Meeting of Nordic and Baltic foreign ministers in Estonia

The foreign ministers of the eight Nordic and Baltic countries - Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden - are meeting on 11-12 September in the Estonian capital Tallinn, as Estonia is leading Nordic-Baltic cooperation in the area of foreign and security policy this year. Sweden will be represented by Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

The ministers are expected to discuss the security situation in Europe, recent developments in Ukraine, energy issues from a regional perspective and the situation in the Middle East and Iraq. The meeting is also an opportunity to continue talks on how Nordic-Baltic cooperation can be strengthened.

Contact
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New chair of SIPRI

The Government today appointed Ambassador Sven-Olof Petersson as new Chairman of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Mr Petersson's previous positions include Director of the Ministers Office and Director-General for Political Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has served at the embassies in Algiers, Beirut, Dar es Salaam, Strasbourg and Washington DC, and been Head of the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the European Union. Most recently he served as Ambassador in Canberra, Australia.

SIPRI

SIPRI is a leading peace and conflict research institution. The Institute, an independent foundation established in 1966, conducts studies and scientific research on matters concerning international peace and conflict management. SIPRI publishes a great many reports and papers, including the SIPRI Yearbook on armaments, disarmament and international security.

Contact

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Carl Bildt to take part in Croatia Forum

On 10-12 July, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in the annual Croatia Forum in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

The theme of this year’s Forum is EU integration of the Western Balkans. Mr Bildt will take part in a panel session on the future of EU enlargement.

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Carl Bildt medverkar i Croatia Forum
Den 10-12 juli närvarar utrikesminister Carl Bildt vid den årliga konferensen Croatia Forum i Dubrovnik i Kroatien.

Årets konferens har temat europeisk integration av västra Balkan och Bildt deltar bland annat i en panel om framtiden för EUs utvidgning.

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Bildt to visit Washington DC

On 7-9 July, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit the US capital, Washington DC.

Along with Speaker of the Riksdag Per Westerberg, Mr Bildt will take part in ceremonies celebrating the Congressional Gold Medal awarded to Raoul Wallenberg.

Mr Bildt is also scheduled to meet National Security Advisor Susan Rice and Speaker of the House of Representatives John Boehner. Mr Bildt will also make a public appearance at the Atlantic Council think tank to discuss Russia and the situation in Europe.

Contact

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Bildt to visit Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine

From 29 June to 1 July, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Carl Bildt, will make a tour of Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine. He is travelling to these countries in the wake of their signing of association agreements with the European Union on 27 June.

Mr Bildt will arrive in the Moldovan capital, Chisinau, at lunchtime on Sunday. At lunchtime on Monday, he will arrive at the Georgian capital, Tbilisi, and on Tuesday morning at the Ukrainian capital, Kiev.

He will return to Sweden on Tuesday evening. During the visits, Mr Bildt will meet politicians and representatives of civil society. He will also take part in a number of media activities directed at the countries' populations.

"The signing of association agreements with the EU by Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine are very significant events for these countries and for the EU - not least for Sweden. We have long actively worked for this outcome. By visiting these countries, I would now like to show my support for the important steps they have chosen to take, and also refresh our understanding of what we in Sweden and Europe can do to further facilitate this process," says Mr Bildt.

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Press release
10 June 2014
Ministry of the Environment

Press Invitation: Global Commission on the Economy and Climate to hold meetings in Stockholm June 26-27

Members of the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate and its Commissioning Countries will meet to finalize the report and discuss how to carry out its messages in Stockholm.

Journalists who wish to participate in any part of the meeting and/or interview any of the Commissioners/Ministers must notify their participation in advance.

Who
- Ingrid Bonde, CFO, Vattenfall
- Felipe Calderón, Chair, The Global Commission on the Economy and Climate and former president of Mexico
- Lena Ek, Minister for the Environment, Sweden
- Peter Norman, Minister for Financial Markets, Sweden
- Jeremy Oppenheim, Programme Director of the New Climate Economy
- Lord Nicholas Stern, Chair, Economic Advisory Council to the Global Commission on Economy and Climate and IG Patel Professor of Economics and Government, London School of Economics

Where
26-27 June in Stockholm, Sweden

- Thursday 26 June 13.00-16.00: Nordic Business Leaders Seminar including reception. The Auditorium, Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications, Mäster Samuelsgatan 70, Stockholm City Centre. See enclosed programme. The Swedish Ministers attending the seminar are Lena Ek and Peter Norman.
- Interview availability for spokespeople on Thursday 26 and Friday 27. Please contact Hanna Björnfors, see contact details.

About
The New Climate Economy (NCE) is the flagship project of the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate, a major new international initiative to analyse and communicate the economic risks and opportunities that arise from climate change. The Commission comprises former heads of government, finance ministers and leaders in the fields of economics, business and finance and is chaired by former Mexican President Felipe Calderón.

The New Climate Economy project will report in September 2014 in advance of the United Nations Secretary General's Climate Summit. It will make recommendations to government, business and financial leaders on how stronger economic growth can be combined with tackling climate risk.

The project is being conducted by a partnership of leading research institutions based in the China, Ethiopia, India, South Korea, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States. Its work will be overseen by an advisory panel of world-leading economists chaired by Lord Nicholas Stern and including the Nobel Laureates Daniel Kahneman and Michael Spence. It was commissioned by a group of seven countries - Colombia, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Korea, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

New Climate Economy research in Sweden
The Stockholm Environment Institute is one of the core eight research institutes of the New Climate Economy project. Stockholm Environment Institute leads the work on energy systems and contributes to the analyses of air pollution and sustainable cities.

The aim of the research conducted for the project is to help decision makers understand how they can meet their core economic and social objectives, while also taking action on climate change.

Felipe Calderón
Felipe Calderón was President of Mexico from 2006 to 2012. Among other achievement his government pushed through structural reforms to modernize the Mexican economy in key areas, such as public pensions, tax, the energy sector and universal healthcare. During his period in office Mexico positioned itself as a global...
leader in fighting climate change: President Calderón presided over the successful UN climate conference in Cancun in 2010 and saw the passing of a comprehensive Climate Change Act in 2012. Felipe Calderón is current Honorary Chairman of the Green Growth Action Alliance, as well as President of the Sustainable Human Development Foundation and a Member of the Board of Directors of the World Resources Institute.

Lord Nicholas Stern
Lord Nicholas Stern is IG Patel Professor of Economics and Government, Chair of the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment and Chair of the Asia Research Centre at the London School of Economics (LSE). A former Chief Economist of both the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, his research and publications have focused on the economics of climate change, economic development and growth, economic theory, tax reform, public policy and the role of the state and economies in transition. He is best known for leading the Stern Review on the economics of climate change which reported in 2006. He is President of the British Academy and a member of the House of Lords.

Jeremy Oppenheim
Jeremy Oppenheim is Programme Director for the New Climate Economy project. He has taken a sabbatical from his role as a Director of McKinsey & Company to lead this project. For the last five years, Jeremy Oppenheim has led McKinsey’s Sustainability and Resource Productivity Practice. In this role he has worked with a wide range of private, public, and social sector clients in many different countries. Prior to joining McKinsey in 1993, Jeremy Oppenheim was a senior economist at the World Bank and is lead author of Resource Revolution: Meeting the World’s Energy, Materials, Food and Water Needs (MGI, 2011).

Other members of government and the Global Commission attending the meeting
- Carl Bildt, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sweden
- Sharan Burrow, General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation
- Sri Mulyani Indrawati, Managing Director, World Bank Group
- Per Klevnäs, Project Leader, Stockholm Environment Institute
- Trevor Manuel, Minister in the Presidency for the National Planning Commission, Government of South Africa
- Paul Polman, Chief Executive Officer, Unilever

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Bildt wants to attract Swedish investment to Ukraine

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit the Ukrainian capital Kyiv on 4-5 June. The purpose of the visit is to participate in two conferences that are being organised, on Sweden's initiative, on the future of Ukraine and the region.

The visit will also be an opportunity for an on-the-spot update on the situation in the country following the recent presidential election.

The first conference is "DCFTAs and Beyond - How can the EU contribute to development and welfare in Eastern Partnership countries". It focuses on the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements that Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine are shortly to sign with the EU. The conference will bring together leading politicians, researchers, officials and civil society and business sector representatives from the EU and the countries in the region. The primary intention is to contribute to more informed debate about the potential and challenges of EU integration. The conference is being organised by the Stockholm Institute of Transition Economics (SITE) at the Stockholm School of Economics and the Kyiv School of Economics (KSE), with support from the Governments of Sweden and Ukraine.

The second conference, "Sweden-Ukraine Business Forum", is being organised by the Swedish Embassy in Kyiv and Business Sweden, and will bring together political and business representatives from Sweden and Ukraine. The purpose is to strengthen contacts and exchanges between Swedish and Ukrainian companies and to highlight the great potential that exists in the new Ukraine.

"The Eastern Partnership and these agreements offer the countries in the region unique opportunities for closer relations with the EU. They provide substantially better conditions for investment and trade with the EU, which - with its more than 500 million inhabitants - is the most important market for a country like Ukraine. The countries in the Baltic and Central Europe have shown the positive effects such integration can have. The world must now do what it can to help Ukraine, and one way of doing so is business investment. I hope we can show Swedish companies that Ukraine offers vast opportunities now, when the country is beginning to implement reforms, fight corruption and improve the business climate," says Mr Bildt.

This will be Mr Bildt's seventh visit to Ukraine since last autumn. His latest visit was on 15-17 May.

The conference on the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements will be streamed live at the following addresses:

- 4 June live stream
- 5 June live stream
- See the programme here
- Ministry for Foreign Affairs thematic page on the Eastern Partnership

The discussion can also be followed on Twitter: #FreeTradeEurope and #InvestInFutureOfUkraine

Contact

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Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Poland’s capital Warsaw on 3-4 June to participate in celebrations of the 25th anniversary of Poland’s democratic liberation.

On 4 June 1989 the first relatively free elections in Poland since the interwar period were held. This was a decisive step in the political transformation and the transition to democracy in Poland and Eastern and Central Europe more broadly. A quarter of a century has now passed since this historic event. This is being celebrated with a major jubilee ceremony and working meeting in Warsaw, in which US President Barack Obama will be among the participants. The ceremony will offer an opportunity to exchange experiences and perspectives on various current issues with attending heads of state and government and other dignitaries.

During his visit, Mr Bildt will also speak at the prize ceremony for the Solidarity Award. The award has been established by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the occasion of the 25th anniversary and is intended to be awarded annually to a current champion of freedom. Mr Bildt was a member of the jury for this year’s award, which will be presented to Crimean Tatar leader Mustafa Dzemilev.

Mr Bildt will also take part in a seminar on European foreign policy, together with Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs Martin Lidegaard.

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Ministry for Foreign Affairs maps human rights situation

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs today publishes its annual human rights reports. The 2014 reports look at 41 countries in Asia and the Pacific Region.

Overall, much of the region is experiencing very strong economic growth, with hundreds of millions of people being lifted out of poverty. However, countries in the Asia-Pacific region vary greatly in size, living conditions and economic and political outlook. The human rights situation in these countries therefore also varies. Several countries in the region provide strong constitutional protection, which is reflected in strong respect for human rights. However, some countries impose severe restrictions, often in the name of security and counter-terrorism.

The Government would like the release of these reports to draw attention to democracy and human rights work as a cornerstone of Swedish foreign policy. It is the Government’s ambition to mainstream human rights across all areas of foreign policy. We take action through bilateral contacts, through the EU, and multilaterally through the UN, the OSCE and the Council of Europe to promote full respect for human rights in every country around the world. The Swedish Embassies are actively engaged in dialogue with all sectors of the societies in which they operate.

The Swedish Foreign Service first produced these human rights reports twenty years ago. They are the result of collaboration between Sweden’s Embassies, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Department for International Law, Human Rights and Treaty Law and the relevant geographical department at the Ministry (in this case, the Department for Asia and the Pacific Region). These extensive fact-based reports are useful for the Government, government agencies, the business community, NGOs and the general public.

All the new reports, and previous reports from other regions, are available on the Government human rights website

- Government human rights website

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Change in schedule for Carl Bildt at Stockholm Internet Forum 2014

On 28 May, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is participating in the international internet conference Stockholm Internet Forum on Internet Freedom for Global Development at the Brewery Conference Centre (Münch Bryggeriet) in Stockholm.

CHANGE OF SCHEDULE
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will address the conference at 13.30 on Wednesday 28 May and will then take part in the opening stages of the conference’s wrap-up panel session. Unfortunately the previously announced press conference with Mr Bildt at 15.00 has to be cancelled.

The Stockholm Internet Forum is being held at the Brewery Conference Centre (Münch Bryggeriet), Torkel Knutssonsgatan 2.

Contact
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Carl Bildt participates in Stockholm Internet Forum 2014

On 28 May, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will participate in the international internet conference Stockholm Internet Forum on Internet Freedom for Global Development at the Brewery Conference Centre (Münchensbryggeriet) in Stockholm.

Time and place
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will address the conference at 13.30 on Wednesday 28 May and will then take part in the opening stages of the conference’s wrap-up panel session. Unfortunately the previously announced press conference with Mr Bildt at 15.00 has to be cancelled. The Stockholm Internet Forum is being held at the Brewery Conference Centre (Münchensbryggeriet), Torkel Knutssonsgatan 2. To attend the press conference, please come to the media desk at 14.50. Bring your press credentials.

The Stockholm Internet Forum, which is being held for the third consecutive year, brings together around 450 activists, experts, politicians and business and civil society representatives from around 100 countries, who are meeting on 26-28 May. Half of this year’s participants come from low and middle income countries. They are coming to the Stockholm Internet Forum 2014 to discuss how freedom and openness on the internet can promote human rights and development worldwide.

Internet freedom is one of the top priority issues in Swedish foreign policy. Human rights must be respected both online and offline. Every individual must be free to think and say what they like - including on the internet.

You can follow the Stockholm Internet Forum 2014 on Twitter: @fxinternet

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External links
Stockholm Internet Forum website
Press release
15 May 2014
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Bildt begins final sprint in Copenhagen

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is to visit Denmark's capital, Copenhagen, on 19 May. He has been invited by the University of Copenhagen to give his views on the challenges facing Europe 100 years after the outbreak of the First World War and to discuss them with students and other invited guests.

The event at the University of Copenhagen, where many Swedish students are of course enrolled, marks the beginning of Mr Bildt’s final spurt to increase voter participation in the European Parliament elections on 25 May.

"Above all, it’s about trying to boost Swedish voter participation, but I am more than happy to help out in Denmark too. The European Parliament elections are important for all of Europe. Our continent is currently facing its most serious security crisis for a very long time, and a united EU with strong leadership is perhaps more important than ever before," says Mr Bildt.

On Tuesday, Mr Bildt will return to Sweden on the Öresund train to campaign in Malmö and Lund. Further campaign visits will follow in Halmstad, Stockholm and most likely in several other places in the country.

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Press invitation: Stockholm Internet Forum

This year’s Stockholm Internet Forum (SIF14) will take place at the Brewery Conference Centre (Münchenbryggeriet) on 27-28 May. Some 450 participants from 90 countries will meet to discuss the theme 'The internet: privacy, transparency, surveillance and control'.

Time and place
27-28 May
Brewery Conference Centre (Münchenbryggeriet)

Freedom and security on the internet is one of the major global issues of the future and one of the highest priorities of Swedish foreign policy.

SIF is a unique forum for in-depth discussions on how freedom and openness on the internet promote human rights and development in the world. Decision-makers, civil society, businesses, academia and the technical community will be represented. Half of the participants will be from low-and middle-income countries - often from places where internet freedom is restricted and efforts to promote it can be downright dangerous. The many participants will include: Jillian York from the Electronic Frontier Foundation, Shahzad Ahmad from the Pakistani internet freedom organisation Bytes4All, Anja Kovacs from the Internet Democracy Project in New Delhi, and OSCE media representative Dunja Mijatovic. See the link below for the complete list of participants.

SIF is arranged by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sida and .SE. All panel sessions will be broadcast live on stockholminternetforum.se. Those not attending in person can put questions to the panels via Twitter using the hashtag #SIF14.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will host the conference, but Minister for International Development Cooperation Hillevi Engström and Minister for Information Technology Anna-Karin Hatt will also attend.

The whole event will be open to the media. Apply for accreditation via the link below. The deadline for accreditation is 25 May.

The programme for the Stockholm Internet Forum contains both panel sessions and a section arranged by participants called Unconference - a concept in which the participants themselves propose ideas for sessions that are then voted on. The ideas that receive the most votes are then implemented by the participants themselves during the SIF conference.

- Agenda
- Participants
- Accreditation

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Bildt to visit Ukraine ahead of presidential election

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Ukraine on 15-17 May. During his visit he will meet representatives of the government, civil society and local business. Mr Bildt is also expected to have talks with Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk.

The aim of his visit is to gain a firsthand, up-to-date insight into the situation in the country ahead of the important presidential election on 25 May. The visit is also an opportunity to discuss how Sweden and the rest of the world can support the country - both in the short term, to ensure that the presidential election runs smoothly, and in the long term, to ensure that the country weather the economic crisis and is able to launch the necessary modernisation and reform of the country.

"The crisis in Ukraine has shown how important it is that Europe stands united and strong when the European order of safety and security is threatened. This visit is an opportunity to show our presence and support, but also has a particular resonance given that we in Sweden and the rest of Europe will also be going to the polls on 25 May. The European Parliament elections will be hugely significant for the future of Europe," says Mr Bildt.

Mr Bildt last visited Ukraine on 10-13 April.

Contact

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European Institute of Peace and crisis in Ukraine on the agenda for EU foreign ministers

The crisis in Ukraine and the continuing destabilisation in the eastern parts of the country will be the focus as the EU foreign ministers meet in Brussels on 12 May. In connection with the meeting, the joint European Institute of Peace initiative will be presented. Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in the Council meeting.

In light of Russia’s illegal annexation of Crimea and the recent unrest in eastern Ukraine, EU foreign ministers are meeting to discuss additional sanctions and economic assistance to Ukraine. The Government is deeply concerned over the annexation of Crimea and Russia’s influence on developments in eastern Ukraine. The EU should extend the grounds for its restrictive measures and continue preparations for ‘stage 3’ of these measures. Russia must respect the agreement that was reached in Geneva and contribute to stabilising the situation.

The EU’s economic support package for Ukraine is welcome, including the unilateral trade provisions adopted by the European Council. The remaining parts of the Association Agreement with the EU must be signed as soon as possible. The Government also wants the meeting to approve a mission to assist Ukraine in the judicial sphere within the framework of the Common Security and Defence Policy.

The European Neighbourhood Policy will also be discussed at the meeting, focusing on the EU’s neighbours to the east and south. On 27 March, the European External Action Service and the European Commission presented a report on the implementation of the policy in 2013. The Government particularly emphasises the ‘more for more’ principle, which entails the EU providing incentives to development by offering more funding and more advanced cooperation to the countries that make the greatest progress on the path to reform.

The foreign ministers are also expected to discuss the Middle East peace process following the expiry of the deadline for the scheduled nine-month negotiations under active mediation by the United States. It is Sweden’s hope that the discussion will focus on the EU’s role in the future peace process and on what the EU can do to prevent a deterioration of the situation on the ground.

The European Institute of Peace - a joint initiative on the part of Sweden, Switzerland, Poland, Finland, Belgium, Hungary, Luxembourg, Italy and Spain - will be presented in connection with the foreign ministers meeting. The Institute is intended to complement other EU instruments to promote dialogue and mediation. It will also bring together existing skills and expertise from throughout Europe. Although independent of other EU institutions, the European Institute of Peace will assist the EU’s global peace efforts.

Press conference

A press conference with Mr Bildt is planned following the meeting on 12 May. Journalists interested in following the press conference remotely are invited to contact Press Secretary Erik Zsiga.

Contact

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EU foreign ministers to discuss Ukraine and Syria

The illegal Russian annexation of Crimea will form the basis of continued discussions on Ukraine when EU foreign ministers hold their monthly meeting in Luxembourg on 14 April. The humanitarian crisis in Syria will also be discussed. Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will attend the meeting.

As a follow up to the summit of EU heads of state and government on 20-21 March, and in view of the recent developments in eastern parts of the country, the foreign ministers will continue their discussions on Ukraine. The possibility of economic sanctions, "stage 3" of the EU's response to the Russian aggression, will be addressed. The Commission is evaluating measures in the economic area. Dependence on Russian gas in Europe has also been discussed on several occasions.

The Government will continue to emphasise Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Russian intervention in Crimea contravenes international law and is a threat to the European security order. The referendum on Crimea joining Russia contravenes international law. Further steps to destabilise the situation in Ukraine must have far-reaching consequences for the cooperation between the EU and Russia.

The unilateral trade provisions for Ukraine adopted by the European Council must be applied immediately. The remaining parts of the association agreement must be signed as soon as possible. The Ukrainian economy is in major need of financial support and IMF approval of the Stand-By Arrangement is essential so that support measures can be implemented.

The foreign ministers will also discuss the latest political developments in Syria. The focus will be on the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution and the continuing negotiations between the parties in Geneva. The Government considers that the UN-led negotiations are the only sustainable solution to the situation and gives its full support to chief negotiator Lakhdar Brahimi. At the meeting, the foreign ministers are also expected to discuss developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina in light of the recent demonstrations in the country. Developments in Egypt may also be discussed as a consequence of the 529 death sentences handed down on 24 March.
Bildt visits Ukraine

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is visiting Ukraine on 10-13 April. The aim of the visit is to gain first-hand understanding of recent developments and discuss opportunities for continued Swedish commitment to and support for Ukraine. The visit also provides an opportunity to repeat the EU's clear position on Russian aggression against the country.

Mr Bildt will begin his visit in the capital, Kyiv, where he plans to meet with Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk, Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrii Deschytstyja and other Ukrainian political and civil society representatives. In addition, Mr Bildt will speak at the Institute of Journalism at the University of Kyiv and at the annual Kyiv Security Forum. During the weekend, Mr Bildt will visit the cities of Odessa and Kherson in southern Ukraine, where he will meet with representatives of the regional administration, civil society and the business sector.

Mr Bildt last visited Ukraine on 5-6 March.

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Related
- Eastern Partnership (EaP)
For new steps towards a world without nuclear explosions - GEM meets in Stockholm

The Group of Eminent Persons (GEM) is a recently established high-level advocacy group to promote the global ban on nuclear weapons testing. Its members will meet in Stockholm, Sweden, from 10 to 11 April 2014, where they will also brainstorm with Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt on how to promote the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary of the CTBTO, will participate in the meeting together with the following GEM members:

- William Perry, former Secretary of Defence, United States
- Hans Blix, former Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs and former Director General of IAEA, Sweden
- Sergio Duarte, former United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Brazil
- Kevin Rudd, former Prime Minister, Australia
- Nobuyasu Abe, former United Nations Under Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Japan
- Ho-jin Lee, Ambassador, Republic of Korea
- Sergio Nobre, Former Secretary of State for Defence, United Kingdom
- John Hutton, former Secretary of State for Defence, United Kingdom
- Cristian Diaconescu, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and currently Chief of Staff to the President, Romania
- Johannes Kyrle, Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs, Austria
- Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, former Secretary-General OSCE, France
- Balazs Csuday, Hungarian Ambassador to Vienna, Hungary (Balazs Csuday is standing in for GEM member János Martonyi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hungary)

Media opportunities

- There will be a panel discussion on the nuclear test-ban on 11 April 2014 at 12.30, hosted by the MFA, SIPRI and UI. Participants: Hans Blix, CTBTO Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo, Federica Mogherini, Kevin Rudd. Media are welcome to participate. Registration required, see attached invitation.
- Images and video footage from the meeting will be made available via the CTBTO Newsroom.
- For interview requests with the members of the GEM and Lassina Zerbo please contact Thomas Mützelburg, CTBTO.

Background

The CTBT bans all nuclear explosions, thus hampering both the initial development of nuclear weapons as well as significant enhancements (h-bomb). The Treaty also helps prevent damage caused by nuclear testing to humans and the environment. A verification regime to monitor the globe for nuclear explosions is nearing completion with around 90 percent of the 337 planned International Monitoring System facilities already in operation.

The CTBT has so far been signed by 183 States and ratified by 162. Its entry-into-force formula prescribes that 44 particular “nuclear technology holder” States need to ratify for it to enter into force. Eight of them have yet to ratify: China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States (the DPRK, India and Pakistan have also not yet signed the Treaty).

Sweden urges all states that have not yet done so, and particularly Annex 2 States, to ratify the CTBT. Together with Mexico, Sweden had the leading role 2011-2013 in supporting the CTBT and its entry into force.

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Bildt to London for discussions

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is to visit the UK capital London on 11-12 March.

The purpose is to take part in different meetings on the EU’s future, Ukraine and internet freedom. He also plans to hold talks with UK Foreign Secretary William Hague.

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State Visit to Latvia on 26-27 March 2014

King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will be paying a state visit to Latvia on 26-27 March 2014 at the invitation of President Andris Bērziņš. The King and Queen paid a State Visit to Latvia in 1992 and in 2005 they received then President Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga on a State Visit to Sweden.

The Swedish Government will be represented by Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt. In connection with the State Visit, President of the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, Jens Spendrup, will lead a Swedish business delegation comprised of companies and organisations with business interests in Latvia.

The purpose of the visit is to confirm and further strengthen the excellent relations between Sweden and Latvia in culture, politics and business.

To editorial offices

Media representatives need special accreditation from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to cover the State Visit. The last day to apply for accreditation is 12 March. Click the link for more information.
Nordic, Baltic and Central European Foreign Ministers to meet in Narva

The foreign ministers from the Nordic and Baltic countries and the countries in the Visegrad Group will meet on 6-7 March in the Estonian city of Narva. Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part.

Twelve countries will be represented at the meeting: the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) and Central European countries (Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary). The foreign ministers are expected to discuss developments and relations to the EU's neighbourhood, security policy, and energy and infrastructure issues.

"It is very pleasing and positive that we are able to strengthen cooperation between these twelve countries in this way. The Nordic and Baltic regions share many interests with the countries in the Visegrad Group," says Mr Bildt.

The Visegrad Group was formed in 1991 between Poland, Hungary and the then Czechoslovakia to promote closer cooperation between the countries and advance their European integration.

This is the second time the foreign ministers from the Nordic and Baltic regions and the Visegrad Group will meet. The first meeting took place in Gdansk, Poland, in February 2013.

A photo opportunity and press conference with the ministers will be arranged in connection with the meeting.

Time and place
Time: 7 March, 11.50 group photo, 12.00 press conference. Place: University of Tartu Narva College. Journalists wishing to participate can apply for accreditation through link below.

- Accredidation for Press Conference i Narva (last day to register March 3, 16:00CET)

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News from the Statement of Foreign Policy 2014


The theme of this year's Statement of Foreign Policy is Europe and European cooperation. In many ways, 2014 is an historic and symbolic year for Europe - as well as being a decisive year for our future and that of Europe. But the Statement of Foreign Policy also describes various foreign policy issues such as the Eastern Partnership, developments in the Middle East, a European global strategy, human rights, multilateral cooperation and trade, disarmament and non-proliferation, aid and development cooperation, security policy, consular assistance and export promotion.

Some new initiatives from this year's Statement of Foreign Policy:

- In the next few months, the Government will seek the support of the Riksdag for a substantial Swedish contribution to the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). The aim of the Mission is to contribute to security in the country and thereby reduce the suffering of the population. The Mission will also counteract the occurrence of terrorism and human trafficking. Sweden already has five staff officers participating in MINUSMA, and another ten officers and instructors in the EU training mission.

- On 18 February, Sweden and six other European States signed the statutes for a European peace institute. The purpose of the institute is to develop the EU's capability to prevent and resolve conflicts through mediation and dialogue. Sweden will have a place on the institute's board of directors. Sweden initiated the peace institute in 2010 in order to strengthen the EU's peace-building role at global level.

- The Government will take a decision today on contributions to the IAEA supervision of the nuclear agreement with Iran. Sweden strongly advocates a diplomatic solution whereby Iran fully meets its obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

- The Government will present Sweden's UN résumé, which will form the basis of our candidacy to the UN Security Council for 2017-2018. Our candidacy will build on our merits as a committed, generous and principled UN member, not on angling for votes and shuttle diplomacy. This is the best way to argue that it is time for a Nordic voice on the Council, and that the international practice of extensive campaigning needs to be reviewed.

- In 2014, Sweden will open embassies in Armenia's capital Yerevan, Azerbaijan's capital Baku and Qatar's capital Doha. We will establish a Swedish diplomatic presence in Ghana, Myanmar and Peru.

The Statement of Foreign Policy has the following hashtags: #utrdek14 and #SeForPol14.

Contact

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Bildt to visit China and Japan
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will tour China and Japan on 21-28 February.

The trip will begin on Friday in Shanghai, where Mr Bildt will attend Stockholm China Forum. He is also expected to meet local leaders in Shanghai, economists and Swedish businesses with operations in the city.

On Sunday 23 February, Mr Bildt will travel to Shandong Province, where he will spend a day in total in the cities of Qufu and Jinan. He will also meet regional leaders and visit the SKF factory in the area.

Tuesday will be spent in the capital, Beijing, where Mr Bildt will meet China's Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi and other representatives of the Chinese administration, as well as civil society organisations.

On 26-28 February, Mr Bildt will visit the Japanese capital, Tokyo, where he will meet Minister for Foreign Affairs Fumio Kishida. He will also have talks with Japanese think tanks and economists.

"East Asia is a region full of interesting economic developments and security policy challenges, which in itself makes it important to go there and experience outlooks and moods. Moreover, what happens in China and Japan has a great influence on global developments and these are also two countries with which Sweden has substantial exchanges, not least through an active Swedish business presence," says Mr Bildt.

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First Swedish foreign minister meeting in Mali

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit the African state of Mali on 14-16 February. This will be the first-ever visit by a Swedish foreign minister to the country.

The visit aims to emphasise Sweden's continued and enhanced support to Mali's development and its long-term peace efforts, and to efforts by the EU, the UN, the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to support Mali's path towards long-term peace. Mr Bildt also wants to increase knowledge about Mali in Sweden and communicate Swedish messages to Malian and international representatives on how to continue dealing with the after-effects of the crisis.

Sweden's relations with Mali largely consist of development cooperation. The Swedish Armed Forces have also recently taken part in international operations in the country. Five staff officers are participating in the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). Ten officers and instructors are participating in the European Union Training Mission in Mali (EUTM).

"Sweden has an important commitment in Mali. We help maintain peace and also pave the way for economic development. It is important to have a presence in the country and study the conditions there in order to ensure that our support continues to have the right focus," says Mr Bildt.

During his visit, Mr Bildt is expected to meet Mali's President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta, Minister of Foreign Affairs Zahabi Ould Sidi Mohamed and Minister of Defence Soumeylou Boubeye Maïga.

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EU foreign ministers to discuss Ukraine and Egypt

Events in Ukraine will again be in focus when EU foreign ministers meet in Brussels on 10 February. They will also discuss the situation in Egypt. Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in the meeting.

The EU’s continued efforts in the Eastern Partnership will also be discussed, in the light of the Vilnius Summit in November and the EU-Russia meeting in January. The main focus of the meeting will be on Ukraine, in view of the latest developments there.

The Swedish Government considers that the EU should continue to stand firm in developing the Eastern Partnership. The EU should emphasise the demands of human rights. All forms of violence against the civilian population must cease immediately and democratic rights must be respected. It is up to the people of Ukraine to decide on their own future. A sustainable political settlement can only be reached through talks between the President and the opposition.

The referendum in Egypt on amending the Constitution has resulted in violence and a repressive climate. The vote was carried out in conditions that failed to meet democratic standards.

In the increasingly tough political climate, the Swedish Government calls for a fair and transparent process ahead of the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections. Further efforts should be made to promote a democracy in which critical voices and independent reporting are permitted.

At their meeting, the foreign ministers are also expected to discuss developments in Tunisia, Libya, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Yemen.

Press conference
A press conference with Mr Bildt is planned following the meeting on 10 February. Journalists interested in following the press conference remotely are invited to contact Press Secretary Erik Zsiga.

Contact
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Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Iran on 3-6 February. The visit follows an invitation by Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammad Javad Zarif and is one of several visits by EU foreign ministers in recent times. It is the first visit to the country by a Swedish foreign minister since Anna Lindh’s visit in 2002.

The visit to Iran has a number of purposes. A new Iranian President has taken office with a clear reform agenda and the new administration has shown signs of cautiously opening up the country. It is important to try to influence this development in the right direction.

Another purpose is to encourage continued progress in discussions on the country’s nuclear technology programme. The EU has a key role to play here. In November, a preliminarily agreement was entered into by Iran and the US, Russia, China, the UK, France and Germany, in which Iran agreed to halt parts of the programme.

In addition, some 100,000 people of Iranian background live in Sweden. This means there are strong ties between the countries and it is important to safeguard this relationship.

Mr Bildt will arrive in Iran early on Monday morning. He will begin his visit in Isfahan, the country’s third largest city, where he will meet regional representatives, including the local governor, in order to gain a picture of the situation and mood in the country outside Tehran.

On the morning of 4 February, Mr Bildt will set off for the country’s capital Tehran. He will begin with talks with Foreign Minister Zarif. Subsequently, on Tuesday and Wednesday, Mr Bildt will meet with other representatives of the administration and civil society.

He will also meet the country’s President Hassan Rouhani. However, the time for this meeting has not yet been set.

Mr Bildt will leave Iran on the morning of 6 February.

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Carl Bildt and Karin Enström to discuss future security in Munich

On 31 January to 2 February, Minister for Defence Karin Enström and Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in the Munich Security Conference (MSC), one of the world's leading security policy conferences that takes place in Munich every year.

The conference will gather just over 20 heads of state and government, 50 foreign and defence ministers and many other security policy experts from around the world. The agenda includes the crisis in Syria, the negotiations on Iran's nuclear programme and cyber security. Participants include UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, US Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov.

Mr Bildt will take part on the panel at a seminar on developments in Iran. He will also devote a large part of the conference to discussions on the situation in Ukraine. Together with US Vice President Joseph R Biden, German Minister for Foreign Affairs Frank-Walter Steinmeier and NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen and others, Mr Bildt will also contribute an essay to the book, Towards Mutual Security - 50 Years of Munich Security Conference, that is being published to draw attention to the 50th anniversary of the MSC.

"Being part of the MSC provides many important perspectives on security policy opportunities and challenges we face in the world at the moment. These insights are very useful for me in my capacity as foreign minister in my daily decision-making. Of particular importance for me this year will be my participation in the panel discussion on Iran. Just a few hours later I will fly straight to Iran for the first visit to the country by a Swedish foreign minister in over ten years," says Mr Bildt.

In conjunction with the conference, Ms Enström will conduct bilateral meetings with Germany’s Minister of Defence Ursula von der Leyen, Norway’s Minister of Defence Ine Eriksen Søreide and Italy’s Minister of Defence Mario Mauro. Ms Enström will also meet Chairman of the European Union Military Committee Patrick de Rousiers to discuss current EU initiatives, and Chief Executive of the European Defence Agency Claude-France Arnould.

"I am looking forward to participating in the MSC, which is an important meeting place to discuss current issues of international security. That so many decision-makers and leading experts in international security from different parts of the world gather under the same roof to talk about these issues is very valuable. The opportunity for personal meetings is particularly important," says Ms Enström.

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Bildt to take part in Syria negotiations

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will head Sweden’s delegation when the Syrian regime and opposition meet for negotiations in Montreux, Switzerland, on 22 January.

The Geneva II meeting has been organised by the UN and will later continue in Geneva. In addition to the regime and opposition, the UN has also invited 43 states (including Sweden) and international organisations that are important actors in the diplomatic efforts to end the conflict.

Press conference
A press conference with Mr Bildt is planned following the meeting on 22 January. Journalists interested in participating are invited to contact Press Secretary Erik Zsiga.

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Bildt to take part in World Economic Forum in Davos

On 23-25 January, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in the annual World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

Internet and cyber issues will be the focus of Mr Bildt’s seminar participation at the forum. He will lead a discussion on the challenges for diplomacy and governments of the digitalised society.

Mr Bildt will also hold discussions and meetings with various political, academic and business representatives. The World Economic Forum is an opportunity for making new contacts and gaining new knowledge.

Press conference
23 January
11.00 Press conference with the Swedish ministers participating in the WEF
Place: Sunstar Park Hotel, Parsenn room.

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External links
- The World Economic Forum
EU foreign ministers discuss Central African Republic and South Sudan

The recent violence in the Central African Republic (CAR) and the armed conflict in South Sudan will be on the agenda for discussion when EU foreign ministers meet in Brussels on 20 January. The ministers will also prepare for the upcoming peace talks between the parties in Syria and discuss the impact of the conflict on neighbouring countries. Sweden will be represented at the meeting in Brussels by Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

So far, the EU’s role in the CAR has consisted of financial support to the African Union’s mission and humanitarian aid. The foreign ministers will discuss the worsened situation in the country and what role the EU should play. The Swedish Government believes that the support of the international community is essential to stabilise the situation in the country. It is particularly important that the African Union’s mission is rapidly in place and able to protect the civilian population. Sweden is one of the EU’s largest bilateral donors of humanitarian support to the country in response to the great needs.

The ministers are also expected to discuss the armed conflict that flared up in South Sudan in December and how the EU can support the ongoing peace negotiations. The Swedish Government is concerned about the developments in South Sudan. The engagement of neighbouring countries and the presence of the parties at negotiations are positive factors. A ceasefire and release of political prisoners should take place immediately. Sweden is providing extensive humanitarian support to South Sudan.

The ministers are also expected to prepare for the Geneva II conference on Syria organised by the United Nations. The purpose of the conference is to allow representatives of the Syrian Government and the various opposition groups to meet. The Swedish Government, which will be represented along with a range of other governments and other actors, welcomes the conference.

The Government emphasises once again that humanitarian law must be respected in Syria and that humanitarian organisations must be given access to conflict areas. The issue of violations of humanitarian law should be raised again in the United Nations Security Council. Other EU countries should also take greater responsibility for receiving and offering resettlement to people fleeing the conflict in Syria. The Government feels increasing concern about the situation in Syria and the consequences the conflict may have for the political situation in neighbouring countries, particularly Lebanon and Iraq.

At the meeting, the ministers are also expected to discuss the situation in Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen and Afghanistan and the status of the peace process in the Middle East. In preparation for the EU-Russia summit on 27-28 January, the ministers are also expected to discuss developments in Russia and the EU’s relations with Russia.

Press conference
A press conference with Mr Bildt is planned following the meeting on 20 January. Journalists interested in following the press conference remotely are invited to contact Press Secretary Erik Zsiga.

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World leaders in digital diplomacy to gather in Stockholm

Some of the world's leading digital diplomats will gather in Stockholm on 16-17 January for the Stockholm Initiative on Digital Diplomacy (#sidd) meeting. In a 24-hour ‘diplohack’ organised by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, representatives from a dozen countries will work together to produce new methods for the digital diplomacy of the future. In connection with the meeting, a special TEDxStockholmSalon on the new diplomacy is being held, at which Carl Bildt will make his TEDx debut.

Time and place
The Stockholm Initiative on Digital Diplomacy (#sidd) will take place on January 16-17, 2014.

The starting point for the meeting was the objective outlined in the Statement of Foreign Policy that Sweden must be at the absolute cutting edge in digital diplomacy efforts. The meeting is one of several examples of how the Swedish Foreign Service is contributing to developments in the area internationally. Since the spring of 2013, all of Sweden's embassies have had a presence on Twitter and Facebook or their equivalents. This, along with the Ministry’s general engagement in social media, has attracted a great deal of international attention.

At SIDD the diplomats will, over a 24-hour work period, work together with international experts on communication and technology in a ‘diplohack’ format. The idea is to combine different kinds of expertise to produce joint solutions to current diplomatic challenges. Participants include digital strategists from the US, UK and French foreign ministries, Bambuser founder Måns Adler, Italian diplomat and author of Twitter for Diplomats Andreas Sandre, and author of the Twiplomacy studies Matthias Lüfkens.

It is hoped that together the participants will produce concrete, feasible solutions for the digital diplomacy of the future. Their work will be based on a number of issues laid out at the start of the meeting. The outcome of the meeting will be made widely available in open source form, to be used and adapted by anyone who wants to do so.

For further information or interviews with participants, please contact Lina Eidmark.
For questions concerning the participation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, please contact Erik Zsiga.

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Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is to visit Latvia's capital city Riga on 9 January. In addition to a number of working meetings, he will receive the Latvian 'Cicero' award and, in connection with this, give a speech at the country's parliament, the Saeima.

The Cicero award honours outstanding achievements in politics and is being presented for the fifteenth year by the Latvian Academy of Science, the University of Latvia, the Latvian Union of Journalists and a number of other non-governmental organisations. The award is presented to politicians, researchers and journalists who actively work for democratic values and human understanding at local, national or international level.

Mr Bildt is to receive the award for his long-term work for a stable security situation in Europe and stronger ties between Sweden and the Baltic States.

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Memorial tree for Per Anger - commemorating 100 years on Saturday

On 7 December it will be one hundred years since Swedish diplomat Per Anger was born. To commemorate his deeds, a memorial tree will be planted in his honour.

Per Anger (1913-2002) arrived at the Swedish legation in Budapest in November 1942 and was there when Nazi Germany occupied Hungary in March 1944.

He immediately began to issue various forms of protective documents for Jews in Hungary, an undertaking that expanded dramatically when his new colleague, Raoul Wallenberg, arrived in Budapest in July 1944. Together, they saved the lives of a large number of Hungarian Jews, first using Swedish provisional passports, and later protective passports.

- It is important that Per Anger's efforts in Budapest are not forgotten. In several respects he laid the foundations of the efforts to save Jews that would later be expanded under the leadership of Raoul Wallenberg, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

- Per Anger showed that an individual can make a great difference for other people. The ultimate task of cultural policy is to protect human rights. Per Anger's actions in Hungary are an example to us all, says City of Stockholm Commissioner for Culture and Real Estate Madeleine Sjöstedt.

Raoul Wallenberg was abducted by the Soviet military in January 1945. Anger and the other embassy staff were held in Soviet "custody", but were allowed to return to Stockholm in mid-April of the same year.

After the war, Per Anger attempted to find out what had happened to Raoul Wallenberg, but he felt that the then Government did not do enough and later resigned from the assignment. Nonetheless, his commitment to Raoul Wallenberg endured: in 1979 he published a book commemorating his colleague and in 1989 he persuaded German Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl to raise the case of Raoul Wallenberg in a telephone call with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

Per Anger served in the Swedish Foreign Service for almost 40 years. To commemorate his deeds, in the spring the Government and the City of Stockholm will plant a memorial tree in his honour, and erect a memorial plaque in a Stockholm location that was dear to his heart.

- It is gratifying that we now have the opportunity to plant a tree in memory of Per Anger's important contributions, in an appropriate place with a view over Stockholm where he enjoyed spending time, says City of Stockholm Traffic Commissioner Ulla Hamilton.

In 2004 the Government established the Per Anger Prize, which is awarded annually in his memory to someone who has undertaken great initiatives in support of human rights and democracy.

Per Anger passed away in Stockholm on 25 August 2002.

Lauded for his efforts

Along with four former colleagues from Budapest, Per Anger was awarded the Israeli honorific title Righteous Among the Nations in 1980. In 1995 he was awarded the Order of Merit by the Republic of Hungary, as well as the Wallenberg Medal by the University of Michigan. In 2000 he was awarded honorary citizenship of Israel. In 2002 he was awarded the Illis quorum meruere labores Medal by the Swedish Government.

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Bildt to visit Washington DC

Time and place
21-22 November
Washington DC

On 21-22 November, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit the US capital, Washington DC. Mr Bildt will speak at a seminar on the Eastern Partnership and the EU, organised by the think tank the Brookings Institution. He will also meet various representatives of the US administration.

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EU foreign ministers to discuss common security policy

On Monday 18 November, EU foreign ministers will meet in Brussels to discuss the Eastern Partnership, the situation in Syria and the common security policy. Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will participate in the meeting.

The aim of the Eastern Partnership is to deepen relations with the EU’s eastern neighbours: Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus and Ukraine. The initiative was taken by Sweden and Poland in 2008. The foreign ministers may take a decision on signing an association and free trade agreement with Ukraine. The Swedish Government takes a positive view of the possibility of free trade, provided that the EU’s previous human rights and democratic reform requirements are fulfilled. Such an agreement may also ultimately be concluded with Moldova and Georgia.

The political situation in the southern neighbourhood will also be discussed, focusing on Syria. The EU has expressed great concern over the serious situation in Syria and has previously discussed the destruction of chemical weapons in the country. The Government will stress the need for a UN-led conference, where a dialogue can be established between the conflicting parties. The EU must convey a consistent message to the Syrian opposition on the importance of participating in the dialogue. The humanitarian situation will also be discussed. The Government considers that the issue of access for aid organisations and respect for humanitarian law should be raised in the UN Security Council.

In addition, the situation in Libya will be discussed, focusing on the deteriorating security situation, exemplified by last month’s kidnapping of the Libyan Prime Minister and the bombing outside the Swedish Honorary Consulate in Benghazi.

At the meeting, a joint sitting of the foreign affairs and defence ministers will be held, where the development of the Common Security and Defence Policy, adopted in connection with the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009, will be discussed. The Council is expected to reach a number of conclusions that will be formally adopted by the defence ministers at a separate meeting the following day.

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Bildt to take part in the World Economic Forum in the United Arab Emirates

On 19-20 November, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates, where he will attend the World Economic Forum Summit on the Global Agenda 2013.

It is expected that the Summit on the Global Agenda will bring together more than 900 participants from academia, civil society, international organisations and politics, who will take part in more than 80 working groups that will provide recommendations on some of the most important current global challenges.

Mr Bildt will lead the working group that will focus on Europe's economic and political challenges.

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Bildt to meet Asian foreign ministers in India

On 11-13 November, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit India’s capital New Delhi, where he will meet foreign ministers and other senior government representatives of over 50 Asian and European states.

The foreign ministers meeting will be held in the context of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), a forum for dialogue and cooperation between Europe and Asia. This cooperation consists of three pillars: political dialogue, economic and financial cooperation, and cooperation in the area of education and culture.

At the Asia-Europe Meeting, Mr Bildt will speak on topics such as the significance of the internet for promoting social and economic development, and the importance of freedom on the internet. He will also have bilateral meetings with various Asian representatives.

"Despite the geographical distance between Europe and Asia, we share many global opportunities and challenges. It is precisely due to this distance that we hope to find new important perspectives on these issues. In addition, the states in Southeast Asia and the Pacific region are generally gaining economic and political influence. This meeting will provide important opportunities for informal discussions and contacts for trade and closer relations with these states," says Mr Bildt.

ASEM was founded in 1996 and, in addition to EU Member States and a long line of Asian states, also includes Australia, New Zealand, Norway, Russia and Switzerland. The foreign ministers meeting in New Delhi is the eleventh of its kind.

During the visit to India, Mr Bildt will also participate in events during the Nobel Memorial Week that the Swedish Embassy organises each year. This year, the centenary of Rabindranath Tagore’s Nobel Prize in literature will be commemorated.

"India is facing major political, economic and social challenges, but at the same time is now one of the world’s largest economies. This visit provides an opportunity to strengthen the relations between India and Sweden. Hopefully, it can also help to draw attention in India to Sweden as a partner, both economically and politically," concludes Mr Bildt.

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External links

- ASEM official website
- Nobel Memorial Week in India
Bildt to travel to Norway for meetings on the Barents and Nordic cooperation

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Norway on 28-30 October. There he will attend the 14th session of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council in Tromsø and then the foreign ministers meeting in connection with the Nordic Council session in Oslo.

The Barents Euro-Arctic Council session will take place in Tromsø on 28-29 October and will bring together the foreign ministers or other government representatives of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council member states Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. Representatives of the EU and various regional and indigenous people’s organisations will also attend.

The Nordic foreign ministers meeting will take place on 29-30 October in conjunction with the Nordic Council's 65th session in Oslo. The meeting will be chaired by Sweden's Minister for Foreign Affairs, as Sweden is coordinating the Nordic countries' informal foreign cooperation.

The meeting in Oslo will cover the continued development of Nordic cooperation on foreign and security policy. The continued development of the already successful embassy cooperation and the Nordic countries' participation in peace-keeping missions are examples of existing cooperation. The agenda also includes current international issues, such as Syria and the Middle East, development in important neighbourhoods, such as the Arctic, and the Eastern Partnership.

Press briefing

A joint press briefing in conjunction with the Nordic foreign ministers meeting will take place on Wednesday 30 October at 11.30 at the Grand Hotel in Oslo. Please register for the press briefing no later than Monday 28 October. Please contact Press Secretary Erik Zsiga via email. This also applies to journalists who are interested in following the press briefing remotely.

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External links

- The Barents Euro-Arctic Council session and the press conference can be followed via webcast at www.regieringen.no
- More information about the programme for the Barents Euro-Arctic Council session is available at www.barents2013.org
- More information about the programme for the Nordic Council's session is available at www.norden.org
Swedish support to UN and OPCW operations in Syria

The Government decided today to send a transport aircraft unit to assist the UN and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in their work of ensuring the elimination of Syria's chemical weapons programme. The Swedish transport aircraft unit will be stationed on Cyprus to support the OPCW with transport of personnel and equipment.

"It is positive that Sweden can contribute qualified resources to the UN. Today's decision means we will continue to support the important work of the UN and the OPCW to ensure the elimination of chemical weapons," say Karin Enström and Carl Bildt.

The unit will include a TP84 C-130 Hercules transport aircraft, with personnel, unit leaders, and liaison and staff officers. The operation will continue until 31 December 2013 at the latest.

Earlier this autumn, Sweden provided support to the UN and the OPCW through the Swedish Defence Research Agency. This took place in connection with the UN investigation of alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria, when Sweden assisted by analysing test samples.

Background
As a consequence of Security Council Resolution 2118 (2013) and OPCW Executive Council Decision EC-M-33/DEC.1, an OPCW-UN joint mission was established to eliminate Syria's chemical weapons programme. The UN and the OPCW are to work in their respective fields of expertise in the joint mission. The UN will support the joint mission in part with logistics resources.

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New Ambassador to the Holy See and Malta

Today the Government appointed Lars-Hjalmar Wide as Ambassador to the Holy See and Malta. Mr Wide is currently Ambassador in Islamabad. He has previously served at the embassies in Havana, Madrid and Tel Aviv, and at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York. Mr Wide has also held positions in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as head of the Americas Department, head of the former Department for Global Security and head of the Protocol Department. Moreover, he has been Director-General of the Swedish Agency for Non-Proliferation and Export Controls and First Marshal of the Court at the Royal Palace. Mr Wide will take up his new post in December 2013.
Norway's new foreign minister to travel to Sweden first

Norway's newly appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs Børge Brende will visit Stockholm on Friday 25 October. This will be Mr Brende's first visit abroad since taking up his post as Minister of Foreign Affairs last week.

During the visit, Mr Brende will meet Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Minister for Trade/Minister for Nordic Cooperation Ewa Björling, among others. The talks will cover bilateral relations between Norway and Sweden, Nordic cooperation and current international issues.

Mr Brende was born in 1965. On his appointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs he held the position of Managing Director at the World Economic Forum. Mr Brende has a background as Secretary-General of the Norwegian Red Cross and has previously been a member of the Norwegian parliament. He served at the beginning of the 2000s as Minister of the Environment and Minister of Trade and Industry.

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New ambassadors

The following four ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Wednesday 23 October 2013:

Latvia’s newly appointed Ambassador Gints Jegermanis
was born in 1964 and has served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia since 1994. In recent years he has held the following posts:

2009- Ambassador in Copenhagen
2005-2009 Head of political department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2001-2005 Ambassador to the UN in New York
1998-2001 Ambassador in Tallinn
1995-2006 Counsellor in Moscow

Austria’s newly appointed Ambassador Arthur Winkler-Hermaden
was born in 1965 and entered the foreign service in 1999. In recent years he has held the following posts:

2012- Ambassador to Liechtenstein (based in Vienna)
2009-2012 Foreign policy adviser to the Minister for European and International Affairs
2008-2009 Minister at the Embassy of Austria in Moscow
2004-2008 Minister Counsellor at the Embassy of Austria in Stockholm

Hungary’s newly appointed Ambassador Lilla Makkay
was born in 1959 and has served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary since 1992. She is a career diplomat and in recent years has held the following posts:

2010- Head of department for development assistance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2009 Seconded to the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs during the Swedish Presidency of the EU
2002-2009 Posts involving press and communications, EU coordination and development assistance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
1997-2001 Cultural and press attaché at the Embassy of Hungary in Stockholm

Turke’s newly appointed Ambassador Ömer Kaya Türkmen
was born in 1956 and entered the foreign service in 1981. In recent years he has held the following posts:

2011- Director-General for European Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ankara
2010-2011 Ambassador in Nicosia (TRNC*)
2007-2010 Minister Counsellor at the Embassy in Lisbon

*Sweden does not recognize TRNC.
Sweden to make pledge at E5P Donor Conference

On 21 October, the fund for Eastern Europe Energy Efficiency and Environment Partnership (E5P) will be expanded to include Moldova, Georgia and Armenia. At the E5P Donor Conference today, Sweden intends to make a further SEK 55 million pledge to the Fund.

The E5P is a fund to promote energy efficiency and environmental investments in the Eastern Partnership countries. Until now, the fund only covered Ukraine, as the pilot country. On 21 October, it will be expanded to include Moldova, Georgia and Armenia.

The E5P was initiated by Sweden during its EU Presidency in 2009. Sweden is a major donor, alongside the EU. At the Donor Conference for the E5P on 21 October, Sweden intends to make a further SEK 55 million pledge. Today’s pledge will bring the total Swedish contribution to over EUR 30 million for these four countries.

Together with a number of countries, the total pledged support before today’s Donor Conference amounts to over EUR 90 million.

Later today, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will begin a visit to three of these countries - Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia - together with his Polish counterpart, Radoslaw Sikorski.

- Efficient use of energy is a major challenge in Eastern Europe. The E5P will improve the environment and at the same time make the countries of Eastern Europe more competitive, efficient and more capable of diversifying their energy supplies, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Hillevi Engström.

The E5P is a multi-donor fund merging contributions from the European Union and a group consisting of more than ten nations. The contributions are used as grants to support municipal investment projects implemented by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank, the International Finance Corporation, the Nordic Investment Bank, the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation and the World Bank.

The E5P focuses on financing energy efficiency and environment investments in Eastern Europe and conducting policy discussions on reforms within the energy sector. The key objectives of the fund are improvement of energy efficiency, significant reduction of CO2 and other greenhouse gas emissions, enhanced economic competitiveness and affordability of assets maintenance.

- If the Fund continues to be successful, we are ready to consider further contributions, continues Ms Engström.

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EU foreign ministers meeting on Eastern Partnership, Egypt, Syria and Myanmar

On Monday 21 October, the EU foreign ministers will hold their monthly meeting in Luxembourg. Developments in the EU’s Eastern Partnership, Syria, Egypt and Myanmar are on the agenda. Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will participate on Sweden’s behalf.

The EU’s Eastern Partnership is expected to be discussed at the meeting, ahead of the summit in Vilnius on 28-29 November. In the Government’s view, the Eastern Partnership is key to bringing the partner countries closer to the EU. The EU should continue to back and develop the partnership, and the summit will be an important part of this. Assuming that the established criteria are met, the Government hopes to sign the agreement with Ukraine and provisionally conclude similar agreements with Moldova and Georgia.

The ministers will also discuss the situation in Syria - the issue of chemical weapons, political developments and the humanitarian situation - and how the EU should act. The Government is concerned by developments in the country, their regional consequences and the increasingly difficult humanitarian situation. The Government welcomes the Security Council’s agreement on the destruction of chemical weapons and emphasises that a Geneva II conference should be held as soon as possible. The EU must give its full support to the political process and send a coherent message to the opposition on the importance of constructive participation in the conference.

At the meeting, the ministers are also expected to discuss developments in Egypt and follow up the conclusions of the extraordinary foreign ministers meeting in August. The Government remains concerned about developments in the country. The interim government’s roadmap must be based on a political process involving all relevant stakeholders. Efforts must be made to promote the transition to a democratic form of government. In light of developments in Egypt, and based on the conclusions from August, is it adequate for the EU to apply the principle of ‘more for more’ and ‘less for less’?

Aung San Suu Kyi will take part in the meeting’s working lunch. The Government sees an opportunity for the EU to support her constructive role in Myanmar’s positive developments over the past two years. But the remaining problems should also be addressed - mainly the situation of the Rohingya people, anti-Muslim violence, ethnic conflict and the reform of the constitution.

A press conference with Carl Bildt is planned following the meeting. Journalists interested in following the press conference via Bambuser (live webcast video) should contact press secretary Erik Zsiga.
Polish-Swedish foreign minister trip to strengthen The Eastern Partnership

On 21-23 October, Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski will do a joint tour of Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia. These countries are part of the EU's Eastern Partnership, and the aim of the trip is to communicate the EU's commitment to bringing these countries closer to the European Union.

The trip will begin on Monday evening after the meeting of EU foreign ministers, when Mr Sikorski and Mr Bildt will travel together to the Moldovan capital, Chisinau. There they are expected to meet the country's prime minister. On Tuesday morning they will continue on to the Ukrainian capital, Kiev, for meetings with the country’s president and representatives of the opposition. They will arrive in the Georgian capital, Tbilisi, on Tuesday evening, where they will meet the country’s president and prime minister. The trip will conclude on Wednesday morning.

The Eastern Partnership was originally a Polish-Swedish initiative to provide the EU's eastern neighbours with an opportunity to establish closer relations to the EU. This trip is taking place during a critical phase ahead of the summit between the EU and the Eastern Partnership in Vilnius at the end of November. There it is hoped it will be possible to conclude or make progress on a number of agreements between the EU and some of the partnership countries.

Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus are also part of the Eastern Partnership, and visits by representatives of Poland and Sweden are also planned to these countries ahead of the summit in Vilnius.

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Bildt debates Europe in the Riksdag

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will debate international and European affairs when the general policy debate in the Riksdag begins on Monday 14 October.

The general policy debate will last for three days, beginning on Monday. During the debate, members of the Riksdag have the opportunity to speak about subjects of their choice. As part of the general policy debate, four thematic debates are held on Monday and Tuesday in which government ministers participate. The first of these will focus on international and European affairs, and this is the debate in which Mr Bildt will participate.

"The Government is focusing on the issue of drawing up a strategy for a European global strategy, a new European peace institute and continued development of the European structures for crisis management. Sweden is also one of the most committed advocates of the EU remaining open to all European democracies that want to and can fulfil the obligations of membership. A debate about Europe also covers important issues of what we want to do with our European cooperation and how we want to develop it. I am therefore looking forward to the debate," says Mr Bildt.

The Riksdag debate on international and European affairs, in which Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and others will take part, will begin in the Riksdag Plenary Chamber on Monday 14 October at 10.00.
Carl Bildt to the Seoul Conference on Cyberspace

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit South Korea on 16-18 October to participate in the Seoul Conference on Cyberspace 2013. Mr Bildt will give a speech on the importance of internet freedom.

The Seoul Conference on Cyberspace 2013 will gather 800 delegates from more than 80 countries. They represent governments, the business sector, and international and regional organisations. This is the third conference under the London Agenda, which was established on the UK's initiative in 2011. The idea was to create a platform for a global discussion on cyberspace issues such as international security, cybercrime, and economic and social benefits of the internet. The topic of this year's conference is 'Global Prosperity through an Open and Secure Cyberspace - Opportunities, Threats and Cooperation'. More countries are represented than at the previous conferences, including many developing countries.

In the margins of the conference, there are also plans for Mr Bildt to meet South Korea's Minister of Foreign Affairs Yun Byung-se and Australia's new Minister for Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop. Mr Bildt is also expected to meet representatives of the small Swedish force monitoring the ceasefire between the two Korean states.

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Carl Bildt to Turkey for discussions
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Turkey on 10-12 October.

On Thursday, Mr Bildt will be in the Turkish capital, Ankara, where he will have meetings with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and others. He will also meet with representatives of local think tanks and civil society.

The discussions are expected to primarily focus on developments in Turkey and the surrounding region, which have now entered a crucial stage. Last week, the Turkish government presented a "democracy package" containing proposals on various reforms for minority rights and other matters.

On Friday and Saturday, Mr Bildt will attend the 9th Bodrum Roundtable. He will take part in a panel discussion entitled "Governments in the new media age: Who rules?"
Sweden now a member of the newly started Alliance for Affordable Internet

Today, Sweden has - along with Facebook, Google, Ericsson and the United States - become a member of the new network Alliance for Affordable Internet. The aim of the network is to promote better regulation and competition to increase access to an open and free internet in low and middle-income countries. The initiator is Sir Tim Berners-Lee, founder of the World Wide Web.

One third of the world's population currently have access to an internet connection. This is a lot, but the lack of access is, in many countries, still a serious obstacle to democratic, social and economic development. The Alliance for Affordable Internet will work to ensure that the UN broadband goal - that the price of an internet connection is reduced to below 5 per cent of the average income in every country - is met or exceeded. If this goal is achieved, the global digital gap would be significantly reduced.

"Expensive internet connections are often a problem in developing countries. Many people cannot afford the internet, despite the fact that there are established networks. They are thus missing out on important opportunities for economic, political and social development. The fact that Sweden is now joining the Alliance for Affordable Internet is another step in the Government's efforts to give more people in developing countries access to the internet's information flows," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

For a long time now the Government has been stressing the importance of internet for the development of democratic and economically prosperous communities, and for the promotion of human rights. The Alliance for Affordable Internet provides Sweden with a new platform on which to work on these issues in low and middle-income countries.

External links

- For more information about the Alliance for Affordable Internet, please visit the Alliance's website
Bildt to visit Croatia Forum

On 3-4 October, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in the annual Croatia Forum in Dubrovnik, Croatia. The theme of this year’s Forum is energy, and Mr Bildt will participate in a panel on EU political considerations in the energy area.

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Carl Bildt to UN General Assembly

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit New York on 22-28 September to participate in the annual meeting of the United Nations General Assembly.

Alongside the UN programme, there will be various foreign policy activities in the margins as well as bilateral meetings. Mr Bildt’s agenda includes meetings on developments in the Middle East, internet freedom and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. He also has numerous meetings with foreign ministers, other government representatives and representatives of international organisations.

Together with Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, Mr Bildt will take part in the Swedish press briefings on 23 September at 17.45 local time and on 24 September at 10.30 local time (these times are preliminary).

Journalists wishing more information about the week’s activities are invited to contact Press Secretary Erik Zsiga.

Contact

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Carl Bildt to visit Ukraine

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Yalta, Ukraine, on 19-20 September. There he will speak and participate at the Yalta Annual Meeting, an annual international conference on Ukraine and developments in the region.

The visit comes at an important point in relations between Ukraine and the EU, ahead of the possible signing of an association agreement and the Eastern Partnership summit in Vilnius in November.

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Ministry for Foreign Affairs commemorates 10th anniversary of Anna Lindh’s death

On 11 September this year, it is ten years since the brutal murder of Anna Lindh. The tenth anniversary will be commemorated by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in several ways.

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Time and place

Seminar:
Wednesday 11 September at 10.00-13.00
Former First Chamber of the Riksdag
Please bring Riksdag media accreditation. Journalists who wish to attend who do not hold Riksdag media accreditation may contact lina.hast@annalindhsminnesfond.se

Memorial evening:
Wednesday 11 September at 18.30
Kungsträdgården, Stockholm

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On Wednesday morning, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Anna Lindh Memorial Fund are arranging the seminar 'The EU as a Global Actor for Peace, Democracy and Freedom: Experience and Vision' in memory of Anna Lindh. The seminar will take place at the Riksdag, where Mona Sahlin, Chair of the Anna Lindh Memorial Fund, and Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will deliver opening addresses. The seminar panel will include former EU Commissioner Margot Wallström and the Palestinian politician Hanan Ashrawi, as well as Anna Lindh’s foreign minister contemporaries from Finland, Greece and Russia - Erkki Tuomioja, Giorgos Papandreou and Igor Ivanov. Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson will also be present at the seminar.

On Wednesday evening, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is one of the speakers at the memorial evening arranged by the Anna Lindh Memorial Fund and the City of Stockholm in Kungsträdgården in Stockholm.

Mr Bildt also participates in Tom Alandh’s documentary about Anna Lindh, which premieres on SVT at 20.00 on 11 September.

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Carl Bildt to attend informal meeting of EU foreign ministers in Lithuania

On 6-7 September, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will participate in the informal meeting of EU foreign ministers to be held in the capital of Lithuania, Vilnius.

The foreign ministers will discuss developments in Syria and Egypt and the peace process between Israel and Palestine. Their agenda also includes the EU’s Eastern Partnership, in preparation for the summit between the EU and the partner countries that will take place in Vilnius in November. In addition, the ministers will have preparatory discussions ahead of the meeting of the European Council in December 2013, which will focus on European defence issues.

The informal meeting of foreign ministers, which is traditionally known as a Gymnich meeting, takes place every six months in the country holding the presidency of the European Union.

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Slovakia's foreign minister to visit Sweden

Slovakia's Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Miroslav Lajčák will visit Sweden on 9-10 September. Together with Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt he will participate in the seminar "Perspectives on the Eastern Partnership in the context of the Vilnius Summit" at the Stockholm School of Economics.

The EU's Eastern Partnership came into being in 2009, partly on Sweden's initiative. Extending to six countries in Eastern Europe and Southern Caucasus, it aims to accelerate their political and economic integration with the EU and to increase mobility and strengthen political ties between the EU and the partner countries. A summit between the EU and the partner countries will be held in Vilnius in November, and the talks between the Slovak and Swedish foreign ministers are a part of the pre-summit preparations.

During the visit, the foreign ministers will also have a bilateral meeting in which they will discuss a range of matters apart from the Eastern Partnership, notably EU enlargement and other future issues for the Union, as well as other current topics such as Syria.

The seminar will take place at the Stockholm School of Economics, Sveavägen 65, on Monday 9 September at 14.00-15.00. The press will have an opportunity to meet Miroslav Lajčák and Carl Bildt immediately after the seminar. Journalists wishing to attend should notify no later than Friday 6 September.

Please bring press credentials.

Contact

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Visit by UK Foreign Secretary postponed

The planned visit to Sweden by UK Foreign Secretary William Hague on 28-29 August has been postponed indefinitely.

Recent developments in Syria have led to a recall of the UK parliament, which means Mr Hague will be unable to carry out his visit. Mr Hague and Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt have therefore today decided to postpone the visit indefinitely.

Both ministers were to have participated in a seminar at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs. This seminar will now be cancelled, along with the meeting Mr Hague was to attend at the Folke Bernadotte Academy with Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson and Minister for Defence Karin Enström to discuss issues concerning women, peace and security and the prevention of sexual violence in conflicts.

Both foreign ministers also agreed that every effort should be made to ensure the visit takes place in the near future.

Contact

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Bildt to host Nordic-Baltic foreign minister meeting

In 2013 Sweden is coordinating Nordic-Baltic cooperation on foreign and security policy. Foreign ministers of the Nordic and Baltic countries will therefore meet in Visby on 2-3 September. The meeting will provide the opportunity for discussions on how the Nordic-Baltic cooperation can be further strengthened, preparations ahead of the EU Eastern Partnership summit in November, and relevant foreign policy issues and challenges.

A press briefing with all the foreign ministers will be held on 3 September at 14.30 at the County Governor’s Residence, Strandgatan 1 in Visby. Journalists interested in following the press conference remotely are invited to contact Press Secretary Erik Zsiga via email.

Contact
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Press conference during UK Foreign Secretary visit

UK Foreign Secretary William Hague will visit Sweden on 28-29 August.

A press conference will be held in connection with the joint appearance of Mr. Hague and Sweden's Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt at a seminar at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs on 29 August. The seminar is entitled 'Europe's role in a global power shift' and aims to discuss how and why global power relations are changing and what the consequences of this will be.

The seminar will be held at 10.00 on Thursday 29 August at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs at Drottning Kristinas väg 37, Stockholm. The press conference will take place immediately after the seminar. Registration is from 09.30 and everyone must be in their places by 09.50. Anyone arriving later than this will not be permitted entry.

Journalists who are not already registered for the seminar via the Swedish Institute of International Affairs may register for the press conference via Press Secretary Erik Zsiga.

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Press invitation: Raoul Wallenberg lecture on civil and personal courage and the limits of diplomacy

To commemorate Raoul Wallenberg Day, 27 August, the Government is organising a lecture on civil courage, personal courage and the limits of diplomacy. The keynote speaker will be Staffan de Mistura, Ambassador and former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Iraq and Afghanistan. Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, Minister for EU Affairs Birgitta Ohlsson and Minister for Integration Erik Ullenhag will also take part.

Time and place
Tuesday 27 August 2013, 10.30-13.00.
Aulan, Centralposthuset, Mäster Samuelsgatan 70, Stockholm.

The Raoul Wallenberg Lecture - Personal courage and bravery - exploring the limits of diplomacy
Speakers:
- Ambassador Staffan de Mistura
- Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt
- Minister for EU Affairs Birgitta Ohlsson
- Minister for Integration Erik Ullenhag
- Olle Wästberg, the Government’s coordinator for the Raoul Wallenberg Year 2012

Participants in the panel debate:
- Ambassador Diana Janse
- Ambassador Jörgen Lindström
- First Secretary Pontus Rosenberg
- First Secretary Fredrick Lee-Ohlsson

Moderator: Lars Weiss, journalist.

The lecture will be given in English and broadcast on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website. As the number of places is limited, advance registration from media representatives is required. Please email Karin Nylund at the Press, Information and Communication Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

We look forward to welcoming you.

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Press release
20 August 2013
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carl Bildt participates in extra EU Foreign Affairs Council

The EU Foreign Affairs Council is to meet in Brussels on 21 August. The extraordinary meeting has been called to discuss the alarming developments in Egypt. Sweden will be represented by Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 13.00. A press conference with Carl Bildt is planned following the meeting. Journalists who are interested in following the press conference by telephone are invited to contact Press Secretary Erik Zsiga.

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UK Foreign Secretary William Hague to visit Sweden

UK Foreign Secretary William Hague will visit Sweden on 28-29 August. The invitation for the visit was formally offered by Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt in a Twitter conversation with Mr Hague today.

Besides holding bilateral discussions, the two ministers will also make a joint appearance at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs. In addition, Mr Hague will speak at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs annual Meeting of Swedish Ambassadors.

Information about a press conference in connection with the visit will be available shortly.

Contact

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New Ambassador to Singapore

The Government today appointed Håkan Jevrell as Ambassador to Singapore. Mr. Jevrell's previous positions have included District Prosecutor at Västerort local public prosecution office in Stockholm, deputy head of coordination at the Prime Minister's Office coordination office and State Secretary at the Ministry of Defence between 2007 and 2012. Mr. Jevrell will take up his new position in autumn 2013.

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Ambassador for the Eastern Partnership appointed

Today the Government appointed Martin Hagström Ambassador for the Eastern Partnership. His role will be to further advance Eastern Partnership work in the EU and in relation to the partner countries in Eastern Europe.

Sweden took the initiative to establish the Eastern Partnership in 2008, together with Poland, and has continued to play an active part in its development. The Partnership includes Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine and aims to promote increasingly ever closer relations between these countries and the EU. An Eastern Partnership summit will be held in Vilnius in November 2013 and will be attended by heads of state and government from the EU and the partner countries.

Martin Hagström is currently head of the Eastern Europe Division at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Department for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. He has previously served in St Petersburg and at Sweden’s Permanent Representation in Brussels. Mr Hagström will take up his new position, which was announced in this year’s Statement of Government Policy on Foreign Affairs, in July 2013.
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is visiting several Balkan countries between 30 June and 2 July. The purpose of his trip is to emphasise the importance of the region continuing to move closer to the EU and of the implementation of the historic agreement reached between Serbia and Kosovo this spring.

Mr Bildt will arrive in the Croatian capital Zagreb on Sunday. There he will participate in a ceremony to celebrate Croatia’s accession to the EU as 28th Member State on 1 July. Numerous heads of state and government, foreign ministers and other dignitaries from a wide range of countries will take part in the ceremony.

On Monday Mr Bildt will continue to the capital of Serbia, Belgrade, for talks with President Tomislav Nikolic, Prime Minister Ivica Dacic and Foreign Minister Ivan Mrkic.

On Tuesday, the trip will conclude with a visit to the capital of Kosovo, Pristina, where Mr Bildt will meet Prime Minister Hashim Thaci and others.

"Sweden has long been a warm advocate of EU membership for Croatia. That's why we are joining in the ceremony in Zagreb. Croatia's membership is important to tie the whole region closer to the EU. The agreement between Serbia and Kosovo in April was a further historic step in this direction, as was confirmed by the EU foreign ministers earlier this week. Visiting Belgrade and Pristina is an opportunity for us to emphasise that the agreement must now be implemented," says Mr Bildt.

Contact

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State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Frank Belfrage is taking part today in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Security in Vienna. This is the first IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Security. It is part of international cooperation to combat nuclear terrorism and prevent nuclear material and other radioactive substances falling into the wrong hands. This cooperation has intensified in recent years. Just over ten years ago, the IAEA Board of Governors adopted an action plan on nuclear security, and the agency has since expanded its operations in the area in order to support the member states in their work.

"Sweden is actively taking part in international cooperation to prevent nuclear terrorism and protect nuclear material, other radioactive substances and nuclear facilities," comments Mr Belfrage.

"Responsibility lies at national level, but international cooperation is essential," he adds. "The IAEA plays a key role and Sweden supports the IAEA's continuing capacity development in this area."

Sweden is currently represented on the IAEA Board of Governors for a period of three years.

Sweden also participates in the summit process that began with President Obama's invitation to the first summit - the Nuclear Security Summit - in Washington in 2010 aimed at intensifying efforts to prevent nuclear terrorism. This summit was followed up two years later in Seoul, where Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt announced the transfer of reprocessed plutonium from Sweden to the United States for disposal. This transfer was the first of its kind within the framework of the US non-proliferation programme, the Global Threat Reduction Initiative. Next year, the Netherlands will host the third summit. In his speech in Berlin on 19 June, President Obama announced that he intended to invite participating states to a new summit in the United States in 2016.

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Iraq's Minister for Foreign Affairs to visit Sweden

Time and place
Press conference on Friday 28 June, 13.45
Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs torg 1

Please bring press credentials.

Iraq's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hoshyar Zebari, will visit Sweden on 26-30 June as part of a European tour. Mr Zebari will meet Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Tobias Billström and State Secretary Gunnar Oom. He will also visit the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Discussions during the visit will focus on the conflict in Syria and the political and security situation in Iraq.

Welcome to a press conference with foreign ministers Zebari and Bildt on Friday 28 June at 13.45.

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Linda Norberg
Press Secretary to Tobias Billström
Twelfth Stockholm China Forum 2013
Where does China’s new leadership want to take the country and how can relations between the United States, Europe and China be deepened?

Time and place
28-29 June 2013
Grand Hotel Saltsjöbaden

What can be expected of the new Chinese leadership under Xi Jinping? What changes have there been in Chinese foreign policy and what do they mean for Europe and the United States? Is there a risk of further deterioration of relations between China and Japan or will they be able to maintain the climate in the region that has been so favourable for both countries’ economic development in recent years? Can East Asia become the world’s foremost economic growth engine or is China’s economy also facing increasing difficulties? Can the United States, Europe and China jointly prevent a trend towards growing protectionism? Can they, together, take greater responsibility for critical issues on the global agenda? Is cyber security becoming an increasingly serious security policy issue, and what is happening with internet freedom?

These and other questions will be discussed when the Stockholm China Forum meets again - a forum for a recurring transatlantic dialogue about, and with, China.

As on previous occasions, a number of representatives of the Obama administration, European foreign ministries and the EU will attend, as will researchers from leading think tanks and universities in the US, Europe and China. The security policy experts expected to attend include Professor Aron Friedberg of Princeton University, François Godement of the French Asia Centre and Shi Yinhong from the Renmin University of China in Beijing. Minxin Pei, perhaps the most quoted expert on developments in China, will again be present. From the media, the Financial Times’ Philip Stevens and the New York Times’ diplomatic correspondent in Beijing, Jane Perlez, are expected to attend. The business sector will be represented by Germany’s Joerg Wuttke, who has been based in Beijing for over twenty years and who is Chief Representative of BASF and a key figure for the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China. Sweden’s Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will also participate on this occasion. Other Swedish participants include economist Klas Eklund.

The Stockholm China Forum was established in 2006 in dialogue between the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education (STINT) (3 years) and the Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation) (5 years). This twelfth meeting will be financed by the GMF and the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The eleventh meeting was held in Beijing in December 2012 and all previous meetings were held in Stockholm.

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Carl Bildt to Luxembourg for EU meetings

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be in Luxembourg on 24-25 June. Today he will attend the Foreign Affairs Council, where EU foreign ministers meet, and tomorrow the General Affairs Council, which is meeting to discuss EU enlargement.

In the Foreign Affairs Council, EU foreign ministers will discuss action by the EU in response to the Arab Spring. The Swedish Government welcomes a review of the EU’s response to establish how it has contributed to the democratic transition. The Government also welcomes a discussion on how to achieve greater cooperation with other actors in the region.

The foreign ministers will also discuss, and possibly make decisions concerning, Syria and the EU’s continued action. The Government remains deeply concerned about developments in Syria and the consequences for the region. The discussion on the EU’s Eastern Partnership will also continue. The foreign ministers will discuss reform progress, the EU’s further messages, and possible objectives of the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius in November. In the Government’s view, the Eastern Partnership plays a key role in bringing the partner countries closer to the EU. The EU should remain committed to the Eastern Partnership and its development, while being clear about the partner countries’ obligations, including the promotion of human rights and democracy.

Mr Bildt will also be attending the General Affairs Council in Luxembourg on Tuesday. Agenda items include the long-term budget, the Western Balkans, and preparations ahead of the European Council on 27-28 June. Sweden will be represented in the General Affairs Council by Minister for EU Affairs Birgitta Ohlsson, but by Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt on issues of EU enlargement.

The ministers will also discuss the opening of EU membership talks with Serbia. The start of negotiations on the stabilisation and association agreement between Kosovo and the EU is also on the agenda. In light of the advances made in the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia, the Swedish Government is expected - both in the General Affairs Council and in connection with the European Council meeting - to give its support for both countries being allowed to start negotiations.

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Sweden to open new embassies in Baku, Yerevan and Doha

The Government decided today to open embassies in Azerbaijan, Armenia and Qatar.

As part of Sweden's efforts to strengthen its presence in the southern Caucasus region of Eastern Europe, the Government today decided to establish permanent representations in Azerbaijan's capital Baku and Armenia's capital Yerevan.

Such an establishment enhances the conditions for Sweden to play an active role in the region and for Sweden to continue to be a driving force in the development of EU policy towards its eastern European neighbours in the Eastern Partnership.

To strengthen Sweden's presence in the Gulf Region, the Government has also decided to establish a permanent representation in Qatar's capital Doha. This establishment will improve the opportunities for Sweden to continue its active role in the Middle East. The promotion of Sweden is a high priority, as the Qatari market has growing potential for the Swedish business sector.

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email to Erik Zsiga
Ministry for Foreign Affairs publishes reports on human rights situation

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs today publishes its annual human rights reports. This year, the reports cover the 35 countries in the Americas.

The overall trend in the reports is positive. All of the governments in the region - except for Cuba's - are popularly elected. Free elections, political parties, respect for the rule of law and greater gender equality have become a part of people's everyday lives in countries that, in some cases, were ruled by military dictatorships as recently as the 1970s.

Efforts for human rights are a cornerstone of Swedish foreign policy. It is the Government's ambition to integrate human rights into all areas of foreign policy. We work through bilateral contacts, through the EU, and multilaterally through the UN, the OSCE, the EU and the Council of Europe to promote full respect for human rights in all the countries around the world. The Embassies are actively involved in dialogues with all sectors of the societies in which they operate.

The extensive background material on which the reports are based makes them useful tools for the Government, as well as for government agencies, the business sector, organisations and the general public.

This year is the eleventh in a row that the Swedish Foreign Service has compiled and published these reports. They are the result of collaboration between Sweden's Embassies, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Department for International Law, Human Rights and Treaty Law and the relevant geographical department at the Ministry (in this case, the Americas Department).

All the new reports, and reports from other countries, are available on the Government's human rights website www.manskligarattigheter.se

- Read all the reports here (only in Swedish)
New ambassadors are welcomed to Stockholm

On Thursday 13 June the following three ambassadors will present their letters of credence to H.M. the King.

Peru

Peru’s newly appointed Ambassador José Beraún Araníbar was born in 1954 and holds a Bachelor degree in International Relations. He has had a long career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he started in 1971 as an administrative employee and subsequently served in Italy, the Holy See, Bolivia and Denmark.

Ambassador Beraún’s recent posts include:

2012- Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs

2010-2012 Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, responsible for Africa, the Middle East and the Gulf countries

2005- Ambassador in Algeria, Tunisia and Libya

Mongolia

Mongolia’s newly appointed Ambassador Zorig Altai was born in 1958 and has over several years held various positions in press, radio and television in Mongolia. In recent years he has held the following posts:

2008-2012 Member of Parliament of Mongolia

2012- Advisor to the Director General of a Mongolian television channel

2005- President of the Mongolian Television Association

Samoa

Samoa’s newly appointed Ambassador Fatumanava Dr Pa’olelei Luteru (concurrently accredited from Brussels) was born in 1954 and has had a lengthy career in academia, including at the University of the South Pacific, Fiji, where he was Director of Planning and Development during the period 1991-1993.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

2012- Ambassador in Brussels

2010-2012 Consul and Trade Commissioner to New Zealand

2006-2010 Director, Oceancrest Consultancy Ltd and Team Leader for the Tuvalu Trade Study funded by the World Bank and the UNDP

Contact

UD Press
Press Service - Office hours
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New Ambassador to Ethiopia

The Government today appointed Jan Sadek as Ambassador to Ethiopia. Mr Sadek is currently Sweden’s Ambassador to Sudan. Prior to this he served at the embassies in Prague and Moscow, and at the former section office in Minsk. Mr Sadek will take up his new post in autumn 2013.
Carl Bildt to take part in Ministerial Session of Council of the Baltic Sea States

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in the Ministerial Session of the Council of the Baltic Sea States in Kaliningrad, Russia, on 5-6 June.

This is the 18th ministerial session and will mark the end of the Russian Presidency of the Council.

Alongside Mr Bildt, the foreign ministers of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Poland and an EU representative are expected to attend. The session will be hosted by Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov.

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Proposed Swedish participation in UN peacekeeping mission in Mali

Today the Government decided to submit a bill to the Riksdag on Swedish participation in the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

The proposed Swedish force of approximately 70 persons in all will include a transport aircraft with an in-flight security team, an air transport unit and a national support unit, together with staff officers. Capacity to augment the force at short notice if the need arises is required, and the maximum number of personnel requested is therefore set at 160.

The United Nations Security Council has established MINUSMA to contribute to improving the security situation in Mali, to restore the country’s constitutional and democratic order and to create a secure environment for humanitarian assistance. It is to begin its mission on 1 July 2013. The mission will include military personnel, police officers and other civilian personnel and will be deployed for a period initially set at 12 months.

The intention is to coordinate Swedish participation in MINUSMA with other Nordic countries.

"The objective of Sweden's contribution is to help stabilise the situation in Mali. Swedish participation is also an expression of our support for the United Nations and its peacekeeping activities," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

Sweden is already contributing training staff to the EU military training mission in Mali and has extensive bilateral long-term development cooperation with the country. In addition, Sweden is one of the largest humanitarian donors to Mali and the Sahel region.

Sweden's participation is also in line with its overarching commitment to peace and development in Africa.

External links

- Government Bill 2012/13:173 on Swedish participation in the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (Swedish)
Carl Bildt to attend Lennart Meri Conference in Tallinn

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will attend the annual Lennart Meri Conference in the Estonian capital of Tallinn on 24-26 May. On Saturday, he will take part in the panel discussion 'The Future of the EU: Is Less Europe More?'

The Lennart Meri Conference is named after Lennart Meri, who was the president of Estonia between 1992 and 2001. Each year, the conference brings together leading politicians, experts and civil society representatives from around the world to discuss foreign and security policy issues related to the north-eastern corner of Europe. This year’s conference, the sixth to be held, is entitled 'The North-South Split - Managing a New World Order'.

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Press release
22 May 2013
Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications

Carl Bildt, Gunilla Carlsson and Anna-Karin Hatt involved in Stockholm Internet Forum 2013

Starting today until 23 May, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson and Minister for Information Technology Anna-Karin Hatt will take part in the Stockholm Internet Forum on Internet Freedom for Global Development at Münchensbryggeriet in central Stockholm.

Time and place
Ms Carlsson and Ms Hatt will be available to answer questions from the media when they attend the conference on 23 May. Ms Carlsson will take part in the concluding panel debate on ‘Internet freedom for global development - making progress?’ between 14.00 and 15.30. Ms Hatt will take part in the panel debate on ‘Free and open internet for global inclusive growth’ between 09.00 and 10.30.

The Stockholm Internet Forum (SIF), which is being held the second year running, will bring together over 400 activists, experts, politicians and representatives of business and society from more than 90 countries. More than half of this year’s participants are from middle- or low-income countries. They are coming to SIF to discuss how internet freedom and openness can promote human rights and social development worldwide.

Internet freedom is one of the top priorities of Swedish foreign policy. It concerns respecting human rights, both online and offline. Everyone should be free to think and say what they want - on the internet too. This may seem obvious to us in Sweden, but it is far from the reality in many other countries.

Stockholm Internet Forum online
Digital curators will be at the conference to enable people to participate in the conference online. The digital curators will monitor and pick up on conference-related content to share on the conference website, making it participator-generated.

The Stockholm Internet Forum will be webcast live in its entirety on the Forum website. It will also be possible to interact with the conference via Twitter at #sif13.

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Related
• More about freedom on the Internet

External links
• Stockholm Internet Forum Web site
Press release
15 May 2013
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Arctic Council presents vision for future cooperation in the Arctic

Ministers from the eight Arctic states and representatives of the Arctic Indigenous Peoples met today in Kiruna at the conclusion of Sweden’s two-year Chairmanship of the Arctic Council.

"In its two years as Chair of the Arctic Council, Sweden has contributed to strengthening cooperation within the Arctic Council. At this meeting, we have adopted a vision statement for the future of the Arctic shared by the Arctic states and the Indigenous Peoples. This sends an important signal to the rest of the world" said the Swedish foreign minister Carl Bildt after the meeting.

The forward-looking statement entitled 'Vision for the Arctic' was adopted at the meeting. The document outlines the Arctic states' and indigenous Permanent Participants' joint vision for the development of the region.

Arctic Council States also signed a new, legally-binding Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic which will substantially improve procedures for combatting oil spills in the Arctic.

A number of important reports were presented to the Ministers at the meeting:

- "The Arctic Biodiversity Assessment produced by the Arctic Council's Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna group (CAFF) presents the status and trends in Arctic biodiversity based on best available science informed by traditional ecological knowledge, and includes policy recommendations for Arctic biodiversity conservation.
- "The Arctic Ocean Review coordinated by the Arctic Council's working group on Protection of the Marine Environment (PAME) analyzes the global and regional instruments and measures that govern the Arctic marine environment, and provides policy recommendations for Arctic states to strengthen the conservation and sustainable use of the Arctic marine environment.
- "The Arctic Ocean Acidification assessment produced by the Arctic Council's Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP) working group is the first major scientific study of the impacts that acidification of the Arctic Ocean may have on Arctic marine ecosystems, and the northern communities and indigenous peoples who depend on them.

A decision was made on seven observer applications.

During the meeting, ministers also signed the Kiruna Declaration, which sets out the work of the Council during the Canadian Chairmanship (2013-15).

"Canada is honoured to assume the Chairmanship of the Council," said Minister Leona Aglukkaq. "The theme for Canada's Chairmanship is Development for the People of the North."

During the Canadian Chairmanship, the Arctic Council program will include the establishment of a Circumpolar Business Forum to provide new opportunities for business to engage with the Council; continued work on oil pollution prevention; and action to address short-lived climate pollutants such as black carbon and methane.

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External links
- Web cast from the Ministerial Meeting
- Arctic Council website with information/documents from the meeting
Sweden's humanitarian aid in 2013

In 2012, Sweden was the third largest bilateral humanitarian donor in the world after the United States and the United Kingdom. Since 2005, Sweden's humanitarian aid contributions have risen from SEK 3.3 billion to over SEK 5 billion in 2012.

In April, the first support payments for 2013 were made. In 2013, Sweden will distribute approximately SEK 5 billion in humanitarian aid with the aim of saving lives and alleviating suffering in connection with armed conflicts and natural disasters. Sweden's humanitarian aid will primarily go to supporting internally displaced persons and refugees, health, and food security. This year, Sweden has chosen to prioritise support to 22 of the largest and most serious ongoing humanitarian crises around the world, where a total of 77 million people are in need of urgent assistance.

Syria

Focusing on support to refugees and basic supplies, Sweden has so far this year allocated SEK 110 million in support to Syria. The situation in Syria has deteriorated and the number of people fleeing within the country's borders has now reached 4.25 million. The number of people fleeing to neighbouring countries is 6.8 million, people, are in need of urgent assistance. During the two years in which the conflict has been going on, the children of Syria have been badly affected and almost 3.1 million children are now in need of assistance. Several measures targeting children have been carried out in Syria, including a campaign to vaccinate children against measles, mumps and rubella (MMR). The campaign, which ran until April, has so far reached 550 000 children. The number of children attending school has dropped sharply since the start of the conflict. Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson announced in April that the Government is earmarking funds for children in Syria. SEK 15 million of this support will be provided to the United Nations Children's Fund and SEK 6 million will go to Save the Children. Reaching all those who are in need of urgent assistance is a major challenge for the humanitarian actors as access is limited.

Somalia

An international high-level conference on Somalia was held in London on 7 May with the aim of giving Somalia's government international support in rebuilding the country. Somalia has long been stricken by conflict and climate-related crises. Over the next year it is expected that 1.67 million people will not be able to meet their basic needs and, without support, risk falling back into crisis. However, Somalia has taken several steps in the right direction over the last year, with a new president and a new government. Humanitarian aid has been important and is expected to continue to play a role. In 2012, Somalia received a total of SEK 155 million in humanitarian aid from Sweden. This support to Somalia was provided through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to UN organisations, including UNICEF. Support also went to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and a number of Swedish and international NGOs. For 2013, Sweden has allocated SEK 146 million in support for Somalia, with a focus on disaster preparedness and greater resilience among vulnerable groups.

Afghanistan

This year, Sweden is planning to provide SEK 125 million in support to Afghanistan through Sida. The situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated in recent years due to the protracted conflict and the recurring drought. There is a risk of the conflict continuing, of development programmes being terminated and of political turbulence. Several million Afghans have fled to neighbouring countries. Humanitarian actors are having trouble getting help through to the population due to the difficult security situation and attacks against humanitarian personnel. The focus of Swedish support this year is water and sanitation, nutrition and health, and protection issues.
Fredrik Reinfeldt and Carl Bildt receive US Secretary of State John F. Kerry

On Tuesday 14 May, Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt and Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will receive US Secretary of State John F. Kerry in Stockholm for talks.

They will discuss current foreign policy issues, including the disturbing developments in Syria, the possibility of creating new momentum in the Middle East peace process and the international community’s future engagement in Afghanistan. Other topics on the agenda include developments in the EU, focusing on the economic situation, the negotiations on a future free trade agreement between the EU and the US, and the Arctic, ahead of the ministerial meeting in Kiruna that begins on the same day.

Programme points 14 May:

Arrival at Stockholm Arlanda Airport
US Secretary of State John F. Kerry arrives in the morning at Stockholm Arlanda Airport, where he will be met by Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.
Photo opportunity.
Photographers must register by 16.00 on 13 May: boel.lindbergh@gov.se
Assembly time for preregistered photographers will be announced to those concerned.
Press credentials are required.

Bilateral meeting at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs
US Secretary of State John F. Kerry and Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will meet for talks at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.
Photo pool - the meeting room.
Photographers must register by 16.00 on 13 May: ud-pressrummet@gov.se
Assembly time for pool photographers will be announced to those concerned.
Press credentials are required.

Prime Minister to receive US Secretary of State John F. Kerry at Rosenbad
Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt will meet US Secretary of State John Kerry at the entrance to Rosenbad.
Photo opportunity.
Photographers must register by 16.00 on 13 May: ud-pressrummet@gov.se
Press credentials are required.

Talks at Rosenbad
Photo pool - the meeting room
Photographers must register by 16.00 on 13 May: ud-pressrummet@gov.se
Press credentials are required.

Please note: For photo opportunities at Rosenbad: Admittance at 10.00-10.30 corner Strömgatan/Drottninggatan

12.00 Press briefing, Rosenbad

Please note: Admittance at 11.10-11.50 corner Strömgatan/Drottninggatan
Press briefing in Rosenbad, Bella Venezia
Language: English
The press briefing will be webcast live at www.government.se
Register for the press by 16.00 on 13 May: ud-pressrummet@gov.se
Press credentials are required
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Five ministers to take part in the World Economic Forum on Africa

On 9-10 May, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson, Minister for Trade Ewa Björling, Minister for Finance Anders Borg and Minister for EU Affairs Birgitta Ohlsson will be taking part in the World Economic Forum on Africa (WEF) in Cape Town. On 5-12 May, in connection with the WEF, some of the ministers will also visit Ethiopia, Nigeria, Angola and Zimbabwe.

The WEF will focus on the conditions for sustaining Africa’s strong growth and development. There will be discussions on how politicians and the business community can help to strengthen the macroeconomic outlook, global trade and regional integration, structural reforms, the impact of development assistance and human rights. In Cape Town, the ministers will also have bilateral talks with South African Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe and several other representatives of the South African Government.

The visits to the other countries will offer opportunities for high-level meetings, promotional events and strengthening the image of Sweden. Bilateral talks will be held with ministers in these countries. Sweden is interested in supporting and seizing on the new, positive outlook for Africa’s development and highlighting the importance of political reforms towards democracy. Sweden’s historical and multifaceted ties with many African countries provide a solid foundation for stronger and broader future cooperation.

The ministers will be available to answer questions at regular press conferences during the trip. Invitations to these press conferences will be sent separately.

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New ambassador to United States of America

The Government today appointed Björn Lyvall Ambassador to the United States of America. Mr Lyrvall is currently Ambassador and Director-General for Political Affairs.

Mr Lyrvall has served as Vice-Consul in Leningrad (later St Petersburg) and was regional manager for the Swedish Trade Council in the then Soviet Union. He has also held positions in the Swedish embassies in Moscow and London. In addition, he was assistant to Carl Bildt in the latter’s capacity as special envoy in the Balkans. Mr Lyrvall has served at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Department for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and at the Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels, where he was responsible for enlargement negotiations. He also represented Sweden on the Political and Security Committee (PSC).

Mr Lyrvall will take up his new position in autumn 2013.

Contact
UD:s presstjänst
Phone: 08-405 57 30
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Welcome to the Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting

On 15 May 2013 the Arctic Council will hold its biennial Ministerial Meeting in Kiruna in the north of Sweden.

Media are invited to a web cast press briefing with the Chair of the Senior Arctic Officials on 6 May.

On 15 May approximately 300 people - ministers, delegates from the eight Arctic states, representatives of indigenous peoples, scientists and observers - will gather in Kiruna to mark the end of the two-year Swedish chairmanship and the beginning of the Canadian chairmanship of the Arctic Council.

The ministers will sign an agreement on 'Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response'. This is the second legally binding agreement among the Arctic States and will enhance response measures and cooperation in the Arctic.

The ministers will also welcome the release of several important scientific reports and approve policy recommendations from:
- the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment, the best available science informed by traditional ecological knowledge on the status and trends of Arctic biodiversity and accompanying policy recommendations for biodiversity conservation,
- the Arctic Ocean Review and
- the Arctic Ocean Acidification assessment.

These reports provide new benchmarks and knowledge about the state of the Arctic environment.

Beginning on 14 May, the six working groups of the Arctic Council will make presentations and provide information on accomplishments during the Swedish Chairmanship and their ongoing activities at the 'Folkehus' (the Community Center) in Kiruna. This event is open to the public and media.

The Ministerial Meeting will take place on the morning of 15 May at Kiruna City Hall. A press event will be held directly after the meeting. Delegates and media will then visit the LKAB iron ore mine, where the working groups will provide further information on their assessments and policy relevant recommendations.

The Kiruna Ministerial Meeting can be followed via web stream from the Arctic Council website.

Ministers expected to attend:
- Carl Bildt, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sweden
- Lena Ek, Minister for the Environment, Sweden
- Leona Aglukkaq, Minister for the Arctic Council, Canada
- John F. Kerry, Secretary of State, USA
- The Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Iceland
- Espen Barth Eide, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Norway
- Villy Sovndal, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Denmark
- Erkki Tuomioja, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Finland
- Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Russia

Pre-Kiruna press briefing

Media are also invited to a press briefing with the Chair of the Senior Arctic Officials, Ambassador Gustaf Lind, on 6 May at 14.00. Mr. Lind will highlight the main substance for the Kiruna meeting. The press briefing will be web-streamed from the Swedish Government’s website. Media who are not able to participate in person are welcome to ask their questions via Twitter on hashtag #askSAOchair.

Time and place

Accreditation is required for media representatives who wish to cover the Kiruna Ministerial Meeting. Media accreditation is open for applications at the Arctic Council website.

More information for media will be published on the Arctic Council website - Press Room.

Kiruna
Kiruna is the northernmost municipality in Sweden, and also the largest in terms of area (20,000 square kilometres). It has 23,000 inhabitants. Kiruna combines many extremes: Sweden's highest mountain, seven large and unspoiled rivers, midnight sun and polar nights, the world's largest underground iron ore mine, high-tech space research, traditional Sami trades and a successful tourism industry. The city of Kiruna is currently undergoing an infrastructure transformation; due to mining close to the city centre, large parts of Kiruna have to be relocated. Kiruna's largest industry is the mining company LKAB, which began mining in 1900.

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Bildt hosts Nordic foreign ministers meeting

Time and place
Press conference Friday 3 May at 14.30
MS Askungen, Pier 14, Strandvägen, Stockholm

In 2013 Sweden chairs the informal Nordic foreign and security cooperation. The Nordic foreign ministers will therefore meet in Sandhamn in the Stockholm archipelago on 2-3 May. The meeting provides an opportunity for further discussions on Nordic cooperation, both in the UN and ongoing Nordic participation in peacekeeping operations and other current international issues. As Sweden also holds the chairmanship of the Arctic Council, the ministers will also touch upon Arctic issues.

This is the first foreign ministers meeting this year under the Swedish chairmanship.

A press conference with all the foreign ministers will take place on board MS Askungen, Pier 14, Strandvägen, Stockholm, Friday 3 May at 14.30.

Please bring your press credentials.

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Bildt participating in Community of Democracies ministerial meeting in Mongolia

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt arrived in the Mongolian capital Ulaan Bator on Saturday evening. The main aim of the visit is to participate in the Community of Democracies ministerial meeting which is taking place in the city, but Mr Bildt will also meet the country's President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj and others.

Mr Bildt's visit is taking place on 27-30 April. Monday will be spent at the Community of Democracies ministerial meeting, which is an intergovernmental network of democratic states formed in 2000 with the aim, together with civil society and parliamentarians, of strengthening democratic development at national and global level through the exchange of experience, cooperation and dialogue. Mr Bildt will present Sweden's view of freedom of the internet and freedom of the press at the ministerial meeting, which takes place every other year.

In connection with the visit, Mr Bildt will also meet several representatives of the Mongolian leadership and society, among them President Elbegdorj and Minister of Foreign Affairs Luvsanvandan Bold.

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Press invitation: 90 countries represented at internet conference in Stockholm

Welcome to SIF13 - an international conference on freedom, security and development on the internet.

Freedom and security on the internet is one of the major global issues of the future and one of the highest priorities of Swedish foreign policy. On 22 and 23 May 2013, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is hosting the second Stockholm Internet Forum on Internet Freedom for Global Development - SIF13.

There is a great deal of interest in this unique platform. This year, participants from over 90 countries are coming to the conference, which is being jointly organised by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, .SE (the Internet Infrastructure Foundation) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). The conference is being held at Münchensbryggeriet in Stockholm and media accreditation opens today.

SIF is a conference that aims to deepen discussions on how freedom and openness on the internet promote human rights and development throughout the world. It uses a format unlike any other.

SIF brings together political decision-makers, representatives of civil society, activists, representatives of the business community and technical experts. The main themes this year are 'Freedom and security' and 'Freedom and development', and discussions will focus on respect for and promotion of human rights, innovation, entrepreneurship and global development.

The number of people online is expected to jump from a little under two billion to five billion within a few years. For the Swedish Government, internet freedom is a high priority issue, based on the premise that human rights must be respected both online and offline. Several Swedish ministers are engaged in this area and apart from Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson and Minister for Information Technology and Energy Anna-Karin Hatt are also taking part in the programme.

Hashtags: #SIF13 (specifically for the conference) #FXinternet (for internet freedom issues in general)

Media accreditation
If you work in the media and wish to cover SIF13, you will need special accreditation. Read more about SIF13 on the conference website; see the adjacent link. The deadline for accreditation is 14 May 2013.

If you have any questions about accreditation, please contact Maria Ekelund, .SE (The Internet Infrastructure Foundation).

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Four new ambassadors

The Government today appointed the following four new ambassadors:

Henrik Landerholm as Ambassador in Latvia. Since 2011, Mr Landerholm has been head of all Swedish operations in northern Afghanistan (Transition Support Team Mazar-e-Sharif). His previous posts include Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Defence, Rector of the Swedish National Defence College and Director-General of the Bernadotte Academy.

Charlotta Sparre as Ambassador in Egypt. Ms Sparre is currently Ambassador in Jordan. She has previously served at the Embassy in Cairo and at the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the EU in Brussels.

Annika Ben David as Ambassador in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Ms Ben David is currently serving at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Africa Department. She has previously served at the embassies in Tel Aviv and Dar es Salaam, and at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Department for International Law, Human Rights and Treaty Law.

Fredrik Schiller as Ambassador in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mr Schiller is currently serving in Juba, South Sudan. He has previously served at the Embassy in Tripoli, the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations, the Embassy in Addis Ababa, the OSCE delegation in Vienna, the section office in Tirana and as the Stockholm-based Ambassador for Eritrea.

All ambassadors will take up their posts in autumn 2013.

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Carl Bildt visits Kazakhstan

On Thursday evening, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will arrive in Kazakhstan's largest city, Almaty. There he will attend the Heart of Asia international conference, aimed at achieving stability in Afghanistan. During his visit, which will last until 27 April, Mr Bildt will also meet Swedish entrepreneurs in Almaty.

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Afghanistan and Sweden enter into agreement on development cooperation

Afghanistan and Sweden are to start negotiations with the goal of entering into a bilateral agreement on development cooperation in the coming year. This is one of the elements of the declaration that Sweden’s Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Afghanistan’s Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Jawed Ludin made public following their meeting in Kabul today.

Time and place
Mr Bildt will hold a press conference by telephone from Afghanistan on Thursday 25 April, at 13.00 Swedish time. Journalists interested in participating should contact Press Secretary Erik Zsiga, tel: +46 72 573 91 30

Afghanistan and Sweden are to start negotiations with the goal of entering into a bilateral agreement on development cooperation in the coming year. This is one of the elements of the declaration that Sweden’s Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Afghanistan’s Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Jawed Ludin made public following their meeting in Kabul today.

Mr Bildt landed in Kabul on Wednesday morning local time, and during his visit in Afghanistan will meet various representatives of the country’s leadership and Afghan civil society. Mr Bildt arrived in Kabul directly from Tuesday’s meeting in Brussels between foreign ministers from NATO and the states participating in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), where the long-term support to Afghanistan was discussed.

"Sweden is helping Afghanistan in order to contribute to peace and economic development, and we will continue to do so. It is therefore important to visit Afghanistan occasionally to study and discuss on site the developments in various sectors of society," says Mr Bildt.

The agreement on development cooperation will be in addition to the future cooperation agreement for partnership for development (CAPD) between Afghanistan and the EU, which will provide a long-term strategic framework for relations between the countries.

The declaration also states that Afghanistan plans to open an embassy in Stockholm in the coming year. Moreover, several exchange visits at various political levels will contribute to increasing political dialogue between the countries.

According to the declaration, Afghanistan and Sweden will also continue cooperation to strengthen Afghan security and the country’s leadership by concluding the transition process in late 2014, when Afghan security forces will have full responsibility for security throughout the country. Sweden will investigate the possibility, if Afghanistan so wishes, of contributing to future international initiatives for training Afghan police officers and security forces.

In 2013, Afghanistan will become the largest recipient country of Swedish development assistance in the world. In 2012, long-term development assistance amounted to approximately SEK 560 million. In addition to this, Sweden annually contributes approximately SEK 500 million to Afghanistan in the form of humanitarian assistance and core support to multilateral organisations active in the country. Since 2002, Sweden has also been a contributor to ISAF, which helps the Afghan Government maintain security in the country.

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Carl Bildt and Karin Enström to take part in EU foreign minister meeting

EU foreign and defence ministers will gather for a meeting of the Foreign Affairs Council, to be held in Luxembourg on 22-23 April. The foreign ministers, including Mr Bildt, will meet on Monday 22 April. The defence ministers will meet on Tuesday 23 April, and Minister for Defence Karin Enström will represent Sweden.

In connection with the foreign ministers’ lunch, which Commissioner for Energy Günther Oettinger will attend, EU energy issues will be discussed from a broad foreign policy perspective. The Swedish Government welcomes the discussion on energy, which should promote all three components of energy policy: security of supply, competitiveness and sustainability.

The foreign ministers will also discuss the situations in Syria, Lebanon and Egypt. The Swedish Government remains concerned about developments in Syria. Given the increasingly difficult humanitarian situation, the Government emphasises the importance of continued humanitarian assistance. This also applies to Lebanon, which risks being affected by destabilising factors as a result of the conflict in Syria. The Government stresses the importance of safeguarding the country’s sovereignty, territorial integrity and political and economic stability.

The situation in Egypt will also be discussed. The Government welcomes the efforts of various EU representatives to reconcile the differences between the government and the opposition in the country. It is very important that the EU continues to support the process to achieve political and economic stability in the country.

Among the issues that the defence ministers will discuss is the European Commission's Defence Task Force. Its task is to pursue defence industry and market issues within the Commission. A number of directorates-general are involved in this work, which is being co-led by the Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry and the Directorate-General for Internal Market and Services.

This issue is an important component ahead of the European Council meeting in December this year, where heads of state and government will hold a comprehensive discussion on defence issues in the EU. The Swedish Government advocates an open market for defence equipment in Europe, and rules that are as simple and uniform as possible for both the defence industry and companies.

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Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is taking part in the State Visit by the H.M. King Carl XVI Gustaf and H.M Queen Silvia in Croatia beginning on Tuesday. During the visit, Mr Bildt will take part in meetings with Croatia's President Ivo Josipovic, Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic and Minister of Foreign and EU Affairs Vesna Pusic.

Mr Bildt will also give the opening address at a seminar on Croatia’s EU accession and continued EU enlargement. Croatia is set to become a new EU Member State on 1 July this year.

The State Visit is taking place from 16 to 18 April. The King and Queen will be accompanied not only by Mr Bildt but also by Minister for the Environment Lena Ek and a Swedish business delegation.

Sweden was one of the first countries to open an embassy in Croatia in 1992. An estimated 35,000 Croatians are living in Sweden, and many have lived in Sweden for some time before returning to Croatia. Some 125,000 Swedish tourists visit Croatia each year.

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New ambassadors

The following four ambassadors, from Kenya, will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Friday 12 April 2013.

Kenya

Kenya's newly appointed ambassador Dr Joseph Sang was born in 1964 and holds a PhD in International Relations from Keele University in the UK. He is very interested in sport and during the Olympic Games in London he acted as a link between the International Olympic Committee, the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games and the National Olympic Committee of Kenya.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

- Sep 2011- Minister Counsellor/Olympics Attaché at the Kenya High Commission in London
- Oct 2010 - Aug 2011 Deputy High Commissioner and Head of Chancery at the Kenya High Commission in London
- Oct 2007-Sep 2010 Director of the Europe & Commonwealth Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Philippines

The newly appointed ambassador from the Philippines, Bayani S. Mercado (concurrently accredited from Oslo) was born in 1953 and holds a Masters degree in International Relations. He has served at the Department of Foreign Affairs since 1979 and in recent years he has held the following posts:

- 2011- Ambassador in Oslo, concurrently accredited in Copenhagen and Reykjavik
- 2010-2011, 2007-2008 Consul General at the Philippine Consulate General in Agana, Guam
- 2008-2010 Assistant Secretary, Home Office, Department of Legislative Liaison

Bhutan

Bhutan's newly appointed ambassador Sonam Tshong (concurrently accredited from Brussels) was born in 1958 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1991. Over the years he has undertaken several important assignments within the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), including coordinating the 16th SAARC Summit in Bhutan in 2010.

In 1998 he was also actively involved in establishing Bhutan's national television.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

- June 2012- Ambassador to Belgium, concurrently accredited in the Netherlands, Denmark, Finland and Spain
- 2008-2012 Director General, Department of SAARC and Regional Organisations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- 2005-2008 Director, SAARC Secretariat in Kathmandu, Nepal

Mali

Mali's newly appointed ambassador BA Hawa Keita (concurrently accredited from Berlin) was born in 1952 and had a long career in the tourist industry. She was educated in Mali and Germany and has also taught German in Bamako and Abidjan.
In recent years she has held the following posts:

Dec 2012- Ambassador to Germany

2008-2011 Ambassador to Senegal, concurrently accredited to Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde and Gambia

2005-2007 Minister for Employment and Vocational Training

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Bildt to speak at nuclear arms conference in Washington DC

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit the US capital Washington DC on 8-10 April.

Mr Bildt will attend the 2013 Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference, where he will deliver a speech on Tuesday about international sanctions as a means for non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The annual conference brings together over 800 experts and representatives from more than 45 countries and international organisations to discuss the current state of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. The organiser is the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a non-profit organisation dedicated to advancing cooperation between nations and promoting active international engagement by the United States.

During his visit, Mr Bildt will have meetings with representatives of the US presidential administration and the State Department, among others. The aim is to discuss current issues and challenges around the world, such as developments in the Middle East and North Korea, and also in the common Arctic neighbourhood.

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Public Diplomacy, Press and Communication Counselor
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Phone: (202) 467-2655

External links

- [2013 Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference](#)
Bildt visits Greece

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is to visit the Greek capital Athens on 26-27 March.

Bildt will meet the country's President Karolos Papoulias, Prime Minister Antonis Samaras and Minister for Foreign Affairs Dimitris Avramopoulos.

"This is a region where Europe meets the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, and where the challenges are constantly increasing. Issues such as security and stability in this entire region, which is so important for us all, are therefore in focus for the visit to Greece - although the dramatic financial situation in the area will surely also be discussed," says Mr Bildt.

Greece is due to hold the Presidency of the EU during the first half of 2014.

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The Government presents written communications on enhanced Nordic cooperation

The Government today adopted two written communications related to Nordic cooperation. The communications will be submitted to the Riksdag. The first communication is the Government’s annual report on Sweden’s role in Nordic cooperation, while the second is a report on Nordic cooperation in foreign and security and defence policy, as well as emergency preparedness.

The communication on Nordic cooperation in foreign, security and defence policy describes how this cooperation has developed and the areas in which it can be strengthened further. Three such areas are cooperation between embassies, coordinated emergency preparedness and crisis management, and joint military training exercises.

"This is the first time the Government has provided a comprehensive account of what Sweden is doing and where we are headed with Nordic defence and security cooperation. A good example of this cooperation is the intended assistance by Sweden and other Nordic countries in Iceland’s airspace surveillance next year, which I had the opportunity to learn more about when I was in Iceland earlier this week,” says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

The annual communication focuses on Nordic cooperation from both a neighbourhood and a global perspective. Sweden is chair of the Nordic Council of Ministers this year. A large part of 2012 was shaped by preparations ahead of this. From the communication it is also clear that the removal of border barriers in the Nordic countries was one of the high priority issues during the year. During the past year, it has become possible for Nordic citizens to work in two countries at the same time for different employers without complicating which social insurance system they belong to. This has also made it possible for commuters to receive rehabilitation in their country of residence.

"My vision is a borderless Nordic region, and we are working daily to try to achieve this, and this includes making it easy for our residents to work and move across our national borders. It is therefore pleasing that, via the new EU regulations, we have now made it possible to live in Sweden, work in Denmark and also have a job in Sweden for a limited number of hours without changing the social insurance system people belong to. This is an important achievement in our efforts to remove border barriers,” says Minister for Nordic Cooperation Ewa Björling.

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Bildt to meet Kazakhstan's Minister of Foreign Affairs in Stockholm

On 20 March 2013, Kazakhstan's Minister of Foreign Affairs Erlan Idrissov will visit Stockholm. Mr Idrissov will have talks with Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and Ministry of the Environment State Secretary Anders Flanking. The programme also includes a business breakfast hosted by Mr Bildt aimed at promoting investment and trade between the countries. Sweden upgraded its diplomatic presence in Kazakhstan last year by appointing a permanent Ambassador in the country.

The foreign ministers will also speak about domestic policy developments in Kazakhstan, including human rights, the economy and the country's application for membership of the World Trade Organisation. Security policy developments in the region will also be discussed, not least in light of military withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2014.

Press briefing
Time: 13.30, 20 March 2013
Place: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs torg 1

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Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Iceland on 18-19 March. Mr Bildt will take part in a conference on the opportunities and challenges of the Arctic region. He will also meet Icelandic politicians to discuss Iceland's accession negotiations with the EU and other issues.

Mr Bildt will address the conference, called the Trans-Arctic Agenda: Challenges of Development, which is being arranged by the University of Iceland and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). He will have a bilateral meeting with Icelandic Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade Össur Skarphéðinsson. He will also visit the centre at Keflavik Airport that will serve as the control centre for the surveillance operation of Icelandic airspace in which Sweden, together with Norway and Finland, have offered to take part in next year.

"Iceland and Sweden share a long history and our cultures are related. We are closely intertwined both economically and politically. This is demonstrated not least by the proposed help to Iceland's airspace surveillance. The visit provides an opportunity to study in detail this good example of Nordic cooperation on the ground. The discussions with Icelandic politicians and social institutions also provide an opportunity to consider other ways to further develop our contacts, and what Sweden can do to help expedite Iceland's accession to the EU," says Mr Bildt.

Sweden has held the Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers since 1 January 2013. Sweden also holds the Chairmanship of the Arctic Council until May this year.

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Carl Bildt to discuss Syria and Russia at foreign minister meeting in Brussels

The EU foreign ministers will gather in Brussels on Monday 11 March for their monthly meeting. Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will participate on Sweden’s behalf.

The UN and Arab League Special Representative for Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi, will attend the foreign ministers' lunch, where there will be discussions of the developments in Syria, which are still a cause for great concern. The Swedish Government stands behind Mr Brahimi’s efforts to bring an end to the violence and get the parties to engage in a political dialogue. The Government also stresses the need for continued humanitarian aid in light of the increasingly intractable humanitarian situation.

The ministers will also discuss the strategic interests in the EU's relationship with Russia and the forms of cooperation between the EU and Russia. The discussion is expected to include human rights and trade issues. The Government considers that it is in the interests of both Sweden and the EU that Russia develops in a democratic direction and is integrated into international economic and political cooperation.

Japan will also be on the agenda, with the focus on the Summit later in March, at which the EU and Japan are expected to decide to initiate free trade negotiations.

The situations in Tunisia and Egypt will also be discussed.

The ministers are also expected to adopt conclusions ahead of the forthcoming elections in Pakistan.

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Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt visiting the Netherlands

On Thursday March 7, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is visiting The Hague in the Netherlands. The aim of the trip is to visit various international organisations, and also to meet the Dutch foreign minister and other officials.

Mr Bildt will visit the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to attend in the 20th anniversary celebration marking the establishment of the High Commissioner on National Minorities. Mr Bildt will take part in a panel discussion which, in connection with the anniversary, will discuss the institution's accomplishments and future challenges.

In addition, Mr Bildt will visit the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and Europol, the European Police Office, which has its headquarters in the city.

During the day, Mr Bildt will also meet Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Frans Timmermans to discuss such matters as developments in our common neighbourhood. Mr Bildt will also meet the new Ukrainian Minister for Foreign Affairs Leonid Kozhara, who will also be in The Hague at the same time. Their discussions will probably centre on developments in Ukraine, the country's establishment of closer ties with the EU and measures that must be taken in this process.

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Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Australia between 25 February and 1 March. The purpose of his visit is to highlight and strengthen the good relations between Sweden and Australia and to exchange views on developments in their neighbouring areas.

Mr Bildt’s first stop will be in Perth, Western Australia, where his programme includes a visit to SKF. He will then continue on to the Australian capital of Canberra to meet Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bob Carr, visit the Australian National University and engage in discussions with various think-tanks and political representatives. The trip will end in Sydney, the country’s largest city, where Mr Bildt will meet with the Swedish Australian Chamber of Commerce and other business and civil society representatives.

"Setting out from Sweden for Australia is not exactly an afternoon trip to Skövde. But despite the enormous geographical distance, Sweden and Australia have a great deal in common. Roughly 250 Swedish companies operate in Australia. After the United States and China, Australia is Sweden's largest export destination outside Europe. It is the fourth most popular study-abroad destination for Swedish students. We also share views on many global challenges," says Mr Bildt.

This is Mr Bildt’s first trip to Australia as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

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Bildt in hearing on European Global Strategy

On Thursday, Sweden’s Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will participate in a hearing in Brussels on a European Global Strategy.

Time and place

21 February
10.00-13.00
Room JAN4Q2 in the European Parliament’s József Antall building

The hearing will take place at a meeting of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the European Parliament. In addition to Mr Bildt, Radoslaw Sikorski, Elmar Brok and Arnaud Danjean will also participate. Mr Sikorski is the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland, Mr Brok is the President of the European Parliament’s Committee on Foreign Affairs and Mr Danjean is the President of the European Parliament’s Subcommittee on Security and Defence.

The European Global Strategy project was initiated by the foreign ministers of Sweden, Poland, Italy and Spain. Based on the premise that new strategic thinking is needed in times of flux, the ministers hope to spur political debate, and to forge the foundations of a common European strategic culture. The process is led by a think tank from each of the initiating countries, which all subscribe to this notion.

The four organising think tanks work in an independent and autonomous fashion with the goal of inspiring creative thinking about a strategy for EU external relations. At the end of the year-long process, a final report spelling out essential elements of a European Global Strategy will be delivered. This endeavour provides an opportunity to shape policy by engaging in debate and exchange of research and ideas.

The hearing will take place on 21 February between 10.00 and 13.00, in room JAN4Q2 in the European Parliament’s József Antall building. Mr Bildt, Mr Sikorski, Mr Brok and Mr Danjean will hold a joint press conference outside the room at 13.30.

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Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Visegrad, Nordic and Baltic countries met in Gdansk on the 20th of February 2013. During the meeting, hosted by Sweden’s Minister Carl Bildt and Poland’s Minister Radoslaw Sikorski, the Ministers agreed that Northern and Central European states must work actively towards strengthening the European Union and Europe as a whole.

Growth in Europe (single market, energy, transport)
Ministers agreed that growth in Europe can be stimulated by strengthening the single market as well as developing energy and transport infrastructure. It was agreed that the internal market stands at the core of efforts to restore growth and competitiveness as well as job creation in Europe and that further co-operation between the Nordic, Baltic and Visegrad countries is called upon. It was highlighted that in order to better use the potential of such co-operation necessary steps should be taken to improve transport and energy connections between these regions.

In that context, Ministers underlined the importance of a fully functioning EU internal energy market, based on diversified, integrated and liberalized energy markets. They further agreed that the common goal also contributing to the security of the region is to ensure stable supplies of energy resources at competitive price. The modernization of existing and building of new energy infrastructure, the promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energy will go hand in hand in contributing to the security of supply in the region as well as meeting climate policy challenges.

An exchange of views was also held on current developments in the global energy markets, and their implications for the countries in the region. The importance of dialogue and partnership with major energy suppliers, based on a rule- and market approach was emphasized.

Eastern Partnership
The Ministers discussed relations with the Eastern European partners, and in particular preparations for the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius in November 2013. They agreed that the Eastern Partnership has been pivotal in strengthening integration on the European continent, and expressed their support for the European aspirations and the European choice of some Eastern European partners.

They further called on the Eastern European partner countries to intensify reform efforts in line with the Eastern Partnership Road Map, in order to prepare the ground for an ambitious outcome of the Summit, and committed to jointly push for the EU to respond accordingly.

Hope was expressed that the Association Agreements and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements between the EU and the Republic of Moldova, Georgia and Armenia would be initialed by the time of the Summit. The Ministers called on Ukraine to demonstrate determined action and tangible progress in line with the EU Council Conclusions of December 2012, in order to pave the way for signing the Association Agreement/ DCFTA during the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius. Moreover, the Ministers highlighted the dynamic development of the Eastern Partnershipmultilateral cooperation and stressed importance of further strengthening of the flagship initiatives and creating new ones as well as further enhancement of people-to-people contacts and support for youth and students’ exchanges and scholarship programmes.

Russia
The latest developments in Russia were discussed. The situation of Human Rights in Russia was considered as worrying. The importance of Russia’s continued negotiations with the EU on the New Agreement, which will replace the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement from 1997, was highlighted.

European Security
Developments in relation to European and International Security were discussed. It was agreed that Visegrad, Nordic and Baltic countries due to their geographic proximity, shared values and interest had an important role to play in promoting democracy, rule of law and security.

Ministers agreed that cooperation between our countries would serve well strengthening our security in a changing international environment. Joint assessment of challenges and joint promotion of our regional
security perspective would make our interests more visible and more comprehensible to others in the broader Euro Atlantic security environment including EU and NATO.

In this context Ministers agreed to look for opportunities to jointly develop capabilities within NATO and EU respectively. Taking into account envisaged limitation of NATO operational engagement after 2014 Ministers called for the development of initiatives which would help to maintain interoperability among Allies’ and Partner’s forces. The need for tangible exercise and training was mentioned specifically.

Ministers discussed and expressed support for the elaboration of a European Global Strategy. Such a strategy would clarify what values and interests the EU should promote, and how to go about it.

The ministers agreed that Europe had an important role in international conflict prevention and mitigation. To enhance its capacity in this respect, the ministers stressed that Europe needed more flexible tools at its disposal, for example through the establishment of a European Institute of Peace, engaged in peace mediation and informal dialogue.

The European Council on defense in December 2013 was discussed and Ministers agreed that the preparations should focus on tangible measures for improving European crisis management capabilities, taking into account a wide security context and a comprehensive approach.

Ministers also called for staunch support for Iceland’s EU aspirations and EU enlargement in general.

Further steps
The Ministers expressed their satisfaction that the meeting in Gdański was an important occasion for Northern and Central European countries to discuss their engagement in European matters. The Ministers expressed their interest in gradually bringing the Nordic/Baltic and Visegrad regional cooperation closer together.

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Carl Bildt to visit Moldova

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Moldova on Tuesday together with the Polish and British foreign ministers, Radoslaw Sikorski and William Hague. During their visit, the ministers will meet representatives of the country’s government and opposition.

Moldova is a member of the Eastern Partnership between the EU and six neighbouring countries in Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus. The Eastern Partnership was initiated in 2009 with the aim of expediting the partner countries’ political and economic integration with the EU and strengthening democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the principles of market economy.

"By visiting Moldova, my colleagues and I want to show support at a crucial stage for the country’s reform process and closer ties with Europe," says Mr Bildt.

The trip to Moldova is the third on which Messrs Bildt and Sikorski are accompanied by a third foreign minister. Last year they made visits to Iraq and Lebanon and to the Southern Caucasus, on those occasions accompanied by Bulgarian foreign minister Nickolay Mladenov.

"It leaves a clearer impression of the principles and messages we consider important if three EU foreign ministers visit together rather than on their own. Joint visits of foreign ministers are therefore an important tool in our foreign policy," says Mr Bildt.
New ambassadors

Four ambassadors, from Botswana, Slovakia, New Zealand and Jamaica, will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Wednesday 13 February 2013.

Botswana
Lameck Nthekela was born in 1966 and earned a Masters in Business Administration at Edith Cowan University in Perth, Australia. For many years he has worked for the Botswana Export Development and Investment Authority (BEDIA), which is one of the organisations in Botswana that Sweden cooperates with most. In 2003-2007 he was BEDIA’s regional representative in London. Ambassador Nthekela was also responsible for Botswana’s participation in the 2010 Shanghai World Expo.

Ambassador Nthekela’s most recent posts include:

2011- Acting CEO of the BEDIA portfolio of the Botswana Investment and Trade Centre (BITC)
2010-2011 Director of Corporate Services (BEDIA), with particular responsibility for Finance, Information and Communications Technology and Human Resources.

Slovakia
Jaroslav Auxt was born in 1960 and is an IT engineer by education. He has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1993 and has been stationed in Berlin and Brussels. Ambassador Auxt’s most recent posts include:

April 2012- Head of the Office of the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2010-2012 Head of Section/Director, EU Policies Department
2009-2010 Head of the Office of the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2008-2009 Deputy Director of the EU Policies Department

New Zealand
Vangelis Vitalis (concurrently accredited from Brussels) was born in 1969, has studied politics and economics at Auckland and Harvard and in his professional capacity has specialised in trade negotiations. Most recently he has held the following posts:

2011- EU Ambassador in Brussels
2009-2011 New Zealand’s Deputy High Commissioner in Canberra
2008-2009 New Zealand’s chief negotiator for the free-trade agreements with ASEAN and Australia, and separately with Malaysia
2004-2009 New Zealand negotiator at the WTO
2001-2004 Chief Adviser at the OECD

Jamaica
Aloun Angela (concurrently accredited from London) was born in 1955, has a Bachelor of Laws from the University of the West Indies and a degree in Strategic Management from the University of Pittsburgh. Between 1982 and 2002 Ms Ndombet-Assamba held a number of positions at the City of Kingston Cooperative Credit Union Limited. During her final years there, she was General Manager.

Most recently she has held the following posts:
2012- Ambassador in London

2007-2008 General Counsel/Chief Corporate Officer, Paymaster Jamaica Limited

2002-2007 Cabinet Minister, Ministry of Tourism, Entertainment and Culture

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Press release
11 February 2013
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Bildt, Björling and Carlsson to present Statement of Foreign Policy

What will Sweden’s foreign policy be like in the year ahead and beyond? On Wednesday, 13 February, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will present this year’s Statement of Foreign Policy to the Riksdag. The Riksdag’s major foreign policy debate will follow the Statement.

Time and place
Time of press conference: Wednesday, 13 February, at approximately 11.00 (after the debate)
Place: Riksdag Press Centre, Stockholm

The Statement of Foreign Policy is both the Government’s annual report of Sweden's role in the world and a presentation of the coming year’s objectives and priorities in foreign, development assistance, trade and security policy. The Statement describes Sweden's views on development in its neighbourhood, the EU and other parts of the world, and also presents, for example, Sweden's contribution to international cooperation and its focus on human rights.

Press conference
At approximately 11.00 on Wednesday, 13 February (after the debate), Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, Minister for Trade and Nordic Cooperation Ewa Björling, and Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson will meet the press at the Riksdag Press Centre.

Statement of Foreign Policy
From 09.00 on Wednesday, when the Statement of Foreign Policy begins in the Riksdag, a PDF version will be available for download on the MFA web site. No printed copies will be distributed. The Statement will be tweeted live on the MFA Twitter account (#SweFP @SweMFA) and webcast live on the Riksdag website.

Twitter with Carl Bildt
Between 13.30 and 14.00, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in a Twitter question and answer session for the second year running. It will be possible to ask him directly about the Statement of Foreign Policy and Swedish foreign policy on the Twitter account @FragaCarlBildt. He will answer as many questions as he can during the half-hour session.

Gunilla Carlsson at Södertörn University
The Minister for International Development Cooperation will visit Södertörn University in the afternoon to present the Statement of Foreign Policy, with a focus on Swedish development assistance. The meeting will take place between 14.00 and 15.00 in room MA636 (6th floor of the main building), Alfred Nobels Allé 7.

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Reminder: Bildt, Björling and Carlsson to present Statement of Foreign Policy

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State Visit from the Republic of Turkey 11-13 March 2013

The State Visit from Turkey that was postponed last autumn will now take place on 11-13 March 2013, when President Abdullah Gül and his wife Hayrünnisa Gül will visit Sweden at the invitation of King Carl XVI Gustaf.

The official Turkish delegation will include a number of ministers of the government and state institutions as well as the business community.

This is the first State Visit by a Head of State from Turkey to Sweden. Their Majesties the King and Queen paid a State Visit to Turkey in 2006, which was the first Swedish State Visit to Turkey.

The State Visit is intended to deepen and intensify the excellent relations between Sweden and Turkey. Bilateral cooperation is marked not least by Swedish support for Turkeys EU membership process, but also by growing trade relations.

The programme will include meetings with Speaker of the Riksdag Per Westerberg, Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt and Swedish business leaders.

To the editorial office

Media representatives need special accreditation via the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to cover the State Visit. Deadline for application for accreditation is Friday 1 March 2013.

See link for accreditation.

More information about the programme will be published on the Government website.

Related

- Media accreditation to the State Visit

External links

- Swedish Royal Court
- Embassy of Sweden in Ankara
- Embassy of Turkey in Stockholm
- Presidency of the Republic of Turkey

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Sweden contributes to Operation Atalanta off the coast of Somalia

The Government decided today to place Swedish armed forces, comprised of a maximum of 260 people for at the most four months during 2013, at the disposal of the EU maritime operation, Operation Atalanta, off the coast of Somalia.

The force has a mandate from the UN Security Council. Since 2008, Operation Atalanta has protected vessels from the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and contributed to keeping trade routes open.

"The problems of piracy and armed robbery along Somalia's coast, together with the humanitarian situation in the country, pose an enormous challenge for the country and the region as a whole. It is therefore important that Sweden, as part of the international community, takes responsibility and contributes to controlling these problems," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

The proposed Swedish contribution to Atalanta will be launched in April and will be provided by HMS Carlskrona, including a helicopter unit, a vessel boarding security team and capacity for providing health care and surgery.

Contact
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New Ambassadors

Three new ambassadors, from Australia, Guatemala and Costa Rica, will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 24 January 2013.

Australia

Australia's newly appointed Ambassador Gerald Bruce Thomson was born in 1966 and joined the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade as a graduate trainee in 1993. He has served as a trade adviser at the International Division of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet in 1999-2000. During a leave of absence in 2000-2001, Ambassador Thomson lived in Sweden and he speaks Swedish. Most recently he has held the following posts:

2010- Assistant Secretary, North East Asia Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

2008-2010 Director, Korean Peninsula and Mongolia Section, North Asia Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

2005-2008 Counsellor, Australian High Commission, Papua New Guinea

2003-2005 Director, Papua New Guinea Section, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

2001-2003 Executive Officer, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Ambassador Thomson is married.

Guatemala

Guatemala's newly appointed Ambassador Jorge Ricardo Putzeys Urigüen was born in 1960 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1993. He is a career diplomat and his most recent posts include:

2010- Head of the Multilateral Department at Ministry of Foreign Affairs

2008-2010 Ambassador in Tel Aviv

2007-2008 Ambassador in Montevideo

2005-2007 Ambassador in Taiwan

Ambassador Putzeys Urigüen is married.

Costa Rica

Costa Rica's newly appointed Ambassador Manuel Antonio Barrantes Rodríguez (concurrently accredited from Oslo) was born in 1943 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship since 1982. His most recent posts include:

2011- Ambassador in Oslo

2009-2011 Ambassador in Moscow

2007-2009 Director of Promotion, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship

2001-2002 Minister Counsellor at the Embassy in Managua

Ambassador Barrantes Rodríguez is married.
Contact
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Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will begin a four-day visit to Chile on Thursday. The main reason for the visit is to participate in the CELAC-EU Business Summit in Santiago, which takes place on 26-27 January.

Prime ministers and other high-ranking representatives from Latin American and Caribbean states, as well as the EU, will meet there. CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) was formed in 2011, and this is the first meeting of its kind between between the EU and the new organisation.

In connection with the summit, Mr Bildt will also hold bilateral meetings with a number of foreign ministers from various Latin American states. He will also meet Swedish-Chileans living in the country, as well as Chilean IT entrepreneurs and internet activists.

"Chile's rapid economic and political journey since the transition to democracy is impressive. It is also a country with which Sweden has close ties, both human and, to an increasing degree, economic. The summit, with representatives of both our own and this region, provides a good opportunity to discuss common global challenges," says Mr Bildt.

Time for Twitter with Mr Bildt:
Friday 25 January, at 17.45-18.00 Swedish time (13.45-14.00 local time), Mr Bildt will answer questions on Twitter. See the link below.

- Carl Bildt on Twitter
Turkey's EU minister Egemen Bagis to visit foreign minister Carl Bildt

Time and place

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will meet with Turkey’s Minister for EU Affairs Egemen Bagis during his visit to Stockholm on 16 January.

"I am looking forward to receiving Mr Bagis and discussing various important issues of common interest. Sweden has long been one of the warmest advocates of Turkey’s membership of the EU and this will be an opportunity to discuss how their accession negotiations can be given renewed impetus," says Mr Bildt.

During his visit to Stockholm, Mr Bagis will also meet with Minister for EU Affairs Birgitta Ohlsson and Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson.

After the meeting between Mr Bildt and Mr Bagis, a press conference will be held at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1, on Wednesday 16 January at 16.40. Please bring your press credentials.

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Carl Bildt to meet Turkish and Brazilian foreign ministers

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt today begins a visit to Izmir, Turkey, at the invitation of Turkey’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoğlu. Alongside his Brazilian counterpart Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Mr Bildt will speak at the annual Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ambassadors Conference, which is taking place in the city.

"The visit offers an opportunity for both formal and informal meetings with ministers and diplomats from two countries that are increasingly important in both their regional contexts and on the global stage. Ministers Davutoğlu and Patriota are also colleagues with whom I have regular contacts," says Mr Bildt.

This is the second tripartite meeting between the Turkish, Brazilian and Swedish foreign ministers in a short space of time. The first took place in September 2012 in the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York.

As well as bilateral meetings with the Turkish and Brazilian foreign ministers, between now and Sunday Mr Bildt will also meet local politicians and business operators from Izmir and visit Izmir University. Izmir is the third largest city in Turkey and has undergone a major economic upturn in recent years.

"It is interesting to visit a city that so clearly illustrates Turkey’s economic growth and endeavours to build a stable democracy. Welcoming Turkey into the EU family would therefore send an important signal to the entire region, while also contributing to a more secure world, and Sweden is working to ensure that this happens. Turkey is a country with which Sweden enjoys close ties, including many personal contacts. The country also has a particularly important role given the recent dramatic developments in its neighbourhood," says Mr Bildt.
Press invitation: Raoul Wallenberg 2012 - Closing conference
We can make a difference - the legacy of Raoul Wallenberg

Time and place
19 December 2012 at 13.30-17.30
The Former Second Chamber, Riksdag, entrance Riksplan

Per Westerberg, Speaker of the Riksdag, will hold the opening address

Speeches will be given by:
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt
Professor Irwin Cotler, MP, former Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
Michael Wernstedt, Raoul Wallenberg Difference Makers
Loreen - a speech on human rights engagement

Panel debate: Does today's Sweden need a Raoul Wallenberg?

Moderator: Lisa Bjurwald
Erik Ullenhag - Minister for Integration
Jonathan Leman - Expo
Dilsa Dermirbag Sten - Berättarministeriet
Helene Lööw - Associate Professor of History

Speech by Olle Wästberg, Coordinator for Raoul Wallenberg 2012.

Proceedings will be simultaneously interpreted into English.

Press accreditation for the Riksdag is mandatory
For special accreditation for the event please contact Anja Jahn Günther.

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Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt to meet Canadian future Arctic Council chair to discuss Arctic challenges

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will meet Canadian Minister of Health Leona Aglukkaq. Ms Aglukkaq is Inuk and comes from northern Canada. In May 2013, Sweden will hand over the Chairmanship of the Arctic Council to Canada, under Ms Aglukkaq’s leadership, for the period 2013-2015. The agenda for the meeting includes discussion of the work of the Arctic Council to protect the environment from oil spills, and Canada’s plans for its upcoming Chairmanship.

During its Chairmanship of the Arctic Council in 2011-2013, Sweden has sought to enhance environmental protection with regard to oil extraction in the Arctic. This has been achieved by developing safety standards based on best practice in the industry and negotiating an international agreement on cooperation in the event of oil spills. Sweden has also led efforts to establish the new permanent secretariat of the Arctic Council in Tromso, which will open in January 2013.

"Rapid changes in the Arctic have led to increasing international focus on the region. The Arctic Council has been successful in creating good cooperation between the countries in the region," says Mr Bildt.

The Swedish Chairmanship of the Arctic Council will conclude on 15 May with a foreign ministers meeting in Kiruna, at which Canada will take over the Chairmanship.

Time and place
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Canadian Minister of Health Leona Aglukkaq will be available to the media at a brief press conference at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustaf Adolfs Torg, at 10.40 on Tuesday 11 December.

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New ambassadors

Three new ambassadors, from Switzerland, Honduras and Slovenia, will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Friday, 7 December 2012.

Switzerland
Switzerland's newly appointed Ambassador Yvana Enzler was born in 1952 and has served at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs since 1979.

Her recent posts include:

2007-2012 Ambassador in Tirana
2002-2007 Head of mission of the Swiss Liaison Office to the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)
1998-2002 Served at the Embassy in Sarajevo

Honduras
Honduras' newly appointed Ambassador Roberto Flores-Bermúdez (concurrently accredited in Brussels) was born in 1949 and has served in the Honduran Foreign Service since 1977.

Ambassador Flores-Bermúdez served as Foreign Minister in 1999-2002, and from 2005 to 2010, he was the Honduran Agent before the International Court of Justice in the case Nicaragua v Honduras.

Most recently he has held the following posts:

2012- Ambassador in Brussels
2010-2012 Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN and other international organisations in Geneva and Vienna
2006-2009 Ambassador to Washington

Slovenia
Slovenia's newly appointed Ambassador Bogdan Benko (concurrently accredited in Copenhagen) was born in 1952 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1976.

Most recently he has held the following posts:

2009- Ambassador to Denmark, concurrently accredited in Norway, Iceland and Lithuania
2006-2009 Acting Director General, and thereafter Director General, of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2002-2006 Ambassador to Portugal, accredited also to Morocco
2000-2001 Head of Section for the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Hungary, as well as State Undersecretary for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Carl Bildt to Beijing

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is to visit Beijing on 6-8 December. During his visit, Mr Bildt will hold political talks and meet representatives of the Swedish business community. Mr Bildt will also be the first foreign minister to answer questions on Chinese microblog Sina Weibo.

During his visit, Mr Bildt will also participate in the Stockholm China Forum, an annual meeting at which government representatives, researchers and journalists from Europe, the United States and Asia discuss developments in China.

"It is an interesting time to visit Beijing and to discuss developments in the country and the region as well as relations between China, Europe and the US. The Stockholm China Forum is an excellent platform for such discussions. The fact that the meeting is being held for the first time in Beijing, and so soon after the Chinese leadership shift, naturally offers the opportunity to deepen the discussion further," says Mr Bildt ahead of his trip.

First foreign minister to interact on Sina Weibo

This is the first time a foreign minister will be available to respond to questions on Chinese microblog Sina Weibo. Mr Bildt will also be available to answer questions on Twitter.

- On Thursday 6 December, at 16.30-17.30 local time (09.30-10.30 Swedish time), Mr Bildt will respond to questions on Sina Weibo. See the adjacent link.
- On Friday 7 December, at 17.45-18.00 local time (10.45-11.00 Swedish time), Mr Bildt will answer questions on Twitter. See the adjacent link.

Stockholm China Forum

For the first time since it was established in 2007, the Stockholm China Forum is taking place in China. The German Marshall Fund and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs are the main organisers of the series of meetings. The Forum in Beijing is being jointly organised with the China Institute of International Studies. The Riksbankens Jubileumsfond is contributing to the financing.

Contact

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New Press Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs

Today, Erik Zsiga will take up the post of Press Secretary to Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

Mr Zsiga was most recently served as global head of the press service at Electrolux. He has previously worked as a journalist at Svenska Dagbladet and Moderna Tider and has written several books, one on the subject of Eastern Europe.

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Press release
29 November 2012
Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Defence

Swedish contribution to ANA Trust Fund

The Government has taken a decision on a Swedish contribution of almost SEK 16 million to the fund established to finance the build-up the Afghan National Army (ANA). The aim is to help build up security forces primarily in northern Afghanistan, the area of the country where Sweden is active.

"Through the fund, Sweden is contributing to capacity building of the Afghan National Army. This is essential if the country is to meet its security challenges," said Minister for Defence Karin Enström, commenting on the decision.

"The aim of the support is to contribute to the development of a democratically governed and well-functioning Afghan security sector, and is part of Sweden's long-term commitment in Afghanistan," said Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

Background

Capacity building of Afghanistan's security forces is of fundamental importance to enable increased security and stability in Afghanistan and constitutes a component in the strategy that enables the transfer of security responsibility to the Afghan authorities and the international military presence to take on more of a supporting role.

Within the framework of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, Sweden is providing support to ANA in the form of its combined contribution of units supporting the army during various security operations, through military advisory groups, and in the form of instructors at ANA's various training centres for staff and functions.

This year the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is providing SEK 10.5 million in financial support to the ANA Trust Fund, while the Ministry of Defence is providing SEK 5.4 million. A sum of SEK 1 million is earmarked particularly for the ANA Literacy Fund, whose purpose is to improve literacy within the Afghan army.

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Sweden to host international conference on internet freedom

On 22-23 May 2013, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, together with Sida and the Internet Infrastructure Foundation (.SE), is organising the second Stockholm Internet Forum on Internet Freedom for Global Development (SIF13). The first Stockholm Internet Forum (SIF12) was held in April this year.

During two days, a broad spectrum of international participants, including representatives of governments, stakeholder organisations and the business sector as well as researchers and internet activists, will gather in Sweden to discuss freedom and security on the internet and the importance of an open and free internet for global development.

Freedom and security on the internet is one of the top priority areas in Swedish foreign policy. This is reflected in Sweden’s efforts in several forums, such as the EU, the UN Human Rights Council, the Council of Europe and the OECD. The development dimension in particular, with an emphasis on increased accessibility to the internet, is central to Sweden’s efforts. The importance of the internet for development was also a main theme of the resolution on internet freedom that was adopted following a Swedish initiative by the UN Human Rights Council earlier this year.

"The increasingly rapid technological development creates entirely new conditions for development, growth and prosperity in the world. The world is becoming hyperconnected. To make the most of the opportunities this development opens up, we need to safeguard both freedom and individual security on the internet and ensure that internet development is steered via broad participation from various actors," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

"We have just seen the beginning of all the possibilities that information and communication technologies can offer people, enabling them to create better living conditions and actively participate in setting the democracy and human rights agenda," says Sida Director-General Charlotte Petri Gornitzka.

"The fundamental reasons why .SE is involved in internet freedom is our view of the opportunities an open and free internet provides to both individuals and society. It particularly stimulates innovation and economic growth and supports democracy and freedom of expression," says Danny Aerts, CEO of .SE.

Nominate participants to SIF13

Do you know someone who you think should participate in the Stockholm Internet Forum? Up to and including 31 December 2012, you can nominate potential participants on the SIF13.se website (see direct link on this page).

Related
- Freedom on the internet - collected news

External links
- Recommend participants to SIF13

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Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is travelling to Washington DC today, 27 November. From Wednesday to Friday, Mr Bildt will have bilateral meetings with the US administration and speak on transatlantic and global issues at a CSIS seminar (see link below).

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External links
- CSIS website
- Embassy of Sweden, Washington DC
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt to visit Paris

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Paris on Thursday 22 November. Mr Bildt will participate in a seminar on European security policy organised by Sciences Po and the Paris School of International Affairs. Members of the Swedish Defence Commission and the Swedish Institute of International Affairs will also be participating.

Mr Bildt will also hold talks on European security policy and the situation in the Middle East with his French counterpart Laurent Fabius.

Press conference
A press conference will be held after the seminar.

Time and place
Approximately 12.45
Sciences Po, 27 rue Saint-Guillaume, 75007 Paris

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• email to Anders Jörle
Press release
21 November 2012
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Change of venue: Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt to visit Paris

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Paris on Thursday 22 November. Mr Bildt will participate in a seminar on European security policy organised by Sciences Po and the Paris School of International Affairs. Members of the Swedish Defence Commission and the Swedish Institute of International Affairs will also be participating.

Mr Bildt will also hold talks on European security policy and the situation in the Middle East with his French counterpart Laurent Fabius.

Press conference
A press conference will be held after the seminar.

Time and place
Approximately 12.45
Sciences Po, 27 rue Saint-Guillaume, 75007 Paris

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Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is to visit Egypt on 13-15 November. On 13 November Mr Bildt will take part in an EU-Arab League foreign ministers meeting, and on 14 November he will attend a high-level meeting of the EU-Egypt Task Force. Bilateral meetings with Egyptian representatives are also scheduled during the trip.

During his visit, Mr Bildt will raise issues including economic development and internet freedom. Both are important components of democratic development and increased respect for human rights in the region. There will also be discussions of the situation in Syria.

Put a question to Carl Bildt on Twitter
Carl Bildt will take part in a question and answer session via Twitter during his trip. The timing of this session will be announced later.

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Press release
08 November 2012
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

EEAS secretary general Pierre Vimont to visit Stockholm

On Friday 9 November, Executive Secretary General of the EEAS Pierre Vimont will visit Stockholm. During the visit he will meet Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Frank Belfrage, as well as Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs Sofia Arkelsten.

The meetings at the MFA will centre on the review of the EEAS, the peace process in the Middle East, Iran, Syria, transatlantic relations and migration issues related to the Balkans.

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New ambassadors

The following four ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Wednesday 7 November 2012.

Mozambique’s newly appointed Ambassador Frances Victória Velho Rodrigues was born in 1952 and has served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mozambique since 1977. She has been her country’s Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria and Greece, and in recent years has held the following posts:

2011- Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the IAEA, Vienna
2009-2011 Ambassador and Permanent Representative to UNIDO, Vienna
2006-2009 Ambassador to Switzerland and Permanent Representative to the UN and other international organisations in Geneva
2001-2004 Consul-General in Wales

Thailand’s newly appointed Ambassador Somchai Charanasomboon was born in 1953 and has served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand since 1977. A career diplomat, he has held the following posts in recent years:

2009- Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates
2009 Minister at the Department of South Asian, Middle East and Africa Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2003-2009 Minister at the Embassy of Thailand in Vienna
2000-2003 Minister at the Embassy of Thailand in Hanoi

Nepal’s newly appointed Ambassador Mukti Nath Bhatta (concurrently accredited from Copenhagen) was born in 1957 and has served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1983. The posts he has held in recent years include the following:

2012- Ambassador in Copenhagen
2010-2012 Chief of Protocol, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2007-2009 Chargé d’Affaires at the Embassy of Nepal in Tel Aviv

Kyrgyzstan’s newly appointed Ambassador Bolot Otunbaev (concurrently accredited from Berlin) was born in 1965 and has served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1998. In recent years he has held the following posts:

2012- Ambassador in Berlin
2010-2012 Political Council Member of the Social Democratic Party of the Kyrgyz Republic
2005-2009 Minister Counsellor at the Kyrgyz Embassy in Turkey
2005 Head of the Eastern Countries Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2003-2005 Director of the Western Countries and OSCE Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt to Laos

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will travel to Vientiane, Laos, on 5-7 November to take part in the 9th ASEM Summit.

The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) is a forum for informal dialogue between the EU Member States, Norway, Switzerland and 22 Asian countries. ASEM gives European and Asian leaders an opportunity to discuss global political trends and economic challenges.

Mr Bildt is expected to discuss issues including globalisation, regional cooperation and freedom on the internet at the meeting.

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Related
- Freedom on the Internet

External links
- More information on ASEM
Positive Swedish response to Iceland's request for participation in surveillance of Icelandic airspace along with Norway and Finland in 2014

In connection with the session of the Nordic Council of Ministers in Helsinki today, Sweden and Finland expressed their willingness to take part alongside Norway in surveillance of Icelandic airspace in the first four months of 2014.

"Swedish participation in airspace surveillance over Iceland would be a concrete example of enhanced Nordic security and defence policy cooperation," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt. "This is entirely in line with the Stoltenberg Report, which in 2009 laid out concrete proposals for this kind of enhanced cooperation. Our participation would also be an expression of the solidarity that exists between the Nordic countries."

Mr Bildt notes that participation in Iceland would build on existing cooperation between the Swedish, Finnish and Norwegian air forces.

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New Ambassadors

The following four ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 25 October 2012:

Henryk Józef Nowacki, Holy See

The Holy See's newly appointed Apostolic Nuncio Monsignor Henryk Józef Nowacki, Titular Archbishop of Blera, was born in Germany in 1946. He has served in the diplomatic service of the Holy See since 1983 and was successively posted at the Pontifical Representations in Paraguay and Angola. Following a period at the Secretariat of State in the Vatican, he was named Apostolic Nuncio in Slovakia in February 2001. In March the same year he was ordained Archbishop of Blera.

Since November 2007 Archbishop Nowacki has served as Apostolic Nuncio in Nicaragua.

PAK Kwang Chol, Democratic People's Republic of Korea

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's newly appointed Ambassador Pak Kwang Chol was born in 1956 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1989. In recent years the posts he has held include the following:

2009- Deputy Director, Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1997-2008 Section Chief, Department for Consular Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1989-1996 Section Chief, Department for Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mazen Tal, Jordan

Jordan's newly appointed Ambassador Mazen Tal (concurrently accredited from Berlin) was born in 1952, received a PhD in international relations from the University of Paris in 1988, and has served at several Jordanian Embassies and Missions, including Paris, Geneva, New York and New Delhi. Most recently he has held the following posts:

2011- Ambassador in Berlin

2010-2011 Ambassador, Director of European Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

2005-2010 Ambassador to South Africa

2000-2004 Chargé d'Affaires in Tel Aviv

Gaoh Aminatou, Niger

Niger's newly appointed Ambassador Gaoh Aminatou (concurrently accredited from Berlin) was born in 1961 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1994. The posts she has held include the following:

2011 Ambassador in Berlin

2010-2011 Head of Decentralised Cooperation and NGOs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

2002-2010 Counsellor at the Embassy of Niger in Paris, responsible for economic, trade and cultural affairs

2000-2002 Head of the Africa Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
State Visit to Croatia

King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will pay a State Visit to Croatia on 16-18 April 2013 at the invitation of President Ivo Josipovic and his wife Tatjana Josipovic.

The Swedish Government will be represented at this State Visit. In addition, a Swedish business delegation will visit Croatia in connection with the State Visit.

The aim of the State Visit is to deepen and intensify the already excellent relations between Sweden and Croatia, which is expected to become the 28th Member State of the EU on 1 July 2013.

***

Media representatives will need special accreditation to cover the visit on site. More information concerning accreditation and the programme will be published on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website.

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External links
- Swedish Royal Court
- Swedish Embassy in Croatia
- The Swedish Trade Council
- Government of the Republic of Croatia
- Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Republic of Croatia
Sweden establishes diplomatic relations with Nauru and Kiribati

Sweden has established diplomatic relations with the island nations of Nauru and Kiribati, located in the Pacific Ocean.

In connection with the annual autumn meeting of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt met Nauru's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Kieren Keke, and Kiribati's President, Anote Tong, to establish diplomatic relations.

Their talks focused on climate change and the importance of success in the climate negotiations. Mr Bildt described the situation in the Arctic and Sweden's influence as an Arctic country.

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Press release
08 October 2012
Prime Minister’s Office
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Fredrik Reinfeldt and Carl Bildt to receive Mongolia’s president

On 9-11 October, Mongolian President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj will visit Stockholm for talks with Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt and Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt. The visit will focus on democracy and rights issues, economy and trade issues, and also sustainable urban development.

President Elbegdorj will be travelling with his wife and a delegation that also includes Minister for Foreign Affairs Luvsanvandan Bold. In addition to talks with Mr Reinfeldt and Mr Bildt, President Elbegdorj will also visit the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), the Supreme Court, Global Water Partnership and Hammarby Sjöstad.

President Elbegdorj will be accompanied by a large business delegation and will take part in the opening of a Swedish-Mongolian business forum together with Minister for Trade Ewa Björling. The programme also includes an audience with the King and Queen, and a dinner with the Speaker of the Riksdag.

Programme points

Tuesday 9 October
14.00 Photo opportunity when Prime Minister Reinfeldt receives President Elbegdorj, entrance to Rosenbad. Admission via Kopparporten no later than 13.40. Press credentials are required.

Wednesday 10 October
13.30 Press briefing with President Elbegdorj and Foreign Minister Carl Bildt, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg. Press credentials are required.

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Carl Bildt to Budapest and Paris

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is to travel to Budapest tomorrow to speak at an international conference on cyberspace. From there, Mr Bildt will continue on to Paris to take part in the International Herald Tribune’s 125th anniversary celebrations and a number of bilateral meetings on Thursday.

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Related
- Read more about Sweden’s international work on internet issues - Freedom on the Internet

External links
- Website of the Budapest Conference on Cyberspace
Fredrik Reinfeldt and Carl Bildt to receive Kosovo's Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi on 1-2 October

On 1-2 October, Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt and Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will receive Kosovo’s Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi in Stockholm for talks. Kosovo’s EU integration process will be discussed as well as current bilateral issues. Among the political issues, particular focus will be placed on the dialogue with Serbia, EU-related reforms and the situation in northern Kosovo. The bilateral issues include migration, trade and development cooperation.

Prime Minister Thaçi’s delegation will include Minister of Foreign Affairs Enver Hoxhaj and Minister of European Integration Vlora Çitaku.

This is the first official visit from Kosovo to Sweden at prime ministerial level and the programme also includes meetings with the Speaker of the Riksdag, Minister for EU Affairs Birgitta Ohlsson and Minister for Trade Ewa Björling.

Programme points

Monday 1 October
Press conference at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs with Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi and Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.


Please email prior notification of attendance to: pressrummet@foreign.ministry.se

Valid press credentials are required.

Tuesday 2 October

Photo opportunity: Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt to receive Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi.

Tuesday 2 October at 14.00. N.B. Assembly for photographers, Rosenbad, entry via Kopparporten no later than 13.40.

Please email prior notification of attendance to: pressrummet@foreign.ministry.se

Valid press credentials are required.

Please be punctual!

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Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson are travelling to New York this weekend to attend the annual meeting of the United Nations General Assembly. Alongside the UN programme, there are various activities in the margins, which for Mr Bildt will be dominated by the situation in the Middle East. Ms Carlsson will begin her work on the international High-level Panel that has been mandated to propose new global development goals.

Time and place
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson will meet the press at 07.45 on Monday 24 September at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations, 885 2nd Avenue, 46th floor.

Mr Bildt's agenda also includes meetings on internet freedom, non-proliferation and the situation in the Horn of Africa, as well as numerous meetings with fellow foreign ministers.

On Wednesday 26 September Mr Bildt will participate in a panel discussion on the future organisation of the internet, focusing on freedom, security and development, co-arranged by Sweden and the International Peace Institute. The Swedish speech to the General Assembly will be delivered on the evening of Friday 28 September.

On 25 September, Ms Carlsson will begin her work on the international High-level Panel that has been mandated to propose new global development goals. The Panel is co-chaired by Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia and President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia. Its remit is to draw conclusions regarding the existing Millennium Development Goals, taking stock of the results achieved and, on the basis of current development challenges, propose new global sustainable development goals, with a focus on poverty reduction. The Panel is to complete its report by June 2013, for discussion at the United Nations General Assembly in September that year.

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Press Secretary to Hillevi Engström
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Government bill on Croatia's EU accession presented to Riksdag

The Government presented a bill to the Riksdag today proposing the approval of Croatia's Treaty of Accession to the European Union. The bill describes Croatia's extensive reforms and negotiation results.

"Following extensive reforms and a fundamental social transformation, Croatia is ready to conform to the EU regulatory framework and thereby also become a member of the EU from 1 July 2013. This is entirely in line with the decision taken by the EU heads of state and government on 9 December 2011. Croatian membership is important not only for Croatia, but also for the Balkan region and the EU as a whole," comments Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

"The success of the enlargement policy, with clear reform requirements coupled to prospects of future EU membership, has now also been applied to one of the war-torn countries of the Western Balkans. Croatia's accession to the EU therefore also sends an important signal to the entire region," says Mr Bildt.

"Sweden has been deeply engaged in Croatia's accession process. During the Swedish Presidency in 2009, a decisive political breakthrough was achieved in the then deadlocked negotiation process through the resolution of a bilateral dispute between Croatia and Slovenia. This paved the way for Croatia to complete the negotiations," says Mr Bildt.

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Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt travels to Russia and Ukraine

On 12-13 September, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is paying an informal visit to Moscow for talks with a number of representatives of the Russian business sector and society and for discussions with the Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov.

Mr Bildt will then continue on to Ukraine to participate on 14-15 September in the Yalta Summit, a major international conference on Ukraine and developments in the region. In connection with the conference, talks will be held with representatives of the government and opposition in Ukraine.

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Carl Bildt to attend informal meeting of foreign ministers (Gymnich) in Cyprus

On 7-8 September, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be in Cyprus for the informal meeting of foreign ministers (Gymnich). The main issue on the agenda is the dramatic developments in Syria, and the ministers will discuss how the EU can best support the new UN envoy to Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi. Water and education are also on the agenda. Access to water and education are of key importance to international security.

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New ambassadors

The following four ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Wednesday 5 September 2012:

Ambassador Isaac Bachman, Israel
Israel’s newly appointed Ambassador Isaac Bachman was born in 1957 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1988. He is a career diplomat, focusing on Latin America, with previous posts including Uruguay, Brazil, Bolivia and Guatemala.

Most recently he has held the following posts:

2009-2011 Chief of Policy Staff to the Minister of Foreign Affairs
2006-2009 Ambassador of Israel to Guatemala, accredited also to Honduras
2004-2006 Director South American Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2001-2004 Director Official Guests Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ambassador Philip De Heer, The Netherlands
The Netherlands’ newly appointed Ambassador Philip De Heer was born in 1950 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1975.

Ambassador De Heer has a Doctorate in Sinology and his career has been focused on Asia, including two postings in Beijing and Hong Kong. He has also worked at the Dutch royal court. Most recently he has held the following posts:

2008- Ambassador in Tokyo
2005-2007 Secretary-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2001-2005 Ambassador in Beijing
2000-2001 Director of the Asia and Oceania Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ambassador Banashri Bose Harrison, India
India’s newly appointed Ambassador Banashri Bose Harrison was born in 1956 and has served at the Ministry of External Affairs since 1981. Most recently she has held the following posts:

2010- Joint Secretary/Additional Secretary (Central Europe) at the Ministry of External Affairs
2006-2010 Minister at the Embassy in Washington
2003-2006 Deputy High Commissioner in Pretoria

Ambassador Dr Ibrahima Sory Sow, Guinea
Guinea’s newly appointed Ambassador Dr Ibrahima Sory Sow (concurrently accredited from Berlin) was born in 1941 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1984. Most recently he has held the following posts:

2011- Ambassador in Berlin, concurrently accredited in Denmark, Norway, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, Liechtenstein and the Vatican
2010-2011 Minister of Health
1995-2010 Member of the National Assembly, Deputy Head of the Foreign Affairs Commission
State Visit from Turkey postponed

The State Visit that Turkey’s President Abdullah Gül and his wife Hayrünnisa Gül were to pay to Sweden on 10-12 September has been postponed due to health issues that the Turkish president is experiencing.

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Related

• Press release 20 August
New Ambassador to Iran

The Government today appointed Peter Tejler as Ambassador to Iran. Mr Tejler is currently Ambassador to South Africa. He has previously served at the embassies in Damascus, Bonn and Washington, and has been Ambassador to Pakistan. Mr Tejler was subsequently head of the Middle East and North Africa Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He will take up his new post in autumn 2012.

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State Visit from Turkey - applications for accreditation by 31 August

Turkish President Abdullah Gül and his wife, Hayrünnisa Gül, will be paying a State Visit to Sweden on 10-12 September, accompanied by the Deputy Prime Minister Ali Babacan and EU Minister Egemen Bagis, together with a number of members of parliament and officials who will have separate meetings. More than 100 Turkish entrepreneurs will also take part in the State Visit to participate in discussions and seminars with representatives of leading players in the Swedish business community.

On the first day, following the drive through the streets of Stockholm to the welcoming ceremonies at the Royal Palace, the visitors will meet the Speaker of the Riksdag and have talks with Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt. In the evening, Their Majesties The King and Queen will host a banquet.

The visit also includes meetings with the Turkish community in Sweden. The third day of the State Visit will be spent in Uppsala and include a visit to Uppsala University.

During the visit to Sweden, Mrs Gül will visit institutions associated with elderly care and children’s literature.

Media representatives need special accreditation to cover the visit directly. The closing date for accreditation is 31 August. Please see the link.

The programme and practical information for the mass media will be made available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website before the visit.

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Related
• Accreditation for the State Visit
• Press release 14 June 2012

External links
• The Swedish Royal Court
• The Embassy of Sweden in Ankara
• Sweden's Consulate-General in Istanbul
• Embassy of Turkey in Sweden
• Presidency of the Republic of Turkey
New ambassador to Vietnam

The Government today appointed Camilla Mellander as Ambassador to Vietnam. Ms Mellander is currently serving as Deputy Head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Department for Consular Affairs and Civil Law. She has previously served at the Embassy in Tel Aviv, the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the EU and the Ministers Office at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Ms Mellander will take up her new post in autumn 2012.

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Sweden expels Belarus diplomats

Statement by Carl Bildt:

"The Lukashenko regime’s expulsion of Sweden’s Ambassador to Belarus is a serious breach of the norms for relations between states.

The accusations directed at the Ambassador by the regime are without foundation. That Sweden is broadly committed to democracy and human rights in Belarus is no secret, and Ambassador Eriksson has represented this Swedish policy in a creditable and important way.

We have informed other EU countries about this matter. I also spoke to Catherine Ashton about the situation earlier in the day.

Ambassador Eriksson will continue his work with an even clearer focus on the work for democracy and human rights in Belarus.

We will also, in consultation with other EU countries, examine ways to further strengthen these efforts.

The Embassy of Belarus in Stockholm will be informed during the day that the proposed new Belarus Ambassador is not welcome here and that the residence permits in Sweden of two of its representatives will be withdrawn.”

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Neighbours the focus of Foreign Affairs Council

Both our southern and eastern neighbours are the focus when Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt travels to Brussels on Monday 23 July for an EU foreign ministers meeting.

Developments in Syria are high on the agenda. The foreign ministers will discuss the escalating violence in the country, possible sanctions against the regime and how the EU can continue to support the opposition. The post-elections situation in Egypt and Libya will also be up for discussion.

The foreign ministers will also discuss the Eastern Partnership between the EU and the partner countries Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldavia, Ukraine and Belarus. After the Council meeting, Mr Bildt will take part in a foreign minister-level meeting between the EU and the six countries. The meeting is expected to focus on the Partnership’s continued development and the importance of the partner countries fulfilling their commitments in terms of human rights, democracy and other central reforms.
Sweden to act as protecting power for the UK in Iran

"Sweden has been asked to act as protecting power for the United Kingdom in Iran. We are pleased that Sweden is able to take on this mandate in the situation that has arisen," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

Under this mandate, Sweden will safeguard Britain's administrative, consular and humanitarian interests in Iran. A British Interests Section at the Swedish Embassy in Tehran will provide limited consular assistance to British citizens in Iran, and take care of British embassy staff and property for as long as the British Embassy remains closed.

Sweden previously served as protecting power for the UK in Iran for much of the 1980s until 1990. A protecting power agreement must be accepted by the receiving State, in this case Iran, and this has been done.

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External links
• Swedish Embassy in Tehran
Swede new Head of the EU Police Mission in Afghanistan

Swedish District Police Commissioner Karl Åke Roghe has been appointed Head of the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan). The mission is to assist the Afghan police in setting up an effective civil police organisation. Mr Roghe will take up his position at the mission on 1 August 2012.

"The appointment of Åke Roghe as head of EUPOL Afghanistan comes at a stage when Sweden is shifting its focus in Afghanistan from military commitment to civil. The Government attaches great value to the appointment and supports Åke Roghe in his assignment," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

"I am pleased that a Swede will have the opportunity to lead the important work of improving security in Afghanistan," says Minister for Justice Beatrice Ask.

EUPOL Afghanistan was launched in June 2007. In addition to Mr Roghe, some twenty Swedes are currently serving in the mission, posted by the Swedish Police, the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency and the Folke Bernadotte Academy. Mr Roghe has sound experience of the EU’s international activities and has previously served in both Kosovo and the Sudan. Mr Roghe most recently held a position with the police authority in Gävleborg.

Swedish involvement in EUPOL Afghanistan is part of Sweden’s comprehensive efforts in Afghanistan.
UN Human Rights Council adopts landmark resolution on online freedom of expression

Today the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva adopted for the first time ever a resolution on human rights and the internet. Sweden, Brazil, Nigeria, Tunisia, Turkey and the United States are the initiative takers behind the resolution. The resolution was presented with the additional support of more than 80 states and was adopted by consensus.

The resolution affirms that the right to freedom of expression established in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights also applies on the internet. The right to freedom of expression that applies 'offline' must apply to equally 'online'.

The resolution also affirms the importance of the internet to global development and all states are urged to promote access to the internet, both to infrastructure and content.

"I am very pleased that the Council has taken this important decision today. The role of the internet in promoting freedom of expression and global development cannot be overstated and we will act to ensure that today's decision will have also have an impact on other international processes," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

The resolution adopted today by the 47 states of the Council is part of Sweden's long-term efforts to secure that fundamental human rights also apply on the internet. In February, Mr Bildt took part in a panel discussion on online freedom of expression in the UN Human Rights Council and Sweden has previously taken the initiative for statements on online freedom of expression in the Council that have received broad support from states all around the world.

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Nomination of judges to the General Court of the European Union

The Government has today nominated Chief Judge at Gothenburg District Court Stefan Strömberg as judge of the General Court of the European Union.

Currently Chief Judge at Gothenburg District Court since 2009, Mr Strömberg was formerly National Police Commissioner and Director-General for the National Courts Administration. Mr Strömberg has also worked at the Ministry of Justice in various positions, such as Director-General for Administrative Affairs and Director-General for Legal Affairs.

He is Inquiry Chair for the Straffprocessutredningen (criminal proceedings inquiry) and has been inquiry chair and political adviser in a number of other official inquiries. He is also editor of the journal Svensk Juristtidning, Chairman of the Board of the Nordic Lawyers’ Meeting (Nordisk juristmöte) and member of the International Advisory Board of the Police Executive Programme at the University of Cambridge.

Decisions on judge appointments at the General Court of the European Union are taken by the governments of the EU Member States in consensus.

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Carl Bildt to Paris for Group of Friends of the Syrian People meeting

On Friday 6 July, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in the Group of Friends of the Syrian People meeting being held in Paris. Issues on the agenda include the political developments in Syria, follow-up of the meeting in Geneva that Kofi Annan led last weekend and how a political solution to the conflict can be reached.

This is the third Group of Friends meeting to be held; the previous two were held in Tunis and Istanbul. As before, the Nordic-Baltic countries will give a joint address at the meeting.

Mr Bildt will be available for questions from the media after the meeting or via a teleconference. Please contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson for more information.

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Raoul Wallenberg exhibition opens in Geneva

The Swedish Institute's exhibition To me there's no other choice - Raoul Wallenberg 1912-2012 will open at the Palace of Nations in Geneva on 4 July during the 20th regular session of the Human Rights Council. Raoul Wallenberg was an exceptional representative of Swedish commitment to human rights, and serves as a role model, not least for young people all over the world. The exhibition is a platform for dialogue and discussions regarding issues of tolerance, democracy and civil courage.


Raoul Wallenberg, and the 100th anniversary of his birth, is being celebrated around the world, with more than 50 countries hosting various events in honour of his memory. The exhibition was inaugurated on 17 January in Budapest and has since been shown in New York, Washington DC and Moscow. The exhibition will continue later in the year to Tel Aviv, Berlin and Canada, while a Swedish version will be shown in Sweden in the autumn.

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Related
- More information about Raoul Wallenberg Year 2012

External links
- The permanent mission of Sweden in Geneva
Carl Bildt to visit new French foreign minister

Today, Friday 29 June, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be in Paris for a meeting with his new French colleague, Minister of Foreign Affairs Laurent Fabius.

The main topics on the agenda include the political situation in the Middle East, focusing on Syria and Iran, the Sahel region and enlargement issues.

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Upgrade of Palestinian Representation in Sweden

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Palestinian Ambassador Hala Husni Fariz today signed a host country agreement. The agreement gives the Palestinian Representation in Sweden a position equivalent to that of an embassy in Stockholm.

"The Palestinian government has made significant progress in the work of laying the foundations for a Palestinian state. Sweden has a leading role in the international support for Palestinian state-building. It is therefore natural for us to take this step," says Mr Bildt.

Since Sweden has not recognised Palestine as a state, the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations is not directly applicable, and immunities and privileges must be regulated in a special host country agreement. In formal terms, the host country agreement is being signed with the PLO, acting on behalf of the Palestinian Authority. Since a legislative amendment is required for the agreement to enter into force, a bill will be presented to the Riksdag in the autumn.

The Palestinian Representation in Stockholm was upgraded in 2011 from the General Delegation of Palestine to the Mission of Palestine. As of 2010, the head of mission has the title of Ambassador.

A growing number of EU countries have upgraded the formal position of Palestinian Representations and given them the same immunities and privileges as embassies.

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Press release  
28 June 2012  
Ministry for Foreign Affairs  
Ministry of Employment  

Popular website on human rights relaunched  

The website www.humanrights.gov.se was relaunched today. Since it was created 10 years ago, the website has become a well-visited platform for information about human rights and what the Government is doing nationally and internationally. New features on the website include clearer access to facts, information about what to do if your rights have been violated and a world map containing links to country-specific human rights reports.

The Government’s human rights website is a tool to promote the dissemination of knowledge and information about human rights in accordance with our convention commitments. Sweden has also been commended for the website in a review by international mechanisms for the protection of human rights.

The number of visitors to the website is increasing steadily. There are on average some 32 000 visitors every month, and some months this number exceeds 45 000. During the past year, the website’s information pages have been viewed almost one million times. This confirms the huge interest in information about human rights.

- More knowledge and accessible information about human rights is a prerequisite for the promotion and protection of these rights in Sweden. The Government’s human rights website is an important tool in this work, says Minister for Integration Erik Ullenhag, who is responsible for the Government’s national efforts on human rights.

- To be able to influence the world around us, we must both be aware of what is happening and why. In this respect, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs human rights reports and the Government’s human rights website have an incredibly important function. Openness and free access to information are two of the most important tools in the work to highlight and fight shortcomings in the respect for human rights, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson.

Background  

The website is a joint project between the Ministry of Employment and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, which are responsible for the national and international policies for human rights respectively. In addition to reports on human rights in the countries of the world, the website includes information about the conventions ratified by Sweden, recommendations from the monitoring committees of the conventions and judgments of the European Court of Human Rights in cases against Sweden. The target groups for the website are schools, government agencies, journalists, civil society and the interested public. A development project took place during the spring to review the information structure and content, and to redesign the website.
Bildt and Carlsson present reports on human rights situation in EU neighbourhood countries

Today Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson will present 44 new human rights reports.

The reports concern the EU neighbourhood countries - Eastern Europe and the Balkans, Central Asia, North Africa and the Middle East. These are important countries for Sweden and the EU. They are also countries that have undergone rapid, and often dramatic, development in 2011, and where there has been a great demand for up-to-date information.

- For us, these reports are a way of sharing the knowledge of the Swedish Foreign Service and at the same time clarifying our policies, our desire for dialogue and our strong commitment to human rights in the world, says Mr Bildt.

This year marks ten years since the Ministry for Foreign Affairs first published reports on the human rights situation in countries around the world. The reports reflect the Government's ambition to integrate human rights into all areas of foreign policy.

- The Government's human rights work involves promoting the most fundamental values of our own country and stressing that these rights apply to people everywhere. We must constantly uphold the protection of human dignity and the integrity, freedom and inviolability of the individual, says Ms Carlsson.

Sweden is, and will always be, a clear voice for human rights in the world. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs works through bilateral contacts, through the EU, and multilaterally through the UN, OSCE, EU and the Council of Europe to promote full respect for human rights in all the countries around the world.

All the new reports, and reports from other countries, are on the Government's human rights website: www.manskligarattigheter.se
Bildt and Ohlsson to attend EU meeting in Luxembourg - human rights, multiannual financial framework and enlargement

On 25-26 June Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Minister for EU Affairs Birgitta Ohlsson will travel to Luxembourg to participate in the EU Foreign Affairs Council and General Affairs Council.

The foreign ministers are to adopt a declaration and an action plan on human rights and democracy. In addition, discussions are expected on developments in Syria and Egypt and on ongoing talks on Iran's nuclear programme. At the General Affairs Council, Ms Ohlsson will take part in discussions on the EU's multiannual financial framework and on preparations for the EU summit later in the week, while Mr Bildt will participate in discussions on EU enlargement.

Human Rights
The Foreign Affairs Council on 25 June is expected to adopt Council conclusions on the EU's strategic framework on human rights and democracy. The purpose of the framework is to give democracy and human rights a greater place in development policy. The action plan covers around 90 measures. The Council will also decide on a mandate for a special EU human rights representative. Human rights are at the heart of Swedish foreign policy. The Government is driving to give human rights an even stronger influence on EU external policy.

Syria, Iran and Egypt
Syria, Iran and Egypt are other points on the foreign ministers' agenda. The latest developments in Syria are very alarming. The discussion will focus on future EU action, in particular possible further restrictive measures targeting the Syrian regime. In response to Iran's nuclear technology programme, the Council will discuss the embargo on imports of oil from Iran and the ongoing dialogue with Iran on its nuclear technology programme.

EU summit, multiannual financial framework and enlargement
At the General Affairs Council on 26 June, Ms Ohlsson will participate in the preparations for the EU summit in Brussels on 28-29 June and in a debate on the EU's multiannual financial framework for 2014-2020. In the enlargement area, Mr Bildt will participate in a discussion on the European Commission's progress report on Montenegro and on the situation for Macedonia.

Press conference
A press conference will be held after the meeting in the Swedish briefing room in the Council building.

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Carl Bildt to Lebanon and Iraq for talks on developments in the region

On 21-24 June Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, together with his Polish and Bulgarian colleagues Radoslaw Sikorski and Nickolay Mladenov, will travel to Lebanon and Iraq for political talks. The focus of the talks will be on the political developments in the region, including Syria, and EU cooperation.

In Lebanon the delegation will meet Lebanese President Michel Sleiman, Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament Nabih Berri, and Deputy Prime Minister and Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants Samir Moqbel.

In Iraq meetings are planned with Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, Minister of Foreign Affairs Hoshyar Zebari and Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament Osama Al Nujaifi.

The delegation will also briefly visit Erbil, Iraqi Kurdistan, to meet representatives from the Kurdistan Regional Government, including Regional President Massoud Barzani.

In both countries they will meet representatives of United Nations agencies, the opposition, the media and other sectors of civil society.

Mr Bildt will be available to the Swedish media via teleconference. Please contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson for more information.

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Appointment of Consul-General in Mumbai

The Government has today appointed Fredrika Ornbrant as Consul-General in Mumbai, India. The new Consulate-General, whose core activity will be the promotion of Sweden, is expected to open in autumn 2012. Ms Ornbrant is currently serving at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York. She previously served at the Embassy in Seoul and at the International Trade Policy Department and the Security Policy Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Ms Ornbrant will take up her new post in autumn 2012.

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Carl Bildt at mediator conference in Oslo

Today and tomorrow, 18-19 June, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is participating in the Oslo Forum, a conference for actors involved in peace negotiations and conflict mediation.

The aim of the conference is to share experiences and discuss future challenges in this area. The conference is organised by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs together with the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue. The theme of this year's conference is 'Negotiating Through Transitions' and discussions will focus on the Arab Spring, Afghanistan, Sahel and Burma.

Mr Bildt is participating in 'Mediators Studio', where he will share experiences and thoughts about mediation and dialogue. Conference participants include Aung San Suu Kyi, Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre, President and Chief Executive Officer of the International Crisis Group Louise Arbour, and the singer Bono.

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New Stockholm-based Ambassador to Eritrea

The Government yesterday appointed Annika Molin Hellgren as Ambassador to Eritrea, based in Stockholm. Ms Molin Hellgren is currently serving at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Africa Department. Her previous postings include the Swedish Delegation to the OECD in Paris, the Swedish Embassy in Damascus and the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in Geneva. Ms Molin Hellgren will take up her new post in autumn 2012.

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Carl Bildt to participate in EuroDIG in Stockholm

Tomorrow, Friday, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will participate in the Pan-European Dialogue on Internet Governance (EuroDIG), which this year is being arranged in Stockholm.

Mr Bildt will take part in a discussion on topics including democracy and the internet, internet freedom and the balance between freedom and security, together with Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Ehsan Norouzi of Deutsche Welle, Marietje Schaake, Member of the European Parliament, and Mats Svegfors, Director-General of Sveriges Radio.

EuroDIG is an open arena for informal discussion and exchange on policy issues related to the internet, involving a large number of stakeholders from all over Europe. They include representatives of civil society, the business sector, and the technical and academic communities, as well as European governments, institutions and organisations, including the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of Europe and the European Broadcasting Union.

Mr Bildt will be available to the media in connection with EuroDIG via Teo Zetterman, Press Service, Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

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State Visit from Turkey on 10-12 September 2012

The President of the Republic of Turkey Abdullah Gül will pay a State Visit to Sweden on 10-12 September 2012 at the invitation of His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf. The President will be accompanied by his wife, Mrs Hayrünnisa Gül.

The official Turkish delegation will include representatives of the government and state institutions as well as the business community.

This is the first State Visit by a Head of State from Turkey to Sweden. Their Majesties the King and Queen paid a State Visit to Turkey in 2006, which was the first Swedish State Visit to Turkey.

The State Visit is intended to deepen and intensify the excellent relations between Sweden and Turkey. Bilateral cooperation is marked not least by Swedish support for Turkey’s EU membership process, but also by growing trade relations.

The programme will include meetings with Speaker of the Riksdag Per Westerberg, Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt and Swedish business leaders.

To the editorial office

Media representatives need special accreditation via the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to cover the State Visit. More information about programme and media accreditation will be published on the Government website at the beginning of August.

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External links
- Swedish Royal Court
- Embassy of Sweden in Ankara
- Turkish Embassy in Stockholm
- Presidency of the Republic of Turkey
New Ambassadors

Four ambassadors, from Iran, Mexico, Spain and Burma (Myanmar), present their letters of credence to H M The King on Monday 4 June 2012.

Iran

Iran's newly appointed Ambassador, Hamid Reza Shakiri Niasar, was born in 1967 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1993. In recent years he has held the following posts:

- 2010- Director-General of the Foreign Ministry for Iranian Expatriate Affairs
- 2007-2010 Head of the Office of Iranian Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- 2005-2007 Deputy head of the Office of Social Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- 2004-2005 Deputy head of the Office of Logistics at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs
- 2001-2004 Consul at the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Rome.

Mexico

Mexico's newly appointed Ambassador, Jorge Lomonaco was born in 1963 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1991.

It may be noted that Ambassador Lomonaco, in connection with the Swedish State Visit to Mexico in 2002, was awarded the Commander of the Order of the Polar Star.

Most recently he has held the following posts:

- 2007- Mexico's Ambassador to the Netherlands and Permanent Representative to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in The Hague
- 2003-2007 Consul-General in Miami
- 2000-2003 Chief of Cabinet to Mexico's Minister of Foreign Affairs

Spain

Spain's newly appointed Ambassador, Francisco Javier Jiménez-Ugarte Hernández was born in 1947 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1972.

Ambassador Jiménez-Ugarte was Ambassador of Spain to Algeria in 1994-1997 and Ambassador of Spain to Greece in 1997-2001. Most recently he has held the following posts:

- 2010- Consul-General in Edinburgh
- 2005-2010 Consul-General in Nador, followed by Tetuan and Larache, Morocco
- 2004-2005 Director-General of the IberoAmerican Cooperation Institute, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- 2001-2004 Secretary-General for Defence Policy at the Spanish Ministry of Defence

Burma (Myanmar)

Burma/Myanmar's newly appointed Ambassador, Kyaw Myo Htut (concurrently accredited from London) was born in 1957 and has served in the Defence Services between 1981 and 2008. In February 2008, he was transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has since held the following posts:
Fredrik Reinfeldt and Carl Bildt receive US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton

On Sunday 3 June Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt and Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will receive US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton in Stockholm for discussions. Among the topics to be discussed are the economic situation in the EU and current foreign policy issues. Particular focus will be on the difficult situation in Syria, developments in the European vicinity, as well as internet freedom issues.

Programme points:

Saturday 2 June
US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton arrives in the evening at Stockholm Arlanda Airport, where she will be met by Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

Photo opportunity
Photographers register in advance, no later than 1 June at 16.00, to: Claes Jernaeus, tel. +46 70 866 83 79.
Assembly time for preregistered photographers will be announced to those concerned later.

Sunday 3 June
Bilateral discussions in the morning between Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton during a boat trip in the Stockholm archipelago. Minister for Defence Karin Enström will participate during some of the discussions.

Minister for the Environment Lena Ek and US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton will speak and launch a campaign to increase awareness of short-lived climate pollutants. HRH Crown Princess Victoria will attend the conference. Researchers, young people, representatives of business and the public have been invited.

A number of places have been reserved for the media at the conference. Time and venue will be announced on accreditation. Apply for accreditation no later than 1 June at 15.00 to eva.lindhe@environment.ministry.se, tel. +46 730 55 39 27.

Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt meets US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton at the entrance to Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity
Advance notification of attendance no later than 1 June at 16.00: pressrummet@foreign.ministry.se.
Valid press credentials required.

Discussions, Rosenbad
Photo pool
Advance notification of attendance no later than 1 June at 16.00: pressrummet@foreign.ministry.se.
Valid press credentials are required.

Please note! For both of these photo opportunities: Admittance via Kopparporten 13.45-14.15.

16.00 Press briefing with Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt,
Rosenbad, Bella Venezia.
Language: English
Advance notification of attendance no later than 1 June at 16.00: pressrummet@foreign.ministry.se

Please note! Admittance via Kopparporten 15.15-15.45.

Please be punctual!

Contact
Carl Bildt to visit Ottawa and Iqaluit

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will travel to Canada this week for political discussions primarily focusing on issues on the Arctic agenda. Mr Bildt will also visit the Arctic areas in Canada.

Sweden currently holds the chair of the Arctic Council, which is a forum for cooperation between the five Nordic countries, Canada, Russia and the USA. The Arctic areas face many challenges and it is important to find a balance between environmental considerations and economic development for the Arctic to be able to develop.

"Arctic region issues are a high priority for the Swedish Government and it is therefore important to discuss these issues with a central Arctic actor like Canada," says Mr Bildt.

Sweden has held the chair of the Arctic Council since May 2011 and will pass on the Chairmanship to Canada at the foreign ministers' meeting in Kiruna in May 2013.

On 16-17 May, Mr Bildt will be in Ottawa for talks with Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs John Baird, Minister of National Defence Peter Mackay and Minister of Health and Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency Leona Aglukkaq.

On 17 May Mr Bildt will deliver a key policy speech at Carleton University under the heading 'Arctic Challenges and the Future Perspectives of Arctic Cooperation'.

On 18-19 May Mr Bildt will visit Iqaluit in northern Canada, where he will meet Premier of Nunavut Eva Aariak and others.

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Carl Bildt and Gunilla Carlsson to Foreign Affairs Council meetings in Brussels

On Monday 14 May, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will participate in the EU foreign ministers meeting and Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson will participate in the development ministers meeting, being held in Brussels.

The agenda includes the EU's continued involvement in and support to Afghanistan; the peace process in the Middle East and how the EU can best contribute to concrete improvements on the ground, particularly in the Israeli-controlled areas of the West Bank; future action by the EU in relation to Syria; developments in Ukraine and the potential for the EU to influence the country; the EU's updated development assistance policy, including consensus on development and the EU’s future management of budget support; and Rio+20, which will be discussed from the development policy perspective.

Press conferences:
Press conferences will take place at the conclusion of the meeting, at approximately 16.00, in the Swedish press centre in the Council building.

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Media accreditation closing 9 May: Princess Estelle's Christening

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is responsible for media accreditation for the Christening of H.R.H. Princess Estelle on 22 May 2012. Please note that it will not be possible to process applications received after 9 May!

Swedish and international media who want to cover the events must apply for special accreditation from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Applications for accreditation can be made via the special accreditation website. See link for accreditation-form and preliminary programme.

To be considered for media accreditation, an approved press card and employment at, or a clear commission from, an established media company is required.

N.B. It will not be possible to process applications received after 9 May!

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UD:s internationella pressecenter
(International Press Centre)
● email to the International Press Centre

External links
● Accreditation form
● The Swedish Royal Court - information on the Christening
Increased Nordic cooperation in focus at Nordic foreign ministers meeting

A meeting of Nordic foreign ministers is taking place in Stavanger, Norway on Thursday and Friday, 3-4 May. Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part on Friday.

The primary focus of the meeting is on increased Nordic cooperation and discussions on various international issues such as developments in the Middle East and North Africa.

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Carl Bildt to Germany for talks with Guido Westerwelle

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is visiting Berlin today, Wednesday 2 May, for political talks. His schedule includes a meeting with his German counterpart, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs Guido Westerwelle, for talks on political issues of common interest.

A press conference will take place following the conclusion of the meeting, at approx. 12.30. For more information, please contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson.

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New ambassadors

Four new ambassadors, from Chile, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria and Lesotho, will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Friday 27 April 2012.

Chile
Chile’s newly appointed Ambassador Horacio del Valle Irarrázaval was born in 1952 and has served at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs since 1971. He is a career diplomat whose first mission abroad was as Third Secretary at the Embassy of Chile in Italy. He has also served at the United Nations Department of the Multilateral Political Division and at Chilean embassies in Latin America. Most recently he has held the following posts:

2011- National Director of the National Council for Culture and the Arts of Chile
2010- Director of the Cultural Affairs Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs
2005-2009 Consul General in Rio de Janeiro
2003 Director of the Consular Affairs Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs
2001 Consul General in Lima

Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bosnia and Herzegovina’s newly appointed Ambassador Jadranka Kalmeta was born in 1948 and is of Croatian extraction. She served at the Embassy of Croatia in Sarajevo from 1994 to 1997. Since autumn 1997 she has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in recent years has held the following posts:

2005-2008 Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN and other international organisations in Geneva
Aug-Oct 2004 Minister Counsellor at the embassy in Ljubljana
2000-Aug 2004 Minister Counsellor at the embassy in Paris and the Permanent Mission to UNESCO

Bulgaria
Bulgaria’s newly appointed Ambassador Svetlan Christov Stoev was born in 1960 and has served at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs since 1985. Ambassador Stoev was head of the Scandinavian Countries Division at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs from 1997 to 1999 and most recently has held the following posts:

2011- Ambassador at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2009-2011 Administrative Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2005-2009 Ambassador and Head of the Diplomatic Bureau of Bulgaria in Bonn
2003-2005 Head of Department in European Countries Directorate
1999-2002 Counsellor at the embassy in Copenhagen
Lesotho
Lesotho's newly appointed Ambassador Paramente Phamotse (concurrently accredited from Dublin) was born in 1967 and has had a long career in the educational system.

From 1999 to 2009 he held various positions in the Ministry of Education and Training, most recently as Deputy Rector at Lesotho College of Education.

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New Ambassador to North Korea and new Head of Sweden’s OSCE Delegation

The Government today appointed Karl-Olof Andersson as Ambassador to North Korea. At present Mr Andersson is Director of the Swedish Diplomatic Training Programme and Secretary of the Selection Board of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has previously served in the Department for Asia and the Pacific Region and at Sweden’s embassies in Tallinn, Berlin and Athens. Mr Andersson will take up his new post in the autumn of 2012.

Also today, the Government appointed Fredrik Löjdquist as the new Head of Sweden’s Permanent Delegation to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Vienna. Mr Löjdquist, who is currently Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy in Vienna, will have the title of Ambassador. He has previously served at the Department for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the Ministry of Defence and Sweden’s embassies in Moscow and Vilnius. Mr Löjdquist will take up his new post in the autumn of 2012.
Sweden has ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM)

"The Convention is an important element in efforts to bring about a broad-based ban on cluster munitions and reduce the unacceptable human suffering they cause," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

The UN has now received the Swedish instrument of ratification and announced that the Convention will enter into force in Sweden on 1 October 2012.

The purpose of the Convention is to prevent continued use of cluster munitions and tackle the extreme suffering and harm caused by cluster munitions around the world. The Government bill on accession to the Convention on Cluster Munitions was passed by the Riksdag on 15 March 2012 together with the new act on punishment of unlawful dealings with cluster munitions.

Contact
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Carl Bildt to Thailand and Brunei

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be in Bangkok on Tuesday and Wednesday, 24-25 April, for meetings with Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, Foreign Minister Surapong Tovichakchaikul, leader of the opposition Abhisit Vejjajiva and civil society representatives. The focus of the visit is deeper relations between Sweden and Thailand.

Mr Bildt will also give a speech at the Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Thailand on relations between the EU and ASEAN.

On Thursday and Friday, 26-27 April, Mr Bildt will be participating in the EU-ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting in Brunei. ASEAN is an important forum for regional cooperation between 10 countries in South-East Asia (almost 600 million people). ASEAN works for peace and stability in the region and for increased economic growth. A new action plan, EU-ASEAN 2013-2017, is to be adopted at the meeting.

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Carl Bildt to Luxembourg for foreign ministers meeting

On Monday 23 April, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be in Luxembourg for a meeting of EU foreign ministers. The meeting will focus on developments in Syria, and a decision is expected to be taken on additional sanctions.

At the meeting, the ministers will also discuss the latest developments in Burma, and a review of EU sanctions will be conducted in light of these.

A press conference will be held in the Swedish press room following the conclusion of the meeting, at approx. 15.30.

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Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson welcome appointment of Maria Leissner

Sweden’s Ambassador for Democracy Maria Leissner has been chosen as the new Secretary-General of the Community of Democracies, a worldwide network of democratic states.

In recent years Sweden, through Maria Leissner, has led a successful reform of the Community of Democracies, which has been transformed from a forum in which democracies meet into an operational hub for supporting global democratic development.

Among recent initiatives, the Community of Democracies has developed an early warning system for restrictive legislation affecting civil society, coordinated support for new democracies and strengthened the voice of democratic states in multilateral organisations.

"We are pleased about the appointment of Maria Leissner as Secretary-General of the Community of Democracies. Maria is already doing a fantastic job in the service of democracy and we will continue to give her our full support," say Mr Bildt and Ms Carlsson in a joint comment.

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Carl Bildt to attend ISAF meeting in Brussels

Today, Thursday 19 April, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in the meeting in Brussels of foreign ministers from countries participating in the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF). The meeting will be held in the context of the meeting of NATO ministers of defence and foreign affairs that is taking place 18-19 April.

The meeting will focus on the implementation of the transition process, i.e. the assumption by Afghan forces of responsibility for security in the country.

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Carl Bildt, Gunilla Carlsson and Anna-Karin Hatt attend international Internet conference

On Wednesday 18 April Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson and Minister for Information Technology Anna-Karin Hatt will take part in the international Internet conference Stockholm Internet Forum on Internet Freedom for Global Development at Radisson Blu Park Hotel in Solna, just north of Stockholm.

The two-day Stockholm Internet Forum on 18-19 April will gather 350 knowledgeable and committed decision-makers, activists, and representatives from civil society, the business sector and the tech community to take part in discussions on Internet freedom. The conference aims to deepen the discussions on how freedom and openness on the Internet promote economic and social development worldwide.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson and Minister for Information Technology Anna-Karin Hatt will each deliver a speech. Discussions from seven sessions form the main structure of the programme. Prominent participants include Frank La Rue, UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression; Alec J Ross, Senior Advisor for Innovation to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton; Rebecca MacKinnon, one of the founders of Global Voices Online; Nicklas Lundblad, policy geek at Google; Suneet Singh, CEO of DataWind, which has launched the budget tablet Aakash; and Måns Adler, founder of the company and Internet service Bambuser for live broadcast of mobile phone videos.

Many international fora deal with the Internet. It is hoped that Stockholm Internet Forum - which specifically deals with freedom on the Internet linked to global development - can feed more energy into international efforts for freedom on the Internet.

Stockholm Internet Forum online
Stockholm Internet Forum will be broadcast live in its entirety on the Forum website. It is also possible to interact with the conference via Twitter at #fxinternet och #sif12.

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External links
• Stockholm Internet Forums website
• Stockholm Internet Forum on Twitter
• Freedom on the Internet on MFA's website
New ambassador to Portugal

Today, 12 April, the Government appointed Caroline Fleetwood as Sweden's Ambassador to Portugal. Ms Fleetwood is currently stationed in Havana as Sweden's Ambassador to Cuba. She has previously served at the Swedish Embassy in Brasilia and at the Americas Department and the Department for Trade at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Ms Fleetwood will take up her new post in the autumn of 2012.

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13 April last date for accreditation: Stockholm Internet Forum on 18-19 April
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is hosting the Stockholm Internet Forum on Internet Freedom for Global Development on 18-19 April. Media representatives covering the conference on site will need special accreditation.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Internet Infrastructure Foundation (.SE) and Sida are organising the first ever Stockholm Internet Forum on Internet Freedom for Global Development - SIF12 - an international conference on the role of internet freedom in global development.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson and Minister for Information Technology Anna-Karin Hatt will be representing the Swedish Government.

Freedom on the Internet for global development
The conference aims to deepen the discussions on how freedom and openness on the Internet promote economic and social development worldwide.

Participants will include 350 invited decision-makers, representatives of civil society, activists, the business sector and the tech community. The conference will be held at Radisson Blu Park Hotel in Solna.

Media accreditation
Read more about accreditation and the conference on the related links. The closing day for accreditation is 13 April.

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Carl Bildt to Bosnia and Herzegovina 20 years after outbreak of war

Tomorrow and Friday, 5-6 April, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be in Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It will then be 20 years since the war broke out. In light of this, Mr Bildt will take part in a memorial ceremony and meet foreign correspondents who were based in the region during the war. During his visit to the country, Mr Bildt will meet Bakir Izetbegovic, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Zlatko Lagumdzija, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and others to discuss political issues.

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Carl Bildt to Istanbul for Group of Friends of the Syrian People meeting

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Istanbul on 1 April to attend the second Group of Friends of the Syrian People meeting.

The meeting will primarily deal with opportunities to support Kofi Annan’s peace plan, the humanitarian situation and how the Syrian opposition can be strengthened.

Members of the Group of Friends of the Syrian People include the Arab League, the EU and the USA.

This is the second time that the Group of Friends is meeting. The first meeting was held in Tunis on 24 February this year.

Telephone press conference
A telephone press conference will be held this afternoon from Istanbul. Those interested in attending should contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson.

Contact
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New Ambassadors

The following four ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Wednesday 28 March 2012.

Zambia
The newly appointed ambassador from Zambia, Edith Mutale, was born in 1948 and graduated in theology from the Atlantic School of Theology, Halifax, Canada, in 1993.

Ambassador Mutale worked as a primary school teacher in 1966-1981, and after studying theology, she has been involved in the activities of the Christian Church, especially in social issues. Since 2004, she has been active as a Methodist minister and head of the Redeemed Methodist Church, and since 2006 has held a senior position as the Church's spiritual leader.

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
The newly appointed ambassador from the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Garvin Edward Timothy Nicholas (concurrently accredited from London), was born in 1967. He has a Bachelor of Laws from Oxford Brookes University and a post-graduate diploma in legal studies from the City University, Inns of Court School of Law, London.

Ambassador Nicholas has primarily had a career in politics, including as leader counsel to the leader of the opposition, temporary senator in the Upper House of Parliament and candidate in the general elections in 2002 and 2010.

In 2007-2010, he was leader of the Movement for National Development and from June-November 2010 he was press secretary at the Office of the Prime Minister.

Since February 2011, Garvin Nicholas has held the position of High Commission of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, London.

Côte d'Ivoire
The newly appointed ambassador from the Côte d'Ivoire, Mina Maria Laurent Baldé (concurrently accredited from Copenhagen), was born in 1950 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1974. She was appointed Ambassador in Copenhagen in October 2011, and has previously held the following posts:

2008-2010 Head of the Communications Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

2005-2008 Technical advisor at the Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs

2000-2005 Counsellor responsible for international organisations at the Embassy in the United Kingdom.

Malta
The newly appointed ambassador from Malta, Martin Valentino (concurrently accredited from The Hague), was born in 1954. Between 1976 and 1988 he served at the Treasury Department and the Inland Revenue Department, and in 1988 he entered the foreign service. Ambassador Valentino’s recent positions include:

February 2011 - Ambassador in The Hague and Permanent Representative to the International Organisations in The Hague

2006-January 2011 Director European Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

2003-2006 Head of Section on Disarmament, Security and Legal Issues at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1999-2003 Counsellor and Consul at the Embassy of Malta in Tripoli.
Sweden contributes to international cooperation on nuclear security and preventing nuclear terrorism

In his speech at the ongoing summit on nuclear security in Seoul, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt emphasised the importance of international cooperation in efforts to prevent uranium, plutonium and other radioactive material from falling into the wrong hands and being used for the production of nuclear devices or in acts of terrorism.

"Sweden whole-heartedly supports international efforts to strengthen the protection of nuclear material to prevent it being used for the proliferation of nuclear weapons or in dirty bombs that would cause extensive destruction," Mr Bildt said in his speech.

Mr Bildt spoke about the measures that Sweden has taken since the summit in Washington in 2010, and highlighted national efforts to strengthen security regarding nuclear material and nuclear facilities.

Mr Bildt also announced that Sweden recently transferred plutonium from historical Swedish nuclear research and development activities to the USA for disposal within the framework of the US Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI). The aim of the initiative is to secure and protect particularly sensitive material to prevent it being used for the production of nuclear devices or in acts of terrorism.

"By transferring plutonium from historical Swedish nuclear research and development activities to the USA within the framework of the GTRI, Sweden is contributing to international security cooperation in this area. We are also setting an example and hope that it will be followed by other countries that have such material in their possession," comments Mr Bildt.

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External links
- South Korean website for the summit
- IAEA website
- Swedish Radiation Safety Authority website
Carl Bildt travels to Beirut for political discussions

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Lebanon on 28 March. Mr Bildt will meet Prime Minister Najib Mikati and UN representatives. Topics of discussion will include how Lebanon and the region are affected by the situation in Syria.

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Arctic Council negotiations in Stockholm

Close to 180 representatives from the Arctic Council’s Member States, indigenous peoples and working groups will convene on 28-29 March during Stockholm Polar Week. The agenda will include one of the Swedish Chairmanship’s most important tasks - strengthening the Arctic Council.

"During the meeting in Stockholm, we hope to make a number of significant decisions on the regulatory framework for the Council's new standing secretariat in Tromsö,” says Sweden's Arctic Ambassador Gustaf Lind.

One year ago, the Council’s members decided also to develop a plan to improve the Arctic Council's strategic communication. The Chairmanship hopes to reach a consensus on the proposal now on the table.

Participants will also receive a report about the ongoing activities of the Arctic Council's working groups. Several of the groups are currently involved in identifying areas in the Arctic that are particularly worthy of protection from an integrated perspective. A more in-depth discussion concerning how the Arctic Council will proceed with this is expected at the next Senior Arctic Official (SAO) meeting in November.

The SAO meeting in Stockholm is the second during the Swedish Chairmanship and will conclude the round of Arctic Council negotiations before the Deputy Ministers’ meeting in May. Mr Lind will tweet from the meeting in Stockholm (@saochair). The hashtag for the week is #polarweek.

Time and place

Journalists are welcome to attend the Museum of Natural History’s polar exhibition mingle on Tuesday 27 March between 17.30 and 21.00 to meet polar researchers and representatives from the Arctic Council’s Member States, indigenous peoples’ organisations and working groups. Minister for Culture Lena Adelsohn Liljeroth will give the opening address. Prior notification of attendance is required. Please contact Linn Duvhammar at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Service: linn.duvhammar@foreign.ministry.se or +46 709 280855.

Journalists are also welcome to attend the opening of the SAO meeting at the Museum of Natural History in Stockholm on Wednesday 28 March at 9.00. Ambassador Gustaf Lind, representatives of the Arctic indigenous peoples and prominent Arctic researchers will be on hand for interviews by appointment. Prior notification of attendance is required. Please contact Linn Duvhammar at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Service: linn.duvhammar@foreign.ministry.se or +46 709 280855.

Lectures and seminars for the public

Within the framework of Stockholm Polar Week and in conjunction with the Arctic Council’s SAO meeting, the Swedish Polar Research Secretariat will hold its annual Polar Forum. Joint seminars, film showings at Cosmonova and panel debates on the vast changes occurring in the Arctic will be held daily and are open to the public. The Arctic Reality - What’s Next? seminar presents researchers' views on what should be prioritised to manage and reduce climate change on the basis of the Arctic Council’s report 'Snow, Water, Ice and Permafrost in the Arctic' (SWIPA). Maritime law, business development in the Arctic, sustainable development and resilience are other themes that will be addressed. See separate programme for each seminar.

Arctic Council

The Arctic Council is a forum for consultation and cooperation between the governments of the five Nordic countries plus Canada, Russia and the United States, as well as representatives of six Arctic indigenous peoples’ organisations. Sweden is currently chairing the Council and will pass on the Chairmanship to Canada at the foreign ministers meeting in Kiruna in May 2013.
Press release
12 March 2012
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation: Welcome to SIF12 - a conference on internet freedom

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Internet Infrastructure Foundation (.SE) and Sida are organising the first ever Stockholm Internet Forum on Internet Freedom for Global Development - SIF12 - an international conference on the role of internet freedom in global development. Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be hosting the event, which will bring together invited activists, decision-makers and business representatives from around the world to Stockholm on 18-19 April. Media accreditation opens today.

Internet freedom and security are among the great global issues of the future. The number of people online is expected to jump from a little under two billion to five billion within a few years. For the Swedish Government, internet freedom is a high priority issue, based on the premise that human rights must be respected both online and offline. An open internet that allows people to express themselves freely is not only a tool for political participation and enabling people to achieve change, but also important for innovation and development.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, .SE and Sida are now, for the first time, organising an international conference in Stockholm that will spotlight freedom and openness, respect for human rights, innovation and global development.

Media accreditation

Media representatives who would like to cover SIF12 need special accreditation. Read more about SIF12 on the conference website; see the link below. The deadline for accreditation is 13 April.

If you have questions about accreditation, please contact Lena Jern at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs International Press Centre.

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External links

• Find out more about accreditation at www.sif12.se
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt arrived in Afghanistan last night and over the next few days will be taking part in political talks both in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Mr Bildt will also attend a ceremony at the Swedish-Finnish base in Mazar-e Sharif to mark the transition to civilian leadership of all Swedish operations in Afghanistan.

During the visit, Mr Bildt will be available to the media via teleconference. If you are interested in taking part, please contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson for more information.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
New Ambassadors

The following four ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 8 March 2012.

Ukraine
Ukraine's newly appointed Ambassador Dr Valery Stepanov was born in 1958 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1994. Over the years he has held the following posts:

2008- Adviser and Deputy Head of the Foreign Policy Service at the Secretariat of the President

2002-2007 Consul General in Munich

1998-2002 Director of the Western Europe Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

1994-1998 First Secretary at the Embassy of Ukraine in Bonn

It may be noted that Ambassador Stepanov speaks Swedish.

Indonesia
Indonesia's newly appointed Ambassador Dewa Made Juniarta Sastrawan was born in 1961 and entered the foreign service in 1988.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

2008- Director for West European Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

2004-2008 Minister Counsellor and subsequently deputy Chief of Mission at the Indonesian Embassy in London

2002-2004 Deputy Director for Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Portugal
Portugal's newly appointed Ambassador Manuel Marcelo Monteiro Curto was born in 1949 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1972. During his career he has served three periods in Moscow and two in Teheran.

It may be noted that Ambassador Curto, in connection with the Swedish State Visit to Portugal in 1986, was awarded the Commander of the Order of the Polar Star.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

2010-2004 Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the International Organisations in Vienna Portugal's representative on the IAEA governing board

2004-2009 Ambassador in Moscow; Coordinator for Central Asia and South Caucasus during Portugal’s EU Presidency

2002-2004 Ambassador in Mexico City

Canada
Canada's newly appointed Ambassador, Kenneth Macartney was born in 1959 and has served at the Department of Foreign Affairs since 1982. In 1984-1987 he served at the Embassy of Canada in Oslo and in recent years he has held the following posts:

Related
- The Diplomatic Portal
2009- Director General, Southeast Asia and Oceania Bureau

2005-2009 Deputy High Commissioner, Canadian High Commission, New Delhi, India

2002-2005 Counsellor at the Embassy of Canada in Sweden
Reminder: EU High Representative Catherine Ashton and Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt to meet in Norrland

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton will visit Kiruna on 6-7 March as part of an 'Arctic trip' that includes visits to Finland and Norway. Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be receiving Ms Ashton and will have the opportunity to present 'Arctic Sweden' and discuss developments in the region. Sweden, currently the chair of the Arctic Council, presented its first Arctic Strategy in May 2011.

"This is an excellent opportunity to introduce Catherine Ashton to our dynamic Norrland and to discuss the challenges the Arctic is facing," says Mr Bildt.

The visit begins on Tuesday evening with dinner and talks at the Ice Hotel in Jukkasjärvi. The programme continues on Wednesday morning with a press briefing outside Bolagshotellet at 10.00-10.15.

From there they depart for LKAB mine in Kiruna, where mining operations take place. Lars-Eric Aaro, CEO of LKAB, will then present the company’s plans for the future.

12.40-14.30 Bildt and Ashton visit Sweden's Esrange Space Centre. Media representatives are welcome to take part in the visit.

At 14.50 Carl Bildt and Catherine Ashton meet Norwegian foreign minister Jonas Gahr Støre at Kiruna airport. There will be a photo and interview opportunity here before Ms Ashton leaves for Norway.

Jan Jansonius, Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Service, will be the media contact person during the visit.

Contact
Jan Jansonius
State Visit from Finland 17-18 April 2012

The President of the Republic of Finland, Sauli Niinistö will make a State Visit to Sweden at the invitation of His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf. The President’s wife, Jenni Haukio, will also take part in the State Visit.

Sauli Niinistö took office as Finland's twelfth president on 1 March this year. Traditionally, the first State Visit is paid to Sweden. The last State Visit from Finland took place in May 2000 when former President Tarja Halonen took office.

The aim of the State Visit is to deepen and intensify the already excellent relations between the two neighbouring countries. Sweden and Finland enjoy very close and broad cooperation in all areas of society, and are also close in the EU and on Nordic issues.

Sweden and Finland also take a very active part in cooperation in our region, including in the Advisory Council for Baltic Sea Cooperation, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Arctic Council.

The programme includes meetings with the Speaker of the Riksdag Per Westerberg and Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt.

To editorial offices

Media representatives need special accreditation from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to cover the State Visit. The last day to apply for accreditation is 4 April. Read more about accreditation and the media arrangements on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website.

Contact

Jan Janonius
EU High Representative Catherine Ashton and Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt to meet in Norrland

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton will visit Kiruna on 6-7 March as part of an 'Arctic trip' that includes visits to Finland and Norway. Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be receiving Ms Ashton and will have the opportunity to present 'Arctic Sweden' and discuss developments in the region. Sweden, currently the chair of the Arctic Council, presented its first Arctic Strategy in May 2011.

The visit will begin on Tuesday evening with dinner and talks at the Ice Hotel in Jukkasjärvi. On Wednesday morning, the programme will continue several hundred metres underground in the LKAB mine in Kiruna, where mining operations take place. Lars-Eric Aaro, CEO of LKAB, will then present plans for the future. A visit to Sweden's Esrange Space Centre will take place in the afternoon.

"This is an excellent opportunity to introduce Catherine Ashton to our dynamic Norrland and to discuss the challenges the Arctic is facing," says Mr Bildt.

Media representatives are welcome to take part in the programme and will be able to conduct interviews during the visit. Contact person: Jan Janonius, Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Service

Contact
Jan Janonius

Related
- Read more about the Swedish Chairmanship of the Arctic Council
UN discusses freedom of expression on the Internet at Sweden’s initiative

Today, the UN Human Rights Council opens its nineteenth ordinary session in Geneva. Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is participating in the session’s High-Level Segment and will give Sweden’s address to the Council on Wednesday 29 February. On the same day, Mr Bildt will also participate in the panel discussion on freedom of expression on the Internet, which is being held at Sweden’s initiative. This is the first time that the issue of freedom on the Internet has been raised on the UN human rights agenda.

Mr Bildt is participating in the panel together with Navi Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and Frank la Rue, UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, as well as representatives of civil society in South America, Africa and Asia, and from Google. The moderator is Al Jazeera reporter Riz Khan. The panel discussion can be followed live (12.00-15.00) via the web link below.

The session agenda contains a range of current issues in which Sweden has an active role. Along with a cross-regional group of countries, Sweden will submit a resolution that aims to extend the mandate of a Special Rapporteur on Iran, based on the serious human rights situation in the country. For the first time, there will also be a panel discussion on the human rights of LGBT people, and on how the Council will monitor these issues in the future. Sweden has nominated Hans Ytterberg (former Ombudsman against Discrimination because of Sexual Orientation) to the panel.

"Over the past year, the Council has come to play a more active role in serious situations, such as Libya and Syria, which strengthens the Council’s relevance," says Mr Bildt. "Through its candidacy to the UN Human Rights Council, Sweden hopes to continue to advance the agenda and improve the situation for human rights worldwide."

Press conference

A press conference with Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be held in connection with the panel discussion on freedom of expression on the Internet.

Wednesday 29 February at 15.15 in Press Room 3, Building A, Palais des Nations.

Contact

Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
Carl Bildt discusses Syria at foreign ministers meeting in Brussels

On Monday 27 February, EU foreign ministers will be meeting in Brussels. The agenda will include Syria and tougher sanctions against the country. The situation in Egypt and the Middle East will also be on the agenda, along with Serbia, Kosovo and the situation in the Southern Caucasus.

Mr Bildt will be available for comment at the Council building, Justus Lipsius, at around 16.00.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
Carl Bildt to attend Friends of Syria meeting in Tunisia

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be in Tunis on Friday 24 February to attend the Friends of the Syrian People meeting being hosted by the Arab League. Government representatives from 160 countries have been invited to the meeting.

Telephone press conference
A telephone press conference with Carl Bildt will be held after the meeting. For more information, journalists are invited to contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
New ambassador to Libya

February 16, the Government appointed Jan Thesleff as Stockholm-based Ambassador for Libya. Sweden does not have an embassy in Tripoli. Since May 2011, Mr Thesleff has been Ambassador for Tunisia based in Stockholm. He was previously Ambassador in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Mr Thesleff has previously served at the embassies in Damascus, Tokyo and Cairo, and at the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the EU. He has also been seconded to the office of the EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process.

Contact
Anders Jörle
Director Press Section MFA
+46 8 405 37 27
+46 70 888 36 24
email to Anders Jörle
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carl Bildt to London for discussions on the challenges in the Arctic

On 21 February, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt travels to London where he is to participate in a public seminar on the Arctic at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). He will discuss Sweden’s current and future role with regard to regional security and other challenges in the Arctic.

Climate change has led to the reduction of sea ice in the Arctic. This creates new business opportunities, and opens up new trade routes and possibilities to exploit natural resources. At the same time, the sensitive Arctic environment and its indigenous people are affected. International interest in the Arctic is increasing.

In connection with the discussions at the IISS, its new forum on climate change and security in the Arctic is being launched. This 18-month programme aims to promote discussion on policy issues between the countries in and around the Arctic. Sweden is the main sponsor for this project.

The meeting will be chaired by Dr John Chipman, IISS Director-General and Chief Executive.

Contact
Mikael Anzén
Swedish Chairmanship of the Arctic Council
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Linn Duvhammar
Desk Officer
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+ 46 (0)709 280 855
• E-mail to Linn Duvhammar
New Ambassadors

The following four ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 16 February 2012.

Paraguay

Paraguay’s newly appointed Ambassador José Emilio Gorostiaga Peña was born in 1961 and has served at the Ministry of External Relations since 1990. In recent years he has held the following posts:

2010- Chargé d'affaires e.p. in Stockholm

2008-2009 Minister at the Embassy in London

2007-2008 General Director of Multilateral Policy at the Ministry of External Relations

2005-2007 General Secretary at the Ministry of External Relations

2002-2005 Consul-General in New York

Morocco

Morocco’s newly appointed Ambassador Yahdih Bouchaab was born in 1955 and has served at the foreign ministry since 2003. He has previously been head of the Office of the Speaker and in recent years he has held the following posts:

2006- Ambassador in Norway

2003-2006 Counsellor in the United Kingdom

Sudan

Sudan’s newly appointed Ambassador Abu Bakr Hussein was born in 1954 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1979. The posts he has held include the following:

2009- Director of the Executive Office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

2007-2008 Ambassador in Senegal

2004-2007 Minister, later Ambassador, at the Embassy in Addis Ababa

2000-2004 Minister at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ireland

Ireland’s newly appointed Ambassador James Joseph Carroll was born in 1950 and has served at the Department of Foreign Affairs since 1975. In recent years the posts he has held include the following:

2008- Representative of Ireland to the Palestinian National Authority, Ramallah

2006-2008 Director, Irish Abroad Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs

2004-2006 Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy in London

2001-2003 Consul-General in Wales

External links

- The Diplomatic Portal
Contact
UD Press
Press Service - Office hours
+46 8 405 57 30
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt travels to Vienna on Wednesday to attend and address a ministerial meeting on the Paris Pact on Thursday 16 February. The meeting will focus on the fight against drugs and Afghanistan.

On the following day, Friday 17 February, he will meet the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Yukiya Amano, to discuss Iran's nuclear technology programme and other issues. Sweden has had a seat on the IAEA Board of Governors since 2011.

On the same day, Mr Bildt will also participate in a celebration of the 15th anniversary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear - Test - Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO), together with UN Secretary - General Ban Ki - moon and others. A press conference will be held in this connection on 17 February at approximately 09.00.

For further information and to register for the press conference, see the link on the CTBTO website.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
Reminder: Carl Bildt to present Statement of Foreign Policy

What will Sweden’s foreign policy be in the year ahead? On Wednesday 15 February, the annual foreign policy debate will be held in the Riksdag, opening with the Statement of Foreign Policy presented by Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

Time and place
Time of press conference: Wednesday 15 February at approximately 11.00 (after the debate)
Place: Riksdag Press Centre, Stockholm

Sweden’s view of EU developments, the status of human rights, international crises and developments in the Middle East and North Africa are some of the subjects that will be raised in the Statement of Foreign Policy, along with development assistance, trade and climate policy. The Statement is both an annual report from the Government and a presentation of visions for the coming year.

Press conference
At approximately 11.00 on Wednesday 15 February (after the debate), Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson will meet the press at the Riksdag Press Centre.

Statement of Foreign Policy
From 09.00 on Wednesday, when the speech in the Riksdag begins, the Statement of Foreign Policy will also be available to read or download as a PDF on www.ud.se. No printed copies will be distributed.

Twitter with Carl Bildt
Between 12.45 and 13.15, for the first time ever, the Minister for Foreign Affairs will participate in a question-and-answer session on Twitter. Questions can be put directly to Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt on the newly started Twitter account @fragaCarlBildt. He will answer as many questions as he can during the half-hour session.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
Carl Bildt to present Statement of Foreign Policy

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Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00

External links
- The Riksdag web site
- @fragaCarlBildt on Twitter
Arctic Council Sustainable Development Working Group to meet in Gällivare

On 14-15 February, the Arctic Council Sustainable Development Working Group will meet in Gällivare. The meeting is being organised under the Swedish Chairmanship of the Arctic Council, which lasts until 2013. Around 30 representatives of the eight member states, indigenous peoples and observer states will take part.

Two weeks ago the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) met in Stockholm on Sweden’s initiative to discuss the responsibility of enterprises operating in the Arctic for the climate and people in the region. In Gällivare, Sweden will inform other participants about continued work on that issue. Other discussions during the meeting on 14-15 February will start out from topics such as food safety, Swedish reindeer husbandry, the Arctic from an economic perspective and how to increase awareness of the human dimension in all Arctic issues.

The participants will also visit the LKAB mine in Malmberget for a dialogue on the company’s work on sustainability.

During the two days of the meeting, Mikael Anzén, who chairs the Working Group, will be available for interviews.

Contact
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Chair of the SDWG
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+ 46 (0)709 280 855
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State Visit to South Korea

Their Majesties King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will pay a State Visit to the Republic of Korea on 30 May-1 June 2012 at the invitation of President Lee Myung-bak.

The Swedish Government will be represented by Minister for Enterprise Annie Lööf and Minister for Defence Sten Tolgfors. A business delegation headed by Chair of the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise Kenneth Bengtsson will also visit South Korea in connection with the State Visit.

The purpose of the visit is to promote relations between South Korea and Sweden - which today are significant - not only in the trade and economic areas but also in areas such as science, research, culture and education. During their visit the King and Queen will also attend the World Expo, Yeosu Expo, whose theme is 'The Living Ocean and Coast'.

Media representatives travelling to South Korea to cover the visit will need special accreditation. More information concerning accreditation, the programme for the visit and media arrangements will be published on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website.

Contact

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Lars Andreasson, Deputy Director-General
Trade development and Promotion
Asia and Pacific Department
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---

External links

- The Swedish Royal Court
- The Embassy of Sweden in South Korea
- South Korea's Government portal
- The Office of the President of South Korea
- The Embassy of South Korea in Sweden
Carl Bildt to the US to launch SIPRI North America

This weekend, 3-5 February, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be attending the Munich Security Conference, where foreign and security policy issues will be in focus.

Mr Bildt will be moderating the panel discussion entitled 'Energy, Resources, and the Environment: New Security Parameters?' Also attending will be Hillary Clinton, Hamadi Jebali, Henry A. Kissinger, Kenneth Roth, Ahmet Davutoglu, Amr Moussa, Kevin Rudd, Leon Panetta and Robert B. Zoellick.

Mr Bildt will then leave for Washington DC, where he will be from 6-8 February. Jointly with Dr Zbigniew Brzezinski (former US national security advisor) he will launch SIPRI North America and have talks with representatives of the State Department, the Senate, the World Bank, the IMF and the National Security Council on issues including the political situation in Iran and internet freedom.

Programme points:

Monday 6 February
Seminar with Dr Zbigniew Brzezinski (former US national security advisor) on the theme 'Peace and Security in 2030: What role for Europe and the United States?' Organised by SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) to launch the newly opened SIPRI North America office.
Time: 16.30-18.00
Place: House of Sweden, Washington DC
Media representatives are welcome to attend (advance registration necessary).

Tuesday 7 February
Lunch on the theme 'Freedom on the Internet' with Alec Ross from the State Department, Colin Crowell, Twitter, and Michael Nelson, CSC Leading Edge Forum.

Please contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson if you would like to register for the SIPRI seminar, request an interview or require any further information.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
Carl Bildt to Madrid

On 30-31 January, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will travel to Madrid for bilateral meetings with his Spanish colleague, José Manuel García-Margallo. Mr Bildt will also meet representatives of the media, civil society and think tanks.

Spain's new government took office in December 2011.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
Carl Bildt to discuss situation in Syria and Iran at foreign minister meeting in Brussels

On Monday 23 January, a meeting of EU foreign ministers will be held in Brussels, with Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt representing Sweden.

Several issues are on the agenda, but discussions are likely to be dominated by Syria and Iran - particularly sanctions and the political situation in both countries.

Mr Bildt will be available for comment at the Council building, Justus Lipsius, at around 16.00.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
Start of the Raoul Wallenberg Year

This year, 2012, will be the year in which the Swede Raoul Wallenberg is celebrated throughout the world. He is the Swede who has had most places, streets, squares and parks named after him, and over thirty monuments throughout the world honour his memory.

Raoul Wallenberg was the young Swede who saved tens of thousands of Jews in Budapest from the Holocaust during the final stages of the Second World War. He was then caught by the Soviet army and became a victim of Stalin's dictatorship.

This is why the Swedish Government has decided to organise a number of activities in 2012 - both in Sweden and internationally - to commemorate his deeds and the continued need for tolerance and the fight for human rights. No one personified this endeavour better than Raoul Wallenberg.

Raoul Wallenberg was arrested by Soviet forces on 17 January 1945. The activities of the Raoul Wallenberg Year will begin on 17 January 2012.

This is when the Riksdag will come together again after the Christmas break to honour the memory of Raoul Wallenberg.

On the same day, at the Swedish Institute in Budapest, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will open the Raoul Wallenberg exhibition To me there was no other choice. He will also speak on Raoul Wallenberg and human rights at the Central European University.

Also on Tuesday 17 January, Sweden’s Ambassador in Berlin, Staffan Carlsson, will inaugurate a permanent Raoul Wallenberg room at Mauermuseum - Museum Haus am Checkpoint Charlie in Berlin.

In Sweden, the Living History Forum will present a publication on Raoul Wallenberg. On the same day, the City of Lidingö - where Raoul Wallenberg was born one hundred years ago - will open an exhibition about him.

The Raoul Wallenberg Year now has both a website (www.raoulwallenberg2012.se) and a Facebook page. Many of the hundreds of different events dedicated to Raoul Wallenberg throughout the world will focus on communicating his message about personal courage and standing up for others to children and young people.

"It is important that we remember and honour Raoul Wallenberg, one of the greatest Swedes. We can honour him best by passing on to new generations knowledge about both Raoul Wallenberg as a person and the importance of individual responsibility and personal courage in crucial situations," says Olle Wästberg, the Government’s coordinator for the Raoul Wallenberg Year.

Facts

Raoul Wallenberg would have turned 100 on 4 August. The Raoul Wallenberg Year 2012 is being run by a national committee, with Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt as chair and three additional ministers as members. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is coordinating the activities, and the Swedish Institute, the Living History Forum, the Army Museum and the Raoul Wallenberg Institute in Lund have special remits to commemorate Raoul Wallenberg. On 26 January, the King and Queen will attend a ceremony for Raoul Wallenberg at the Stockholm synagogue, and the following day Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt and former UN Secretary - General Kofi Annan will speak at Raoul Wallenbergs Torg in Stockholm.

Contact

Ursula Åhlén
Head of Communication, Raoul Wallenberg 2012
+46 8 405 543 14
+46 76 764 89 40
E-mail to Ursula Åhlén
Bilateral meeting and talks between foreign ministers Bildt and Tuomioja on 'the Finnish question in Swedish politics'.

On Monday 16 January, Finnish Minister for Foreign Affairs Erkki Tuomioja travels to Stockholm for a bilateral meeting with Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt about political issues of common interest.

They will also participate in a discussion of a new book on the Finnish question in Swedish politics between the years 1809-2009 by Professor Krister Wahlbäck.

A press conference attended by both foreign ministers will take place at the Finnish Embassy following the bilateral meeting and before the discussion of Professor Wahlbäck's book.

See below for information on registration.
We look forward to seeing you.

Press conference with Messrs Bildt and Tuomioja

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time and place</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 16 January at 14.45-15.00 (arrive by 14.30)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Finnish Embassy, Gärdesgatan 11, 115 27 Stockholm</td>
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Discussion of a new book by Professor Krister Wahlbäck on the Finnish question in Swedish politics between the years 1809-2009.

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</tbody>
</table>

Introduction by Ambassador Harry Helenius
Participating:
Professor Krister Wahlbäck
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt
Finnish Minister for Foreign Affairs Erkki Tuomioja
Moderator: Dr Teija Tiilikainen, Director of the Finnish Institute of International Affairs

The discussion and presentation of the book will be followed by a reception.

Register
Register for the press conference and/or the discussion by 15 January at the latest by emailing svar.tuk@formin.fi or telephoning Pia Lundström on +46 8 676 67 18.

Note: Please bring your press credentials.

For more information, please contact Anna Charlotta Johansson, Press Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, or Cita Högnabba, Press Counsellor at the Finnish Embassy.
Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00

Cita Högrabba
Press Counsellor at the Finnish Embassy
+46 70 843 99 97
Carl Bildt travels to Budapest to open exhibition and hold speech on Raoul Wallenberg

On Tuesday 17 January, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and the Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs János Martonyi will open the exhibition 'To me there's no other choice - Raoul Wallenberg 1912 -2012' at the Hungarian National Museum in Budapest.

The inauguration of the Swedish Institute’s travelling exhibition marks the official start of the Raoul Wallenberg Year 2012. The programme also includes a walking tour in Raoul Wallenberg’s footsteps in Budapest, bilateral talks with the Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, and a lecture by Mr Bildt on Raoul Wallenberg, Human Rights and International Relations at the Central European University on the invitation of the University’s President and Rector, John Shattuck and the Director of the Centre for European Enlargement Studies, Péter Balázs.

The travelling exhibition will be displayed at a further seven places during the year, in the following order: New York, Washington DC, Moscow, Tel Aviv, Berlin, Toronto and Winnipeg.

For further information and/or to participate in the various programme points in Budapest, please contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson or Ursula Åhlén, Communications Officer, Raoul Wallenberg 2012.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00

Ursula Åhlén
Head of Communication, Raoul Wallenberg 2012
+46 8 405 543 14
+46 76 764 89 40
E-mail to Ursula Åhlén
Press release
10 January 2012
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carl Bildt to Lithuania for conference and bilateral meeting

On Wednesday 11 January and Thursday 12 January, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in the Snow Meeting 2012 conference in Lithuania, organised by the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mr Bildt will participate in a panel discussion on security aspects of Nordic-Baltic cooperation together with Edgars Rinkevics, Latvia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Anna Jardfeldt, Director of the Swedish Institute of International Affairs.

He will also have a bilateral meeting with Lithuania's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Audronius Ašteikis, to discuss political issues of common interest.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
2011

Carl Bildt to attend funeral of Vaclav Havel

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will attend the funeral of Vaclav Havel tomorrow. The funeral will be held at the St. Vitus Cathedral in Prague.

Please contact the MFA Press Service with any questions.

Contact
UD Press
Press Service - Office hours
+46 8 405 57 30
New ambassador to Cyprus

The Government yesterday appointed Klas Gierow as Ambassador to Cyprus. Mr Gierow was last stationed in Liberia, where he was in charge of opening the embassy in Monrovia. Before that he served as Ambassador in Jordan and in Morocco. He has also served at the embassies in Brasilia, Paris and Islamabad and at the Permanent Mission of Sweden in Geneva. Mr Gierow will take up his new post in January 2012.
Press release
20 December 2011
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Presentation of Raoul Wallenberg Year 2012

On 20 December the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Swedish Institute and the Living History Forum will present the Raoul Wallenberg Year 2012 and the exhibition that will tour at least six countries next year.

The exhibition "To me there's no other choice - Raoul Wallenberg 1912 - 2012" is open for public on Tuesday 20 December, 01.00 - 05.00 pm at Designens Hus, Telefonplan. This is the only opportunity to see the exhibition in Sweden.

The purpose of a year in Raoul Wallenberg’s honour is to shed light on his deeds in Budapest during the Second World War and, above all, in a wider perspective, to highlight and discuss current issues relating to human rights, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, as well as the importance of personal responsibility and courage, and each individual's ability to make a difference.

Press conference and presentation of the exhibition, the postage stamp and the Swedish and international activities during Wallenberg Year 2012

Time and place
Tuesday 20 December, 09.00-10.30
Designens hus, Telefonplan, LM Ericssons väg 26 (entrance in direction of Konstfack)

Participants:
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt
Olle Wästberg, the Government’s coordinator for the Raoul Wallenberg Year 2012
Director - General Annika Rembe, Swedish Institute
Director Eskil Franck, Living History Forum
CEO Andreas Falkenmark, Posten Meddelande AB

We look forward to seeing you there.
Please bring your press credentials.

Contact
Contact: Ursula Åhlén, Head of Communication, Raoul Wallenberg 2012
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Related
• Raoul Wallenberg 2012
Ministry for Foreign Affairs travel information - now also as Android app

Today, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) is releasing its smartphone app 'UD Resklar' for Android mobiles. The app is aimed at Swedes who are planning to travel. The app has been available for the iPhone since the summer and version 1.1 was released in November. Improvements have now been integrated in the app for Android. With the travel app, the MFA provides up-to-date travel information on different countries around the world, direct to mobiles.

In June this year the MFA commissioned a SIFO survey which shows that young people have poor awareness of what the MFA can and cannot help with when one runs into difficulties abroad. This is one of the reasons for the initiative to develop an app for the MFA’s travel information.

The UD Resklar app contains information on important things to think about when planning a trip, such as checking insurance cover, the situation in the country, what kind of help Swedish travellers can expect if bad luck strikes and, of course, which countries the MFA advises against travelling to. UD Resklar includes tips that can save time and money if the unexpected happens during the trip.

"We are continuing to make the MFA's travel information available, now also for users of Android mobiles. The app will be particularly useful in the event of an emergency. We have an important mandate to disseminate MFA travel information, and hope that more and more people download the app before travelling," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

The MFA's travel information is in great demand. This was clear in connection with the events in North Africa, the Middle East and Japan in the spring, when the situation in these countries changed rapidly and travel information and advice against travelling was updated continuously. Among other things, the app includes security assessments from the Swedish embassies.

Facts
The information in the app is collected from various information sources, primarily from the website for Swedish diplomatic missions abroad (swedenabroad.com) and the MFA website (www.ud.se). To provide users with updated health and vaccine information and country-specific facts, the MFA has chosen to collaborate with other government agencies. The information is updated automatically via RSS. The app is free to download from Android Market; see link.

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The Government is proposing Sweden's accession to the Convention on Cluster Munitions

The Government has today decided to submit a Bill to the Riksdag proposing Sweden's accession to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The purpose of the Convention is to prevent continued use of cluster munitions and to rectify the serious humanitarian problems that cluster munitions have caused in countries where they are used.

"I am pleased that the Government can now propose Sweden's accession to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The Convention is an important element in efforts to bring about a broad-based ban on cluster munitions, which cause unacceptable injuries to the civilian population," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

Central to the Convention is its ban on using, developing, producing, stockpiling, retaining or directly or indirectly transferring cluster munitions. The Convention also contains a ban on assisting, encouraging or inducing anyone to engage in any prohibited activities. In addition, the Convention means that the States Parties are to clear and destroy remnants of cluster munitions and submunitions that have been stockpiled. Finally, the Convention contains provisions on support to cluster munitions victims and commitments to international cooperation and assistance.

As the Convention requires States Parties to destroy their existing stocks of cluster munitions, the Swedish weapons system Bombkapsel 90 will now be discontinued and destroyed.

The Bill estimates that Sweden's accession to the Convention will require some legislative amendments. The Bill contains a proposed new law on punishment of unlawful dealings with cluster munitions.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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Anna Maj Hultgård
Deputy Head of the Department for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation
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Carl Bildt talks with this year’s Peace Prize laureates

Time and place
Monday 12 December at 17.00-19.00
Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Drottning Kristinas väg 37, Stockholm

On Monday 12 December, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will participate in a discussion with this year’s Nobel Peace Prize laureates - Tawakkol Karman, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Leymah Gbowee - on their fight for women’s rights and participation in peace-building efforts.

The Swedish Institute of International Affairs will host the discussion. Mr Bildt will give the concluding remarks. Director-General of Sida Charlotte Petri Gornitzka and Secretary-General of the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation Lena Ag will also be taking part.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00

External links
- Swedish Institute of International Affairs
Press release
08 December 2011
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation to the presentation of Raoul Wallenberg Year 2012

On 20 December the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Swedish Institute and the Living History Forum will present the Raoul Wallenberg Year 2012 and the exhibition that will tour at least six countries next year. This is the only opportunity to see the exhibition in Sweden.

The purpose of a year in Raoul Wallenberg's honour is to shed light on his deeds in Budapest during the Second World War and, above all, in a wider perspective, to highlight and discuss current issues relating to human rights, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, as well as the importance of personal responsibility and courage, and each individual's ability to make a difference.

Press conference and presentation of the exhibition, the postage stamp and the Swedish and international activities during Wallenberg Year 2012

* Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt
* Olle Wästberg, the Government's coordinator for the Raoul Wallenberg Year 2012
* Director-General Annika Rembe, Swedish Institute
* Director Eskil Franck, Living History Forum
* CEO Andreas Falkenmark, Posten Meddelande AB

Time and place
Tuesday 20 December, 09.00-10.30
Designens hus, Telefonplan, LM Ericssons väg 26 (entrance in direction of Konstfack)

Contact
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Head of Communication, Raoul Wallenberg 2012
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E-mail to Ursula Åhlén
New Ambassadors to Stockholm

The following four ambassadors will present their letters of credence to H M The King on Thursday 8 December 2011.

The Czech Republic

The Czech Republic’s newly appointed Ambassador Jana Hynková was born in 1969 and has served at the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1994. During this period, Ambassador Hynková has mainly been responsible for Nordic, Baltic and EU issues. The posts she has held include the following:

July 2010- Director, EU General Affairs Department
January-July 2010 Director of the Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs
2009-January 2010 Director, EU General Affairs Department
2004-2009 Counsellor, Embassy of the Czech Republic in Copenhagen

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan’s newly appointed Ambassador Dilshod Akhatov (concurrently accredited from Brussels) was born in 1972 and has served at the Uzbek Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1995.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

September 2010- Ambassador in Berlin
2007-2010 Head of the Department for Cooperation with European Countries and NATO
2003-2007 Head of Unit, Department for Cooperation with European Countries
1999-2003 Third Secretary, Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in Berlin

Jamaica

Jamaica’s newly appointed Ambassador Anthony Smith Rowe Johnson (concurrently accredited from London) was born in 1938 and has a degree in economics. The posts he has held include the following:

2002-2007 Minority Leader of the Senate and Opposition Spokesman on Agriculture
2008-2010 Ambassador in Washington and Jamaica’s Permanent Representative to the Organisation of American States (OAS).
2010- High Commissioner in London.

Ethiopia

Ethiopia’s newly appointed Ambassador Berhanu Kebede (concurrently accredited from London) was born in 1956 and has served at the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1978. In recent years he has held the following posts:

2006- Ambassador to the United Kingdom
2002-2006 Ambassador to Sweden, concurrently accredited in Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland
2000-2002 Chargé d'Affaires in the Russian Federation

1993-2000 Director General for International Organisation and Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Contact
UD Press
Press Service - Office hours
+46 8 405 57 30
The Arctic States call for powerful measures to reduce emissions

"The fight against climate change is an imperative common challenge for the international community and requires immediate global measures. To highlight the effects of global warming in the Arctic, Sweden, which holds the chairmanship of the Arctic Council, will today host a seminar in the margins of the climate conference."

This statement was made today by Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, chair of the Arctic Council, in connection with the UN Climate Change Conference which is currently under way in Durban, South Africa. The statement is supported by all eight member states of the Arctic Council.

At the seminar, State Secretary Anders Flanking of the Ministry of the Environment will highlight the special responsibility of the Arctic countries to protect the unique environment of the Arctic.

Arctic Council
The Arctic Council is a forum for consultation and cooperation between the governments of the five Nordic countries plus Canada, Russia and the United States, as well as representatives of six Arctic indigenous peoples' organisations. Sweden is currently chairing the Council and will pass on the Chairmanship to Canada at the foreign ministers meeting in Kiruna in May 2013.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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Gustaf Lind
Ambassadör för Arktis
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External links
- Read the full statement here
- Website of the Arctic Council
- Website of the Climate Conference
Carl Bildt to discuss Internet freedom with Hillary Clinton at conference in The Hague

On Friday 9 December, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in a conference on Internet freedom in The Hague.

The foreign ministers of countries including the United States, Canada, Estonia and Kenya will also be taking part, together with the most important civil society organisations that work for freedom on the Internet, as well as international organisations, such as Internet companies and telecom operators. A number of bloggers will also be participating.

"This conference is important as it aims to strengthen cooperation between like-minded governments that want to work together for freedom on the Internet," says Mr Bildt.

On the evening of 8 December, Mr Bildt will take part, together with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and others, in a seminar on Internet freedom organised by Google in The Hague.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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Carl Bildt to Brussels for Council meeting on EU enlargement

On Monday 5 December, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in the General Affairs Council meeting in Brussels. The issue of EU enlargement tops the agenda. Discussions will focus on the further progress of Croatia, Iceland, Turkey, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia, Albania and Kosovo towards EU membership.

On Monday the General Affairs Council meets in Brussels. At the meeting, ministers from the EU Member States will adopt conclusions on the continued enlargement of the EU. The conclusions will then provide a basis for discussions at the EU summit in Brussels at the end of the week, on 8-9 December. It is possible that at that meeting the Heads of State and Government will decide on candidate country status for Serbia, and a start to negotiations for Montenegro and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Background

In an opinion piece yesterday, Carl Bildt and ten other EU foreign ministers wrote about the development of the important relations between the EU and candidate country Turkey. You can read the article here.

On 12 October, the European Commission presented its annual overview of the enlargement process. The overview will underlie discussions in the General Affairs Council on Monday and can be downloaded here.

Contact

Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00

Related

- Opinion piece in the EUobserver by Carl Bildt and ten other foreign ministers on EU enlargement

External links

- European Commission 2011 overview of EU enlargement
Carl Bildt to speak about Afghanistan post-2014 at Bonn conference

On Monday 5 December, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in the International Afghanistan Conference in Bonn. The conference is an important opportunity for the international community to confirm its long-term commitment to Afghanistan, with a focus on the period after 2014.

Progress on the transfer of security responsibility to the Afghans, the need for an intensified peace and reconciliation process and regional cooperation will also be on the agenda.

"Our commitment to Afghanistan is long-term and the conference in Bonn will be an important opportunity to confirm this. This is especially important when we make the gradual transition to a mainly civilian commitment. On the initiative of Sweden, the EU has agreed to begin negotiations on a partnership agreement with Afghanistan, which will pave the way for long-term European commitment," says Mr Bildt.

"Prior to the conference, Sweden has stressed the importance of not undermining the progress made in the area of human rights, especially women's rights," says Mr Bildt.

The conference will be chaired by Afghanistan's president, Hamid Karzai. Some 90 countries will be represented, of which around 70 at foreign minister level. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will also be taking part. In connection with the conference, a major meeting will take place between Afghan and foreign NGOs that are involved in Afghanistan.

Mr Bildt will be available to the media. Please contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson for details.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
Tougher sanctions against Iran and Syria in focus when Carl Bildt participates in foreign ministers meeting

Tomorrow, Thursday 1 December, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will attend the Foreign Affairs Council in Brussels. Issues on the agenda include a discussion and decision on tougher sanctions against Syria and Iran. Political developments in Egypt and the Middle East peace process will also be discussed.

There will be an opportunity for the press to meet Mr Bildt in the Swedish press room at the Justus Lipsius Building after the meeting ends, at approximately 16.00.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
Carl Bildt to Latvia for political talks

On Monday 28 November, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will travel to Riga, Latvia, for political talks with Prime Minister Valdis Dombrovskis, newly appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs Edgars Rinkevics and Minister for Defence Artis Pabriks.

Issues on the agenda for discussion include bilateral issues and development in the region and within the EU.

There will be a press conference with both foreign ministers following their meeting, at approximately 15.50 at the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Those interested in attending the press conference should contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
New Ambassadors to Stockholm

The following four ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 24 November 2011.

Angola
Angola’s newly appointed Ambassador Brito António Sózinho was born in 1941 and has served at the Ministry of External Relations since 1975. In recent years he has held the following posts:

2006-2011 Ambassador to Guinea Bissau

2001-2006 Ambassador to Tanzania with concurrent accreditation to Kenya, Burundi, Uganda and the Seychelles. Also Angola’s permanent representative at the UN body in Kenya.


Liberia
Liberia’s newly appointed Ambassador Ethel Davis (concurrently accredited from Berlin) has a Master of Business Administration from George Washington University in Washington D.C. and held several senior positions at the African Development Bank during the period 1992-2001, including the last four years as adviser to the Executive Director.

During the period 2001-2006 she was Manager for Human Resources at the Central Bank of Liberia and subsequently Deputy Governor at the same bank from 2006 to 2009.

Between 2009 and 2010, Ambassador Davis was a consultant at the Liberian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and since December 2010 she has been Ambassador in Berlin.

The United States
The United States’ newly appointed Ambassador Mark Francis Brzezinski was born in 1965. In recent years he has held the following posts:


1999-2001 Director, National Security Council


Lithuania
Lithuania’s newly appointed Ambassador Eityvydas Bajarunas was born in 1963 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1994.

He has worked at the Ministry of Defence and NATO and has taken part in courses on disarmament and international security and international relations at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Swedish Institute of International Affairs in Stockholm. In recent years, Ambassador Bajarunas has held the following positions:

2009-2011 Political Director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

2005-2009 Consul General in Saint Petersburg, Russia

2004-2005 Director, Europe Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2003-2004 Diplomatic Adviser to the President of Lithuania

2002-2003 Director, First Department of Bilateral Relations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Contact
UD Press
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Carl Bildt and Radoslaw Sikorski to Ukraine for political talks

Tomorrow, Wednesday 23 November, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Poland’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Radoslaw Sikorski will travel to Donetsk in Ukraine.

The journey is at the invitation of the chairman of the Shaktar Donetsk football club, Rinat Akhmetov, and both foreign ministers will watch a Champions League match between Shaktar Donetsk and FC Porto.

The visit will provide an opportunity to discuss current political issues and the country’s EU integration process and to be briefed on the progress of the preparations for the 2012 European football championships, which Ukraine is arranging together with Poland next year.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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New ambassador to Mexico

The Government today appointed Jörgen Persson as Ambassador to Mexico. Jörgen Persson is currently Minister at the Embassy in Madrid and has previously served at the embassies in Tel Aviv, Madrid and Vienna.

Jörgen Persson is expected to take up his new post at the beginning of next year.

Contact
UD Press
Press Service - Office hours
+46 8 405 57 30
Carl Bildt to speak at India Forum in Stockholm

The India Forum will be held in Stockholm on Friday and Saturday 11-12 November. Some 60 people from India, the United States, Sweden and the rest of Europe are meeting to discuss the political, economic and social developments in the country, and India's growing global role. On Friday, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will speak at the Forum.

The India Forum is a meeting place and discussion forum on India's growing global role which brings together experts from different fields and parts of the world. This year's India Forum is the fourth to be held. The meeting is arranged by the US German Marshall Fund and has financial support from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

In October this year Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt visited Mumbai in India, where he announced Sweden's decision to open a Consulate-General in Mumbai - the commercial and financial centre of India.

The meeting is not open to the media but Mr Bildt will be available through press secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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Press release
10 November 2011
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carl Bildt to open Afghanistan exhibition at Museum of Ethnography in Stockholm

Time and place
14.00-15.00
Museum of Ethnography, Museiparken, northern Djurgården, Stockholm

On Friday 11 November Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will participate in the opening of a new exhibition on Afghanistan at the Museum of Ethnography in Stockholm.

Sweden has an extensive involvement in Afghanistan, in military and civil initiatives as well as development cooperation.

"Sweden supports Afghanistan's development and efforts to become a functioning democracy through a number of different initiatives. Not least in light of this it is pleasing that this exhibition has now come to Sweden. There are many of us who should be interested in learning more about the country's history and culture," says Mr Bildt.

The media is very welcome to attend the opening ceremony.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
Continued Swedish KFOR participation in Kosovo

The Government has today decided to present a Bill to the Riksdag on continued Swedish participation in the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR). The Government is seeking the approval of the Riksdag for an extended mandate until the end of December 2013.

It is proposed that up to April 2012, Swedish forces in KFOR comprise no more than 70 people, to be subsequently reduced by the end of December 2013, when the current contribution ends. In 2009, Sweden began a reduction of its contribution in connection with NATO's gradual reduction.

"As Kosovo's own ability to maintain law and order in the country is strengthened and more and more security functions are handed over to the Kosovo authorities, the importance of a military presence is reduced. It is therefore reasonable that the Swedish contribution reflects the general reduction," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

"Military commitments within the framework of KFOR will continue in 2012 and 2013, with the primary focus on the military Liaison and Observation Teams to which Sweden has contributed for more than a year. The Swedish reduction will take place under the condition that the positive developments in Kosovo continue," says Minister for Defence Sten Tolgfors.

Teleconference

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will comment on the Bill during a teleconference from Kosovo/Serbia, today, Wednesday 9 November, at 15.30.

To participate in the teleconference, please contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson on telephone: +46 70 356 30 32.

Contact

Anna Charlotta Johansson
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Henrik Hedberg
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Press invitation: Arctic Council to meet in Luleå

On 8–9 November, nearly 150 delegates representing the Arctic Council Member States, working groups and indigenous peoples will meet in Luleå. At the meeting, the Council is expected to discuss two major research projects, the Arctic Change Assessment and the Arctic Resilience Report. Among other projects, young people in reindeer husbandry will be on the meeting agenda.

"The preparatory discussions were dealt with during the Arctic week in Stockholm in late September. So in Luleå we are aiming for a dynamic meeting where we can 'press the start button' for the new projects," says Sweden's Arctic Ambassador Gustaf Lind, who will lead the meeting.

One of the research projects will be on how the environment and Arctic communities are reacting to the changes that are occurring in the Arctic, an issue that is one of the top priorities of the Swedish Chairmanship.

Much of the practical work of the Council is conducted by its six working groups, which will report to the meeting on ongoing activities and present new proposals within the framework of Arctic cooperation.

The Senior Arctic Official (SAO) meeting in Luleå is the first of its kind during a Swedish Chairmanship and will start with guided tours of the icebreaker Oden, in cooperation with the Swedish Maritime Administration and the Swedish Polar Research Secretariat. Gustaf Lind will twitter from the meeting in Luleå.

Side events

Dr Svante Bodin of the Swedish Ministry of the Environment will give a lecture on "Short-lived Climate Forcers in the Arctic".
Time: Monday 7 November, 13.00-14.30.
Place: Lecture hall C305, Luleå University of Technology

Lars-Otto Reiersen, Secretary of the Arctic Council Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP) working group, will give a lecture on "Climate change and pollution of the Arctic: Status, trends and effects on Arctic ecosystems and humans".
Time: Tuesday 8 November, 14.45-16.15.
Place: Lecture hall E632, Luleå University of Technology

Time and place

Journalists are welcome to take part in the guided tours of the icebreaker Oden on 7 November and the opening of the SAO meeting in Luleå on 8 November. Prior notification of attendance is required. Ambassador Gustaf Lind, prominent Arctic researchers and representatives of Arctic indigenous peoples will be available for interviews. Journalists are also welcome to attend the public climate lectures at Luleå University of Technology.

The Arctic Council

The Arctic Council is a forum for consultation and cooperation between the governments of the five Nordic countries plus Canada, Russia and the United States, as well as representatives of six Arctic indigenous peoples' organisations. Sweden is currently chairing the Council and will pass on the Chairmanship to Canada at the foreign ministers meeting in Kiruna in May 2013.

Contact

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Special Adviser, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
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Press release  
01 November 2011  
Ministry for Foreign Affairs  

Carl Bildt to Nordic Council Session in Copenhagen  

On Wednesday 2 November, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in the annual Nordic Council Session, which will be held in Copenhagen this year.

In connection with the Session, the Nordic foreign ministers will also meet to discuss current foreign policy issues, focusing on the political developments in North Africa, the Middle East and Afghanistan. Further discussions will also take place on implementing the recommendations of the Stoltenberg Report, including cooperation on IT security and cooperation among the embassies of the Nordic countries.

Time and place  
A press briefing with Mr Bildt and the other Nordic foreign ministers will be held on Wednesday 2 November at 11.30, at Eigtveds Pakhus, Room A, Asiatisk Plads 2.

Contact  
Anna Charlotta Johansson  
+46 8 405 00 00
Press release
28 October 2011
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carl Bildt to attend Cyber Conference in London

On 1-2 November, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in the London Cyber Conference. The host of the conference will be Mr Bildt's British counterpart, William Hague. The agenda includes a broad range of Internet issues, from economic growth and development to freedom on the Internet and international security.

"The time is ripe to discuss issues of both freedom and security on the Internet at the same forum. These issues cannot be separated and they are also interlinked with innovative freedom. Freedom on the Internet is a crucial factor for continued economic growth. This is the case whether you live in Kista or Maputo," commented Mr Bildt prior to the conference.

Mr Bildt will be one of the keynote speakers at the conference. Other speakers will include government representatives, activists, business leaders and directors of research. In connection with the conference, Mr Bildt will hold a number of individual meetings with other actors.

Contact
Press contact for the conference is Teo Zetterman, Special Adviser at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Service.
New Ambassadors to Stockholm

The following four ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Friday 28 October 2011.

Malaysia
Malaysia’s newly appointed Ambassador Dato’ Badruddin Ab. Rahman was born in 1957 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1983. In recent years he has held the following posts:

2009-2011 Senior Under Secretary, Directorate of Europe, Americas & Africa, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2008-2009 Under Secretary, Middle East & North Africa Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2005-2011 Ambassador to Algeria
2003-2005 Under Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2001-2003 Principle Assistant Secretary, Southeast Asia Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Belgium
Belgium’s newly appointed Ambassador Jan Van Dessel was born in 1952 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1978. In recent years he has held the following posts:

2007-2011 Chair of the Interministerial Committee on Headquarters Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2003-2006 Ambassador to Finland
2000-2003 Central Administration, Civil Crisis Management, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
1998-2000 Ambassador to Argentina
1994-1997 Ambassador to Zaire

Sri Lanka
Sri Lanka’s newly appointed Ambassador Oshadhi Alahapperuma was born in 1972 and has worked in the telecommunications sector.

Among other things, he has attended training programmes at Ericsson in Stockholm and Gothenburg in March 2004 and October 2005 respectively.

Ambassador Alahapperuma worked as an engineer at Mobitel Ltd. between 2003 and 2010.

Since 2010 he has served as Private Secretary to the Minister of Youth Affairs and Skills Development.

Iceland
Iceland’s newly appointed Ambassador Gunnar Gunnarsson was born in 1948 and has served at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs since 1989. In recent years, he has held the following posts:

2008-2011 Ambassador, Political Department, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
2002-2008 Icelandic Ambassador and Permanent Representative to NATO and the WEU, Brussels, and the OPCW, the Hague
2001-2002 Director of Defence Department, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Related
- The Diplomatic Portal
1998-2001 Ambassador, Political Department, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Press release
21 October 2011
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carl Bildt to Brussels forum on the EU and the world's emerging powers

On Monday 24 October Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will give the opening address at a forum in Brussels on the EU and relations with emerging powers such as China, India, Russia, Brazil and South Africa.

The programme includes two panel debates focusing on political and economic issues, opportunities for the EU to develop strategic partnerships with these countries, and how the EU and the emerging powers together can contribute to increased trade and investments.

The conference is being organised by Allianz and the Centre for European Reform. Speakers include Director-General of the WTO Pascal Lamy.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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Sweden opens Consulate-General in Mumbai

The Government has decided to open a Swedish Consulate-General in Mumbai, India. The promotion of Sweden will be a central part of its activities and the Consulate-General will have a significant role in developing a network of contacts with representatives of India’s business sector and institutions.

Contacts between Sweden and India have increased and widened considerably in recent years. This applies at a political level, within the business sector, and among researchers and students. The decision to open a Consulate-General in Mumbai is part of the agreement the Government entered into with the Swedish Social Democratic Party regarding the future of the Swedish Foreign Service.

Mumbai is one of the world’s largest cities, with almost 20 million inhabitants, and is the financial and economic hub of India.

"India's importance for Sweden is growing, which is why there is cause to increase Swedish presence in the country’s increasingly important market. The opening of a Consulate-General in Mumbai is part of Sweden's increased efforts to build long-term and broad relations with India," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

The Consulate-General is expected to open in the middle of 2012.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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UD Press
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External links
• Swedish Embassy in New Delhi
Carl Bildt to India for official visit

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will travel to India on Tuesday 18 October. His visit will begin in the country's financial and commercial capital Mumbai, where meetings are scheduled with various financial institutions and Indian and Swedish companies.

On Thursday Mr Bildt will travel to New Delhi for political talks with Minister of External Affairs S.M. Krishna and others, and to take part in the Embassy’s annual week commemorating Alfred Nobel, this year on the theme of creativity and innovation. On Friday Mr Bildt will address the Asia Forum on Global Governance on the theme of ‘Global Asia’.

Meetings with opposition representatives, academics and journalists are also planned.

For further information or to register interest in being involved in a telephone press conference, please contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
New Ambassadors to Stockholm

The following four ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 13 October 2011:

Nigeria
Nigeria’s newly appointed Ambassador Benedict Onochie Amobi was born in 1955 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1979. In recent years he has held the following posts:

2010-2011 Director of the Africa Multilateral Affairs Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including responsibility for the AU and ECOWAS
2007-2010 Minister at the Embassy in Dublin
2004-2007 Deputy Chief of Protocol at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2003-2004 Minister at the International Economic Cooperation/Trade and Investment Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

France
France’s newly appointed Ambassador Jean-Pierre Lacroix was born in 1960 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs since 1988. He served in Prime Minister Juppé’s cabinet from 1994 to 1995 and in recent years he has held the following posts:

2009-2010 Head of Protocol at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, liaison for new Ambassadors
2005-2006 Deputy head of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs United Nations and International Organisations Directorate
2002-2005 Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs United Nations and International Organisations Directorate

Colombia
Colombia’s newly appointed Ambassador Victoriana Mejia Marulanda was born in 1943 and has studied literature and economics in the USA and worked as a teacher, among other things. She has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1994 and in recent years she has held the following posts:

2003-2011 Ambassador in Berlin
1997-2003 Consul-General of Colombia in Belgium and Luxembourg
1994-2002 First Secretary at the Embassy in Brussels

Spain
Spain’s newly appointed Ambassador Luis Calvo Merino was born in 1948 and is a career diplomat. He has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation since 1980 and in recent years he has held the following posts:

2007-2011 Ambassador in Rome
2004-2007 Under-Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
2003-2004 Inspector General of Services
1999-2003 Consul-General in Frankfurt
1996-1999 Deputy Permanent Representative to the International Organisations in Vienna

Contact
UD Press
Press Service - Office hours
+46 8 405 57 30
New ambassador to Abu Dhabi

The Government today appointed Max Bjur as Sweden’s Ambassador in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates. Max Bjur is currently Head of Group at the Consular Affairs and Civil Law Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and has served at the embassies in Zagreb, Addis Ababa and Pretoria.

Max Bjur will take up his new post in October.

Contact
UD Press
Press Service - Office hours
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Foreign minister meeting at LKAB mine in Kiruna

On Tuesday and Wednesday 11-12 October, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (Barents Council) will convene at LKAB's mine in Kiruna for its foreign minister meeting. The meeting marks the end of Sweden's two-year chairmanship. Joining Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be Russia's foreign minister Sergey Lavrov, Norway's foreign minister Jonas Gahr Støre, Finland's foreign minister Erkki Tuomioja and state secretaries from Denmark and Iceland.

In connection with this meeting a bilateral meeting will also be held between Carl Bildt and Sergey Lavrov. Apart from discussing matters of common interest, Sweden and Russia will also sign an agreement on transit of Swedish personnel and equipment via Russian territory to the Swedish ISAF mission in Afghanistan. A couple of press conferences will be arranged in connection with the meeting. Please bring valid press card.

Time and place

11 October 2011
approx 14.00 Ministers Bildt and Støre arrive in Kiruna on ore train from Narvik.

15.30-17.00 Study visit to the SSC Esrange Space Center. Advance registration is obligatory, via Esrange directly, lena.svensson@sscspace.com, or +46 70 387 23 34. A bus will depart from Hotel Ferrum to Esrange at 14.45, returning at 17.00.

18.30-19.00 Press conference following bilateral meeting between Carl Bildt and Sergey Lavrov. Kiruna City Hall, Hjalmar Lundbohmsvägen 31.

12 October 2011
11.00-11.30 Press conference at LKAB's visitors' mine, Kiruna. NB - the time! Advance registration is obligatory, via LKAB directly, ulrika.westerberg@lkab.com or + 46 70 342 13 59. Meeting place: Administration Office LKAB, Kiruna. Transport down into the mine leaves at approximately 10.30. Please arrive in good time.

Other information

A press centre will be set up in the Lappland Room,
Folkets Hus, Lars Janssonsgata 17, Kiruna.

During the meeting, an account of the Swedish chairmanship will be delivered and a communiqué on the future of Barents cooperation will be adopted. The chairmanship will be passed on to Norway. At the same time, the Norwegian county of Troms will hand over the chairmanship of the Barents Regional Council to Norrbotten County.

During its chairmanship, Sweden has prioritised environmentally sustainable economic development in the Barents region; this subject will also be the focus of the ministerial meeting in Kiruna. The region is already world-leading when it comes to making use of its extensive forest, mineral and energy resources in an efficient and environmentally sustainable way. Alongside this key environmental work, the Swedish chairmanship has also highlighted the issue of how we can best promote growth in the region, through cooperation on sustainable extraction, processing and marketing in the raw materials sector.

The Barents Euro-Arctic Council
The Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) was established in 1993 in Kirkenes, Norway. The chairmanship rotates between Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. The aim of Barents cooperation is to strengthen peace, stability and progress by improving the opportunities for cross-border cooperation. For more information on the BEAC, go to www.beac.st.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
Foreign ministers meeting in Kiruna

On 11-12 October, the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (Barents Council) will convene at LKAB's mine in Kiruna for its foreign minister meeting. The meeting marks the end of Sweden's two-year chairmanship. Joining Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be Russia's foreign minister Sergey Lavrov, Norway's foreign minister Jonas Gahr Støre, Finland's foreign minister Erkki Tuomioja and state secretaries from Denmark and Iceland and an EU Commissioner will also take part. A press conference will be held in connection with the meeting.

Time and place

Time: The press conference will be held at 11.30 on 12 October 2011
Place: LKAB's visitors' mine (InfoMine), Kiruna

Advance registration is obligatory, please contact LKAB directly via email ulrika.westerberg@lkab.com or on +46 70 342 13 59.
Meeting venue: Reception in Förmanskontoret, Kiruna
Transport down into the mine leaves at approximately 11.00. Please arrive in good time.

During the meeting, an account of the Swedish chairmanship will be delivered and a communiqué on the future of Barents cooperation will be adopted. The chairmanship will be passed on to Norway. At the same time, the Norwegian county of Troms will hand over the chairmanship of the Barents Regional Council to Norrbotten county.

During its chairmanship, Sweden has prioritised environmentally sustainable economic development in the Barents region; this subject will also be the focus of the ministerial meeting in Kiruna. The region is already world-leading when it comes to making use of its extensive forest, mineral and energy resources in an efficient and environmentally sustainable way. Alongside this key environmental work, the Swedish chairmanship has also highlighted the issue of how we can best promote growth in the region, through cooperation on sustainable extraction, processing and marketing in the raw materials sector.

A press conference will be held directly after the meeting (for more information, see above).

The Barents Euro-Arctic Council

The Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) was established in 1993 in Kirkenes, Norway. The chairmanship rotates between Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. The aim of Barents cooperation is to strengthen peace, stability and progress by improving the opportunities for cross-border cooperation. For more information on the BEAC, go to www.beac.st.

Contact

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Anja Jahn Günther
Barents Secretariat
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Swedish success in Geneva for freedom of expression on the Internet

On Thursday, the UN Human Rights Council adopted by consensus a decision to arrange a panel discussion on freedom of expression on the Internet at its next session in March 2012. The decision was adopted on the initiative of Sweden, with the support of over fifty states from throughout the world. This will be the first time that the Council discusses the issue of freedom of expression on the Internet.

"This is a major success for Sweden, which has pushed for the human rights issue to apply online as well as offline", says Carl Bildt, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Earlier this year, the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Frank La Rue, presented a report on freedom of expression on the Internet. At the UN Human Rights Council’s session in June, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt gave a speech in support of several of the conclusions presented in La Rue’s report. Sweden’s address won the support of a number of influential countries, including India, Brazil and South Africa.

This is the background to how, at its 18th session which will conclude today, the Council was able to decide to invite a panel of experts and representatives of governments, the UN system, the business sector and civil society to discuss the issue. This means that the issue of freedom of expression on the Internet will be placed on the agenda of the UN Human Rights Council for the first time.

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External links
- UN Human Rights Council
Arctic week in Stockholm

On Monday and Tuesday, researchers, lawyers and representatives of the Arctic region are meeting in Stockholm to discuss Arctic cooperation. One of the questions is how the Arctic Council can become stronger and more effective.

In addition, a major research project will be launched on how the environment and Arctic communities are reacting to the changes that are occurring in the Arctic - one of the top priorities of the Swedish Chairmanship.

Sweden took over the Chairmanship of the Arctic Council at the ministerial meeting in Nuuk, Greenland, in May. After a period of intensive preparations, the Swedish Chairmanship will now hold its first meetings. One of the issues on which the members of the Council are to seek agreement is the process surrounding the establishment of the new permanent secretariat of the Arctic Council.

"Our objective is for the permanent secretariat to be set up during the Swedish Chairmanship," says Ambassador Gustaf Lind.

He thinks a stronger Arctic Council can play an important role for the environment and sustainable development.

"Reduced emissions of black carbon and short-lived climate forcers can rapidly lead to a positive impact on the regional climate."

The Council includes the five Nordic countries, together with Canada, Russia and the United States, plus representatives of six indigenous peoples' organisations in the Arctic.

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Sweden elected to the board of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

At the IAEA General Conference yesterday, Sweden was elected to the IAEA Board of Governors for a period of at least two years. Sweden was most recently on the Board between 2004 and 2007.

Sweden's special Board representative - or Governor - for the next governing period is Sweden's Ambassador in Vienna, Nils Daag, who is also accredited to the UN and the international agencies.

"It is very pleasing that Sweden is once again on the IAEA Board of Governors, which has an important role to play especially with regard to upholding the international non-proliferation regime and preventing nuclear technology from being used for military purposes in violation of the international Non-Proliferation Treaty," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

In a comment, Minister for the Environment Andreas Carlgren welcomes that its place on the Board will enable Sweden to contribute to nuclear security issues gaining a more prominent position on the international agenda. "After the events in Fukushima, it is even clearer that strong international cooperation is needed in the area and that's where Sweden has a leading role to play," says the Minister for the Environment.

The IAEA was set up in 1957 under the slogan 'Atoms for Peace' - an expression coined by US President Eisenhower in an earlier speech to the United Nations General Assembly. The IAEA is an independent body in the UN family that works to promote the peaceful use of nuclear technology and to prevent non-military use. Three main pillars underpin the organisation's mission: non-proliferation of nuclear technology/nuclear energy for military purposes, promotion of radiation protection and nuclear protection security, and technology and knowledge transfer.

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New ambassadors to Côte d'Ivoire and Pakistan

Today, the Government appointed two new ambassadors - to Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, and Islamabad, Pakistan.

Per E J Carlson has been appointed Ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire, based in Stockholm. Since the beginning of 2011, Mr Carlson has also been Ambassador in Conakry (Guinea), Dakar (Senegal) and Monrovia (Liberia), with Stockholm as his base. He has previously served in Abidjan, the OECD Delegation in Paris and at the former European Security Policy Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Mr Carlson has also worked for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Middle East and North Africa Department.

Lars-Hjalmar Wide has been appointed Ambassador to Pakistan. Mr Wide is currently Marshal of the Court and Head of the Office of the Marshal of the Court at the Royal Palace. At the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, he has previously worked as head of the Americas Department and the Protocol Department, and he has served at the embassies in Havana, Madrid and Tel Aviv, and at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the UN in New York. Mr Wide has also served as chef de cabinet for former President of the General Assembly of the UN, Jan Eliasson, and during the period 2001-2005 he was Director-General and Head of the Swedish Inspectorate of Strategic Products (ISP). He will take up his new post in the autumn.

Contact
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Decision on four new embassies - Buenos Aires, Hanoi, Kuala Lumpur and Luanda

The Government made a formal decision today to re-establish four embassies. In two of the cases, previous closure plans have been halted, and in the other two cases, two recently closed embassies are to be re-opened.

This decision means that the closure of the embassies in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Hanoi, Vietnam, has been halted and that the embassies in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and Luanda, Angola, are to be re-opened.

This decision is a result of the agreement reached on 1 August this year between the parties in Government and the Social Democratic Party. The embassies in Hanoi and Buenos Aires were going to be closed down during the autumn. They will now continue to operate as usual. The embassies in Kuala Lumpur and Luanda were closed down in the summer. Work to reopen the embassies in these cities is now under way.

Contact
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Statement on the tenth anniversary of the detention of Swedish journalist Dawit Isaak in Eritrea

"The Swedish Government considers that Dawit Isaak should be released immediately," states Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt in a statement on the tenth anniversary of the detention of Swedish journalist Dawit Isaak in Eritrea.

"His situation is a tragedy for him and his family. An immediate release is necessary not least on humanitarian grounds, as the EU has also clearly stated through its High Representative Catherine Ashton.

"The Government continues to work tirelessly to bring about the release of Dawit Isaak and our commitment remains firm. This case involves major difficulties, but we will never give up," states Mr Bildt.

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Swedish ambassador to Libya

On Friday, Sweden announced to the National Transitional Council of Libya its intention to appoint a new Swedish ambassador to the country. This ambassador will be based in Stockholm and make frequent visits to Libya.

The National Transitional Council has also been invited to appoint a head of the Libyan Embassy in Stockholm. This took place at a meeting between the two countries' missions to the United Nations.

"Sweden looks forward to broad cooperation with a free and democratic Libya," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

The EU and the International Contact Group for Libya have declared that the Libyan National Transitional Council is currently the sole legitimate representative of Libya. This was confirmed at the summit in Paris on 1 September. On 16 September the UN General Assembly decided that the National Transitional Council will represent Libya in the UN.

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Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for International Development Cooperation to travel to New York for UN General Assembly

Wednesday 21 September will see the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) open the General Debate of the 66th Session. Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson will take part in the General Assembly at the UN headquarters in New York. The Prime Minister will deliver Sweden's address.

The 'UNGA week' brings together political leaders from all over the world. The Swedish ministers have a number of meetings planned in connection with the General Assembly meeting. Together with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Mr Reinfeldt and Mr Bildt will take part in a commemorative ceremony for Dag Hammarskjöld to mark the 50th anniversary of his death. Mr Reinfeldt will also meet Bill Clinton and take part in a panel discussion on 'Empowering Girls and Women', organised by the Clinton Global Initiative. In addition, Mr Reinfeldt will meet successful Swedish entrepreneurs who have become established in New York.

During the week, Mr Bildt will take part in a number of different EU meetings with counterparts including US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov.

Ms Carlsson will take part in a summit on the protracted humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa under the leadership of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon; she will also have meetings with the heads of key UN bodies. The three ministers will also hold a number of bilateral meetings.

Programme points:

Sunday 18 September
Gunilla Carlsson takes part in panel on sustainable development.

Monday 19 September
Gunilla Carlsson takes part in panel on sustainable development.

Tuesday 20 September
Fredrik Reinfeldt arrives in New York and holds a press briefing for Swedish journalists, approximately 18.00 local time.
Carl Bildt takes part in high-level meeting on Libya, 'Friends of Libya'.
Gunilla Carlsson takes part in 'Every Woman Every Child', a one-year review of Ban Ki-moon's initiative within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals.
Fredrik Reinfeldt meets Marcus Samuelsson and Swedish entrepreneurs in New York.

Wednesday 21 September
Fredrik Reinfeldt attends a lunch with Ban Ki-moon and other heads of state and government.
Fredrik Reinfeldt attends a reception organised by President Barack Obama.

Thursday 22 September
Fredrik Reinfeldt takes part in a panel debate on 'Empowering Girls and Women - What to Scale; Where to Scale', organised by the Clinton Global Initiative. Open to the media.
Fredrik Reinfeldt meets Bill Clinton for a bilateral meeting.
Fredrik Reinfeldt and Carl Bildt take part in a commemorative ceremony for Dag Hammarskjöld.

Friday 23 September
Fredrik Reinfeldt has a breakfast meeting with Jeffrey D. Sachs, special adviser to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on issues concerning sustainable development.
Fredrik Reinfeldt delivers Sweden's address to the UN General Assembly.
Fredrik Reinfeldt visits Ground Zero. Open to the media, notify Roberta Aelenius if you are interested in attending.

Saturday 24 September
Gunilla Carlsson takes part in a donor meeting on the Horn of Africa under the leadership of Ban Ki-moon.

Please note that dates and times are provisional and subject to change.
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New Ambassadors to Stockholm

Four new Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to H.M. The King on Friday, 16 September 2011.

United Kingdom

The newly appointed Ambassador for the UK, Paul Johnston, was born in 1968 and began his professional career at the Ministry of Defence. Since 1993 he has served in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, where his recent postings include:

2008-2010 Director, International Security

2005-2008 Head of the Political Section at the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the UN in New York

2002-2004 Head of the Security Policy Department

2001-2002 Deputy Head of the EU Department

Uruguay

Uruguay’s newly appointed Ambassador Dr Zulma Guelman-Radke was born in 1945 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1967. In recent years she has held the following posts:

2008- General Director of the Department for International Cooperation and Technical Support at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

2001-2007 Ambassador to Germany

1999-2001 Secretary-General (non-political) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1993-1999 Ambassador to Japan

Germany

Germany’s newly appointed Ambassador Harald Kindermann was born in 1949 and trained as a lawyer. He has served at the Federal Foreign Office since 1992 and in recent years he has held the following posts:

2006- Ambassador in Tel Aviv

2003-2006 Ambassador in Sofia

1999-2003 Ambassador in Riyadh

1997-1999 Head of the Planning Section, Federal Foreign Office

Georgia

Georgia’s newly appointed Ambassador Konstantin Kavtaradze was born in 1966 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1990. In recent years he has held the following posts:

2006-2011 Ambassador to Poland

2004 Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

2001-2004 Director of the Department for International Cultural Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

2000-2001 Head of the OSCE Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department of International Organisations
Contact
UD Press
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Government Bill on continued participation in Libya

The Government today submitted a Bill to the Riksdag on continued participation in the international military operation in Libya.

"The Swedish aerial surveillance operations are still important, given the continuing uncertainty in parts of Libya. We are therefore requesting a 30-day extension," comments Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

The Bill proposes that current operations be extended by no more than 30 days. The Swedish contribution consists of aerial surveillance using five JAS 39 Gripen planes and the associated support resources, and resources for information operations. The mission does not include combat operations against ground targets.

The Swedish contribution involves a total of around 140 people. The force may be temporarily reinforced up to a total of 250 people, should the need arise. Continued Swedish participation will begin on 25 September 2011, provided that NATO approves an extension of the operation.
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt received Palestine's newly appointed ambassador Hala Husni Fariz, today Thursday 8 September. This is the first time that an incoming Palestinian representative has been formally welcomed at a ceremony at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

"Palestinian state-building efforts have made significant progress. To express our support for these efforts, it has been natural for us to upgrade the Palestinian Representation in Stockholm. It is now important that the parties resume negotiations that lead to a two-state solution and the creation of a democratic and sustainable Palestinian state side by side, in peace and security, with Israel," says Mr Bildt.

Over the last year, the Palestinian Representation in Stockholm has been upgraded from General Delegation to Mission of Palestine. The former General Delegate is now addressed as Ambassador/Head of Mission and, in addition to being invited to the welcome visit hosted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, will also have an audience with HM The King.

Ambassador Hala Husni Fariz was born in 1955 and most recently served as Minister at the Palestinian Representation in Madrid. She has previously also served at the Palestinian Special Delegation in Brasilia and at the Palestinian Embassies in Manila and Managua.
Carl Bildt to meet Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs Vuk Jeremic

Tomorrow, Thursday 8 September, Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs Vuk Jeremic will visit Stockholm for bilateral talks with Carl Bildt. Among the issues the ministers will discuss are developments in the region and Serbian relations with the EU.

Mr. Jeremic was last in Sweden in 2009. During Thursday’s visit, Mr. Jeremic will meet Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Tobias Billström and Minister for EU Affairs Birgitta Ohlsson.

A press conference will be held after the meeting.

Time and place
Thursday, 8 September at 16.00
Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1, Stockholm

N.B. Please bring your press credentials.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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Sweden to host informal Nordic-African ministerial meeting in Skåne

Next week, on Monday 5 and Tuesday 6 September, Sweden will be hosting an informal foreign ministers meeting between the Nordic countries and eleven African countries at Örenäs Castle, south of Helsingborg. Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will host the meeting and Minister for Trade Ewa Björling and Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson will also be taking part.

At the meeting ministers will discuss economic development and growth against the backdrop of the strong economic outlook in several African countries, freedom on the Internet, democracy and state-building, and other topical issues.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will host the meeting. Sweden’s Minister for Trade Ewa Björling and Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson will also be taking part. In attendance will also be foreign ministers (or other representatives) from Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland, and Benin, Botswana, Ghana, Lesotho, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania and Djibouti.

This year’s will be the tenth informal Nordic-African ministerial meeting of its kind. Each year the job of hosting the meeting has alternated between an African country and a Nordic country.

Press conference
A press conference with Mr Bildt and Ms Carlsson will be held after the meeting. Please bring your press credentials.

Time and place
Tuesday 6 September, approx. 12.15
Örenäs Castle, Landskrona, Sweden

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Press Secretary
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Press release
01 September 2011
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carl Bildt to discuss peace process in Middle East at informal foreign ministers meeting in Poland

Tomorrow, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will travel to Sopot in Poland to take part in the EU informal foreign ministers meeting due to take place on Friday and Saturday.

The issues on the agenda are primarily the peace process in the Middle East, political developments in Libya and Syria, and the EU’s relations with certain countries outside the EU, known as strategic partners.

Mr Bildt will be available for questions from the media after the meeting. If you are interested, please contact Political Adviser Sara Malmgren.

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Reinforced diplomatic cooperation between the Nordic and Baltic countries

The Nordic and Baltic countries have today signed a memorandum of understanding on the locating of diplomats at each other's missions abroad. The memorandum will make it easier for the Nordic and Baltic countries to maintain a diplomatic presence around the world by enabling flexible and cost-effective solutions.

This reinforced diplomatic cooperation coincides with the twentieth anniversary of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania regaining their freedom and re-establishing diplomatic relations with other countries.

"This memorandum of understanding signed by our eight countries is concrete evidence of our solidarity and our strengthened diplomatic cooperation," say the foreign ministers of the Nordic and Baltic countries in a joint statement.

The memorandum regulates the diplomatic and practical aspects of locating diplomats to the mission abroad of another Nordic or Baltic country.

The Nordic and Baltic countries comprise Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden.

Contact
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Bildt to meet Stavros Lambrinidis, Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs

On Thursday 25 August, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will meet his Greek counterpart Stavros Lambrinidis for bilateral talks in Stockholm.

The ministers will discuss the economic crisis, developments in the EU’s southern neighbourhood, in particular Libya and Syria, and enlargement issues.

Mr Lambrinidis became Minister of Foreign Affairs on 17 June 2011. During his visit to Stockholm, Mr Lambrinidis will also give a speech at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs.

A press conference will be held after the meeting.

Time and place
Thursday 25 August at 14.10
Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1, Stockholm

N.B. Please bring your press credentials.

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Celebration of Baltic Year 2011

In 2011 Sweden is commemorating the fact that it is 20 years since Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania regained their freedom and re-established diplomatic relations with other countries. The anniversary will be celebrated at two events in Stockholm on 15 August.

Monday meeting
Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt and the heads of government of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania will speak. The meeting will also include music and folk dancing.

Time: 15 August at 12.00
Place: Stage at Norrmalmstorg

Press conference at Norrmalmstorg
The Monday meeting will be followed by a press conference with Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt and the heads of government of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Time: 15 August at 13.00
Place: Stage at Norrmalmstorg

Unrestricted admission.

Ceremony at Riksplan
The commemoration at Norrmalmstorg will be followed by a flag ceremony led by the Speaker of the Riksdag, Per Westerberg, in which the Speakers of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Parliaments will also participate.

Time: 15 August approx. 13.30
Place: Riksplan, the Riksdag

Contact person: Sarah Sidibé Everås, Press Secretary to the Speaker. Tel.: +46 8 786 54 86, mobile: +46 703 36 38 23, email: sarah.everas.sidibe@riksdagen.se.

Background
In August 1991, Sweden recognised Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and resumed diplomatic relations with them. Since then, Sweden has undertaken major initiatives to promote and consolidate the countries’ regained independence. These initiatives are based on strong political commitment, broad popular support and an early diplomatic presence. Notable measures have included early free trade agreements, support for sovereignty and security building, advice, development assistance, education and training, etc. This has laid the foundations for good cooperation with great potential for development, even beyond 2011.

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Contact person for Baltic Year 2011: Ursula Åhlén, Head of Communications for Baltic Year 2011.
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Bildt and Carlsson meet Liu Jieyi, Vice Minister in the Communist Party of China

Today, 8 July, the Chinese Vice Minister Liu Jieyi visited Almedalen and had talks with Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson.

"This is a good opportunity to showcase Swedish democracy, free debate and a pluralist party system," said Mr Bildt and Ms Carlsson following talks with the Chinese Vice Minister Liu Jieyi.

The Chinese Vice Minister is from the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC). Mr Liu's areas of responsibility include the Nordic region, North America, the United Kingdom, Ireland, New Zealand and Australia.

Contact
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Swedish recognises South Sudan

Sweden has today recognised the independence of the Republic of South Sudan and intends to establish diplomatic relations.

In accordance with the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, South Sudan held a referendum in January 2011, in which an overwhelming majority voted for independence.

"It is with great pleasure that I today welcome the Republic of South Sudan as a new state and member of the international community," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson is representing Sweden at the ceremonies being held to celebrate the declaration of independence in South Sudan's capital, Juba, today.

Contact

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Ministry for Foreign Affairs releases reports on human rights in 188 countries

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) has once again examined the human rights situation worldwide. The result is 188 reports from as many countries that will be published today, 7 July, on the Government's human rights website www.manskligarattigheter.se.

These reports present the human rights situation in all these countries and summarise challenges facing them in the work for democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights in a rapidly changing world.

Each country report contains a survey of the human rights situations based on different categories, such as the right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health and the right to education for LGBT people and minority groups. The reports reflect the high priority that the Government and the MFA accord to respect for human rights. Sweden and the United States are alone in the world in publishing reports on compliance with human rights in the world's countries.

The reports have been published since 2003 to make the information available to organisations, government agencies, companies and individuals who are interested in human rights. The last batch of MFA human rights reports was released on 27 March 2008.

In connection with the launch, a seminar will be held in Almedalen, where both Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson will discuss the development of human rights and what action Sweden can take in this area.
Carl Bildt to take part in Community of Democracies in Vilnius

On Friday 1 July, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will take part in the ministerial conference "Community of Democracies: Empowered, Energised, Engaged" in Vilnius, Lithuania. Mr Bildt will also have several bilateral meetings during the day, and attend a breakfast meeting with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and others.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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The Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Almedalen: human rights, freedom on the Internet and Sweden as a brand

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is participating in various ways in this year’s Almedalen Week on Gotland. Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson and Minister for Trade Ewa Björling will be there. Thursday will see the presentation of the Ministry’s reports on human rights in more than 180 countries, and on Friday all three ministers will take part in a seminar on freedom on the Internet.

Programme points:

Sweden as a brand and enterprise
Sweden has a strong brand image abroad. Representatives of various types of companies talk about the brand’s importance for international initiatives and exports. How do we attract major international actors and tourists using the Sweden brand? Ewa Björling will be participating, along with the heads of the Ministry’s Department for the EU Internal Market and the Promotion of Sweden and Swedish Trade, the Swedish Trade Council, Invest Sweden, the Swedish Institute and VisitSweden. After the seminar, Dr Björling will be available to the media.

Time and place
Tuesday 5 July, 12.00-14.00
Krukmakarens hus, Mellangatan 21, Visby

Human rights around the world
At this seminar, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will present more than 180 reports on the human rights situation in as many countries. Carl Bildt and Gunilla Carlsson will take part in discussions on the situation in different countries and what Sweden can do to contribute to positive developments based on the trends, changes and challenges identified in the reports. A press conference with Mr Bildt and Ms Carlsson will be held after the seminar.

Time and place
Thursday 7 July, 14.00-15.30, with the subsequent press conference to start at around 15.30 inside the Residence of the County Governor.
Democracy Stage, Länsstyrelsens trädgård, Strandgatan 1

Freedom on the Internet - for all!
Carl Bildt, Gunilla Carlsson and Ewa Björling will all take part in the seminar 'Freedom on the Internet - for all!’. What can the Government do to enhance freedom, security and privacy on the Internet? How can the Internet be used as an important engine for global development? These are just some of the questions that will be examined. Director-General of Sida Charlotte Petri Gornitzka will give the opening address and take part in the panel discussion alongside the three ministers. The discussion will be led by Patrik Fältström, Distinguished Consulting Engineer at Cisco. Following the seminar, a press conference will be held with Mr Bildt, Ms Carlsson and Dr Björling.

Time and place
Friday 8 July, 11.00-12.30, with the subsequent press conference to start at around 12.30 right beside Östersjötorg.
Östersjötorg, Donnersgatan 6, Visby, entrance from Almedalen park.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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United Arab Emirates' foreign minister to Stockholm for meeting with Carl Bildt

Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the United Arab Emirates' Minister of Foreign Affairs, will visit Stockholm on Tuesday 28 and Wednesday 29 June for bilateral talks with Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and others. The agenda includes developments in the Middle East and North Africa.

During his visit, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan will also have a bilateral meeting with Minister for Enterprise and Energy Maud Olofsson.

A press conference will be held after the meeting between Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Mr Bildt on Wednesday.

NB! Please bring your press credentials.

Time and place
Wednesday 29 June at 11.00
Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1, Stockholm
Ministry for Foreign Affairs travel information - now also as smartphone app

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is launching a smartphone app today aimed at Swedes who are planning to travel: UD Resklar. In addition to its easy accessible format, the big news is that the latest travel information on countries all around the world is now gathered in the one spot - and is only a click away on a mobile phone.

The UD Resklar app contains information on important things to think about when planning a trip, such as checking insurance cover, the situation in the country, what kind of help Swedish travellers can get if bad luck strikes and, of course, which countries the Ministry for Foreign Affairs advises against travelling to. UD Resklar includes tips that can save time and money if the unexpected happens during the trip.

The Ministry's travel information is in great demand. This was especially obvious this spring in connection with the developments in North Africa, the Middle East and Japan, which led the Ministry to change its travel information several times and also to advise against travel to certain regions. The app makes it possible to receive security assessments from Swedish embassies direct to a mobile phone.

"We hope that the app will make it easier and smoother for travellers to keep themselves updated on the Ministry's travel information. We are proud to be among the first countries in Europe to offer this service," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

The information in the app is collected from various information sources, primarily from the website for Swedish Diplomatic Missions abroad (swedenabroad.com) and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website (www.ud.se). To provide users with updated health and vaccine information and country-specific facts, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has chosen to collaborate with other government agencies. The information is updated automatically via RSS.

The app is freely downloadable from the App Store. The first version of the app has been developed for the iPhone but there are plans to develop an equivalent version for Android phones in the autumn, when experience can be drawn from the iPhone version. New versions of both apps will be available in the future. More information about the app and how to download it is available at ud.se/reseapp.

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External links
UD Resklar in App Store
Press release
20 June 2011
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carl Bildt to Paris for political discussions and visit to International Paris Air Show

On Tuesday 21 June and Wednesday 22 June, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be in Paris for political discussions with French Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Alain Juppé and others. He will also visit the International Paris Air Show, an aviation and space event at Le Bourget exhibition centre, where he will talk with Swedish exhibitors.

Contact
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Historic resolution on LGBT issues adopted by UN

Today a resolution on violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people was adopted by the United Nations Human Rights Council. This is unique, as it is the first time the UN has adopted a resolution on LGBT issues. In view of recent developments in certain African countries, it is particularly pleasing that the resolution was at the initiative of South Africa.

The resolution, which was supported by Sweden and the other EU countries, calls upon the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to document discriminatory laws and acts of violence occurring in all parts of the world against LGBT people. The findings of the study will be discussed by the UN Human Rights Council in March 2012. The Council will then also consider appropriate means of following up how the international human rights framework can be used to combat gender-based violence and discrimination.

Violations and prejudice against LGBT people occur in much of the world and in some 70 countries homosexuality is still prohibited. The issue is controversial and in certain states there is strong resistance to discussing it from a human rights perspective. In the UN, the issue has so far only been addressed under a resolution on summary executions put forward by Sweden and the other Nordic countries. The Government therefore views the resolution adopted today as an important step at the UN to strengthen the enjoyment of human rights by LGBT people.

The UN Human Rights Council

The UN Human Rights Council has 47 members with voting rights. Sweden has observer status and is therefore not entitled to vote.

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Carl Bildt to discuss developments in Syria and Libya at meeting of EU foreign ministers

The latest political developments in North Africa and the Middle East, focusing on Syria and Libya and the peace process in Israel and Palestine, will be the key issues for discussion and decision when the EU foreign ministers meet in Luxembourg on Monday 20 June. The foreign ministers are also expected to discuss the future design of the EU Neighbourhood Policy. Carl Bildt will participate on Sweden's behalf.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will meet the press after the meeting ends, at approximately 16.00.

Time and place
Monday 20 June at approx. 16.00
Swedish briefing room, Centre de Conférence, Luxembourg

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email to Helena Zimmerdahl
Carl Bildt to meet his Danish colleague Lene Espersen

Time and place
Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1
Friday 17 June, 15.30

Today, Friday 17 June, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will meet his Danish colleague Lene Espersen. They will discuss the European Neighbourhood Policy, developments in Libya and other issues ahead of the meeting of foreign ministers in Brussels on Monday next week. They will also discuss the planned Danish measures to tighten border controls.

A press conference will be held after the meeting.

Contact
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Freedom of the Internet - 40 countries support Sweden

On Friday, 10 June, Sweden will address the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC). The topic of the address is that human rights must be respected online in the same way as they are offline. The group of countries supporting the address are representative of all different parts of the world.

This is the first time that such an extensive initiative on human rights and the Internet is taken up in the Council. Sweden has led the work on pursuing, negotiating and gathering support for this address. The address will be given by Sweden's Ambassador to the UN, Jan Knutsson.

Influential countries like Brazil, India, Indonesia, South Africa and the United States have chosen to support the address, which sends an important signal that freedom of expression and human rights on the Internet is an issue that concerns people all over the world. It is of particular interest to note that both Palestine and Israel have given their support, which is an important signal in itself.

The report that the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression, Frank La Rue, presented to the Council on 3 June forms the basis of the address. This report is based on global expert consultations, including two international expert meetings in Stockholm (June 2010 and March 2011). At present, a large number of states - currently 40 - are preparing comments on the report and have expressed support for many of its principles.

For Sweden, one principle is particularly fundamental: the same rights that people have in general - such as freedom of expression, including the freedom to search for information, freedom of assembly and freedom of association - must also be protected on the Internet.

Other important parts of the address are the general rule that individuals must be able to express themselves anonymously on the Internet, and that decisions concerning the administration of the Internet must be taken in forums that include representatives of all interest groups, i.e. not only states but also civil society, academics, the business world, etc.

The address in its entirety will be published on www.ud.se when it is held.

The Human Rights Council session opens on Friday 10 June at 12.00 and will be webcast at: http://www.un.org/webcast/unhrc/

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External links
• UN Live webcast
Carl Bildt to visit Southern Caucasus for discussions on political situation

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will tour the Southern Caucasus region from Sunday 12 June until Wednesday 15 June. He will visit Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia to get an update of the political situation in the region and for bilateral talks with the countries’ foreign ministers.

Mr Bildt will be available to the media on various occasions during the tour. For more information, please contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson.

Contact
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Carl Bildt to attend ASEM foreign ministers meeting in Budapest

On Monday and Tuesday 6-7 June, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be in Budapest to take part in the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), which is holding its tenth foreign ministers meeting. Issues discussed during the meeting in Budapest will include non-traditional security threats, climate change, economic cooperation, human rights, and international and regional issues.

ASEM was founded at a summit in Bangkok in 1996 and is a forum for informal dialogue and cooperation between the participating countries. ASEM foreign ministers meetings take place every other year. The most recent was held in Hanoi in 2009.

The members of ASEM are the 27 EU Member States, the European Commission, the 10 ASEAN member states (Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam), the ASEAN Secretariat, India, Japan, China, Mongolia, Pakistan, South Korea, Russia, Australia and New Zealand.

Mr Bildt will be available to the media. Please contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson for details.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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Sweden honours Raoul Wallenberg's deeds

Raoul Wallenberg would have been 100 years old next year. The Government has decided to honour this both in Sweden and internationally.

A national committee, chaired by Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, will therefore be appointed soon to bring together different parts of Swedish society to honour Raoul Wallenberg's deeds. Former Director-General of the Swedish Institute, Olle Wästberg, will coordinate 'Raoul Wallenberg Year 2012'.

"The memory of Raoul Wallenberg gives us reason to both reflect on the responsibility of the individual and what we today can do to prevent xenophobia and anti-Semitism," says Mr Bildt.

Through his deeds in Budapest in the final stages of the Second World War, Raoul Wallenberg saved tens of thousands of Jews from the gas chambers. He exemplifies the importance civil courage; how a single person can play a crucial role in helping others.

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Olle Wästberg
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Press release
25 May 2011
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carl Bildt to Turkey to discuss developments in Middle East and North Africa

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is to take part in the meeting of the German Marshall Fund's Trilateral Strategy Group in Istanbul tomorrow, Thursday 26 May. The theme of the conference is 'Trilateral Perspectives on Power and Prosperity'.

Mr Bildt will give an opening address on Thursday morning, and then lead a lunch discussion on the theme of 'Revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa - Trilateral Implications'.

Mr Bildt will be available to the media. Please contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson for details.

External links

- Carl Bildt's blog (Swedish)

Contact

Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
New Ambassadors

Four newly appointed ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 19 May.

South Africa's newly appointed Ambassador Mandisa Dona Marasha was born in 1952. Between 1980 and 1993, Ms Marasha worked in health and medical services, and thereafter served in such capacities as Executive Council Committee Member for Transport, for Public Administration and for Welfare, and as Deputy Speaker of the Eastern Cape Legislature. She began working at the Department of International Relations and Cooperation in 2006, and the same year took up the post of Ambassador in Athens.

Brazil's newly appointed Ambassador Leda Lúcia Martins Camargo was born in 1946 and has served in the Ministry of External Relations since 1977. Her postings include the embassies in New Delhi, Washington, Buenos Aires, Rome and Maputo. Between 1997 and 2004, she served as Minister Counsellor at the Mission to the EU in Brussels, and most recently held the post of Ambassador in Prague.

The People's Republic of China's newly appointed Ambassador Lan Lijun was born in 1952 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1976. He studied at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. His previous positions include Consul-General in Los Angeles, Minister at the Embassy in Washington, Ambassador in Indonesia and, most recently, Ambassador in Canada.

Rwanda's newly appointed Ambassador Venetia Sebudandi was born in 1954 and has served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1996. Her previous positions include Chief of State Protocol at the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Counsellor at the Embassy in Paris. Most recently, she served as Ambassador in Switzerland and as Permanent Representative of the Republic of Rwanda to the UN Office in Geneva, the WTO and other international bodies based in the country.

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Telephone press conference with Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt

In connection with Sweden taking over the Chairmanship of the Arctic Council and the Government's adoption of a strategy for the Arctic region, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will hold a telephone press conference from Greenland at 15.00 Swedish time. Those wishing to participate should notify Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson on +46 70 356 30 32.

We would also like to point out that filmed material from Greenland, including interviews with Mr Bildt and other foreign ministers, can be downloaded at www.thenewsmarket.com/swedenchannel.

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External links
● thenewsmarket.com
Swedish strategy for Arctic region adopted

The Government adopted a Swedish strategy for policy in the Arctic region on Thursday, the same day that Sweden formally takes over the Chairmanship of the Arctic Council, a cooperation organisation for states with territory and borders north of the Arctic Circle. The Chairmanship runs for a two-year period.

The purpose of the Government’s Strategy for the Arctic region is to present Sweden’s relationship with the Arctic, together with the current priorities and future outlook for Sweden’s Arctic policy, proceeding from an international perspective.

The strategy particularly concerns three areas: climate and the environment, economic development and living conditions for people in the region. This is the first strategy the Government of Sweden has adopted on the Arctic as a whole.

The region is in a process of far-reaching change. Climate change is creating new challenges, but also opportunities, on which Sweden must take a position and exert an influence. New conditions are emerging for shipping, hunting, fishing, trade and energy extraction, and alongside this new needs are arising for an efficient infrastructure.

Deeper Nordic and European cooperation means that Sweden is affected by other countries’ policies and priorities in the Arctic. It is in Sweden’s interest that new emerging activities are governed by common and robust regulatory frameworks and above all that they focus on environmental sustainability. Sweden will also work to ensure that the Arctic remains a region where security policy tensions are low.

The Arctic Council consists of the eight Arctic States: Canada, Denmark (including Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States. Six international organisations representing indigenous Arctic peoples have permanent participant status.

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Carl Bildt to attend Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers meeting in Istanbul

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt travels to Istanbul today, Tuesday 10 May, to attend the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers meeting.

The agenda of the meeting includes the Council of Europe Neighbourhood Policy and a discussion of the organisation's future, based on the report 'Living together in 21st century Europe' by Joschka Fischer, Javier Solana, and others.

While in Istanbul, Mr Bildt will also sign the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

In connection with the meeting, the Turkish Chairmanship comes to an end and Ukraine, the incoming chairmanship holder, will present its work programme.

Mr Bildt will be available to the media. Please contact Anna Charlotta Johansson for details.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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Press release
10 May 2011
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carl Bildt to attend meeting on future of Arctic in Greenland

How should the world respond to climate change in the Arctic? And how should we deal with increased demand for the natural resources hidden below the ice? This week, foreign ministers from the countries surrounding the North Pole are to meet to discuss these and other decisive issues facing the region. The meeting, which takes place on 12 May in the Greenland capital, Nuuk, is part of the work of the Arctic Council, which Sweden is soon to lead.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt arrives in Greenland on Wednesday evening. US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs Sergej Lavrov are also expected to attend the meeting. The five Nordic countries, along with the US, Russia, Canada and representatives of indigenous peoples, participate in the Arctic Council. Among the issues on the agenda are the momentous changes in the climate, the life of indigenous peoples, and how joint sea rescue operations can be coordinated.

The climate issue in particular is especially acute in the Arctic, since temperatures have risen twice as fast there compared with the rest of the world. And when the ice melts, larger areas are opened up to exploitation. During the two-year Swedish Chairmanship, which begins when the foreign ministers meeting is rounded up on Thursday, Sweden wants to see a coherent policy for dealing with these issues.

"The Arctic is facing decisive changes at present. A responsible, joint policy for the region is the alpha and omega, and not only for the countries around the North Pole," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

On Thursday, the same day as the ministerial meeting, Sweden is to launch the priorities for its Chairmanship as well as a national strategy for the Arctic. The texts will be posted on ud.se/arctic on Thursday morning, just after 09.00.

There will be opportunities for telephone interviews with Carl Bildt and Arctic Ambassador Gustaf Lind in connection with the ministerial meeting. Please contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotte Johansson for more information. A press conference will be held in connection with the meeting in Nuuk when Sweden assumes the Chairmanship, at approximately 17.00 (local time) on Thursday.

Video footage from the press conference, as well as interviews with Carl Bildt and other participating foreign ministers, will be posted on thenewsmarket.com/swedenchannel. If the internet connection in Nuuk allows, this will material be posted on Thursday afternoon and evening (Swedish time).

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Related
- Read more about the Arctic Council and Sweden's involvement at sweden.gov.se/arctic

External links
- Arctic Council website
- Downloadable video footage from the foreign ministers meeting
New Ambassadors to Stockholm

Four new ambassadors present their letters of credence to HM The King on 7 April.

Finland's newly appointed Ambassador Harry Gustaf Helenius was born in 1946, is a career diplomat and joined the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1973. Ambassador Helenius was Minister at the Embassy in Stockholm from 1995-1998. He was subsequently Consul-General in Saint Petersburg and in the early 2000s he served at the Department for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. From 2004-2008, he was Ambassador in Moscow and since then he has served as Finland's Ambassador in Berlin.

The Republic of Korea's newly appointed Ambassador Eom Seock-jeong was born in 1952 and joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1977. He has been posted in Switzerland, Hong Kong, the Netherlands and China, and has been Dean of Education and Training at the Ministry's Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security. Between 2006 and 2008, he served as Ambassador to Hungary and most recently as Ambassador and Adviser for International Relations to the Seoul Metropolitan Government.

Estonia's newly appointed Ambassador Jaak Jõerüüt was born in 1947 and has previously been Minister of Defence, Member of Parliament, and Deputy Minister at the Ministry of Culture. He has served as Estonia's Ambassador to Finland, Italy, Malta, Cyprus and Latvia, and been the Permanent Representative of Estonia to the United Nations in New York. Ambassador Jõerüüt has been Director-General of the Protocol Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, since August 2010, Counsellor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Zimbabwe's newly appointed Ambassador Stephen Cletus Chiketa was born in 1940 and joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1982. His previous postings include Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, Ambassador in Bucharest, High Commissioner in London and Deputy Secretary for Political and Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. From 1995-2002, he was Ambassador in Kuwait, from 2003-2006 Ambassador in Tehran and most recently Ambassador in Canberra.

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Carl Bildt to attend London Conference on Libya

Tomorrow, Tuesday 29 March, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will travel to London to take part in the London Conference on Libya, convened by the UK government.

The conference, which will be held at Lancaster House in central London, will look at issues to do with the current situation in Libya and the future needs of the military, humanitarian and political aspects of operations in Libya. Foreign ministers from over 35 countries, including US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, are expected to attend, along with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Jean Ping of the African Union.

After the meeting, Carl Bildt will hold a press conference.

Time: Tuesday 29 March, approx. 17.30 (GMT)
Address: 2 Carlton Gardens, London (next to Lancaster House)

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00

External links
• More information on the conference is available at the UK FCO web site
Greater pressure for human rights in Iran

At Sweden’s initiative, the UN Human Rights Council decided today to establish a special rapporteur for human rights in Iran. The rapporteur will gather information on the situation in Iran and help to call attention to human rights problems in the country.

"The worsening human rights situation in Iran is worrying and greater pressure on the country is needed in this area. I am therefore very pleased that the UN Human Rights Council, at Sweden’s initiative, decided on a special rapporteur for human rights in Iran," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

The rapporteur will be responsible for monitoring developments in Iran and reporting to the United Nations General Assembly and the Human Rights Council. The UN General Assembly will receive the first report in the autumn.

Contact
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Deadline Monday: Press accreditation for Greenland

On 12 May, Sweden will pick up the gavel of the Arctic Council.

During a one-day ministerial meeting in Greenland’s capital city, Nuuk, a range of urgent topics will be discussed, including climate change around the North Pole and the rights of minorities. Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be in attendance along with his fellow foreign ministers from the other seven member countries, among them the US, Russia, Canada and Island.

Monday (21 March) is the deadline for advanced registration by representatives of the media who wish to attend the ministerial meeting. Registration guarantees flight bookings from Copenhagen and hotel bookings in Nuuk.

Register as soon as possible by emailing your name, date of birth and employer to: ac-chair@artic-council.org

More information is contained in the column to the right.
EU and Sweden introduce sanctions against Libya

The Swedish Government and the Council of the European Union today decided to introduce sanctions against the Libyan regime. The move follows a decision on sanctions by the United Nations Security Council this weekend. The EU decision, which represents a tightening of the UN sanctions, involves the freezing of the Libyan leader’s foreign assets and a ban on the import and export of weapons.

The EU energy ministers decided on the issue during a meeting in Brussels on Monday afternoon. Sweden’s Government decided to introduce the sanctions at an extra government meeting.

"Sweden supports the decision to introduce sanctions against Libya. It is important to get them in place as soon as possible so that we in Sweden and in Europe do what we can," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

The EU decision implements the UN decision on sanctions, but it also represents a tightening of the sanctions on the part of Europe. The EU decision contains further bans on the import of equipment that can be used for oppression, as well as restrictions on travel and the freezing of assets of additional members of the country’s leadership.

Sweden supports the decision of the United Nations Security Council to instruct the International Criminal Court to investigate the bloody attacks on civilians in Libya. Meanwhile, Sweden was active in ensuring that the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on the situation in Libya on Friday.

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Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will travel to Jordan, Israel and Palestine between 26 February and 3 March. He will hold talks with politicians and meet representatives of civil society in Amman, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Ramallah and Nablus. During his trip, Mr Bildt will also visit northern Israel and the Jordan Valley. In East Jerusalem Mr Bildt will hold speeches and meet students at Al-Quds University. In connection with this, there will be an opportunity for questions from the media.

For further information concerning the trip and the dates and times of press conferences, please contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson.

Contact
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New Ambassadors

The following four ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Wednesday 23 February 2011:

The new Ambassador of Macedonia, Kire Ilioski, was born in 1969. Ambassador Ilioski served in the Ministry of the Interior until 2002, when he became Head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department for the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) and the Partnership for Peace (PfP). Between 2005 and 2007 he served at the Embassy in Budapest and from 2007 to 2008 at the Embassy in Belgrade. His most recent appointment has been as Ambassador and Head of Mission of the Republic of Macedonia to NATO.

The new Ambassador of Serbia, Dr Dusan Crnogorcevic, was born in 1948. He began working at the Federal Secretariat of Foreign Affairs in 1978 and between 1989 and 1992 served at the Embassy of Yugoslavia in Stockholm. Dr Crnogorcevic was Ambassador to Finland from 1997 until 2001, after which he served at the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs before being Ambassador to Romania between 2005 and 2009. He has served most recently as Director of the Directorate for the Americas at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The new Ambassador of Sierra Leone, Edward Mohamed Turay, was born in 1945. Ambassador Turay has worked as a lawyer and Member of Parliament. He was a candidate in the 2007 presidential election and subsequently held the position of Parliament Majority Leader. In 2010 Ambassador Turay was appointed Sierra Leone’s High Commissioner in London. The Ambassador is concurrently accredited from the United Kingdom.

The new Ambassador of Maldives, Dr Farahanaz Faizal, is the country’s first ambassador in Stockholm. She was born in 1965 and worked in research before entering the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2008 as Advisor to the Minister. She has been the High Commissioner of Maldives to the United Kingdom since March 2009. The Ambassador is concurrently accredited from the United Kingdom.
Carl Bildt to Egypt for political talks

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will begin a two-day visit to Cairo late this evening. The purpose of the visit is to gain an understanding, on the ground and in broad dialogue, of the political situation in the country and see how Sweden and the EU can contribute to the continued democratisation process. Mr Bildt’s visit to Egypt follows a visit by EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Catherine Ashton.

Time and place
In direct connection with his arrival home on Thursday evening, 24 February, Carl Bildt will hold a press conference at Bromma Airport.

Time: Evening of Thursday 24 February - time to be announced later
Place: Bromma Airport, Bällstavägen (vehicle entry point to hangar 4, Air Force guard)

On his way back from Egypt, Mr Bildt will visit Malta’s capital, Valletta, to discuss developments in the region.

NB. Prior notification of attendance at the press conference should be given no later than 15.00 on Thursday 24 February to Monica Lundkvist at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs: monica.lundkvist@foreign.ministry.se. Valid press credentials are required to attend the press conference.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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MFA releases classified reports

Two decades have passed since Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania once again became independent states. Today, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will publish a large number of secret diplomatic reports dating from the dramatic period when the Soviet Union fell. This is one way to contribute to the writing of history, according to Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

On Thursday evening, a seminar will be held at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs to highlight the release of the documents and to present portions of them. Mr Bildt and three ambassadors who were active during the years of the Soviet Union's downfall will take part in the seminar.

"This is unique material and a unique decision. The documents provide a unique insight into how our Foreign Service can function when it is at its very best," says Mr Bildt on the declassification of the documents.

The aim of making a total of 400 pages of diplomatic reports public is to highlight an historically important period from a Swedish perspective. The reports provide a picture of how Sweden reacted to the chain of events that resulted in the fall of the Soviet Union and the liberation of the Baltic States.

The release of the embassy reports makes it possible for anyone who so wishes to gain an inside look at the environment and working conditions of Swedish diplomats who were active in the region during this period.

The reports can be read and downloaded from ud.se, and at issuu.com/utrikesdepartementet

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Wednesday: Carl Bildt presents the Statement of Foreign Policy

What will Sweden’s foreign policy look like in the year ahead? Tomorrow, Wednesday, the Riksdag will hold its annual foreign policy debate, which will begin, as tradition dictates, with Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt presenting the Statement of Government Policy on Foreign Affairs - a programmatic declaration setting out visions for Sweden's work in the world.

Sweden’s view of the EU’s future, the status of human rights and international crises are some of the subjects that will be raised in the Statement of Foreign Policy, along with development assistance, trade and climate policy. The Statement is both an annual report from the Government on the past year and a presentation of visions for the coming year.

At around 11.00 on Wednesday 16 February, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson will meet the press at the Riksdag Press Centre.

From 09.00 on Wednesday, when the speech in the Riksdag begins, the Statement of Foreign Policy will also be available to read or download as a PDF on www.ud.se. No printed copies will be distributed.

Time and place

Time of press conference: approximately 11.00 on Wednesday 16 February
Place: Riksdag Press Centre, Stockholm
Fredrik Reinfeldt and Carl Bildt to visit Latvia

On Friday 18 February, Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt and Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Latvia for meetings with Prime Minister Valdis Dombrovskis and President Valdis Zatlers.

The agenda includes bilateral relations and trade, the economic situation in Europe and current EU affairs.

Programme points:

11.00 Welcome and wreath-laying ceremony at the Freedom Monument
Venue: Z.A. Meierovica bulvaris
- Photo opportunity

11.25 Arrival Cabinet of Ministers
Venue: Brivibas bulvaris 36
- Photo opportunity in lobby

11.30-12.10 Talks between Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt and Prime Minister Valdis Dombrovskis
Venue: Prime Minister’s Hall, 3rd floor
- Photo opportunity at start of talks

12.10-12.40 Press conference
Languages: English and Latvian

12.50-13.50 Official lunch
Venue: Hall Bellacord, Small Guild, Amatu iela 3/5

14.00-15.00 Round-table discussion with participants from the Swedish and Latvian business communities.
Organised by the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia, the Employers’ Confederation of Latvia and the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise
Venue: Green Hall, Small Guild

15.15-15.55 Meeting with President Valdis Zatlers
Venue: Riga Castle, Pils laukums 3
- Photo opportunity at start of meeting

16.05-16.50 Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt speaks at the Stockholm School of Economics: ‘Sustainable Growth in the Baltic Sea Region’
Venue: Strelnieku iela 4a
- Photo opportunity

Please note that the times are local.

Accreditation is required and should be applied for by mail to Roberta Alenius. Please state whether you need assistance with transport between the programme points.

Contact
Roberta Alenius
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Anna Charlotta Johansson
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Bildt to Munich for security policy conference

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will travel to Munich today, 4 February, where he will take part in the annual major Munich Security Conference. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will also be taking part.

The conference will be held over 4-6 February and discussions will centre on themes such as cyber security and global and regional security challenges.

There will be an opportunity for questions from the media in the margins of the meeting; please contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson for more information.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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External links
• Conference website
Press release
02 February 2011
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

State Visit to Poland

Their Majesties King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will pay a State Visit to Poland on 4-6 May 2011 at the invitation of President Bronislaw Komorowski.

The Swedish Government will be represented.

A Swedish business delegation will visit Poland in connection with the State Visit. Head of the business delegation is Mr Ulf Berg, CEO of Swedish Trade Council.

* * *

Representatives of the media require special accreditation to cover the State Visit in Poland. More information on accreditation, programme, delegations and media arrangements will be available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website.

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Related

Home - Government Offices of Sweden

External links

- Swedish Royal Court
- The Swedish Trade Council
- Embassy of Sweden in Warsaw
- Sweden.se - Gateway to Sweden
- President of the Republic of Poland
- Embassy of Poland in Stockholm
Sweden prepared to increase support to civil society in Belarus

Tomorrow, Wednesday 2 February, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will travel to Warsaw to participate in the international donor conference 'Solidarity with Belarus' which is being arranged by Poland in support of the Belarusian people and a democratic Belarus.

The Swedish delegation will include Robert Hårth from Civil Rights Defenders, and Christian Holm, Member of the Riksdag (Moderate Party) and chair of the Riksdag’s Belarus Network.

"I am expecting a meeting where the participants describe the strengthened measures we plan to take to support civil society in Belarus. This is about support to various NGOs, the media and the political foundations in Sweden, among others, that are working for a democratisation process in Belarus," says Mr Bildt.

The first session, a roundtable discussion between the delegation leaders, is open to the media. Mr Bildt will also take part in a joint press conference with Poland’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski.

Venue and time
Wednesday 2 February, Hotel Sofitel Warsaw Victoria, 11 Krolewska Street, Warsaw

11.15-13.30
Roundtable discussion (open to media)

approx. 13.30
Press conference

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
Program World Economic Forum

From Wednesday 26 until Sunday 30 January, the World Economic Forum's annual summit will be held in Davos, Switzerland. The forum engages leaders from various fields to discuss how the situation in the world can be improved. Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, Minister for Finance Anders Borg, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson will be there to represent the Swedish Government.

The theme of this year's summit is "Shared Norms for the New Reality". This year's summit is the 41st of its kind, and close to 35 heads of state and government, a large number of ministers, almost 900 CEOs and others are expected to take part.

Programme points:

**WEDNESDAY 26 JANUARY**
18:00 - 18:30, Gunilla Carlsson, Bilateral Josette Sheeran, Chef för WFP
(Bilateral room ME19, Middle Entry level)
18:30 -19:00, Gunilla Carlsson, Bilateral Robert Greenhill
(Bilateral room ME19)

**THURSDAY 27 JANUARY**
08:00-08:30, Gunilla Carlsson, Breakfast with Andrew Mitchell, Open for media.
(Hotel Alexanderhaus)

10:00-10:30, Gunilla Carlsson, Bilateral med Kofi Annan
(Bilateral meeting room ME21)

12:30-14:00, Gunilla Carlsson, Development Lessons from High-growth Economies
(Hotel Schweizerhof, Arvenstübli)
What are the development lessons - good and bad - that slow-growth, industrialized economies can learn from faster-growing emerging markets?

15.00-16.00, Gunilla Carlsson, Informal working meeting about "Global Sustainability"
(www.un.org/wcm/content/site/climatechange/pages/gsp

16:00-16:30, Gunilla Carlsson, Bilateral Micheline Calmy-Rey, UN Women

16:30-17:00 Bilateral Michelle Bachelet

17:30 – 18:00, Gunilla Carlsson, Bilateral Helen Clark, UNDP
(Bilateral meeting room ME23)

**THURSDAY 27 JANUARY**
08:00-08:30, Gunilla Carlsson, Breakfast with Andrew Mitchell, Open for media.
(Hotel Alexanderhaus)

10:00 - 10:30, Gunilla Carlsson, Bilateral med Kofi Annan
(Bilateral meeting room ME21)

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What are the development lessons - good and bad - that slow-growth, industrialized economies can learn from faster-growing emerging markets?

Related
- Interview with Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt ahead of the World Economic Forum in Davos
- Debate article: A new image of Sweden is emerging

External links
- More information about the summit at The World Economic Forum's website
FRIDAY 28 JANUARY

08.00 - 10.15, Carl Bildt, Governing in a new media age (Private Events for Annual Meeting)
How will the roles and functions of government change in the coming years, and how will internet, social media and other dimensions of the digital revolution affect their abilities to deliver and execute? What is known about practices that work in the new world of networked governance?
(Congress Centre, Rinerhorn Terrasse)

09.00, Anders Borg, Meeting with Stanley Fischer

09.00-10.00, Gunilla Carlsson, Redefining Sustainable Development.
(Congress Centre - Congress Hall)

10.20-10.50, Fredrik Reinfeldt, Bilateral with the President of Mexico Calderón

11.00-11.30, Fredrik Reinfeldt, Meeting with ECB's Jean-Claude Trichet

11.10-11.30, Carl Bildt and Gunilla Carlsson Bilateral meeting with Jakob Kellenberger, President, ICRC.
(Congress centre)

11.45-12.05, Carl Bildt, Bilateral meeting with Mr David Drummond, Senior Vice President Corporate Development, Google
(Congress centre)

12.15-14.15, Anders Borg, Luncheon Seminar Currency Imbalances: Towards a New Bretton Woods?
High volatility of exchange rates of the most important currencies has triggered renewed debates about the stability of the international monetary system. Questions on global reserve currencies, economic disparities, protectionism and financial imbalances are calling for a new Bretton Woods.

12.30-14.00, Carl Bildt, 7th Davos Ukrainian Lunch
Debate: a) how to kickstart modernization, b) bring Ukraine and Poland closer together and c) foster Ukraine's European Integration. (Morosani Swisscherhof Hotel, Promenade 50)

12.30-14.15, Fredrik Reinfeldt, seminar- Informal Gathering of World Economic Leaders - Toward a New Growth Model
(Congress Centre, Parsem/Pischa)
At their 2009 London Summit, G20 leaders pledged "to build an inclusive, green and sustainable recovery" and to "lay the foundation for a fair and sustainable world economy". Yet, domestic pressures for increased protectionist measures continue to grow. With unemployment persisting and the path of recovery uncertain in many countries, how can this aspiration for more inclusive growth be translated more effectively into reality? What role do free trade and open economy play in promoting sustainable growth? How can surplus and deficit countries adopt a mutually reinforcing set of reforms to accelerate growth in global aggregate demand and median living standards?
Moderated by
Fredrik Reinfeldt, Prime Minister of Sweden

14.00-16.30, Gunilla Carlsson, Designing a Policy Innovation Platform for sustainable Consumption
(Derby Hotel Davos, Fluela 1 + 2 + 3)

(Congress Centre, Aspen 2)
What are the underlying principles and policies behind the economic success and social innovation that are hallmarks of Nordic countries?
The following dimensions will be addressed:
- Public-private collaboration
- Fiscal reform
- Gender and migration policies
- Employment and social protection
The session will include:
Olafur Ragnar Grimsson, President of Iceland (Panellists)
17.00-19.00, Fredrik Reinfeldt and Anders Borg, Informal Gathering of World Economic Leaders - Reform of the International Monetary System
(Congress Centre, Pischa)
The international monetary system of recent decades has been characterized by wide swings in exchange rate parities, large and persistent current account imbalances and cross-border financial crises affecting developed and developing countries alike. Recent exchange rate policy tensions have evoked memories of the competitive devaluations of the 1930s. What longer-term lessons can be drawn from the experience of the past decade? What reforms would be appropriate and feasible in the areas identified by the French G20 presidency: increasing protection against capital flow volatility; answering the need for reserve asset diversification; and improving policy coordination? How should the mandate, capacity and governance of the International Monetary Fund be improved to support these objectives?
Moderated by
Christine Lagarde, Minister of Economy, Finance and Industry of France; Member of the Foundation Board of the World Economic Forum

20.00-22.00, Carl Bildt, Middagsseminarium The Art of Negotiation
(Hotel National, Living Room)
Carl Bildt, Discussion leader

SATURDAY 29 JANUARY
08.15 - 10.00 Fredrik Reinfeldt and Carl Bildt, Seminar
Informal Gathering of World Economic Leaders - Rio + 20
(Congress Centre, Parsenn)
The 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro galvanized environmental consciousness and cooperation on a scale never witnessed before or since. Attended by 108 heads of state or government, it resulted in landmark climate change, biodiversity, forestry management and financing accords. The Rio+20 Summit in 2012 presents a similar opportunity for progress. Should it pursue a top-down (intergovernmental) or bottom-up (national and multistakeholder) reform agenda or both? If the UN is to remain a central platform, should a World Environment Organization be created? If so, what should be its core mandate and functions? If not, in what other ways could a major upgrade in international environmental and developmental governance be achieved? How can other multilateral regimes, such as trade, advance the environment agenda?
Moderated by
Achim Steiner, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Nairobi

08.00 - 10.00, Anders Borg, Informal Gathering of World Economic Leaders - Aligning Perspectives in the New Financial Landscape
(Congress Centre, Pischa WorkSpace)
The G-20 summit in Korea produced agreement on an important set of reforms to international financial supervision. However, deliberations on financial governance and regulatory reform are far from complete. How can business and policy leaders ensure progress on financial government and regulatory reforms in 2011? How can they seek to advance the scope of the regulatory framework and the establishment of a level playing field as a means of improving global financial governance? What are the next steps in regulating key dimensions of the financial landscape?
1. Regulating systemically important financial institutions
2. Coordinating among regulatory frameworks
3. Levelling the playing field between regulated and unregulated sectors
4. Restoring trust in the financial system
5. Developing capital markets in emerging economies
12.00-14.00, Carl Bildt, Lunch seminar
Informal Gathering of World Economic Leaders - The Role of the Group of 20 in the Multilateral System

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New Ambassadors

Four ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Wednesday 26 January 2011:

Ecuador's newly appointed Ambassador Mario Aníbal Guerrero Murgueytio was born in 1950. He has worked for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs since 1980, including a post at the Embassy of Ecuador in Stockholm 1982-1986. He was Consul-General in Milan 2001-2006 and most recently he had a senior post at the Ministry for Foreign Relations, Trade and Integration.

Syria's newly appointed Ambassador Milad Atieh was born in 1959. He started working for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1989 and has held posts at the Embassy in Washington and at Syria's representation to the UN in New York. Most recently Ambassador Atieh served as Director of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Department for International Organisations and Conferences.

Qatar's newly appointed Ambassador Hamad Ali Jager Al- Hinzab was born in 1957. The Ambassador is concurrently accredited from The Netherlands. He began his professional career in the Qatari Air Force and has been posted as Defence Attaché in Washington. He was appointed Chief of Protocol at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and was thereafter Ambassador to Pakistan. Since February 2010 has been Ambassador to The Netherlands.

Ghana's newly appointed Ambassador Hajia Fati Habib-Jawula was born in 1945. The Ambassador is concurrently accredited from Denmark. She began her professional career teaching English literature and history and also has a long career in domestic politics. She has been Ambassador to Denmark since 2009, and since January she has also chaired the Council of IDEA, The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

Contact
Press Service, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Office hours
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Related
• The Diplomatic Portal
Bildt discusses political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt travels to Bosnia and Herzegovina today, Wednesday 26 January. Over two days, he will follow up on the political situation in the country in the wake of the election in October 2010. The visit is important ahead of continued discussions in the EU concerning Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Carl Bildt will visit Sarajevo and Banja Luka and will meet Valentin Inzko (European Union Special Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina), Foreign Minister Sven Alkalaj and member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina Bakir Izetbegovic, as well as leaders of some of the political parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition, meetings with various think tanks in the country are planned.

Contact
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Sweden stands for UN Human Rights Council

"Sweden has declared its candidature as a member of the UN Human Rights Council for the period 2012-2015," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

"Human rights are a priority issue for the Government. As a member of the UN Human Rights Council, we want to increase the Council’s ability to get results on the ground by, for example, addressing areas and situations in which there are particularly serious crimes against human rights," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Gunilla Carlsson.

Sweden has actively participated as an observer in the UN Human Rights Council since it was formed in 2006. Sweden also represented the European Union in the Council during the Swedish presidency in 2009.

The UN Human Rights Council has 47 members, all of whom are elected on a three-year basis. The Council meets in Geneva, where the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is headquartered.

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email to Sebastian Tham
Relations between the US and China theme for Stockholm China Forum

On 23-24 January, immediately after the summit between the US and China, the Stockholm China Forum will convene for its eighth session since its launch in 2007. The conference will be held at the Hotel Skeppsholmen. Carl Bildt will take part, and this time Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Fu Ying, who is responsible for the European Region at the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will also attend.

The Forum has created a unique opportunity for regular transatlantic dialogue on and with China. The involvement of China is an increasingly important factor in dealing with the issues facing the world and one of the main issues for the Forum is how the upswing in China can be met in a way that contributes to international peace and development.

Relations between the US and China - perhaps the most important relationship of our time - is a key theme of the discussions on both security policy and economics. A natural question this time is whether the talks in Washington between President Obama and President Hu Jintao have improved the countries’ long-term cooperation prospects. A key question for Europe is what can be done to build more sustainable relations between the US, Europe and China. The financial crisis has inevitably been a main theme at most of the recent Forums. This time, the focus will be on global economic issues and trade and currency issues. Each forum devotes special attention to a regional issue. At this meeting, the strategic importance of Central Asia will be the focal point.

As on previous occasions, a number of representatives of the Obama administration, European foreign ministries and the EU will attend, as will researchers from leading think tanks and universities in the US, Europe and China. Two of the world’s most respected analysts of the significance of China’s development, Minxin Pei of Claremont McKenna College and Gideon Rachman of the Financial Times, will also be attending.

*****

The Stockholm China Forum was established in 2006 in dialogue between the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education (STINT) and the Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation). All four parties contributed financially. The seventh Forum was held in June 2010. The coming Forum is the second in a second phase funded by the GMF, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Riksbankens Jubileumsfond.

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Bildt to attend Holbrooke's memorial in Washington D.C.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will leave for Washington D.C. today to attend the memorial service for the late American diplomat Richard Holbrooke. The service will be held tomorrow, Friday 14 January. Mr Bildt and Mr Holbrooke worked together to bring peace to Bosnia in the mid-1990s.

"Richard Holbrooke was a giant in the modern world of diplomacy. Soldiers die in battle, but diplomats seldom do. Richard Holbrooke was, I think, an exception in this respect. He died in the middle of one of modern diplomacy's most important and most difficult battles," says Mr Bildt.

Mr Bildt will also have several bilateral talks in Washington D.C., and will be available to the media. Please contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson or Press Counsellor Gabriella Augustsson if interested.

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Gabriella Augustsson
Public Affairs and Press Counsellor
Tel: +001 202 467 26 55
Reminder: Last day for accreditation 5 January: State Visit from Estonia on 18-20 January 2011

The President of the Republic of Estonia Toomas Henrik Ilves will pay a State Visit to Sweden on 18-20 January 2011 at the invitation of His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf. The President will be accompanied by his wife, Mrs Evelin Ilves.

Urgent - To the editorial office

Media representatives need special accreditation via the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to cover the State Visit. The last day to apply for accreditation is 5 January 2011. Click the link for information on the programme and the accreditation procedure.

Contact

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Sweden welcomes LGBT decision at UN
Following pressure from Sweden and other countries the United Nations General Assembly decided today to reintroduce the reference to sexual orientation in the resolution on extrajudicial and summary executions that was jointly presented by the Nordic countries.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt welcomes the decision:

"Sweden and other countries have worked hard to keep this important reference and we are very pleased that our work has paid off."

Background
The UN resolution on extrajudicial and summary executions is the only UN resolution on human rights that contains an express reference to people's vulnerability based on their sexual orientation. The resolution is presented every other year jointly by the Nordic countries, this year by Finland.

During consideration of the resolution a majority of the committee voted to remove the reference to sexual orientation, but following considerable lobbying by the Nordic countries and the USA a number of states have changed their position and a majority of countries consequently decided to reintroduce the reference during finalisation of the resolution at the General Assembly today.

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Sweden to close five Embassies

The Government has today decided to close Sweden’s Embassies in Buenos Aires, Brussels, Hanoi, Kuala Lumpur and Luanda.

"This painful decision is a consequence of the recent decision of the Riksdag to cut funding to the Government Offices by SEK 300 million," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

The five embassies will be closed during 2011.

* * *

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will be available at the Riksdag Press Centre following the interpellation debate.

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Charlotta Ozaki Macias
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Press conference: Bildt to comment on developments in Belarus

Following the events in Belarus after this weekend's presidential elections, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will meet the press today to comment on developments.

Time and place
Time: 20 December at 16.00
Place: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1, Stockholm. Please bring your press credentials.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
Last day for accreditation 5 January: State Visit from Estonia on 18-20 January 2011

The President of the Republic of Estonia Toomas Henrik Ilves will pay a State Visit to Sweden on 18-20 January 2011 at the invitation of His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf. The President will be accompanied by his wife, Mrs Evelin Ilves.

To the editorial office
Media representatives need special accreditation via the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to cover the State Visit. The last day to apply for accreditation is 5 January 2011. Click the link for information on the programme and the accreditation procedure.

Contact
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Carl Bildt visits Serbia and Moldova

On Tuesday 7 December, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is travelling to the capital of Serbia, Belgrade, where he will meet the country’s President Boris Tadic over an informal dinner in the evening. They will discuss Serbia’s EU-oriented reforms and other issues. On Wednesday Mr Bildt will meet Minister of Foreign Affairs Vuk Jeremic.

Later on Wednesday 8 December, Mr Bildt will continue to Moldova for meetings with representatives of the political parties in the country, in response to the complicated situation that has arisen there after the elections.

On Wednesday at 17.00 local time, a press conference will be held in Chisinau with Carl Bildt and the ministers of foreign affairs of Poland and Moldova, Wladyslaw Sikorski and Iurie Leanca. The address:

Moldovan Ministry of Foreign Affairs
80, 31 August 1989 Str, Chisinau

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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Ukraine's Foreign Minister to visit Stockholm

On Monday 6 December, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Kostyantyn Gryshchenko, will visit Stockholm. He will meet Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt and Minister for Trade Ewa Björling.

Time and place
2 December at 14.30
Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1, Stockholm.

Please bring your press credentials.

The purpose of the visit is to discuss bilateral issues between Ukraine and Sweden, but also Ukraine's closer ties with the EU.

Dr Björling has invited Swedish companies to participate in a breakfast meeting together with Mr Gryshchenko. The discussion will focus on how Swedish companies can become more active in the growing Ukrainian market.

Following the meeting with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, a press conference will be held at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

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Carl Bildt to discuss security policy issues in Bahrain

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is to travel to Manama, Bahrain to take part in the IISS Manama Dialogue on 3-5 December.

The conference, which takes place each year, focuses on regional security policy challenges. Among other things, Mr Bildt will take part in a panel discussion on the subject of 'The changing nature of regional security issues'. He will also have several bilateral meetings.

The foreign ministers of the United States, Hillary Clinton, and Iran, Manouchehr Mottaki, will also be attending the conference. The organiser is IISS, the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Mr Bildt will be available for comments to the media during the conference.

Contact
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State Visit to the Republic of Botswana

Their Majesties King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will be paying a State Visit to the Republic of Botswana on 22-25 March 2011.

Their Majesties King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will be paying a State Visit to the Republic of Botswana on 22-25 March 2011 at the invitation of His Excellency Lieutenant General Seretse President Khama Ian Khama.

The Swedish Government will be represented at the State Visit. A Swedish business delegation will also visit Botswana in connection with the State Visit.

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Media representatives will need special accreditation to cover the visit. More information about accreditation and the programme will be published on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website.

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External links
- The Royal Court of Sweden
- Embassy of Sweden in South Africa
- Swedish Trade Council in Botswana
- The Republic of Botswana - Government Portal
- Embassy of Botswana in Sweden
- The official gateway to Sweden

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Carl Bildt discusses 'frozen conflicts' at OSCE Summit in Kazakhstan

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt travels to Astana in Kazakhstan today for the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Summit to be held on 1-2 December. It is the first time in 11 years that the OSCE is holding a summit.

On the agenda are discussions on future security policy challenges, such as 'frozen conflicts' and issues of democracy, human rights, the rule of law and cross-border threats. Future challenges facing the OSCE will also be discussed.

In connection with the meeting, there will be an opportunity for questions from the media: contact Press Secretary Anna Charlotta Johansson for more information.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
+46 8 405 00 00
Photo opportunity: Carl Bildt meets Turkish Cypriot leader

On Thursday 25 November, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is to meet Turkish Cypriot leader Dervis Eroglu in Stockholm. The two are to discuss the UN-backed talks on Cyprus that were held in New York last week, in which Mr Eroglu participated, and the new talks planned for January 2011. Just before the meeting of Mr Bildt and Mr Eroglu there will be an opportunity for journalists to ask questions of the two at the Grand Hôtel in Stockholm.

Time and place
Time: Thursday, 25 November at 15.00
Place: Grand Hôtel (lobby), Södra Blasieholmshamnen 8, Stockholm

Bring your press credentials.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
Press Secretary for Foreign Minister Carl Bildt
Phone: +46 70 3563032
Carl Bildt to visit Berlin to deliver speech and participate in bilateral meetings

On Friday 26 November, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is to visit Berlin to deliver a speech entitled "European Interests and Strategic Partnerships - Global and Regional Perspectives" at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs.

Time and place
Venue: German Federal Foreign Office, Werderscher Markt 1, Berlin
Time: 26 November, 15.30

During his visit he will also meet his German counterpart Guido Westerwelle and Federal Minister of Defence Karl-Theodor Freiherr zu Guttenberg for bilateral meetings. On the agenda are Afghanistan and the EU’s future foreign and security policy.

A press conference will be held at the German Federal Foreign Office after the meeting with Federal Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
Press Secretary for Foreign Minister Carl Bildt
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Today: Carl Bildt to speak at Swedish Institute of International Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt is to address the Swedish Institute of International Affairs in Stockholm today, 23 November. His address will contain reflections on the four years that have passed since he first addressed the Institute as Minister for Foreign Affairs in 2006 as well as which foreign policy issues will be important during the coming four years.

Time and place
Time: Tuesday 23 November, 16.30-17.45
Place: Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Drottning Kristinas väg 37, Stockholm

Please come in good time. For more information about participation, please consult the website of the Swedish Institute of International Affairs (in Swedish)

http://www.ui.se/evenemang/namnlos-nyhet-7

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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State Visit from Estonia on 18-20 January 2011

The President of the Republic of Estonia Toomas Henrik Ilves will pay a State Visit to Sweden on 18-20 January 2011 at the invitation of His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf. The President will be accompanied by his wife, Mrs Evelin Ilves.

The Estonian official delegation will also include representatives of the government, parliament and business community.

The visit is intended to deepen and intensify the already excellent relations between Sweden and Estonia. The programme will include meetings with Speaker of the Riksdag Per Westerberg, Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt and Swedish business leaders. Visits to Enköping and Uppsala are also part of the programme.

To the editorial office

Media representatives need special accreditation via the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to cover the State Visit. The last day to apply for accreditation is 5 January 2011. Click the link for more information.

Contact

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Press briefing with Carl Bildt and Estonia's Minister of Foreign Affairs

On Monday 15 November, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will meet Estonian foreign minister Urmas Paet. A joint press briefing will be held after the meeting.

Time and place
Time: 15 November at 11.45
Place: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1, Stockholm.

Please bring your press credentials.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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Carl Bildt to London

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit London on 11-12 November to meet with Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs William Hague and attend the US-European Forum on Global Issues. He will also address the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) on Future Challenges for Europe.

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External links
Read more about IISS
Carl Bildt to Abu Dhabi
Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Abu Dhabi on 5-8 November for informal talks.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Abu Dhabi on 5-8 November for informal talks on various issues, including the Middle East peace process, at a peace and security conference organised by the United Arab Emirates and the International Peace Institute. Mr Bildt will also have bilateral talks with the Minister of Foreign Trade H.E. Shaikha Lubna Al Qassimi.

Contact
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ISAF Bill adopted

The Government today adopted a Bill to the Riksdag on continued Swedish participation in the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF). The Government is seeking the approval of the Riksdag for an extended mandate until the end of December 2011. It is proposed that the planned Swedish military operation on the ground in Afghanistan consist of approximately 500 people in 2011. In addition, it is proposed that an additional contribution of two rescue helicopters be provided to improve security. The Government is presenting the Bill following the agreement reached with the Social Democratic Party and the Green Party on 31 October.

"It is very important that, with this agreement, we have a consensus across party blocks on the overall focus of Sweden's presence during the entire electoral period," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt.

"The basis for our policy are the decisions by the UN Security Council to urge the member states to contribute to ISAF in Afghanistan, and the new and improved direction of the overall policy that was established at the Kabul conference in the summer," says Mr Bildt.

"Sweden should take an active role in realising the objective of Afghan security forces being able to lead and implement operations in all provinces by the end of 2014," Mr Bildt continues. "The focus is on transferring responsibility for security to facilitate a gradual change from combatant troops to supportive security actions in 2012. Sweden will also continue to strengthen the various civil operations in Afghanistan."

Background

Sweden has been contributing to the International Security Assistance Force since it was established in 2001/2002. Since 2006, Sweden has had responsibility for the management of a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Mazar-i-Sharif in northern Afghanistan. The current Swedish military contribution amounts to approximately 500 people. There are currently 48 countries contributing to ISAF, which consists of just over 120 000 people.

Related

- Country strategy: Afghanistan 2009-2013

External links

- Official website for Swedish support for international involvement in Afghanistan

Contact

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Bildt to hold press conference on ISAF participation

Today, Thursday 4 November at 11.30, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will hold a press conference at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm. This is because the Government is expected to adopt a bill today on continued Swedish participation in the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

Time and place
Time: Thursday, 4 November at 11.30
Place: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1, Stockholm. Please bring your press credentials.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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Carl Bildt to visit Oslo and Reykjavik

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Oslo on Tuesday 2 November to take part in a Northern Dimension ministerial meeting. The Northern Dimension is a framework for cooperation between the European Union, Iceland, Russia and Norway, focusing on partnerships in north-western Russia, the Barents Region, the Baltic Sea and the Arctic.

Time and place
2-3 November

The meeting will focus on cross-border cooperation.

On Wednesday 3 November, the Minister for Foreign Affairs will participate in the Nordic Council Session in Reykjavik.

Contact
Anna Charlotta Johansson
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External links
- Nordic Council, 2010 session
Carl Bildt to visit Moscow

Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Moscow on 19-20 October for a bilateral meeting with Russia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov. He will also take part in the Munich Security Conference Core Group Meeting, which is being held in Moscow at the same time.

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External links
- Munich Security Conference
Press release
14 October 2010
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carl Bildt to Brussels
On Friday 15 October, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will attend a meeting in Brussels of Friends of Democratic Pakistan (FoDP). EU’s High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton and Pakistan’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi will co-host the meeting.

Discussions at the meeting will focus on the humanitarian situation and reconstruction needs following the floods, as well as long-term measures for positive development in Pakistan, including economic reforms, energy issues and development of the areas in the northwest. The FoDP was established in autumn 2008 as a group to support the democratically elected government in Pakistan.

Its main purpose is to serve as a forum for political dialogue on strategic issues, but it also serves as a catalyst for concrete support to various projects.

External links
- Read more: Meeting in Brussels
Carl Bildt to Turkey

On 9-12 October, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt will visit Bodrum in Turkey to take part in a conference organised by the Centre for European Reform and the Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies. Mr Bildt will be part of a panel to discuss the topic "Reshaping the European security architecture: the NATO strategic concept vs the European security strategy."

Contact
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Sweden's new government

Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt has appointed the following government ministers today, 5 October 2010

Ministers and their press contacts are listed below. For new ministers, the press contact given is temporary and applies until further notice.

Prime Minister: Fredrik Reinfeldt
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Minister for Justice: Beatrice Ask
Martin Valfridsson
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Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy: Tobias Billström
Markus Friberg
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Minister for Foreign Affairs: Carl Bildt
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Minister for International Development Cooperation: Gunilla Carlsson
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Minister for Trade: Ewa Björling
Monica Ohlsson
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Minister for Defence: Sten Tolgfors
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Minister for Public Administration and Housing: Stefan Attefall
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Minister for Social Security: Ulf Kristersson
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Minister for Education and Deputy Prime Minister: Jan Björklund
Camilla Hansson
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Yoav Bartal
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Minister for Rural Affairs: Eskil Erlandsson
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Minister for Enterprise and Energy: Maud Olofsson
Håkan Lind
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Frank Nilsson
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