peace and security that membership of the Security Council entails. On 1 January 2017, when we take our seat at the table that has become a symbol of world affairs, we will do so as President, at the same time as the next Secretary-General of the United Nations takes office.

Sweden's candidacy was based on issues and on a belief in dialogue and diplomacy as tools. Deeper contacts with many countries around the world have given us a better understanding of how today's challenges are perceived and experienced, but also a basis for advancing our vision of democracy and human rights, gender equality and development. This is also how Sweden will work as a member: we will listen to those concerned, defend those who need to be defended and stand up for those we believe in.

Security, development and gender equality are interlinked. Poor countries run a much greater risk of being affected by conflict. We will work to make the Security Council better at acting before conflicts erupt. We will work to make the Security Council see the nexus between security, development, climate and gender equality. We will work to highlight the perspective of women in conflict situations. Half of the world's population cannot be excluded if we want to achieve sustainable peace.

The UN must become more open – even more open. We want to work for greater transparency and openness in the Security Council. We want to talk with countries, rather than about countries. We want to strengthen dialogue with civil society, women's organisations and other peace actors. This is how to build a peaceful world.

We will deal with issues on the Security Council agenda on the basis of our values. The last time we had a seat on the Security Council, we were always the ones to emphasise international law and human rights. And that's how it will be this time too. The situation in Sweden's neighbourhood and the fact that our European security order is being challenged demonstrate the importance of respect for international rules and principles. This perspective will be central during our two-year term on the Security Council.

In six months' time we will take our seat on the Security Council. We will be doing so at a time when, all around the world, uncertainty and insecurity are taking a toll on people's lives, and the need to work together to build sustainable peace and resilient communities has never been clearer. We will do so because we are convinced that as a small and open country dependent on the rest of the world, it is in our interest to contribute to and defend the international order that has at its core the United Nations and the Security Council. And we will do so because we believe we can make a difference – through our policies, our values and our engagement.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström

Published 23 March 2016 Updated 23 March 2016

I strongly condemn the sentence that was handed down yesterday against Nadiya Savchenko and once again call on Russia to immediately release Ms Savchenko and other Ukrainian nationals who have been illegally detained.

This conviction violates the universal human right to a fair trial and runs counter to Russia's commitments in the Minsk agreements. Russia must respect Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, and international law.

Sweden has called on Russia on numerous occasions, both bilaterally in talks with Russian representatives and through the EU, to immediately release Nadiya Savchenko and other illegally detained Ukrainian nationals.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on Nadiya Savchenko and other Ukrainian nationals illegally detained in Russia

Published 11 March 2016 Updated 11 March 2016

I call on Russia to immediately release Nadiya Savchenko and other Ukrainian nationals who have been illegally detained and held in custody in violation of the Minsk agreements.

Sweden has called on Russia to immediately release Savchenko and other Ukrainian nationals illegally detained, including Oleg Sentsov and Alexander Kolchenko, on numerous occasions, both bilaterally in talks with Russian representatives and through the EU. As a demonstration of our support, our Embassy in Moscow is following Ms Savchenko's trial in the court room, and we encourage others to do the same. I stressed the efforts being undertaken by Sweden and the EU for the release of Savchenko when I met her sister Vira this fall in Kiev and New York.

Russia must respect Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, and international law. The right to a fair trial is a basic human right.

Savchenko has been illegally detained since June 2014. A verdict is expected on 21–22 March.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement

Comment on reported hydrogen bomb test by North Korea

Published 06 January 2016 Updated 06 January 2016

The reports of a nuclear test in North Korea are cause for deep concern. If a nuclear test has been carried out, this is a serious and provocative action that jeopardises international peace and security and deserves to be condemned.

A nuclear test is a flagrant violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions and the principles of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Sweden, the EU and the international community call on North Korea to meet its international obligations and to respect United Nations Security Council resolutions and the principles of the CTBT.



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on the CAR review panel report

Published 19 December 2015 Updated 19 December 2015

Like many other people, I was appalled last year to hear about suspected sexual abuse of defenceless children in the Central African Republic, committed by international peacekeeping troops who were put there to protect them. The internal handling of the matter by the United Nations has been deficient and also left much to be desired, including the treatment of individual UN officials, such as Anders Kompass, who had acted against the abuses.

Sweden therefore welcomed the appointment of an independent review panel earlier this year, tasked with investigating UN action to protect the rights of these children as well as the internal handling of the matter. The panel has now submitted its report, which has been published by the UN. This is a very welcome step.

I am also pleased that the panel has concluded that Anders Kompass has not gone beyond the scope of his official mandate.

Throughout, Sweden has emphasised the importance of an unbiased and independent review. It is of the utmost importance to follow up on the report's specific recommendations on how the entire UN system can strengthen its efforts to combat sexual abuse and exploitation in the field. This is a shared responsibility.

We must also, as recommended by the panel, work to ensure that the UN system restores confidence in and the independence of the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services and Ethics Office so as to safeguard the correct and fair treatment of UN officials. Member states also need to make sure

that the perpetrators are punished.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Margot Wallström on the adoption of the Security Council resolution on ISIL

Published 21 November 2015 Updated 21 November 2015

Sweden welcomes the adoption of the Security Council resolution today on ISIL. Through the resolution, the international community agrees to enhance efforts to prevent and suppress ISIL's terrorist acts in accordance with international law. Sweden fully supports this.

In the fight against terrorism, it is vital to apply a broad approach. In addition to immediate responses, we must also address the root causes. It remains paramount to establish a process for reaching an inclusive and sustainable political solution to the conflict in Syria.

Margot Wallström, Minister for Foreign Affairs



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on the terrorist attacks in Paris

Published 14 November 2015 Updated 14 November 2015

Sweden condemns yesterday's despicable terrorist attacks in Paris. They targeted and killed innocent citizens, and our thoughts go to the victims and their families. These acts of terrorism are an attack on democracy and our open societies. They must and will be met with resolve; terrorism must be opposed and those responsible must be called to account. We also need to tackle the underlying causes of terrorism, taking a long-term approach, and to strengthen our efforts against extremism and fanaticism. Together we must stand up for democracy and for humanistic values.

Margot Wallström, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Déclaration de Margot Wallström, Ministre des Affaires étrangères

La Suède condamne les terribles actes terroristes survenus hier à Paris. Ces actes ont ciblé et tué des citoyens innocents. Nos pensées vont aux victimes et à leurs familles. Ces actes de terrorisme sont une attaque contre la démocratie et nos sociétés ouvertes. Il convient de répondre avec détermination à ces attaques ; nous devons repousser le terrorisme et les responsables doivent répondre de leurs actes. Nous devons également lutter efficacement à long terme contre les causes profondes du terrorisme et renforcer les actions contre l'extrémisme et le fanatisme. Nous devons ensemble défendre la démocratie et les valeurs humanistes.

Margot Wallström, Ministre des Affaires étrangères



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on the elections in Myanmar

Published 13 November 2015 Updated 13 November 2015

I would like to congratulate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy on the overwhelming victory in the parliamentary elections in Myanmar. I have always been hugely impressed by the tireless work and great personal sacrifice Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has been demonstrating for many years now for democracy in Myanmar. The world needs many more people like her.

But above all, I would like to congratulate the people of Myanmar on the success of the election. The result shows that the people of Myanmar voted in favour of change. And they did so in a very dignified and determined manner. The people made this election a landmark event in Myanmar's transition towards democracy.

I am very pleased that the elections were carried out without serious incidents and I would like to commend the excellent work of the election observers. I also acknowledge and welcome the work of the Union Election Commission and the present Government under the leadership of President U Thein Sein. I welcome the assurances from the major stakeholders that the election results will be respected and that talks will be held soon in order to ensure a peaceful transfer of power.

I trust that in future elections we will see the full participation of the Rohingya and that all Muslim candidates can run.

Sweden looks forward to working closely with a new Government of Myanmar. We stand ready to continue our support for true democratisation, inclusive peace and full respect for human rights for all in Myanmar: for

women, men, girls and boys, regardless of ethnicity and religious affiliation.



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 Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on the terrorist attack in Ankara, Turkey, today

Published 10 October 2015 Updated 10 October 2015

I strongly condemn the attacks on peaceful demonstrations that took place today. I send my deepest sympathy to the many people who have lost family members and friends in the attacks.

The fight against terrorism is a shared fight, in which we must all stand united. Today's attack on political demonstrations is also an attack on freedom of expression and the right to demonstrate. It is essential now that the trend towards violence is halted. I call on all parties to take responsibility for a return to stability and a resumption of peace negotiations.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement on detention of ministers in Burkina Faso

Published 17 September 2015 Updated 17 September 2015

The forceful detention of President Kafando and Prime Minister Zida and other ministers in Burkina Faso is unacceptable and violates the legitimate demands of the Burkinabe people for a peaceful and democratic transition.

It is imperative that free and fair elections are held as scheduled on 11 October 2015. Sweden remains a long term partner to the people of Burkina Faso and supports the electoral process with approximately 4,5 Million Euro channeled through the UN system as well as through civil society organisations.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

statement on Hiroshima and Nagasaki

Published 05 August 2015 Updated 05 August 2015

Over the next few days, on 6 and 9 August, we mark the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Hundreds of thousands of people paid with their lives due to the bombs, both immediately and much later, and both cities were completely destroyed. The bombs used were relatively weak in comparison with those currently held in the arsenals of nuclear powers. Almost 16 000 nuclear weapons remain.

"We must never forget the victims and the terrible destruction that the human race unleashed on itself. But that is not enough".

"Today, 70 years on, we must act to ensure that no one is ever again affected by such terrible consequences. The only way to fully guarantee this is to totally eliminate all nuclear weapons," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström

Published 28 July 2015 Updated 28 July 2015

The escalating violence in and around Turkey is deeply worrying.

Sweden condemns once again the attack against innocent civilians in Suruç last week. This was also an attack on the humanitarian responsibility that Turkey and its people have assumed towards refugees from Syria.

Turkey is an important partner for the EU in the fight against terrorism and extremism, and its implementation of necessary measures against ISIL is welcome. However, Sweden emphasises the importance of protecting civilians and the need for proportionality of measures. Sweden urges Turkey and the PKK to observe the ceasefire and to resume peace talks immediately. A stalled peace process in Turkey threatens to further undermine stability in the region.



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on the agreement with Iran on the nuclear issue

Published 14 July 2015 Updated 14 July 2015

Sweden warmly welcomes the agreement on the nuclear issue between Germany, France, the United Kingdom, China, Russia, the United States (EU3+3) and Iran. The agreement is a victory for diplomacy. I would like to express my deep appreciation and that of my Government for the perseverance and determination shown by the parties, and by EU High Representative Federica Mogherini and her predecessors in leading EU3+3 in the negotiations.

Now it is up to all parties to live up to their commitments. Iran needs to show that its nuclear technology programme has exclusively peaceful purposes and the international community must lift sanctions, in accordance with today's agreement. Sweden will do its part in this.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will now take on a key role in verifying compliance with the agreement. Sweden fully supports the IAEA in its important work.

The agreement on the nuclear issue means that a strategic obstacle to the development of international relations with Iran has been removed. Now the way is open for a deeper – and, where necessary, critical – dialogue with Iran, and for increased cooperation.



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Foreign Minister Margot Wallström on the extension of the mandate for the stabilisation mission in Mali (MINUSMA)

Published 30 June 2015 Updated 30 June 2015

I welcome the UN Security Council's extension of the mandate for the stabilisation mission in Mali (MINUSMA) by one more year.

MINUSMA's support to the Mali peace process has been, and continues to be, very important. The mission will also play a key role in supporting the implementation of the agreement for peace and reconciliation, which has now been signed by all the major groups.

We congratulate the parties to the conflict, and Algeria's Minister of Foreign Affairs Ramtane Lamamra, who headed the mediation that reached a political solution to the conflict, and Mali's President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta on his leadership. All parties are now responsible for the pledges that have been made and for implementing the peace agreement.

The women of Mali must be given a prominent place in the implementation of the agreement and in the continued reconciliation process. It is admirable and important that the Security Council establishes gender issues as an overall responsibility for MINUSMA.

The Swedish commitment to peace and development in Mali, and to strengthening women's rights and representation, continues. Sweden contributes approximately 250 personnel to MINUSMA, has extensive development cooperation, supplies humanitarian aid and contributes

personnel and resources to EU's operations in Mali.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government condemns terror attack in Tunisia

Published 26 June 2015 Updated 26 June 2015

“The reports from Tunisia shock and dismay me. The Swedish Government vigorously condemns the terror attack that took place today in the town of Sousse,” says Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström.

“We condemn this outrage and want to express our strong solidarity with Tunisia and deep sympathy for those affected and their families,” Ms Wallström says.

“We are currently trying to find out exactly what has happened through the Swedish consulate in Sousse. At present we have no information about Swedish victims,” Ms Wallström says.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement on the peace agreement in Mali

Published 15 May 2015 Updated 25 May 2015

Sweden welcomes the signature today of a peace and reconciliation agreement between the Government of Mali and the Plateforme coalition of armed groups. We urge the parties that have not signed the agreement to do so as soon as possible, and welcome yesterday's initialling by the armed groups of the CMA coalition.

All parties must work together to implement the agreement now in place. Only a political solution can bring an end to the conflict and the suffering of the people of Mali. Women must play an active role in shaping the country's development.

Sweden supports the efforts for peace, security and development in Mali. We have contributed approximately 250 people to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) to help bring stability and protect civilians. MINUSMA has also played an important role in the peace negotiations. We also remain a long-term partner of Mali through our development cooperation, which focuses on democratic governance and sustainable development of natural resources.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Margot Wallström on the release of two Swedes held hostage in Syria

Published 25 April 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

"I am very glad that two Swedes held hostage in Syria have now been released and can be reunited with their families. We have worked very closely and very well with other Swedish authorities, particularly with the police. I would also like to thank all the countries that have supported us in this case. Special thanks to Palestine, and to President Abbas personally, whose involvement has been crucial, and to the Jordanian authorities. For well-known reasons, I cannot comment on how we work in such cases in any more detail."

Margot Wallström, Minister for Foreign Affairs



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Margot Wallström and Isabella Lövin on the earthquake in Nepal

Published 25 April 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Joint statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström and Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin on the earthquake in Nepal

"We feel deep sorrow about the thousands of people who have died, been injured or otherwise suffered from the powerful earthquake in Nepal and neighbouring countries.

Our thoughts and sympathies - and those of the entire Government - are with those who have lost loved ones, who are living in uncertainty about the fate of their families and friends, and whose homes have been destroyed.

The earthquake has caused great devastation and many people are still missing. Large-scale rescue operations and measures to assist the victims can be expected. Sweden will contribute through its core support to UN humanitarian bodies and is ready to respond to calls for additional assistance."



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström on the tragedy in 1915

Published 24 April 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Today we remember one of the very darkest chapters of our European history and show our respect for all of those who fell victim to the large-scale atrocities that took place against the Armenian people and other minorities in the crumbling Ottoman Empire during the First World War.

The accounts of what happened are horrendous. Both contemporary reports, such as those from the Swedish Embassy in Constantinople, and recent research testify to an unimaginably large number of people being murdered, deported or forced to flee from their homes. A considerable proportion of the Ottoman Empire's Christian population was lost.

It is crucial that painful historical events such as this are handled responsibly. The Government encourages an open analysis and digestion of important historical events so as to contribute to reconciliation and historical redress. We need a lively debate that is open to international research and free from censorship. The Government is now conducting a review of how to refer and relate to historical mass atrocities.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Morgan Johansson

Joint statement on the shipwreck in the Mediterranean

Published 19 April 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

By Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström and Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson.

“We are dismayed by the shipwreck in the Mediterranean in which a large number of people drowned on their way to Europe.

The unscrupulous people-smugglers who exploit the situation of desperate people bear a large part of the responsibility. The reports of the tragedy are harrowing and heart-rending, and the EU must now take action and strengthen our joint measures to try to prevent a repeat of this tragedy. Sweden will work for further measures on the part of the EU to strengthen rescue operations at sea, combat refugee-smuggling and support peace processes in conflict-affected areas.

The European Commission and the European Council need to take initiatives to strengthen Operation Triton. If the EU is unable to take initiatives, individual countries should do so. Sweden stands ready to rapidly provide resources from the Swedish Coast Guard.

Libya is the transit country for the majority of those who attempt to enter the EU across the Mediterranean, and the ongoing collapse of Libya provides scope for this deadly people-smuggling. Migration and the situation in Libya will be the subject of considerable attention at the meeting of the EU foreign ministers on Monday. Sweden will push for the EU to do more, together with the UN and others, to support the peace process in Libya so that the situation stabilises and effective measures to stop people-smuggling can be implemented.

Many of those who risk their lives to reach Europe on dilapidated and overcrowded vessels are seeking refuge from war and persecution. Europe must

do more to ensure that people in need of protection can come to Europe legally. At present, half of EU Member States do not even take in UN quota refugees, and the reception of asylum seekers is extremely uneven among Member States. The EU and many Member States are working actively to contribute to political solutions to the conflicts and terror that force people to flee countries such as Iraq and Syria. But in a world in which so many people are forced to flee, Europe should be doing more, and one of the basic premises of the common asylum policy should be that all Member States take in quota refugees.”

Margot Wallström
Morgan Johansson



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement on the agreement in Lausanne

Published 03 April 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

The Swedish Government warmly welcomes the great progress made in the negotiations with Iran.

The agreement in Lausanne between the EU3+3 and Iran on key parameters for an agreement on Iran's nuclear programme is a signal inspiring hope for a region grappling with great challenges. I call upon everyone to now give their full support to the continued negotiations so that a final agreement can be reached by 30 June.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement on the terrorist attack in eastern Kenya

Published 03 April 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

The Swedish Government condemns Thursday's appalling terrorist attack against Garissa University College in eastern Kenya.

Once again, Al Shabaab has committed an atrocity against innocent people, leaving at least 147 people dead and many others seriously injured.

I feel great sorrow and anger that all these young people have lost their lives, and I would like to express my own and the rest of the Government's deep sympathy with all those who have been injured or have lost a family member or friend.

Those who are responsible for this terrible deed must be brought to justice. International cooperation to prevent and combat terrorism must continue.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Margot Wallström on the terrorist attacks in Yemen

Published 21 March 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

I am shocked and distressed by yesterday's appalling terrorist attacks in Yemen. The attacks against two mosques in Sana'a killed at least 140 people and many more were seriously injured.

The Government condemns these cowardly acts of terrorism, which deliberately targeted civilians during Friday prayers. Our thoughts go to the victims' families and loved ones.

The spiral of violence must now be broken and all parties return to the negotiating table to find a political solution.

The UN's efforts have our full support. The Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) also has a key role to play in finding a solution.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement on the situation in Syria and Iraq

Published 27 February 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

The situation in Syria and Iraq is exceptionally serious. We are seeing a humanitarian disaster with devastating consequences for an entire region and repercussions for the whole world. Both ISIL and the Assad regime in Syria are committing serious abuses on a daily basis.

The abduction of hundreds of Assyrians in Syria is yet another example of ISIL's sheer brutality. Sweden condemns these crimes, and we are deeply concerned at what has happened. Many Assyrians have come to Sweden and found refuge here. ISIL's actions in Syria and Iraq threaten a people with deep historical roots in the Middle East.

The brutality of ISIL strikes the civilian populations of Iraq and Syria indiscriminately. No one is safe: Sunnis, Shias, Kurds, Christians or other groups. Those who commit crimes such as genocide, crimes against humanity and other serious breaches of international law must be held to account.

The Government is monitoring the situation closely and has chosen to focus support on two main approaches: humanitarian and political.

Since 2011, Sweden has contributed more than SEK 1.3 billion in humanitarian support to Syria alone. This sum includes support to the UN, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent movement and other international organisations with access to the area. Sweden has also taken in some 65 000 asylum seekers from Syria. We are supporting Syria's neighbouring countries, which are under immense pressure.

In the long term, only a political solution can put a stop to the conflict. The Government fully supports the work of UN Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura. He is working intensively, and the Government is in close contact with him so as to be able to support the work in the best possible way.

Sweden is working via the EU, and together with the Arab League, Turkey and other countries in the region to expedite a solution. Sweden also supports the US-led military operation against ISIL in northern Iraq. Sweden is planning a military contribution to the training operation that has been established in northern Iraq as part of the coalition efforts to defeat ISIL.

Sweden will continue its efforts and actions. The Government feels that in this work, it is important to maintain contacts with groups from the region in Sweden, including Yazidis, Assyrians, Kurds and others.



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.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Margot Wallström on Norway's intent to continue participating in the EU ETS

Published 05 February 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

I welcome Norway's announcement today that the country intends to join the EU 2030 framework for climate and energy policies and thus continue participating in the EU Emissions Trading System for the period after 2020. The Trading System is a key tool for achieving EU climate and energy targets for 2030. Norway's agreement to join further strengthens Europe's position ahead of the UN Climate Change Conference to be held in Paris at the end of the year.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Margot Wallström on the attack at Paris offices of satirical magazine

Published 07 January 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

The attack on the Paris offices of the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo is horrendous. The attack has left many dead. Our thoughts go to the victims and their families. It is also a deeply alarming attack on the fundamental freedom to spread information and express an opinion. This is essential for an open and democratic society. We must defend freedom of expression and freedom of the press in every way, and those responsible must be brought to justice. Margot Wallström, Minister for Foreign Affairs



Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ten years since the tsunami

Published 25 December 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

This Christmas, it is ten years since the tsunami of 26 December 2004. As the images from the disaster are replayed, our thoughts go out to those who lost their lives and their families and friends.

To commemorate the disaster, the Swedish Embassy in Thailand is organising a memorial ceremony in Khao Lak. A national memorial service held in Uppsala Cathedral will be broadcast on television, so that we can all remember and honour the memory of those who died. The Government will be represented at both ceremonies.

More than 250 000 people lost their lives in the tsunami, 543 of them Swedes. Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand suffered most from the disaster. The Swedes who lived through this nightmare speak of the kindness and support shown to them by the local people in the countries affected. In the emergency, people helped one another. On behalf of Sweden, today we thank the people in the countries affected for their invaluable help and warmth during and after the tsunami. It is sometimes said that international solidarity knows no borders. Amidst the tragedy, we saw how reality lived up to these lofty words.

Today we also thank the volunteers who were willing to help at the height of the disaster, in extremely demanding conditions. Without their help, the situation of those affected would in many cases have been considerably worse.

The disaster caused widespread homelessness, destroyed people's livelihoods, devastated the infrastructure and tested health services and other public institutions to their limits. Sweden and many other countries have shared in the work of reconstruction. This has strengthened our relations and helped us to deal with trying situations together.

The tsunami also exposed obvious weaknesses in Sweden's ability to deal with major emergencies abroad affecting many Swedes. An inquiry was later conducted which looked at the actions of the Swedish state and its crisis management. Many of the proposals presented have now taken shape in the crisis management organisation that has been built up at the Government Offices, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sweden's missions abroad.

As a country, we must move on, but sometimes it is also necessary to pause and reflect. The Christmas season gives us an opportunity to do so. Our thoughts are with the families who continue to live with the pain.

Margot Wallström, Minister for Foreign Affairs



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström following the Nobel Peace Prize announcement

Published 10 October 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

I would like to offer my congratulations to Kailash Satyarthi and Malala Yousafzai following the announcement today by the Norwegian Nobel Committee that they are both to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

The greatest threat to the Taliban is a young girl with a book. In my eyes, Malala Yousafzai is a hero. I also think that it was wise of the Nobel Committee to have a clear child rights theme, and to share the prize between a young activist and a person who has devoted his life's work to children's rights.

I hope that the Prize serves as an inspiration to all those who fight daily for children, and particularly young girls.