



Scandinavia and ESDP

Are the Nordic States Holding Back?

Prof. Dr. Nikolaus Rockberger war Professor am schwedischen National Defence College. Als Experte für die Geschichte Zentraleuropas hat er zahlreiche sicherheitspolitische und historische Fachbücher und Fachbeiträge verfasst.

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Amtsgebäude Stiftgasse 2a, 1070 Wien

Tel. (+43-1) 5200/27000, Fax (+43-1) 5200/17068

Gestaltung: Doris Washiedl

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Summary

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the approaches of the various Nordic states to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), and also to show how they have implemented them in their policies and actions.

Of the Nordic states only Finland and Sweden actively participate in the European Security and Defence Policy. Norway is not a member of the European Union, and Denmark is exempted from all military cooperation within the framework of the Union. Both states, however, are members of NATO.

Finland and Sweden had been defining themselves as “neutral” in one way or another until the collapse of the Soviet Union in Central and Eastern Europe. After that both states, including Austria, applied for EU-membership, started to define their status as being non-aligned, and did not apply for becoming NATO members – contrary to the Central European and Baltic states.

Along with the accession of the “ex-neutrals” to the Union, questions about security and defence policy increasingly appeared in the Union’s agenda. As ex-neutrals Sweden and Finland neither are in favour of any European defence system or mutual defence guarantees nor do they want the EU to become too “military”. But at the same time leading Finnish and Swedish politicians have repeatedly stressed a moral obligation to defend other EU states if they were attacked.

Both states are experienced participants of U.N. peacekeeping missions as “blue-helmets” and have been enthusiastic about it. Over the years, many thousand officers and soldiers have served under UN flag. Therefore, participation in European peacekeeping – if endorsed by the UN – is no big deal for Finland and Sweden, both under EU or NATO command. Neither is participation in various civil protection and aid activities.

Both states have offered their participation in the EU’s army corps (Headline Goal 1999) and setting up a common battlegroup together with Norway according to the Headline Goal 2010, which is expected to be operable by 2007.

After the tsunami disaster in December 2004 plans have been made in Sweden to set up civil rescue teams that will be able to operate all over the world at very short notice to help Swedes who have been hit by a catastrophe.

The Nordic States

When talking about the Nordic states we have to consider that they do not only view CFSP and ESDP differently but also the EU itself and the EMU cooperation in the field of the Euro currency. On some occasions there was much political debate about the EU as such and also the EMU, especially in Denmark and Sweden. But the security policy issues of CFSP and ESDP have not been on the political agenda, and for the most part there is consensus in these matters between government and opposition. Only some leftist and green parties are against “military cooperation”. There have been political discussions and disagreements between the parties, more in Denmark and Sweden than in Finland and Norway, about the extent of military defence and how much money should be dedicated to it.

Although the Nordic states have been cooperating in many fields for a long time, security policy, however, has always been kept out of cooperation in the Nordic Council and other organisations. Foreign and security policy cooperation between the Nordic states has really come as a bonus to EU membership. In U.N. missions, of course, there has been cooperation among some of the states in specific missions. The missions in Bosnia are example for this, where there was also cooperation with the Baltic states.

Denmark

Denmark was the first Nordic state to join the EEC/EU in 1973, acceding together with the UK and Ireland. But a large part of the population has been, and some still are, sceptical of European cooperation. There have been about ten troublesome referenda about EU matters in Denmark. Although a NATO member the Danes turned down the Maastricht Treaty in a 1992 referendum. At the Edinburgh Summit later that year Denmark was conceded four exemptions from future advanced integration of the EU, including EMU and European defence cooperation within the EU. In another referendum in 1993 the majority of the population accepted the Maastricht Treaty under these conditions.

Therefore, Danes do not participate in any kind of military cooperation within the EU, including the decision-making in these matters. This fact does not automatically exclude the Danes from taking part in discussions about crisis management, and Denmark is represented in all EU bodies dealing with ESDP. Denmark co-operates fully in the civilian part of ESDP.

In a dozen of cases Denmark has invoked the granted exemptions from defence cooperation of all kinds. Obviously the Danish position is not determined by pacifism but dictated by internal political needs. Denmark is a NATO member and even participates in Iraq with a force of about 500-600 men, thereby forming part of the US alliance (which none of the other Nordic states does at present – see Norway).

Norway

The Norwegians are so reticent that they are not even a member of the EU. Twice, in 1972 and 1994, Norway had ready-negotiated agreements for membership with the EU, and on both occasions, however, the people turned down membership in a referendum.

After these two agonising experiences, which even split Norway's Labour Party, the Norwegian politicians have been very cautious with EU matters

in domestic policy. Lately opinion polls have shown a more positive trend towards the EU in the Norwegian public. Reasons for this may be, among others, the great EU enlargement of 2004 all the way to Central Europe, which left Norway "more outside", but also the fact that Norway has to pay the EU for its free-trade agreement and other cooperations with the Union. "We have to pay the EU a lot of money but have no influence on decision-making in the Union".

After the war in Iraq, from July 2003 to July 2004, Norway maintained an engineer company of about 180 men there to help rebuild the country.

"Ex-Neutrals"

The 1995 enlargement of the Union increased the number of neutral states from one, that is Ireland, to four, adding Austria, Finland and Sweden to the list. Before that, almost all states, 11 out of 12, had been members of both EU and NATO. So the number of non-NATO members increased substantially from one to four at the same time as the Union was becoming more active in the fields of foreign, security and defence policy (for peace keeping, Petersberg tasks, and so forth).

The neutrality concept of the three new member states was very different in nature. Their neutrality was not guaranteed or recognised internationally (as was the case with Switzerland and Belgium before 1914). Neutrality, however, did not prevent these three states from becoming members of the UN (unlike Switzerland) and from actively participating in UN-led peacekeeping operations.

Austria's neutrality was established as a constitutional act dating back to 1955, the same time as the State Treaty that gave Austria back its sovereignty and which ended the presence of the four occupational powers.

Finland

In 1948 Finland was forced to sign a Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Assistance with the Soviet Union, thereby promising to help each other "against Germany or any state allied with Germany". Viewed from a strictly formal point of view Finland was not "neutral" with regard to NATO and the Warsaw Pact, as there was the treaty with the Soviet Union. As the Soviet Union started to collapse, in the autumn of 1991 Finland unilaterally declared the end of the treaty and defined itself as being "militarily non-aligned". In June 1995, after joining the EU, Finland officially revoked the country's neutrality. Later on the basic features of Finnish national security policy has been described as "militarily non-aligned, with an independent defence, and membership of the European Union".

Generally speaking there are great differences between Sweden and Finland regarding the EU. Sweden saw the membership purely from an economic point of view (how much does it cost and how much will we get back?). For Finland the security policy aspects of membership were a significant component that had to be considered. The analysis of the threat picture has always been different in Finland due to the geo-political situation and the country's historical experiences. The support of the Finnish referendum ten years ago was also much more impressive than the narrow margin in Sweden. This was also the year in which Norway, for the second time, rejected a ready-negotiated membership agreement.

Finland for its part is mostly keeping a "low profile" in questions of foreign policy and there has been a consensus between the parties in such questions. No foreign policy questions are to be exploited for domestic political use and there are no idealistic views but very down-to-earth, realistic policy. And there is no criticism of other states, especially of the great powers.

Even in EU matters Finland has been rather approving of most proposals and has brought forward its own views only in a few, important issues (espe-

cially in the beginning the Swedes constantly shared their opinion about almost everything, so after a while nobody cared to listen to them any more).

Finland entered the Euro zone together with most EU states four years ago whereas the Swedes last year (2004) rejected the Euro in a referendum.

So even if Sweden and Finland have some basic different views on and interests concerning the EU in general, as former neutral states they have cooperated in matters of CFSP and ESDP. Despite all their differences. Finland and Austria favour majority decisions in CFSP matters, whereas Sweden wants to keep the principle of unanimity of decisions in CFSP matters.

Sweden

The Swedish approach to neutrality – officially referred to as "non-aligned in peacetime, aiming to be neutral in wartime" – goes back to the two World Wars and has its roots back in the 19th century. However, there are no international obligations derived from it and it is not even based on a legal act. After the end of the Cold War, for some years, Swedish security policy was described as "non-aligned in peacetime with the option to be neutral in wartime". In 2002 the political parties agreed on a security policy formula stating that Sweden is militarily non-aligned (without mentioning neutrality or any other options).

In the security policy declaration made in parliament on 9 February 2005 the foreign minister Laila Freivalds stated that "Sweden does not participate in military alliances. At the same time, NATO is an important partner to Sweden when it comes to efforts in crisis areas. We are continuing to contribute forces for NATO/PfP operations in the Balkans and in Afghanistan. In May Sweden will host a ministerial meeting within the framework of the partnership with NATO, which will provide the opportunity to discuss current security policy challenges in this extensive forum."

During the Cold War Finland and Sweden com-

plemented and indirectly supported each other within the so-called "Nordic balance" precisely through the difference of their roles: Sweden helped to assure Finland's independence by avoiding the "provocation" of joining NATO (at least "openly" – but as we know today there was much secret cooperation between Sweden and NATO), while Finland was Sweden's welcome de facto "buffer".

Sweden and Finland have tried to keep apart military peace keeping missions from the military defence of the Union with arguments like "but you have all that already in NATO, why double it up?" One reason is that as non-aligned members of the EU Sweden and Finland do not want the EU to go "military".

Another reason is that it is important for the two Nordic states to keep the U.S. presence in a region that is close to Russia and of great strategic importance.

Previously, Russia's closeness was a clear threat to both Finland and Sweden, just like to most Western European countries. There has been a gradual transformation of that perception as a threat to a factor of risk – though coupled with significant residual uncertainty and heightened consciousness of non-military challenges such as pollution, crime and migration. This clearly makes a greater difference to Finland than to Sweden, but for both countries it opens up the theoretical options – in practice differently exploited, though – of possible force re-deployment (away from the far north and the eastern coastline/frontier); some relaxation of readiness standards, some de-emphasising of territorial defence; and an accompanying shift of attention and resources towards the security aspects of active communication and interplay with Russia (for example, in the case of Finland, vigilance against cross-border crime and smuggling, and co-operative border management in general).*

* Bailes, Alyson JK: European Security from a Nordic Perspective: The Roles of Finland and Sweden. Strategic Yearbook 2004 of the Swedish National Defence College and the Finnish National Defence College.

When the Baltic states regained their independence in 1991 Sweden and Finland rejected the idea that the two states should or could directly guarantee the security of their small reborn neighbours. That was and is one more reason why it is important to keep the U.S. presence in the Nordic area. Because of these reasons Finland and Sweden (and also Denmark) could be ranged among the Atlanticists rather than the Europeanists.

European Security and Defence Policy

Military Capacity

After the end of the Cold War and the wars in the Balkans there was talk for NATO to assume more global tasks. At the same time some states, especially France but also Italy and sometimes even Germany and/or the UK, started to talk about a European defence capacity for peacekeeping and peace enforcement actions, mainly outside Europe (but, of course, also in the Balkans).

The serious starting point was the 1992 Maastricht Summit followed by the 1997 Amsterdam Summit and a British-French summit meeting in St. Malo in 1998 (about giving the EU the capability to lead defence forces). The aim according to the Headline Goal 1999 is that a EU defence force, the equivalent of an army corps, consisting of some 60,000 troops supported by aircraft-carriers, other navy units and air support, etc. should be able to be assembled by the member states within 60 days and be able to conduct different crisis management tasks for up to one year. Finland and Sweden both announced to contribute 1,500 troops each, in addition Sweden also pledged four fighter aircraft, one submarine and two mine clearance ships.

The promises of the member states are well filling up the numerous demands of the army corps, but there are many shortcomings in quality, such as suppressing anti-aircraft forces, the ability to refuel in the air, the strategic airlift capability, and systems for reconnaissance, intelligence and target acquisition. In

2004 the European Council set itself a new goal for the military capacity, the Headline Goal 2010, which mainly deals with the rapid deployment of forces (battlegroups), but also with how to deal with the deficiencies and shortcomings mentioned above. One step was to create the European Defence Agency (EDA), in which the big arms producers of Europe, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and UK (together making up 90 percent of Europe's arms production capacity) will collaborate.

Civil Crisis Management

In order to prevent closer military cooperation within the Union, before the 1997 Amsterdam Summit Sweden and Finland lobbied that the EU should focus more on crisis prevention and crisis solution, and acquire the ability to carry out the so called Petersberg tasks, including humanitarian aid, rescue operations, peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations. Perhaps unexpectedly, the UK supported this proposal and so it was added to the Amsterdam Treaty.

Soon afterwards the decision was taken that the EU would take over the responsibility for Petersberg tasks from the WEU and would get access to some NATO resources in order to be able to do so.

At the 2000 summit in Santa Maria de Feira several main goals were defined for EU civil crisis management: the police to support the rule of law, civil administration, and civil protection. It should be possible to set up a police force of 5,000 officers for this purpose from among the member states.

Originally CFSP was to deal with military crisis management and civil crisis management. Upon a Swedish proposal a third pillar – crisis prevention – was added to CFSP at the 2001 Gothenburg Summit.

After the tsunami catastrophe of December 2004 the Swedish government claimed that the country had to be better prepared to render civil assistance to Swedes abroad in case that a disaster of any type occurs in which many Swedish nationals are hurt.

The Swedish Rescue Services Agency has assured that they could have a first small group of 2 – 4 persons ready to leave within six hours after being ordered to reconnoitre the needs on the spot and rapport back what kind of help is needed. Based on this information a rescue team of about 50 persons will be composed and should be able to leave Sweden within 12 hours. Such a team will involve people from several agencies and organisations. A first team should be operable by next year (2006). Another two years later, by 2008, another 150 persons should be trained for this purpose, so a total of four rescue teams will be available in the future.

Battlegroups

The Kosovo conflict was again proof that the Union was not sufficiently capable of handling crises, not even in Europe. At the European Council meeting of June 1999 it was stated that Europe had to strengthen the common security and defence policy in order to handle crises with both military and civil assets. Half a year later in Helsinki a concept for ESDP was adopted and the proposal was made that the focus should be placed on smaller rapid deployment forces. This idea was concretised in February 2004 by a proposal by the UK, France and Germany of forming EU battlegroups. A battlegroup will generally be built around an infantry battalion, have supporting units, be about 1,500 troops strong, be an independent, self-supported unit, and when necessary draw upon air and/or navy support.

Battlegroups should be able to act within ten days after receiving an order and be able to operate for 30-120 days in a crisis area within a radius of 6,000 km from Brussels. The EU Battlegroup concept was adopted in June 2004. Two battlegroups are to be able to operate simultaneously and they are to be ready for the duration of six months in a row.

At a conference in November 2004 European NATO members and the new EU member states were invited to participate in the programme. At this conference the states declared what assets they were prepared to provide. The number of the first intended seven to nine battlegroups was increased to

thirteen. The first battlegroups (from the big states) are supposed to reach a certain degree of operability already during 2005, all groups should be fully ready by 2007.

Of the thirteen battlegroups four are exclusively national ones provided by:

- France
- Italy
- Spain
- UK

The others are multinational ones built from contributions from two to five countries:

- France, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, and possibly, Spain
- France and Belgium
- Germany, the Netherlands and Finland
- Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic
- Italy, Hungary and Slovenia
- Italy, Spain, Greece and Portugal
- Poland, Germany, Slovakia, Latvia and Lithuania
- Sweden, Finland, Norway (from outside the EU) and one smaller Estonian component.
- UK and the Netherlands

Beside these battlegroups

- Cyprus will provide a hospital section,
- Lithuania a water purification section,
- Greece a co-ordination centre for sea transportations in Athens
- France the framework for the multinational mobile command staff.

Estonia, Ireland and Malta are still primarily in the planning phase, even if Estonia will participate "symbolically" in the Swedish-led battlegroup. Poland was interested in cooperating with Sweden in a common battlegroup, but Sweden much rather prefers to cooperate with its Nordic brothers.

Due to the huge cuts in the Swedish defence budget in the last years and in the future and also due to some other peace keeping operations, Sweden could not manage to provide a battlegroup all by itself. Therefore, there will be a Swedish-Finnish battlegroup under Swedish command, and also Norway will contribute about 150 troops, although it is not a member of the EU. Very recently Estonia was invited to participate too. Finland will contribute about 200 troops. That leaves about 1,100 Swedish soldiers for the battlegroup. Finland will also contribute about 150 soldiers to a German-Dutch-Finnish battlegroup (Force Protection).

Opinions differ in Sweden how to finance the battlegroup. The non-Socialist opposition parties wanted to allocate extra money to defence in order to pay the costs of the battlegroup, but the government decided that the defence budget is to cover the costs – and that with an already reduced budget.

An armoured company with a dozen modern and very potent Leopard tanks were to be included in the Swedish-led battlegroup. But in December 2004 the Swedish commander-in-chief doubted, due to economic considerations, whether it would be necessary to exclude the tanks to save money. Many Swedish officers have stressed that the experiences gained in Bosnia and other peacekeeping missions proved that the presence of tanks may often be vital for the safety of the troops, and that it makes the peacekeeping forces respected by the opposing parties.

Now in March 2005 the government stated that, perhaps, some extra money would be allocated to the defence budget after all in order to be able to put up the battlegroup – and in time. However no formal decision has been taken so far.

The big cuts in the Swedish defence budget makes it also very doubtful whether in the future Sweden will be able to afford to keep its "small but mean" defence forces as well as a strong and qualified defence industry at the same time, or if there has to be a (certainly very difficult and painful) selection of only one of these.

Sweden and Finland

There are significant differences in the reduction of the armed forces in Sweden and Finland. According to the latest defence decision Sweden will fully adopt the concept of a small and modern force for international employment. In 2008 the combined armed forces will be able to mobilise no more than 31,500 troops, 23,300 in the army (including the headquarters), 5,000 men air force and 3,200 men navy (not long ago the armed forces could mobilise some 650,000 men), and a home guard of 30,000 (100,000 some years ago). So Sweden will not have a territorial defence any more.

5,000 officers and others in the field of defence will lose their jobs. Newly trained young officers will not be employed for the next two years in defence, because of the inflexible Swedish labour market laws ("first in – last out"). This will cost a lot of money and there will be a lack of young field officers while too many old ones, who have families and who are not willing to go on international missions will be behind writing desks. But battlegroups' needs ...

The Finnish Defence will also be reduced, but not to such a degree as the Swedish one. By a recent defence decision, by 2008, the Finnish armed forces will have 165,000 troops available with modern equipment and will also keep army units with present equipment as a territorial defence of another 225,000 troops. Gradually they will be discarded. Three Finnish brigades are fully NATO compatible and will be provided with up to date equipment.

For the first time in history the Finnish navy will have more surface ships than Sweden (eight compared to seven), and the proud Swedish air force that was of the size of a great power and many times bigger than the Finnish counterpart will be reduced to almost the same size.

The operational units, from which battlegroups and other peacekeeping forces can be recruited, will consist of 100,000 troops in Finland and less than 23,300 army personnel in Sweden. And the official goal of Sweden is to be able to keep two battalions and three independent companies in international

service at the same time. The personnel basis for that will be very thin indeed. It should be added that at present (spring of 2005) less than 750 Swedes are active in different international peacekeeping operations around the world.

The huge difference in the Finnish and Swedish defence policies and mentality was very well expressed in February 2004 by the Finnish president Tarja Halonen by stating: "Our geopolitical situation is such that we cannot quite do as the Swedes and leave the defence to be done by the neighbours."

The 11 March 2004 Madrid bombing showed that there is no border between external and internal security and threats anymore. The member states agreed on a declaration of solidarity (which is also included in the proposal for an EU constitution, article I-43 and III-329), which states that, if a member state is attacked by terrorists, is affected by a natural disaster or a manmade disaster, all the resources of the Union, including military ones provided by the member states, can be used to:

- prevent a terrorist threat in the member states;
- protect the democratic institutions and civil population in case of a terrorist attack;
- support a member state on the other's territory if so asked by the political authorities in connection with a terrorist attack;
- assist a member state on the other's territory in connection with a natural disaster if so asked by its political authorities.

As non-aligned states both Finland and Sweden do not want to include a clause of collective defence obligation of the Union in the EU or any other treaties to provide mutual defence guarantees. But at the same time there has been no hesitation – on the contrary – in either state to participate in UN peace keeping operations as "blue-helmets", also under NATO command, in former Yugoslavia.

But at the same time leading Swedish and Finnish politicians have repeatedly expressed their recognition of an obligation to defend another EU country in case it is attacked. For non-aligned states

the moral obligation of defending others is apparently a completely different matter than giving official guarantees.

Participation in EU battlegroups has not been a political issue in Sweden and Finland (nor in Norway) as long as it is for peacekeeping tasks. It is seen as an extension of the U.N. activities of these states. There has not been any debate about the solidarity clauses contained in the "constitution" – they are perceived as a part of the fight against terrorism. The political elite, including vast majorities in the parliaments, are in favour of ratifying the treaty. In Sweden there are anti-EU manifestations, mainly from leftist and green groups, to hold a referendum.

The Swedish Parliament was supposed to ratify the treaty in December 2005, but after the French and Dutch referenda it is now supposed to be delayed (for one year?). According to the Danish Constitution there must be a referendum about such a treaty, planned to be held in September 2005. Before the referenda in France and Holland there was a clear "yes"-majority in opinion polls. According to latest polls this has changed rather to "no". But also the Danish referenda and decision will be "put on ice" for the time being.

For those rejecting the treaty the security policy parts do not play a major role (even if they are bad). They say there will be "more EU" with the constitution, a "super-state" and so forth. For many people it is rather a question of disliking the EU as such than a matter of having or not having the treaty as such. Most people of both sides are only vaguely familiar about the content of the treaty, if they know something about it at all.

Today 19 of the 25 EU member states are also NATO members. We can also remember Sweden's unique experience – or lets better call it lack of experience – as the only state in the EU that has not been at war even once during the 20th century (actually since 1814) to defend its freedom and independence. That is perhaps why international solidarity does not play an important role in the Swedish EU-debate.

Summary of the Swedish Points of Views

Some final keywords from the Swedish point of view:

- *Foreign policy* is a nice thing to have and Sweden always wants to convince the others of the "Swedish model" in different questions.
- *Security policy* is not bad either, almost like U.N. or something like that.
- *Common defence policy* with mutual defence guarantees is bad and dangerous.
- Peacekeeping and peacemaking of all types is good.
- Humanitarian aid and civil protection is very good.
- *Conflict prevention* is the best approach of all – and most probably a Swedish invention!

So the Swedish motto perhaps could be described as: From a European Security Community to a Secure European Community.

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Appendix

Statement of Government Policy in the Parliamentary Debate on Foreign Affairs, Wednesday 9 February 2005

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Tsunami: a word none of us will ever forget. An earthquake so violent that it shook the Earth on its axis, giant waves crushing everything in their path, an inconceivable 300 000 dead.

We probably lost more children on Boxing Day morning than on any other day in the history of Sweden. A mark that will always show in the statistics on child mortality in our country. A mark in time, a wound in the heart of every person who has lost someone.

We want to be able to help people in distress, even on the other side of the globe. We want to be able to do more, and to do more sooner. The Government looks forward to the special commissions proposals on ways of improving Swedens capacity in emergency situations. Some initiatives have already been taken.

First, measures will be taken to ensure that the different systems for information, intelligence and analysis at the Government Offices are strengthened and coordinated. A computerised consular information system will be developed. Information exchange with other EU countries will be reinforced.

Second, it must be possible to deploy relief efforts without delay. The Swedish Rescue Services Agency must be able to act directly in an emergency. A consular contingency force is being set up at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Third, the EU must be able to send rapid reaction forces to assist its citizens in the event of crises and disasters abroad.

In the wake of the disaster we have witnessed many examples of sacrifice and cooperation. The Government sends warm thanks to all those who

have made fantastic efforts in Sweden, in Thailand and in other countries. But many people will need help for a long time to come. To the children, the parents, the sisters and brothers who must live on with a wound in their heart, we must give all the comfort, all the support and all the respect we can.

The tsunami is a merciless reminder that we all share the same world. Natural disasters and environmental degradation, poverty and pandemics, terrorism and organised crime, failing states and regional conflicts, war and weapons of mass destruction all these are a threat to every country.

These new threats require a broadened concept of security. They require a security policy that focuses on the protection and rights of the individual, and on international law. They require an active foreign policy. During the Cold War it was said that foreign policy is our first line of defence. This line now runs through Afghanistan, Africa, the Balkans and other places where Sweden is participating in missions to promote peace and in active development cooperation.

The many who, together, form this Organisation peoples, governments, and individuals share one great responsibility. Future generations may come to say of us that we never achieved what we set out to do. May they never be entitled to say that we failed because we lacked faith or permitted narrow self-interest to distort our efforts.

This was how Dag Hammarskjöld formulated his vision of our responsibility for the global organisation. He succeeded in strengthening the United Nations, even in a time of sharp antagonisms.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan is continuing to build in the same spirit. In December the High-level Panel that he had appointed published one of the most comprehensive reform documents in the UNs history, the report on global threats, challenges and change. Sweden has contributed both financial support and concrete proposals. In January, moreover, the challenging report of the Millennium Project was launched. Now it is up to the Member States to take their responsibility.

This year we will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. In September the worlds heads of state and government will gather in New York. Ahead of this summit meeting which will be chaired by Jan Eliasson, who will then be the newly elected President of the General Assembly Sweden is working actively to ensure that it leads to concrete results.

We want to see a legitimate and effective Security Council that takes its full responsibility for international peace and security. The composition of the Security Council must better reflect the fact that the world has changed since 1945. Since the UN Charter was adopted, the number of Member States has almost quadrupled and a number of new countries around the world have developed into particularly important political and economic actors. Sweden considers that these states should be given a role in the Security Council that is commensurate with their growing importance and with their desire and ability to contribute to the work of the UN. An enlargement of the Security Council would safeguard its legitimacy and relevance. At the same time, the effectiveness of the Security Council can be increased by restricting the use of the right of veto. The High-level Panel has launched two models for possible enlargement of the Security Council. Both fulfil the principal objective of making the Council more representative. Regardless of which model is chosen, the most important thing is that we reach a decision on enlargement in connection with the summit meeting this year.

We want to see stronger protection of peoples security. The primary responsibility for peoples security must continue to rest with the sovereign state. But sixty years after Auschwitz and ten years after Srebrenica and Rwanda, we know that states can be unwilling or unable to stop atrocities. In such cases, the international community must act. It follows from the UN Charter that the Security Council must take its responsibility for preventing genocide, mass murder and ethnic cleansing. If the Security Council fails to take this responsibility, or if the right of veto is abused, we must, after careful assessment of the political and international law dimensions, consider

what can be done in other ways in urgent circumstances to save people from serious injustices. The duty to protect is a common responsibility that we should all be prepared to take.

We want to see forceful common action against international terrorism. This requires long-term global cooperation with full respect for human rights and the rule of law.

We want to see clearer collective responsibility in the fight against weapons of mass destruction. The proliferation of nuclear weapons must be prevented. It is important that every effort is pursued to prevent countries such as North Korea and Iran from obtaining such weapons, and that the commitments of the nuclear-weapon states regarding disarmament are implemented without further delay. These will be Swedens priorities ahead of the non-proliferation review conference that will be held in May.

We want to reform the United Nations Economic and Social Council so as to make it an effective global forum that contributes to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

We want to see a vigorous General Assembly that tackles relevant current issues. There must be an end to repetitive and fruitless discussions.

We want to see a strengthened crisis management capacity at the UN. The UN must be able to act swiftly and to act long-term. We want a peace-building commission under the Security Council to be given responsibility for filling the gap between urgent crisis management and long-term development. Liberia is a current example of a case where a peace-keeping mission succeeded in stopping the fighting, but where sustainable peace has nonetheless not been secured because the combatants have not been reintegrated into civil society. The ongoing UN mission in the country, in which Sweden is participating, has a broader and more long-term mandate.

We want women to be more actively involved in peace processes and peace-support operations and we want stronger protection of womens rights, in

accordance with UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

We want stronger protection for the most vulnerable victims of conflicts children.

We want to improve the ability of the UN to prevent armed conflicts. In Sudan five million people are displaced in their own country. While we welcome the peace agreement in the south, the situation in Darfur, where two million people are in urgent need, is deteriorating. This is a first test of the capability of the African Union. We welcome the fact that the AU is taking the lead in efforts to solve the continents conflicts. A partnership is evolving between the AU and the EU. The EU is currently contributing military and civilian personnel, as well as funding, to AU operations in Darfur.

We want a stronger international legal system. We want those responsible for human rights offences in Darfur to be held accountable before the International Criminal Court, and we want the Security Council to consider when to introduce targeted sanctions against those responsible for violations.

The Government wants to make the most of the commitment of popular movements in the work of reforming the UN. The Dag Hammarskjöld anniversary will provide an important opportunity, as will the seminar on UN reform that Sweden is to organise jointly with Norway in April.

The UN has a crucial role in global security. But the UN cannot and should not do everything. Regional cooperation is assuming an increasingly important role all over the world. As Kofi Annan has pointed out, the global organisation cannot give priority to operations in Europe. Our rich continent must itself take prime responsibility. And considerable efforts are needed, despite the prosperity in our part of the world.

Many transnational threats are interconnected in Europe. Ninety per cent of all heroin in Sweden is transported from Afghanistan via criminal networks in the Balkans and other areas in the EUs vicinity. Such networks are responsible for hundreds of thousands of

women and children falling victim to the sex trade, and these networks often finance terrorism. We need to strengthen European cooperation to meet these threats.

The most effective countermeasures are democracy, economic development and respect for human rights and the rule of law throughout Europe. These were the preconditions for progress and prosperity in our country, as in all other European countries. The EUs ability to propagate these values is the foremost contribution to security in Europe. The pull of the EU has helped more than a dozen countries achieve impressive democratic, economic and social progress, and has led to the start of a fundamental transformation of Turkish society.

The peaceful revolutions in Georgia and most recently in Ukraine show that the dream of freedom can never be defeated. When Viktor Yushchenko recently swore the presidential oath, it was a historic event comparable with earlier revolutionary changes in Central and Eastern Europe. We must support the reform efforts of the new Ukrainian government. Sweden is stepping up the exchange of visits and doubling development assistance. The dream of freedom is also a dream of the EU. The Ukrainian people have shown clearly that they share the fundamental values on which the EU is based. Ukraine has the same right as other European countries to a membership perspective.

When the wars in former Yugoslavia broke out at the beginning of the 1990s, the EU was unable to deal with the situation. Today the EU is taking a major responsibility for developments in the Western Balkans. A free trade area is being built up with the EU as the role model for lasting peace. The EU perspective is an important driving force for reform. But membership negotiations are conditional on cooperation in bringing war criminals to trial. Sweden also continues to work actively to achieve a solution to the future status of Kosovo.

Belarus is a neighbour. From this Chamber, it is closer to Minsk than to Kiruna. But democracy and human rights have been set aside. This is why the top political leadership must be isolated and the de-

mocratic forces supported. The Belarusian people have a natural place in the pan-European community.

Moldova is an almost forgotten country in Europe. But we cannot accept frozen conflicts, lawless breakaway republics and trafficking in human beings. We must help Moldova set the right course.

Cooperation with Russia is a cornerstone in security work in our common vicinity. We have well-developed regional cooperation that is helping to bring Russia closer to Sweden, the Nordic countries and the EU. Sweden wants to deepen cooperation with Russia. We want Russia to be more involved in global issues. It was important that Russia ratified the Kyoto Protocol. We are working to facilitate free trade between the EU and Russia. We share the commitment to the problems facing Russia, including the threat of terrorism. We witnessed the terrorist action in Beslan with great dismay. A precondition for deepened cooperation is that the Russian government ensures that democratic development in the country moves in the right direction and breaches of human rights cease. The situation in Chechnya must be solved by a political process.

With a population of 450 million and a quarter of the world's total GDP, with the world's largest trade area by virtue of the internal market, and with more than half the world's development assistance, the EU is undeniably a global actor. With an EU agenda for the global challenges in which all the Union's instruments interact development assistance, conflict prevention, peace-keeping, environment and trade policy the Union can effectively combat the new threats.

This is why we are working in the EU for ambitious and coherent action in support of the UN Millennium Development Goals. Political decisions affect not only our own citizens but the world as a whole. All policy areas interact in Sweden's new global development policy. But development cooperation retains its important role. More development assistance is needed. Sweden is now reaching the one per cent target and is push-

ing for the total level of EU development assistance to be raised.

This is why we are working in the EU for more transparent and more equitable world trade rules. Trade creates conditions for growth and development in poor countries too, and combats threats and conflicts. We want to see results from the WTO negotiations. Tariff walls and other trade barriers must be demolished and agricultural subsidies must be radically reduced. Sweden is also investing in special development assistance to enable developing countries to participate seriously in international trade.

This is why we are working in the EU for an ambitious refugee policy. The fact that people cross borders to work and study encourages cooperation, development and growth. But no one should be forced to leave their country because of conflict or oppression. This is where our refugee policy begins. People who are persecuted will be offered refuge in Sweden and in the EU. Sweden will contribute to a functional asylum system in countries that do not have one, and will further develop its own system for the reception of refugees. Legal security in the asylum process will be strengthened both nationally and at EU level. Sweden wants to see common rules for international migration too. We have a functional global system of cross-border movement for goods, services and money, but not for people. The Global Migration Commission's report this summer will hopefully be a first step.

This is why we are working in the EU to promote peace and manage crises. The EU is undertaking crisis management in Africa, the Middle East, Southern Caucasus and the Balkans. Sweden is taking part in all EU operations. But we must be able to respond more rapidly, not least when the UN needs support. This is why we are proud that Sweden, together with Finland, Norway and Estonia, will shortly be able to establish a military rapid reaction force in the EU. During 2005, the Government will increase the allocation for participation in peace-keeping operations, including longer-term missions led by the UN, the EU or NATO.

This is why we are working in the EU for the establishment of civilian rapid reaction units such as rescue services, medical staff, evacuation teams, administrators and police. It should also be possible to deploy these quickly to help citizens affected by natural disasters or other crises outside EU borders. EU crisis preparedness should be complemented by a Nordic equivalent. The first large group of seriously injured Swedes was flown home from Thailand on a Norwegian plane. We can become even better at supporting each other in emergencies.

During its ten years of membership, Sweden has helped make the EU its most important forum alongside the UN for influencing the global agenda. The new treaty and the efforts to create the world's most competitive knowledge-based economy are important steps towards more open and effective intergovernmental cooperation.

But other forms of cooperation are also important. The Government will continue to place emphasis on our own region and the Nordic-Baltic cooperation. The centenary of the dissolution of the union with Norway will be observed in many ways, including presenting it as an example of peaceful conflict resolution and how long-term close cooperation can take the place of serious differences.

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe played an important part when the nations of Central and Eastern Europe won their freedom and now has a similar role regarding Ukraine, Belarus and other countries immediately to the east of the EU and in Central Asia. Through the OSCE we also work against organised crime, terrorism and trafficking in human beings, and for minority rights.

Sweden does not participate in military alliances. At the same time, NATO is an important partner to Sweden when it comes to efforts in crisis areas. We are continuing to contribute forces for NATO/PfP operations in the Balkans and in Afghanistan. In May Sweden is hosting a ministerial meeting within the framework of the partnership with NATO, which will provide an opportunity to discuss current security policy challenges in this extensive forum.

Being a member of the EU and a partner in various organisations gives us additional means for pursuing an active foreign policy and developing our long tradition of mediation and conflict resolution.

Sweden helps make the world a safer place through its involvement in the Middle East and through the new Anna Lindh Foundation for dialogue between cultures. We will make use of the opportunity presented by the Palestinian and Iraqi peoples' impressive yes to peace and freedom and their clear no to terror and oppression.

The Iraqi parliamentary election represents a promising start for a political process towards full democracy. The international military presence should be gradually phased out. Sweden is assisting Iraq by training and educating police officers and judges. We are supporting democracy and human rights and will assist in rebuilding the ruined infrastructure.

The Palestinian presidential election became a symbol for the new ray of hope that now exists for finding a solution to the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians. Understanding has to increase, as illustrated by Abu Mazens words from the presidential inauguration that we are two peoples destined to live side by side.

We have seen how violence begets violence but we also know that peace begets peace. The new Palestinian leadership needs support. Israel is preparing to evacuate all settlements in Gaza. The Government welcomes Israel's withdrawal as a first step towards ending the occupation of the Palestinian areas. The separation barrier in occupied territory is in violation of international law and can never be accepted.

The Palestinian leadership has a responsibility to continue building democracy and to take measures against terrorism. Sweden is contributing personnel to the EU group that will support Palestinians in improving law and order. Israel, as well as the United States, has a great responsibility to help the Palestinian leadership become established. Israel must facilitate freedom of movement in the Palestinian

areas so that normal economic activity can get underway.

The entire international community must contribute to these efforts. Clear commitment is needed from all members of the Quartet to ensure that the roadmaps objective of a viable and democratic Palestinian state and an Israel within secure and recognised borders can be fulfilled. It is high time to realise the vision of peace and development in the Middle East.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a clear example of the need for American involvement. The EU and the USA must cooperate in order for the international community to be able to meet the challenges it faces. Differences of opinion must not overshadow the realisation that we share fundamental values regarding freedom and democracy. The Government wants to see revitalised transatlantic cooperation.

Sweden is helping to make the world a safer place through contact with the worlds most populous country, China, which has become an increasingly important global actor. The Government is convinced that dialogue and cooperation are necessary in order to be able to influence the country towards democracy and greater respect for human rights. China is also a key country in efforts for environmentally sustainable development and against communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS. At the same time, we also wish to emphasise the importance of dialogue between China and Taiwan. This conflict must be solved through peaceful methods, without the use of military threats as a means of applying pressure.

Sweden is helping to make the world a safer place through its efforts to stop the most serious epidemic in the world, HIV/AIDS, which threatens development in large parts of Africa and increasingly in countries in Asia and Europe. The Government wants to use all means available to fight HIV/AIDS: from massive preventive measures and increased research to a major initiative to provide more people with the right to health care on the same

terms as in the rich world. It is a question of solidarity and a question of fairness.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

After the tsunami we have been brought together in sorrow, but we have also been united in solidarity. Let this serve as the starting point for deeper international cooperation.

Let us continue to strengthen cooperation in our region and in the Nordic-Baltic sphere. We need our closest friends even in a global world.

Let us take action for freedom and development throughout Europe, and let us in the EU also tackle the global challenges.

Let us support the peoples of Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan, Ukraine and others on the path away from oppression and towards freedom and democracy.

Let us take the historic opportunity to develop the United Nations. Let us turn the UN into the force that the international community needs in the fight for international peace and security, development, democracy and human rights.

Let these be the challenges for an active Swedish foreign policy.