

December 2006

Press releases 2002–2006

This document contains the collected Ministry for Foreign Affairs press releases from the period 1 January 2002–6 October 2006. These press releases have previously been published on www.regeringen.se and were removed from the website on 6 October 2006 when a new Government took office.

The contact information in the press releases has largely been deleted since press secretaries and other staff have been replaced.

Links contained in the press releases have been deleted.

The press releases in the document have been sorted by date, starting with the most recent.

In total, there are 1 414 press releases from this period.

How to search the document

You can search the press releases in the document using the Adobe Reader search function. The search function is generally marked with a binoculars icon on the tool bar. You can search using any word of your choice, but to simplify your search the press releases contain the following key words:

- Minister
- Ministry
- Subject

In 2002–2006 the following ministers, ministries and subjects were referred to on www.regeringen.se:

Ministers

Göran Persson, Ann-Christin Nykvist, Barbro Holmberg, Berit Andnor, Bosse Ringholm, Carin Jämtin, Hans Karlsson, Ibrahim Baylan, Jan Eliasson, Jens Orback, Leif Pagrotsky, Lena Hallengren, Lena Sommestad, Leni Björklund, Mona Sahlin, Morgan Johansson, Pär Nuder, Sven-Erik Österberg, Thomas Bodström, Thomas Östros, Ulrica Messing, Ylva Johansson, Laila Freivalds, Gunnar Lund, Lars-Erik Lövdén, Lars Engqvist, Marita Ulvskog, Anna Lindh, Margareta Winberg and Jan O Karlsson.

Ministries

The Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Education, Research and Culture, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs, the Ministry of Sustainable Development, the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of the Environment and The Permanent Representation of Sweden to the European Union.

Subjects

Agriculture, forestry, fisheries
 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities
 Central, regional and local government
 Communications, IT
 Culture, the media, leisure activities
 Defence, emergency management and safety
 Democracy and human rights
 Education and research
 Employment and gender equality
 Environment, energy and housing
 EU
 Foreign policy and international cooperation
 Health care, health, social issues/insurance
 Industry, trade, regional development
 Legislation and justice
 National economy and budget
 Sustainable development

PRESS RELEASE

2006-10-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government Bill on Swedish participation in UN mission in Lebanon

The Government has presented a Bill to the Riksdag proposing Swedish participation in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for six months. Sweden intends to send one corvette to the UNIFIL naval component.

The mission is being carried out within the framework of Security Council resolution 1701, which emphasises the importance of the Lebanese government restoring sovereignty over the whole of its territory. The Resolution establishes that a reinforced UNIFIL is to support Lebanon's government in securing the country's borders and preventing the import of weapons or the like that have not been approved by the government.

"By contributing to UNIFIL, Sweden sends a clear message about its strong support of the UN and multilateral solutions. It demonstrates strong Swedish commitment to Lebanon's unity and sovereignty," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson.

Sweden has contributed SEK 84.2 million to humanitarian measures in Lebanon and is one of the largest donors in the EU as regards both the UN appeal and the total amount of humanitarian aid. Swedish initiatives are now being implemented and planned for the early reconstruction of Lebanon.

Sweden has also helped to increase the total amount of international support to the reconstruction of Lebanon by means of the conference that was held in Stockholm on 31 August.

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Key word: 70156 Sustainable development Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-09-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

State Visit to Canada

TIME AND PLACE

Applications for accreditations close on 10 October!

Their Majesties King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will be paying a State Visit to Canada on 24-27 October 2006 at the invitation of The Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada.

The Swedish government will be represented on the visit.

A delegation of Swedish business representatives will also be visiting Canada at the same time.

The programme includes visits to Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto and Quebec City. The King and Queen will meet the Prime Minister of Canada and representatives of the provincial governments of Ontario and Quebec.

The programme also includes:

- the opening of a silver exhibition in Ottawa
- company visits in Montreal
- round table discussions on violence against women
- an environmental conference with Swedish participation in Toronto
- International Festival of Authors, IFOA, with a special focus on Swedish children's literature, Toronto
- a Polar research meeting in Quebec City.

To the editorial office:

Swedish journalists need special accreditation to cover the State Visit.

More information on accreditation and other practical issues concerning the State Visit is available at: www.regeringen.se/press (in Swedish).

Please note: Applications for accreditation close on 10 October.

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Key word: 69855 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-09-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Southern Caucasus

The Government has appointed Minister Hans Gunnar Adén as Ambassador in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Mr Adén's previous postings include Sweden's embassies in Paris and Kiev, and the Swedish Consulate-General in St Petersburg. He has also worked at the OECD Secretariat in Paris.

Mr Adén will be based at the Office of Swedish Ambassadors Stationed in Stockholm (UD-KSA). His assignment includes regular trips to the countries he is responsible for.

He will take up his new post in September 2006.

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Key word: 69750 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-09-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Nicaragua

The Government has decided to send two long-term and three short-term observers to Nicaragua ahead of the parliamentary and presidential elections that are to take place on 5 November. The election observers are part of a joint EU mission that is expected to comprise a total of 94 people.

"By sending election observers, Sweden and the EU can help to ensure that correctly-conducted democratic elections are held in the country. This is an important condition for continued development in the country," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Nicaragua is one of Sweden's primary partner countries in Latin America. Development cooperation aims to support Nicaragua's efforts to reduce poverty and contribute to democratic development.

Sida is responsible for the recruitment and training of Swedish election observers. Questions may be addressed to Sida's election monitoring group.

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Key word: 69747 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-09-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to weapons destruction in Tajikistan

The Government Offices decided today to give EUR 100 000 to the final phase of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) project regarding small arms and light weapons and conventional ammunition in Tajikistan.

The project aims at destroying small arms and light weapons and conventional ammunition, increasing security in the handling, storing and documentation of the material, and building a national capability for dealing with these activities in the future.

The project is led and administered by the OSCE Mission in Dushanbe in cooperation with Tajik authorities. The Mission reports to the OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation in Vienna, where all participating OSCE states are represented. Sweden's representative at the Forum for Security Cooperation, Colonel Claes Nilsson, is coordinator for the OSCE light weapons project in 2005 and 2006.

Sweden has already provided a total of SEK 1.6 million to the project.

Since the programme began in the summer of 2005, some 12 tonnes of conventional ammunition has been destroyed. The destruction of a total of 26 000 small arms and light weapons began in June 2006, when the destruction facility in the country became operational. Security improvements as well as renovation and construction of secure weapon and ammunition depots are underway and will be completed before the end of the year.

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Key word: 69690 Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-09-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Report on global challenges launched

A report on global public goods has been launched in conjunction with the IMF and World Bank Annual Meetings in Singapore on Monday 18 September. The report addresses threats facing humanity, including the spread of communicable diseases, climate change as a result of the greenhouse effect, financial instability, international terrorism as well as the proliferation and use of nuclear weapons.

The report states that these transboundary problems demand renewed commitment to international cooperation. The report proposes reforms of central international institutions and points out the importance of all states contributing politically and economically. In addition, a number of concrete proposals are presented on how to deal with pressing challenges.

Sweden and France together appointed the international task force that has produced the report.

The report as well as a summary are available under the heading "download".

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Key word: 69610 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-09-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election monitors to Georgia

The Government decided today to send two election monitors to Georgia ahead of the local elections on 5 October.

"The elections are important for creating continued stable and democratic development in the country. By sending election monitors to Georgia, Sweden can contribute to the development of a functioning electoral system in the country," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election monitors follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). This time the OSCE will be sending a Limited Election Observation Mission consisting of twenty election monitors.

Sida is responsible for the recruitment and training of Swedish election observers. Questions may be addressed to Sida's election monitoring group.

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Key word: 69466 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-09-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Barbro Holmberg to take part in UN meeting on migration

The UN high level dialogue on migration and development begins in New York on 14 September. This is the first time that ministers from UN member states are to meet and discuss how migration can promote development and what needs to be done to counter its negative aspects. The Swedish delegation will be led by Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg.

"Migration is one of the most important global issues of the future and it brings with it incredible development capacity. When people move, knowledge and experience are spread. The amount of money migrants send home is already more than twice as much as all development assistance. In countries with an ageing population, immigration can be an important supplement to the labour

force. But there are also drawbacks. People are taken advantage of and treated badly. This is something we must deal with," says Ms Holmberg.

"Migration is a transboundary issue and has to be managed in cooperation with other countries. The fact that the UN is now highlighting the issue of migration and development for the first time is an initial step towards being able to make better use of the potential presented by migration and counter its drawbacks."

Sweden has been proactive in highlighting the migration issue internationally, including by initiating the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM), whose report is part of the material on which the high level dialogue is based.

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Key word: 69451 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Foreign policy and international cooperation Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2006-09-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Increased Swedish support to research on HIV and AIDS

Sweden has decided to contribute SEK 15 million to each of three research organisations for their work with vaccines and microbicides against HIV and AIDS. The organisations are the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), the International Partnership for Microbicides (IPM) and the Population Council.

"Research is long-term and costly and, for HIV and AIDS, unusually complicated. Since Sweden actively pursues issues on preventive measures it is natural for us to give support to research on vaccines and microbicides. Our increased contribution gives us the opportunity to put economic weight behind our policy in the area of HIV/AIDS. Research, preventive measures, care and treatment as well as opinion forming with regard to the causes and consequences of the pandemic are all important parts of our cohesive strategy against HIV/AIDS," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Sweden has also given economic support to the three organisations in the past, in part through Sida/SAREC and in part through the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The evenly distributed contributions amounted to a total of SEK 12 million in 2004 and a total of SEK 30 million in 2005. This year, the support is increased by a total of SEK 15 million, amounting to SEK 45 million.

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Key word: 69440 Health care, health, social issues/insurance Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-09-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Zagreb

The Government has appointed Director Lars Fredén as Ambassador in Croatia.

Lars Fredén has served at the European Space Agency (ESA) in Paris since 2004. Before that, he was Deputy Head of the Department for Asia and the Pacific Region at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has also served at Sweden's embassies in Beijing, Moscow, Riga and Beirut.

He will take up his new post in September 2006.

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Key word: 69309 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2006-09-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Zambia

The Government has decided to send election observers to Zambia ahead of the presidential and parliamentary elections that will be taking place on 28 September. One long-term and two short-term observers will be sent from

Sweden as part of a joint EU mission.

"The elections in Zambia are important for further stable democratic development of the country. The Swedish contribution is intended to demonstrate our support for this development," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

In connection with the Swedish elections Zambia, in its turn, will be sending election observers under the aegis of the Swedish Institute.

Sida is responsible for the recruitment and training of Swedish election observers. Questions may be addressed to Sida's election monitoring group. Enquiries regarding the Zambian election observers should be made to the Swedish Institute.

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Key word: 69198 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-09-07

Ministry of Sustainable Development
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Increased Swedish support to Global Environmental Facility

An agreement to top up the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) with more than SEK 22 billion for the period 2006-2010 was reached at a meeting in Cape Town, South Africa, at the end of August.

A total of 32 donors including China, India and South Africa will contribute to the topping up of the Global Environmental Facility. Sweden is one of the few countries to increase its contribution to the Facility with a pledge of SEK 850 million.

"Global environmental issues require more cooperation to achieve internationally set goals. Sweden's strong commitment to the climate, biological diversity and the handling of chemicals is demonstrated by our support to the Facility," says Minister for the Environment Lena Sommestad.

"More resources are needed if we are to be able to deal with global environmental threats. Rich

countries must take greater responsibility to ensure that resources are available for these efforts. Swedish support reflects our conviction that the Facility is an extremely important multilateral actor," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The Global Environmental Facility was established in 1991 to finance investments in developing and former eastern bloc countries. The Facility, which currently has 176 member states, cooperates closely with organisations including the World Bank, UNDP and UNEP. Since it was set up, the Facility has distributed more than SEK 44 billion in grants and has acquired approximately SEK 145 billion more from other sources. At present the Facility supports 1 800 environmental projects in 140 countries.

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Key word: 69129 Sustainable development Environment, energy and housing Foreign policy and international cooperation Lena Sommestad

PRESS RELEASE

2006-09-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Finance

Sweden grants debt relief to Congo

The Government decided today to grant debt relief to the Democratic Republic of Congo in the framework of the HIPC-initiative, an international agreement to assist the poorest and most heavily indebted countries to achieve a sustainable debt.

The decision is based on a multilateral agreement in the Paris Club and consists in the cancellation of about 70 per cent of Congo's payments to Sweden between June 30, 2005 and Mars 31, 2006. Payments during this period amount to about 38 million kronor in Swedish kronor, of which about 26 million kronor are cancelled. Congo shall make the remaining payments between 2010 and 2027.

The Paris Club is a group of official creditors from 19 industrialized countries.

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Key word: 69049 Foreign policy and international cooperation National economy and budget Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-09-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Harvard professorship in memory of Anna Lindh

The Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University today announced the appointment of Samantha Power to be the first holder of the chair named in memory of Sweden's late Minister for Foreign Affairs, the "Anna Lindh Professor of Practice of Global Leadership and Public Policy".

David T. Ellwood, Dean of the Kennedy School of Government, announced the appointment today at a ceremony at Harvard attended by Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson.

"With her commitment to human rights and her epoch-making work on genocide, Samantha Power will be a strong and worthy first holder of the Anna Lindh Professorship at Harvard University. By this appointment, Harvard is securing Anna Lindh's memory and position in international politics," says Mr Eliasson.

Samantha Power came to the Kennedy School in July 2000 after a number of years of work as a journalist. She has written several books on foreign policy and human rights and has received several awards for her writings. In 2003 she won the prestigious Pulitzer Prize for her book "A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide".

The establishment of the professorship has been actively supported by Prime Minister Göran Persson, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh's family, the Anna Lindh Memorial Fund and the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise. The professorship is largely financed by funds from the business sector and private foundations. Most of the funding comes from the telecommunications company Ericsson, which has contributed USD 1 million. Other contributors include the Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation, the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation, the Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education, Ambassador Lyndon Olson Jr. and Dr S. Alan Counter.

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Key word: 69000 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-09-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Stockholm

Five new ambassadors from Chile, Mexico, Slovenia, Namibia and Denmark presented their letters of credence to HM The King on Tuesday 5 September.

Chile's newly appointed ambassador, Ovid Harasich, was born in 1945. He was employed in his country's foreign ministry in 1967 but left Chile after the coup against Allende in 1973. He resumed his duties in 1992 and since then he has served as Consul-General in New York, Ambassador in Lebanon, Director of Special Policy for Science and Technology at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Santiago and most recently Ambassador in Jordan.

Mexico's newly appointed ambassador is Norma Bertha Pensado Moreno, born in 1958. She has served in her country's Ministry for Foreign Affairs since 1981 and in recent years served as Counsellor in Vienna, at the Mexican Delegation to the OECD in Paris and from 2001 to 2004 at the Embassy of Mexico in Stockholm. Most recently she has served as Director General for Europe at her country's Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Slovenia's newly appointed Ambassador, Vojislav Suc, was born in 1954. He entered his country's foreign service in 1991 and has served as Consul-General in New York as well as serving two separate spells as Head of Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ljubljana, first heading the Department for Multilateral Political Relations and most recently as Head of the Division for North and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Namibia's newly appointed Ambassador Theresia Samaria was born in 1947. She started as an accountant at the Municipality of Kuisebmond, Walvis Bay and subsequently became Chairperson of the Management Committee of the Walvis Bay Town Council before being elected Mayor. Ambassador Theresia Samaria served most recently in Botswana where she was High Commissioner.

Denmark's newly appointed ambassador, Tom Risdahl Jensen, was born in 1947 and has served in the Danish Foreign Service since 1977. His former posts include Counsellor in Bonn and Director, Ambassador, North Group, in Copenhagen. His most recent post was in London, where he was Ambassador since 2001.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-09-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan Eliasson welcomes Security Council Resolution on Darfur

On 31 August, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1706 on the Darfur region in Sudan. The Resolution announces that UMIS, the UN peace-keeping mission in Sudan, will be expanded to include some 20 000 people. The primary task of UNMIS is to support implementation of the peace agreement entered into on 5 May between the government of Sudan and parts of the rebel movement in Darfur.

"I welcome this Resolution. It will lay the basis for a vigorous international commitment to bring an end to the conflict in Darfur. The government in Khartoum has not been able to shoulder its responsibility to protect its people. I would therefore urge the government in Sudan to accept the UN initiative," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson.

"We cannot tacitly accept a situation in which Darfur collapses into an even deeper spiral of violence and suffering. It is important that the Resolution can be fully implemented," says Mr Eliasson.

Sweden is heavily committed to efforts to bring the conflict in Darfur to an end and has taken part in the peace negotiations in Abuja. Sweden is also contributing military experts, police officers, medical experts and financial support to AMIS, the African Union's peace mission in Darfur, and, in addition, is reviewing the possibilities of contributing to a future UN mission.

Sweden is also participating in UNMIS, the UN mission in the southern region of Sudan, whose task is to monitor the peace agreement between the Sudanese government and the rebel movement (SPLM/A). Swedish humanitarian support to Sudan amounts to some SEK 210 million per year.

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Key word: 68806 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Donor conference on the humanitarian situation in the Palestinian territories

"I am deeply concerned about the way in which the situation in Gaza has deteriorated during the summer. The aim of today's conference is to increase humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The situation in the Palestinian territories, particularly in Gaza, is worsening day by day. There are shortages of electricity, fuel, fresh water and other essential supplies. There is an urgent need to build up medical services, which have partly collapsed.

"Humanitarian aid must reach those who are suffering and the violence must come to an immediate end. The serious humanitarian situation has been caused by the current conflict and the occupation. In addition, the situation is being made worse by the fact that humanitarian actors are not being allowed adequate access to the affected areas in Gaza and on the West Bank," says the Minister for International Development Cooperation.

The Stockholm International Donor Conference on the Humanitarian Situation in the Palestinian Territories aims to increase humanitarian aid to the Palestinian territories. The conference, which is being organised together with Norway and Spain, will also deal with the issues of access for relief organisations and the need to quickly repair the damage in war-torn Gaza.

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin warmly welcomes accredited media representatives to a meeting in the Conference Media Centre, Grand Hôtel, at 13.00.

In May, the UN made a revised emergency appeal for the Palestinian territories in which it requested USD 384 million. To date, only USD 162 million has been paid out. Sweden has contributed SEK 80 million to the appeal. In addition, Sweden is providing humanitarian aid via other organisations and actors in the region. Humanitarian aid from Sweden during 2006 will amount to SEK 360 million, which makes Sweden the fourth largest humanitarian donor to the Palestinians.

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John Zanchi

Key word: 68672 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan Eliasson to meeting of EU foreign ministers in Finland

On Friday and Saturday, 1-2 September, Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson will take part in an informal meeting of EU foreign ministers in Lappeenranta.

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Key word: 68576 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ahmed Yussuf now finally deleted from all sanctions lists

The European Commission has now also decided to delete Ahmed Yussuf from the EU list of persons suspected of having dealings with Al Qaida, the Taliban or other groups. The decision enters into force today. Accordingly, the EU as well as the UN and the United States have deleted Ahmed Yussuf from their sanctions lists. He can now access his frozen financial assets, and the earlier travel restrictions have also been lifted.

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Key word: 68537 EU Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation: Presentation of Lebanon's early recovery needs

TIME AND PLACE

Tuesday 29 August at 16.00

Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre
Fredsgatan 6
Stockholm

The media are invited to a press meeting with Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin, Lebanese Ambassador Mounir Talhouk, and a UN representative. At the press meeting there will be a presentation of the analysis of early recovery needs that the Lebanese Government has drawn up together with the United Nations.

Sweden's contribution to the early recovery of Lebanon will be presented at the same time.

The press meeting will take place at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre, Fredsgatan 6, on Tuesday 29 August at 16.00.

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Key word: 68483 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

International Contact Group on Somalia to meet in Stockholm

TIME AND PLACE

Tuesday 29 August, 13.45

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Gustav Adolfs torg 1
Stockholm

Assembly in the entrance at 13.35

Please bring your press credentials

The International Contact Group on Somalia is to meet in Stockholm on Tuesday, 29 August. The aim of the meeting is to discuss recent developments in Somalia and ways in which participating countries and organisations could support the fragile reconciliation process. State Secretary Annika Söder is to host the meeting.

"I welcome the contact group members to Sweden at a time when the international community's support to the process is of central importance. It is positive that the USA, committed EU countries and the regional organisations are now cooperating closely. The support of the surrounding world for dialogue and reconciliation is crucial for progress to be made," says State Secretary Annika Söder.

Participating at the meeting are state secretaries from the USA and Norway, representatives of the

UK and Italy, and the UN, the EU, the Arab League as well as African countries and regional organisations.

The International Contact Group was established in June this year, on the initiative of the USA and Norway.

The media are invited to a doorstep with Annika Söder, Norway's State Secretary Raymond Johansen and USA's Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs at 13.45.

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Key word: 68427 Sustainable development Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ahmed Yussuf deleted from UN sanctions list

Yesterday, the UN Sanctions Committee - at the request of the Swedish Government - deleted Ahmed Yussuf from its list of individuals suspected of being associated with Al Qaida and other organisations. The US Treasury Department has also deleted Yussuf from its sanctions list.

Now, all that is left for Yussuf to be completely free from the sanctions that have been affecting him for five years is that the EU also removes him from its list. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is pressing the EU to take its decision as soon as possible.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Head of Protocol at Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government today appointed Deputy Director-General Lars-Hjalmar Wide as Head of Protocol at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Mr Wide's most recent post was Head of the Office of the President of the 60th session of the UN General Assembly. During the period 2001-2005 he was Director-General and Head of the Swedish Inspectorate of Strategic Products (ISP). Lars-Hjalmar Wide has also been Head of the Department for Global Security and Head of the Americas Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and has served at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York and at the embassies in Tel Aviv, Madrid and Havana.

Lars-Hjalmar Wide will take up his post as Head of Protocol, with the rank of Ambassador, in October.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Accreditation for the donor conferences on 31 August and 1 September

TIME AND PLACE

Application for accreditation, no later than Friday 25 August

Email: pressrummet@foreign.ministry.se

Fax: +46 8 405 59 88

On 31 August and 1 September Sweden will host two donor conferences on Lebanon and the Palestinian territories respectively. The conferences will be held at the Grand Hotel in Stockholm and will begin on Thursday 31 August at 11.00.

Journalists who wish to cover the conferences must apply for accreditation no later than Friday 25 August using the attached form.

The accreditation form should be sent by email to pressrummet@foreign.ministry.se or by fax to +46 8 405 59 88.

Accreditation will be issued in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre, Fredsgatan 6, Stockholm on Tuesday 29 August and Wednesday 30 August between 08.30 and 18.00 and, for media stationed abroad, on 31 August between 08.00 and 12.00.

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Key word: 67987 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ahmed Yusuf may be deleted from UN sanctions list

On Wednesday evening, the Government requested the United Nations to remove Ahmed Yusuf from the sanctions list of individuals who have had their assets frozen because of alleged association with Al-Qaida, the Taliban and Usama bin Laden.

The Government has learned that the United States, which originally requested that Ahmed Yusuf be put on the list, now supports delisting.

"It is extremely pleasing that this message has finally come. It is most important for Mr Yusuf himself, who will be removed from the UN sanctions list after nearly five years. But it is also important for all those who have persevered in their efforts to enable Mr Yusuf to be removed from the list," says State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren.

The UN Sanctions Committee will now make a decision on the Swedish Government's request for delisting, which may take several days. The Government has no reason to believe that the Committee will deny this request. After that, it will remain for the European Commission also to decide to delete Mr Yusuf from the EU list. This will cancel the freezing of Mr Yusuf's assets and the travel restrictions applying to him.

"What has happened illustrates that the UN sanctions need reform, that better legal security is needed in the system and that it must become easier to remove individuals from the sanctions list who obviously do not belong there," says Mr Dahlgren.

Background

In November 2001 Ahmed Yusuf and two other Swedes, along with the Swedish organisation Al Barakaat, were listed by the UN Sanctions Committee because they were alleged to have been associated with Al-Qaida, the Taliban and Usama bin Laden. The UN decision was then implemented by an EU decision and the Swedes' financial assets were frozen. Later, travel restrictions were also imposed.

On many occasions since the decision, the Government has requested that the Swedes be deleted from the list as no investigation proved any association with Al-Qaida and the others. Two of the Swedes were delisted in consultation with the United States in autumn 2002. Regarding Ahmed Yusuf, however, the US authorities considered there were still unresolved questions that made them unwilling to agree to his delisting. Since decisions by the Sanctions Committee, whose members are the same as the countries represented in the Security Council, require unanimity it was impossible to obtain approval for delisting against the will of the United States.

Since then the Government has worked intensively, in tandem with Ahmed Yusuf's lawyer, to convince the US authorities that there is no reason to keep Mr Yusuf on the list. The US authorities have now arrived at the same conclusion as the Swedish Government, namely, that Mr Yusuf should be taken off the sanctions list.

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Key word: 67972 Legislation and justice Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden issues invitation to an international conference on the humanitarian situation in the Palestinian territories

Sweden, Spain and Norway will jointly host a conference in Stockholm on 1 September 2006 on the humanitarian situation in the Palestinian territories, focusing especially on Gaza. The conference is being held in close consultation with the United Nations and the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin have invited a large number of countries and international organisations

to participate in the conference.

"At the same time as the eyes of the world are rightly directed towards the ongoing crisis in Lebanon, we must not forget the situation in the West Bank and Gaza. The humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestinian territories is deteriorating all the time. The human suffering in Gaza especially is getting worse by the day," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The conference will primarily focus on humanitarian relief, humanitarian access and early recovery. It is a follow-up to a meeting with the same focus held in Geneva on 14 July 2006.

The conference will be held in Stockholm on Friday 1 September, the day after the international conference on Lebanon. This is in order to facilitate the participation of countries and organisations proposing to attend both conferences.

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Key word: 67890 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

International donor conference for Lebanon, 31 August 2006

Today Sweden has issued invitations to an international donor conference for Lebanon, to be held in Stockholm on 31 August 2006.

The conference will focus on humanitarian needs and early reconstruction and is being arranged in close cooperation with the Government of Lebanon and the United Nations. Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin have invited close to 60 governments and organisations.

"We are assuming the ceasefire will be respected so that the conference can be held on 31 August as planned. The international community must now support Lebanon's recovery and help the afflicted people of Lebanon," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson.

"We show our solidarity with Lebanon and that we promptly respond to the message of the resolution adopted by the Security Council on 11 August. This resolution calls on the international community to take immediate steps to extend its financial and humanitarian assistance to the Lebanese people," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"We hope that the conference will contribute to speedy and coordinated international efforts to support the people of Lebanon. Lebanon needs all the help it can get in the difficult transition facing the country," says Ms Jämtin.

"Ultimately, this conference is about solidarity with the people of Lebanon and about asserting the

sovereignty of Lebanon," says Mr Eliasson.

To the editorial office:

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin and State Secretary Annika Söder will be available to answer questions during the afternoon.

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Key word: 67833 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Azerbaijan's foreign minister to visit Sweden

TIME AND PLACE

Tuesday 8 August at 14.00

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Gustaf Adolfs Torg 1
Stockholm

Assembly at the main entrance at 13.55

Please bring your press credentials.

Azerbaijan's foreign minister, Elmar Mammadyarov, will visit Stockholm on 7-9 August. Foreign Minister Mammadyarov will have a meeting with Jan Eliasson on Tuesday to discuss bilateral and foreign policy issues.

Mr Mammadyarov will also meet State Secretary Sven-Erik Söder and representatives of the Swedish Trade Council and Swedish enterprises. Points for discussion will include bilateral trade and the newly opened oil pipeline between Baku and the Turkish port of Ceyhan.

Media representatives are welcome to a press conference with Jan Eliasson and Elmar Mammadyarov at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on 8 August at 14.00.

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Key word: 67568 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Montenegro

The Government decided today to send seven election observers to Montenegro to monitor the parliamentary elections on 10 September.

"The elections in Montenegro are the first to be held since independence and are therefore of major political and symbolic significance for the democratic development of the country. The Swedish contribution is intended to demonstrate our support for a stable and independent Montenegro," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Sida is responsible for the recruitment and training of Swedish election observers. Questions may be addressed to Sida's election monitoring group.

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Key word: 67551 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Government decided today to send eight election observers to Bosnia and Herzegovina to monitor the parliamentary elections on 1 October.

"The elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina are important for continued stable democratic development in the country. The Swedish contribution is intended to demonstrate our support for the transition to democracy in the country," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Sida is responsible for the recruitment and training of Swedish election observers. Questions may be addressed to Sida's election monitoring group.

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Key word: 67549 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Continued Swedish participation in Hebron

The Government decided today to continue Swedish participation in the civilian observer mission Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH), which monitors the situation in the West Bank city of Hebron in occupied Palestinian territory.

The observer mission was set up at the request of the Israeli government and the PLO. The mandate has been extended for a period of three months and will then be automatically extended for a further three months provided none of the parties objects.

TIPH comprises 58 observers from Norway, Italy, Denmark, Turkey, Switzerland and Sweden. Sweden has participated in the observer mission since February 1997.

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Key word: 67547 Sustainable development Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden recalls observers from Sri Lanka

Sweden will be successively recalling the Swedish members of the Nordic observer mission SLMM (Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission) from Sri Lanka.

All the observers will have been recalled before 1 September, due to the fact that one of the parties involved in the conflict, the Tamil Tigers LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam), has declared that it no longer accept the inclusion of citizens of EU states in the Nordic observer mission in Sri Lanka. The presence of the observers is based on the agreement of the parties on SLMM's composition and their undertaking to guarantee its security.

"In the situation that has arisen we have no choice other than to recall the Swedish observers. I regret the attitude of the Tamil Tigers. This implies a reinterpretation of the ceasefire agreement and is in contravention of the international agreements stating that personnel in international monitoring missions do not represent their governments but only themselves and their missions", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson.

"The forced withdrawal of personnel from Denmark, Finland and Sweden - constituting more than half of the SLMM contingent - may weaken the ceasefire agreement. So I want to again urge the Tamil Tigers to reconsider their decision. Sweden is prepared to send back Swedish observers if it is possible to find a solution to the issue of SKMM's composition and the safety of its personnel. We are therefore awaiting Norway's continued contacts with the parties concerning the future of SLMM".

Since 1998 Norway has been acting as mediator in the peace process between LTTE and the government of Sri Lanka. Talks between the parties led to the signing of a ceasefire agreement in February 2002. As part of the agreement SLMM was established in March 2002 to monitor compliance with the ceasefire agreement.

The Mission consists of 60 unarmed Nordic observers - 16 Norwegian, 15 Swedish, 13 Danish, 12 Finnish and 4 Icelandic - and has been led since 1 April 2006 by the Swedish Brigadier General Ulf Henricsson.

A large part of SLMM's activities consist of investigating accusations of violations of the ceasefire agreement, marking international presence and facilitating mediation in conflicts at the local level.

After EU's listing of LTTE as a terrorist organisation on 29 May, LTTE declared that Denmark, Finland and Sweden were no longer regarded as being neutral in their work for SLMM and must therefore withdraw from the assignment by 1 September. In July Sweden sent an emissary, Ambassador Anders Oljelund, to discuss directly with the LTTE the issue of continued Swedish participation in SLMM with reference to the crucial role of SLMM in the monitoring of the ceasefire agreement.

The government of Sri Lanka has opposed LTTE's unilateral decision to exclude observers from EU member states from SLMM. Both Finland and Denmark have reported that they are planning to recall their observers before 1 September.

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Key word: 67514 Defence, emergency management and safety EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-08-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Largest evacuation ever

To date, 8 027 Swedish citizens and other people resident in our country have received help in evacuating from Lebanon to Sweden since the unrest in Lebanon began.

Of these, 7 573 have travelled on aircraft chartered by Sweden's Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Most recently, about a hundred arrived last night at Stockholm-Arlanda Airport on one of these aircraft.

"This means that Sweden has undertaken the largest evacuation of Swedes ever", says State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren.

By comparison, between 800 and 900 Swedes were evacuated in connection with the Cyprus crisis in 1974.

So far, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has chartered 51 aircraft, three ships for shuttle services between Beirut and Cyprus, as well as some 15 buses for transport to Syria.

The Swedes who were in southern Lebanon south of the Litani River, and with whom the Ministry

has had contact, have all now been able to leave the area.

"During this crisis, as long there are Swedes remaining in Lebanon who want to be evacuated, Swedish efforts to help them will continue," says the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

During the evacuation work, Sweden has cooperated closely with the other Nordic countries, EU countries and with the UN and other organisations.

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Key word: 67517 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2006-07-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New justice and human rights fund in the World Bank

Sweden and the other Nordic countries have set up a trust fund for justice and human rights in the World Bank.

The fund will support countries requesting assistance from the World Bank to strengthen their national efforts to respect human rights and enhance the justice system.

"The World Bank must pay more attention to matters concerning human rights in the countries in which it operates and be able to respond to countries' requests, this is why we are taking this initiative", says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"The World Bank and the UN system must work more closely together on human rights issues", continues Ms Jämtin.

"I hope that the World Bank will be better able to coordinate with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNDP, UNICEF and UNIFEM", concludes Ms Jämtin.

Since 2004 Sweden, together with the Nordic and Baltic countries, has been urging the World Bank to take more account of issues concerning human rights in its partner countries and to help the countries that wish to improve respect for and realisation of all human rights and legal security.

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Key word: 67489 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-07-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Revised guidelines for democracy support through organisations linked to political parties

On 27 July the Government adopted revised guidelines for democracy support to developing countries, Western Balkan countries and Eastern European countries provided through organisations linked to political parties.

Sida will continue to decide on applications from Swedish party-political organisations and the revised guidelines now allow two-year agreements with the organisations.

"Building democracy takes time and must be based on the will and active participation of the people. Sweden's democracy support aims to build well-functioning multiparty systems, increase political participation and contribute to the creation of democratic societies," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The Government has therefore decided to extend the period of support from one year to two. From now on, the party political organisations must be able to plan their international activities on the basis of the same mandate period as other political activities, i.e. in a four-year perspective.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-07-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Increased support for vaccination in poor countries

The Government has decided that Sweden will contribute more than SEK 270 million over a period of 15 years to the International Finance Facility for Immunisation (IFFIm). The intention is to help the international community to rapidly obtain more resources for increased vaccination in the poor countries of the world.

"This financing will enable us to help save millions of lives in poor countries in the years ahead," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"This supplements our continued strong support and direct payments to the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI) and other support for the fight against communicable diseases," says Ms Jämtin.

The fight against communicable diseases is one of four priority areas in Swedish development cooperation. The idea behind Sweden's long-term but financially limited support to IFFIm is to show donor countries that are not able at present to immediately allocate extra funds from national budgets that it is still possible to quickly increase aid in an area given priority.

The International Finance Facility for Immunisation (IFFIm)

borrow money in international capital markets by issuing bonds guaranteed by donor countries' legally binding future aid increases. The donor countries also undertake to pay a certain amount of interest to bondholders.

These bonds are an attractive investment for institutional investors and others seeking secure future returns. The money that IFFIm borrows is then transferred to the GAVI Alliance (Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation), which provides financial support to vaccination programmes in poor countries. IFFIm's target is to collect USD 4 billion, which, if achieved, will make it possible to save an estimated 10 million lives, according to GAVI's calculations.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-07-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador for international cooperation against trafficking in human beings

The Government has appointed Anders Oljelund as Ambassador for international cooperation in the fight against human trafficking.

"Our intention is to put increasing pressure on the people organising this shameful trade. The goal is to stop it completely. More intensive cooperation at international and regional levels is needed to deal with this type of crime. Anders Oljelund's task will be to strengthen and coordinate these efforts", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson, commenting on the decision.

Human trafficking is a complex problem rooted in poverty, marginalisation and ideas about the subordination of women and children as well as in inadequate protection of human rights. Trafficking in human beings is closely linked to international organised crime and to inadequate protection of human rights. It is therefore one of the greatest security threats today.

Anders Oljelund will coordinate the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' work on fighting human trafficking and will promote Sweden's international cooperation in fighting all forms of trade in human beings, including trafficking for sexual purposes, forced labour, the trade in organs and in mercenaries. These efforts also involve fighting the causes of human trafficking, promoting preventive measures and strengthening the protection of victims.

Anders Oljelund, who takes up his new post in August 2006, is currently Director at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He was appointed in January 2006 as a mediator in the Darfur conflict in Sudan, as a member of the EU Special Representative's staff in Sudan. His previous appointments have included posts as Ambassador and Head of the Swedish NATO delegation in Brussels, followed by Head of the Department for Global Development at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Anders Oljelund has also served in Kinshasa and Rome.

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Key word: 67395 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-07-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Björn Carlsson to receive the 2006 Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award

The Swedish financier Björn Carlsson has been named as the winner of the 2006 Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award.

The Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award is a regional award established by the Swedish Government to draw attention to direct, practical initiatives that help improve the quality of water in the Baltic Sea. Mr Carlsson is the first Swede to receive this mark of distinction in the eight years that the prize has been awarded.

In 2005, Björn Carlsson personally donated SEK 500 million (USD 62.6 million) to the recently established Baltic Sea Foundation. The donation will be used for interdisciplinary projects and creative initiatives that support and help improve the quality of water in the Baltic Sea. The Foundation, which began its work on 1 January 2006, is administered jointly by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences and Åbo Akademi University.

According to the award committee chair, Ulla-Britt Fallenius of the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, Mr Carlsson's individual initiative for improving the marine environment of the Baltic Sea is unique. It is the largest donation ever in the forty years that various institutions and organisations have been working on the Baltic Sea.

The prize money of SEK 100 000 will be presented on 25 August 2006 during World Water Week in Stockholm.

The prize, which has been awarded annually since 1999, is administered by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI). Previous award winners include Vodokanal, St Petersburg's municipal water utility and its General Director Felix Karmazinov, the Nature Management and Water Environment Division of Fyn County, Denmark and Frantschach Swiecie SA, Poland.

More information is available on the SIWI website.

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Key word: 67388 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-07-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden prepared to contribute disaster relief to Lebanon

The humanitarian situation in Lebanon is very serious. The population in the southern sections of the country is especially hard hit. According to UN sources there may be as many as 400 000 refugees. That figure is expected to grow. Furthermore, the limited access of relief organisations to the region is a major problem.

The UN has sent experts to the country to identify what the aid requirements are and to examine what measures the international community can contribute under UN leadership. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is following developments and is in regular contact with UN aid agencies. An overall picture with a request for help from the UN is expected to be compiled by the end of the week.

- It is important that the UN take the lead in coordinating the relief operations that will be needed in the serious humanitarian crisis that is developing in Lebanon, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

- Sweden is prepared to immediately provide help in alleviating the humanitarian needs that have arisen and to support the appeals for economic support that are expected to come later in the week, says Ms Jämtin.

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Key word: 67269 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-07-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Increased Swedish support to peace mission in Darfur

On 18 July 2006 Sweden is participating in a donor conference for AMIS, the African Union (AU) peace-keeping mission in Darfur in Sudan. The conference is being held in Brussels. Leading the Swedish delegation is Ambassador Marika Fahlén. At the conference, Sweden will announce a further contribution of SEK 10 million in support of the AU and AMIS. The money will make possible the continued and strengthened participation of Swedish civilian personnel and help in the form of expertise and experience through such means as training programmes.

"The situation in Darfur remains serious. By strengthening the African Union's capacity, Sweden will provide additional support to efforts to create peace in the region," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"We already contribute to the AU in the form of both civilian and military personnel. Our increased support should be seen as a contribution to strengthen the AU mission in Darfur pending a UN takeover."

A peace agreement between the Sudanese government and some of the rebel groups has been in

effect since May 2006, but despite this the disturbances continue. Since summer 2004 AMIS has been in place as a peace-keeping force under a UN mandate and now monitors the peace agreement. Sweden currently provides 3 military experts and 6 civil police officers to AMIS. The Swedish Rescue Services Agency, within the framework of the EU support mission, runs a medical services operation with the aim of strengthening AMIS's capacity in the medical field.

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Key word: 67265 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-07-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Inga Eriksson Fogh new Director-General for Administrative Affairs at Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government has today appointed Sweden's Ambassador in New Delhi, Inga Eriksson Fogh, as Director-General for Administrative Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Ms Eriksson Fogh has previously served as Deputy Permanent Representative at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York, Head of the Secretariat for Sweden's EU Presidency in 2001 and Ambassador in Bangkok. She has also been stationed at Sweden's embassies in Buenos Aires and Warsaw.

Ms Eriksson Fogh will take up her position as Director-General for Administrative Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in September 2006.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-07-03

Prime Minister's Office
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
Ministry of Health and Social Affairs
Permanent Representation of Sweden to the EU
Ministry of Defence
Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Finance
Ministry of Sustainable Development
Office for Administrative Affairs
Ministry of Education, Research and Culture
Ministry of Justice

Improved usability and accessibility on www.sweden.gov.se

In July 2006, some changes will be made to the design of the www.regeringen.se and www.sweden.gov.se websites. The new design is the result of a systematic effort to improve usability and accessibility. The changes are based on such things as user tests and validation of HTML and style sheets.

In connection with the launch in July, the text version of the website will be discontinued. Instead, the level of customisation on the entire website will be increased in accordance with WAI guidelines. Visitors to the website will be able to select their own preferences, such as choice of font or background colour.

Content on the websites is validated XHTML 1.0 Strict, and Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) 2.0. The website has a fluid design, which means that all proportions are relative to the text size used.

The changes being made will not affect the URL addresses; links to material on the websites will still work after the launch.

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Key word: 66638 Communications, IT

PRESS RELEASE

2006-07-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin: Sweden calls for humanitarian access to Gaza

"The living conditions of the civilian population in the Gaza Strip are close to untenable. A

humanitarian disaster is near at hand. The effect on the civilian population is very severe.

"Violence and destruction must cease and international humanitarian law must be respected. Humanitarian access must be guaranteed so that measures to protect the civilian population can be initiated.

"Eliminating electric power in Gaza is having devastating consequences. Large sections of the civilian population - women, children, old people and the ill do not have electricity. The supply of fresh water has been cut off. Waste management plants and sewage pumps are immobilised, with grave consequences for the health of the civilian population. There is no electric power for technical equipment essential to hospitals. The fuel tanks of back-up generators will soon be empty.

"The deliberate bombing of civilian targets - of central importance to the survival of the civilian population - such as electric power, the supply of fresh water and sewage management violates international humanitarian law and can be considered a form of collective punishment of the civilian population.

"We are very concerned about the intensification of violence in Gaza. The disproportionate use of violence must cease. Innocent civilians find themselves in a hostage-like situation in a very complicated drama.

"We urge the Palestinian side to immediately release captured Israelis and to immediately cease firing rockets into Israeli territory.

"We urge Israel to immediately cease firing on and bombing civilian targets in Gaza and to immediately undertake measures to help and facilitate the re-establishment of vital functions in the Gaza Strip such as electric power, the supply of fresh water and sewage management.

"We further urge Israel to immediately provide humanitarian access and to facilitate the import of foods, fuel, medicine and spare parts to Gaza to stop an impending humanitarian disaster.

"Israel must immediately release the detained Palestinian politicians or bring charges against them in a court of law."

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Dan Svanell

Key word: 66740 Sustainable development Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden new President of the Council of the Baltic Sea States

On 1 July Sweden will assume the Presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS). Sweden takes over after Iceland and will lead cooperation in the Baltic Sea region for one year.

At a Summit in Reykjavik on 7-8 June 2006, Prime Minister Göran Persson presented the Swedish

priorities ahead of assuming the Presidency. The Swedish Presidency will mainly prioritise concrete measures to:

- Improve the protection and preservation of the environment in the Baltic Sea region
- Promote democracy, human rights, security as well as social security and prosperity in the Baltic Sea region
- Reduce barriers to trade and investment, and promote the opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises to build networks and expand in the Baltic Sea region

Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson sees great potential in Baltic Sea cooperation.

"We need strong regional cooperation in order to work with issues that concern all those living around the Baltic Sea. Cooperation in the Council of the Baltic Sea States can lead to concrete results in many areas, such as improving the Baltic Sea environment and fighting organised crime, not least when it comes to the disgraceful trafficking in human beings," says Mr Eliasson.

The Council of the Baltic Sea States was established in 1992 by the Baltic Sea region foreign ministers. In addition to the countries around the Baltic Sea, Iceland, Norway and the European Commission are also members of the Council.

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Key word: 66700 Industry, trade, regional development Environment, energy and housing Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to improve international humanitarian operations

The Government Offices have decided to contribute SEK 30 million to a new system for improving the international community's operations in humanitarian crises.

The system will also make it easier to initiate reconstruction efforts at an earlier stage. The leading humanitarian organisations have agreed to divide the responsibility for different types of operations among themselves. The money will primarily go to the UN bodies UNICEF, UNHCR, UNDP,

WFP and WHO so that they can build up capacity in the form of personnel, equipment and material so as to be able to take immediate responsibility for relief requirements within the framework of their new areas of responsibility.

"The new system will contribute to faster and more effective humanitarian operations. Examples of such operations could be the efforts immediately following the earthquake in Pakistan or in the ongoing humanitarian crisis in northern Uganda, where some two million people are living as refugees," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

According to an independent evaluation of the international community's operational capacity in humanitarian crises, relief organisations have become increasingly more effective at saving lives and alleviating the suffering of people in situations of conflict and disaster, but there are still substantial gaps and delays in the relief efforts. As a result of the evaluation commissioned by the UN, a number of reforms of the humanitarian system have been initiated with the aim of improving financing for humanitarian assistance and strengthening the capacity, efficiency and coordination of operations in the field. Sweden has supported these reforms and was proactive in the work with establishing the UN's new Central Emergency Response Fund for humanitarian crises.

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Key word: 66654 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Nairobi

The Government today appointed Anna Brandt as Ambassador in Nairobi, Kenya.

Ms Brandt is currently Head of the Africa Department. Her previous postings include Lusaka and she has worked at the World Bank's office in Washington.

She will take up her new post in October 2006.

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Key word: 66617 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Bucharest

The Government today appointed Mats O. Åberg as Ambassador in Bucharest, Romania.

Mr Åberg is currently Secretary-General of the Visby Conference 2006 at the Prime Minister's Office. He has been Head of the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg and his previous postings include Cairo, Berlin, Vientiane, Moscow, Oslo and Hanoi.

He will take up his new post in September 2006.

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Key word: 66616 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Guatemala

The Government today appointed Ewa Werner Dahlin as Ambassador in Guatemala, Guatemala.

Ms Dahlin is currently Head of Department at Sida. Her previous postings include Guatemala, Lima and Maputo.

She will take up her new post in September 2006.

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Key word: 66615 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-29
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Prague

The Government today appointed Catherine von Heidenstam as Ambassador in Prague, Czech Republic.

Ms von Heidenstam is currently Head of the Protocol Department. She has previously served as Ambassador in Tunis and her postings have included Hanoi, Vienna, New York and Helsinki.

She will take up her new post in September 2006.

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Key word: 66614 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-29
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Consul-General in Kaliningrad

The Government today appointed Manne Wängborg as Consul-General in Kaliningrad, Russia.

Mr Wängborg is currently Senior Adviser at the Department for Global Security. His previous postings include Vienna and Moscow.

He will take up his new post in September 2006.

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Key word: 66612 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Consul-General in Hamburg

The Government today appointed Bengt Lundborg as Consul-General in Hamburg, Germany.

Mr Lundborg is currently Sweden's Ambassador in Budapest. His previous postings include Islamabad, The Hague, Abu Dhabi and Bonn.

He will take up his new post in January 2007.

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Key word: 66611 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New cooperation strategy with Tanzania

The Government today adopted a new strategy for development cooperation with Tanzania for the period 2006-2010.

The overall aim of the strategy is to support Tanzania's own efforts to reduce poverty. The cooperation will be in the form of general budget support and focus on fewer sectors than before. The areas that Sweden will work in are energy, promotion of trade and the private sector, education and research, reform programmes for local and public financial management, and also human rights and democracy.

"Tanzania sets a good example when it comes to coordinating the activities of various donors and adapting them to the country's own development policy. Our support is intended to strengthen Tanzania's efforts to take responsibility for its own development," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Tanzania is one of Sweden's largest and oldest partner countries. This year, development cooperation amounts to some SEK 700 million. The cooperation agreement with Tanzania for the period 2006-2010 comprises some SEK 3.8 billion.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin meets Belarus opposition leader Milinkevich

Carin Jämtin meets Belarus opposition leader Milinkevich

TIME AND PLACE

Thursday 29 June at 14.45

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Gustaf Adolfs Torg 1
Stockholm

Assembly at the main entrance at 14.40

Please bring your press credentials

Belarus opposition leader Alexander Milinkevich is today visiting Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin. Mr Milinkevich, who is the joint Belarusian opposition's presidential candidate, is visiting Ms Jämtin in the company of two other Belarusian opposition leaders, Vintsuk Viachorka and Anatoly Lebedko.

Ms Jämtin will have discussions with Mr Milinkevich and his colleagues on the situation of the opposition and civil society after the election, and on possible democratic development in Belarus.

The media are invited to attend a press briefing with Ms Jämtin and her Belarusian guests at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on Thursday 29 June at 14.45.

Swedish development cooperation focuses mainly on support for the democratisation process, civil society, as well as humanitarian and regional projects. Support to Belarus currently amounts to just over SEK 40 million per year.

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Key word: 66499 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-29

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Montenegro's health minister visits Sweden

Montenegro's Minister of Health Miodrag Pavlicic is visiting Sweden and will meet Minister for Public Health and Social Services Morgan Johansson on Thursday 29 June. This is the first ministerial visit since Montenegro became independent after a referendum at the end of May. Minister Pavlicic's agenda includes meetings at Karolinska Institutet and the University Hospital to discuss possible future exchanges and cooperation.

Sweden recognised Montenegro as a sovereign state following a Government decision on 14 June. Formal diplomatic relations were established with the country on 26 June.

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Key word: 66495 Health care, health, social issues/insurance Foreign policy and international cooperation Morgan Johansson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to chair UNAIDS board

Sweden, through Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin, will take over as chair of the Programme Coordinating Board for the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) on 27 June for a one-year period. This is the first time that Sweden, one of the driving forces behind the establishment of UNAIDS ten years ago, will hold the chair.

Sweden will act to ensure that UNAIDS gives priority to follow-up of the General Assembly's meeting on HIV/AIDS held in late May/early June of this year. In addition, Sweden intends to continue work to ensure that prevention issues retain a prominent position. The central task in the fight against HIV and AIDS is to prevent more people from contracting the disease.

Sweden gives extensive economic support to UNAIDS. In 2006 support amounts to SEK 200 million, which makes Sweden one of the organisation's largest donors.

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Key word: 66123 Sustainable development Health care, health, social issues/insurance Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Special Advisor on the Great Lakes Region

The Government has appointed Ambassador Jan Cedergren as Special Advisor on the Great Lakes Region.

Mr Cedergren will advance Swedish initiatives in support of peaceful development and improved regional cooperation. An important part of the assignment will focus on the eastern areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the bordering countries of Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. The assignment confirms the Government's commitment to positive development in the Great Lakes Region, which is important to all of Africa.

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Key word: 66101 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Proposal for support to earthquake-stricken Pakistan

The Government has instructed Sida to submit proposals as to how Sweden can contribute to the reconstruction of earthquake-stricken areas in Pakistan.

"It is important that the long-term needs of people affected by the earthquake are not forgotten. We hope to help rebuild areas destroyed by the earthquake so that people will be able to resume their everyday lives," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Sweden has pledged support to Pakistan amounting to SEK 150 million for reconstruction of the worst affected areas. In connection with the earthquake, Sweden contributed humanitarian support of just over SEK 214 million. Sweden does not have bilateral development cooperation with Pakistan but does support multilateral bodies and NGOs active in the country.

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Key word: 66097 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports debt relief

The Government has decided to support the African Development Bank's participation in the multilateral debt relief initiative for the poorest and most heavily indebted countries that was launched by the G8 countries last summer.

"By taking this decision, Sweden shows that debt relief is an important tool in the efforts to fight poverty. It is now important that other donors remain committed to their promises of compensating the African Development Bank for costs that arise through participation in the debt relief initiative. These additional resources are necessary to enable poor countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The costs to the African Development Bank are estimated at USD 8.5 billion over a 50-year period and in the long term will benefit over 30 African countries. Sweden's share of the costs amounts to 5.5 per cent.

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Key word: 66092 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Proposal for new development strategy for Belarus

The Government has instructed Sida to prepare a proposal for a new strategy for development cooperation in Belarus for the period 2007-2010.

Development cooperation in Belarus will continue to promote democratic development and respect for human rights. Measures will also support a transition to market economy and closer ties to European cooperation structures.

"Of greatest importance is support to civil society and to the democratisation necessary to enable the people of Belarus to improve their living conditions," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Support to Belarus currently amounts to just over SEK 40 million per year. Most of this is made up of support to civil society.

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Key word: 66088 Sustainable development Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Royal couple to visit China - arrive on board Swedish Ship Götheborg

King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will visit China on 17-22 July. They will be on board the Swedish Ship Götheborg when it arrives at the outer harbour in Canton (Guangzhou) on 18 July.

The King and Queen will also visit Beijing on 19-20 July and will be received by China's President Hu Jintao. The Royal couple will be accompanied by Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson and State Secretary Lars-Olof Lindgren. Mr Eliasson will have discussions with his Chinese counterpart, Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, during the visit to Beijing.

A business delegation comprising more than 20 companies will participate, led by Michael Treschow, Chairman of the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise. The Royal couple's programme will include a meeting with the Mayor of Beijing, a tour of the Olympic Village and the inauguration of Ericsson's new head office in Beijing.

The Royal couple will return to Canton on 21 July to take part in the major welcome activities that are planned for the arrival of the Götheborg at the quay in central Canton, close to the historic berthing place for 18th century Swedish-Chinese trading ships in a part of the harbour that has now been rebuilt. They will also sail aboard a Chinese junk that has been specially built to receive the Götheborg.

Arrangements while the Götheborg is visiting Canton include a number of seminars, exhibitions and other activities in which a large number of representatives of the Swedish public sector and the Swedish business community will participate.

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Key word: 66741 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish contribution to reconstruction in Georgia

Sweden plans to contribute SEK 10 million for projects in the agricultural sector in South Ossetia. This promise of a contribution was given in connection with a donor conference on South Ossetia in Brussels on 14 June, convened by Chairman-in-Office of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Belgian foreign minister Karel de Gucht.

The aim of the conference was to obtain financing for projects in agriculture, energy and

infrastructure and for the development of small enterprises in South Ossetia. It is hoped that support to economic reconstruction in the conflict zone and its surrounding areas will result in confidence-building measures and inject new energy into the peace process in South Ossetia.

"I welcome this initiative by the OSCE and am particularly pleased that the parties to the conflict were able to agree on the confidence-building measures that were proposed. I hope that the Swedish contribution will help these development initiatives in South Ossetia to contribute to greater security for the population in the region and to reduce the tensions," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

A factor of particular importance is that through this conference, the OSCE is drawing a link between the mutual relationship between security and development.

A conflict broke out when the Georgian province of South Ossetia declared its independence in connection with the collapse of the Soviet Union. An agreement on a ceasefire was negotiated in 1992, but it has not yet been possible to conclude a peace agreement.

Swedish development assistance to Georgia has doubled in recent years and for the period 2006-2009 is expected to amount to SEK 100 million per year.

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Key word: 65792 Sustainable development Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan Eliasson to open the first session of the new UN Human Rights Council

The new UN Human Rights Council will start its first session on 19 June. Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson is to open the session in his capacity as President of the UN General Assembly.

"I hope that the Council will mean a fresh start for UN efforts to promote human rights. This ultimately depends on the political will of the members of the Council. It is important that everyone contributes to making the Human Rights Council an effective body in the work to promote human rights," says Mr Eliasson.

Mr Eliasson will hold a joint press briefing with High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Louise Arbour, on 19 June in Palais des Nations, Geneva.

The new Council replaces the former Commission on Human Rights. The Council will be convened three times a year. The first session will be held on 19-30 June. The next session will take place in September.

Sweden wants the new Council to be more targeted at the implementation and follow-up of States' commitments with regard to human rights. The Council will meet more often than the former Commission and will be able to deal on a regular basis with urgent situations where human rights are violated.

Sweden is not a member of the Council during the current period. Under an agreement on Nordic rotation, Finland has sought and won election to the Council.

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Key word: 65644 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Lusaka

On 14 June the Government appointed Lars Ronnås as Ambassador in Lusaka, Zambia.

Lars Ronnås is currently Deputy Head at the Africa Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has previously served at the Department for International Law, Human Rights and Treaty Law at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and at the embassy in Harare.

Mr Ronnås will take up his post in Lusaka in August 2006.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Bratislava

On 14 June the Government appointed Mikael Westerlind as Ambassador in Bratislava, Slovakia.

Mikael Westerlind is currently head of the Security Secretariat at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He was previously Consul-General in Hong Kong and has served at the embassies in Berlin, Prague and Buenos Aires.

Mr Westerlind will take up his post in Bratislava in September 2006.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Rome

On 14 June the Government appointed Anders Bjurner as Ambassador in Rome.

Anders Bjurner is currently Head of the European Security Policy Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He was previously Sweden's representative at the EU Political and Security Committee (PSC), Deputy State Secretary and Head of Sweden's Chairmanship group at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Mr Bjurner has also served at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York and at the embassies in Luanda and Lusaka.

Mr Bjurner will take up his post in Rome in November 2006.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Beijing

On 14 June the Government appointed Mikael Lindström, Ambassador in Tokyo, as Ambassador in Beijing.

Mikael Lindström's previous appointments have included Head of the Office of the Minister for Trade and Ambassador in Jakarta. He has also served at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the international organisations in Geneva and at the embassies in Washington, Paris and Rabat.

Mr Lindström will take up his post in Beijing in September 2006.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

National action plan on women, peace and security - UN Security Council Resolution 1325

The Government today adopted a national action plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

"Women are often particularly vulnerable during conflicts. At the same time, women in conflict areas are often excluded from measures aimed at preventing armed conflicts, managing crises and building peace. The national action plan is both a map and a compass for the Government's intensified efforts to strengthen protection for women in conflicts," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson.

The Swedish action plan contains measures at national, regional and global levels. These include enhancing the training of personnel in international operations to increase security for women and

girls. In addition, more women will be included in Sweden's contributions to peace-support operations. A special "1325 delegation" will also be set up for consultation with researchers, civil society and others. Moreover, Sweden will work to ensure that a gender perspective is included in peace and security-building operations within the framework of the UN, the EU and the OSCE.

UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security was adopted unanimously by the Security Council in October 2000. It is intended to increase women's equal participation in conflict prevention, peace support and peace-building, and to strengthen the protection of women and girls in conflicts.

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Key word: 65671 Sustainable development Defence, emergency management and safety Democracy and human rights Employment and gender equality Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Indonesian minister visiting Sweden

TIME AND PLACE

Thursday 15 June at 13.15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Gustaf Adolfs Torg 1
Stockholm

Assembly at the main entrance, at 13.10

Please bring your press credentials

The Indonesian Minister for Communication and Information Technology and representative of the Indonesian Government in the peace process in Aceh, Dr Sofyan A. Djalil, is visiting Sweden on 13-15 June. This is the first visit by a minister from Indonesia since 2002.

Dr Djalil will meet Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin for talks on current issues concerning the peace process in Aceh. The agenda also includes meetings with Minister for Communications and Regional Policy Ulrica Messing and Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson. Dr Djalil will also visit the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences and the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences.

Media representatives are invited to a press conference with Ms Jämtin and Dr Djalil at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on Thursday 15 June at 13.15.

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Key word: 65608 Sustainable development Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin in talks on new United Nations Human Rights Council

On 12 June, Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin met Swedish non-governmental organisations for consultation prior to the first meeting of the new United Nations Human Rights Council. Some twenty representatives of organisations including Amnesty, Save the Children Sweden, the Church of Sweden, and the Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights, RFSL, took part.

The United Nations Human Rights Council will open its first session in Geneva on 19 June. Ms Jämtin stated that the Government hoped the new Council would mean greater effectiveness in the work to promote human rights.

Ms Jämtin's main point was that the Council should primarily aim to follow up the implementation of commitments that have already been made.

The new Council replaces the former Commission on Human Rights.

"I want the Council to be more operational and goal-oriented. Council discussions must produce concrete results on the ground," said Ms Jämtin.

She also said that Sweden is advocating that the same generous conditions should apply for non-governmental organisations to participate in the new Council as in the Commission. Another Swedish demand is that the status and mandate of the UN Special Rapporteurs should be retained.

The new United Nations Council for Human Rights will convene three times a year. It may also convene in emergencies. The first session will be held on 19-30 June. The following sessions will take place in September and December.

Sweden is not a member of the Council during the current period. Under an agreement on Nordic rotation, Finland has sought and won election to the Council. As an observer, however, Sweden will both take part in the meetings and express its opinions.

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Key word: 65589 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden recognises Montenegro

On Wednesday, 14 June the Swedish Government decided to recognise the Republic of Montenegro's independence. The process of establishing bilateral diplomatic relations can thus be initiated.

"I was very pleased today to inform my colleague in Podgorica, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro Miodrag Vlahovic, that Sweden now formally recognises Montenegro as an independent state," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson.

Montenegro held a referendum on independence on 21 May and declared its independence on 3 June.

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Key word: 65539 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Press Secretary to Barbro Holmberg

As of 12 June, Martin Sandgren is the new Press Secretary to Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg.

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Key word: 65431 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Sweden will be sending election observers to the parliamentary elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 30 July. The formal decision will be taken by the Government next Thursday. The Swedish election observers will be part of the EU election observation mission.

"It is essential that the elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are conducted in a democratic manner, essential not only for the country but for the entire region and thus for Africa as a whole," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin, who visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo at the beginning of May.

The first round of elections will take place on 30 July and a second round will be held later in the autumn.

In 2005 Sweden provided substantial support to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the form of aid projects worth a total of approximately SEK 120 million in humanitarian aid and SEK 80 million in other forms of aid. Sweden is also contributing some 70 people to the EU military force that will be in place in the region prior to the elections.

Sida is responsible for the recruitment and training of Swedish election observers. Questions about recruitment may be addressed to Sida's election monitoring group.

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Key word: 65419 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Special ambassador to combat trafficking in human beings

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is to appoint a special ambassador to strengthen its international cooperation in the fight against trafficking in human beings.

"Our intention is to put increasing pressure on the people organising this trafficking. The goal is to stop it altogether," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson. "The fact that trafficking in human beings is taking place in Sweden, in the Baltic Sea countries or in the world as a whole is an unacceptable phenomenon. Trafficking in human beings also has links with other serious international crime."

"More intensive cooperation is needed at the international and regional levels to deal with this type of crime. The task of the special ambassador will be to strengthen and coordinate these efforts."

"The issue of trafficking will be given high priority when Sweden takes over the Presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States in July this year. In addition to the well-functioning cooperation on these issues that already exists between the Nordic and Baltic countries, we intend to invite the other Baltic Sea States, Russia, Poland and Germany to join in the work of preventing trafficking in human beings.

"The fight against this type of crime is strengthened by a commitment from NGOs and individuals. It is vital that more and more people see the connection between people who purchase sex and serious international crime," says Jan Eliasson.

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Key word: 65418 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Moldova's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign and EU Integration Minister to visit Sweden

TIME AND PLACE

DOOR STEP FACILITY

Monday, 12 June 10.30

Media representatives meet at MFA main entrance, Gustav Adolfs torg 1, at 10.20.

Moldova's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign and EU Integration Minister Andrei Stratan is to visit Stockholm on 12 June. This is the first Swedish-Moldovan exchange at foreign minister level.

Mr Stratan will be holding talks with Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Carin Jämtin on current bilateral issues, Moldova's present and future relationship with the EU, and Moldova's security policy situation.

The programme includes meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications and Mr Stratan will also address the Swedish Institute of International Affairs.

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Key word: 65341 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Tokyo

The Government has appointed Stefan Noreén as Ambassador in Japan.

Mr Noreén is currently State Secretary to Minister for Nordic Cooperation Berit Andnor. He has served in Brussels, Geneva, Maputo, Moscow, New York and Warsaw.

He will take up his new post in September 2006.

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Key word: 65302 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Budapest

The Government has appointed Director Cecilia Björner as Ambassador in Hungary.

Ms Björner is currently standing in as Director-General at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. She has served at the Swedish Mission in Geneva and as Deputy Head of the Department for Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

She will take up her new post in December 2006.

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Key word: 65301 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Riyadh

The Government has appointed Counsellor Jan Thesleff as Ambassador in Saudia Arabia.

Mr Thesleff is currently serving on the staff of EU Special Representative for the Middle East peace process Marc Otte. Mr Thesleff has served at Sweden's embassies in Brussels, Damascus, Cairo and Tokyo.

He will take up his new post in September 2006.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Hanoi

The Government has appointed Deputy Director-General Rolf Bergman as Ambassador in Viet Nam.

Mr Bergman is currently Head of the Administrative Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has previously served at Sweden's embassy in Harare.

He will take up his new post in September 2006.

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Key word: 65297 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Berne

The Government has appointed Per Thöresson as Ambassador in Switzerland.

Mr Thöresson is currently Director-General for Administrative Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He was Administrative Director to Foreign Minister Anna Lindh and has also served in New York and Vienna.

He will take up his new post in September 2006.

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Key word: 65296 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Berlin

The Government has appointed Ruth Jacoby as Ambassador in Germany.

Ms Jacoby is currently Director-General for International Development Cooperation at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. She has served at the OECD delegation in Paris and at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York.

She will take up her new post in September 2006.

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Key word: 65295 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Macedonia

The Government has decided to send seven Swedish election observers to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in preparation for the parliamentary elections on 5 July.

"The elections in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are important to further strengthen democracy in the country. Well conducted elections will also influence the continued development of closer relations with the European Union," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Sida is responsible for the recruitment and training of Swedish election observers. Questions may be addressed to Sida's election monitoring group.

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Key word: 65264 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Five new ambassadors in Stockholm

Five newly appointed ambassadors, from Mozambique, Slovakia, Vietnam, Finland and the United States, will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 8 June.

Mozambique's new ambassador Pedro Comissário Afonso, was born in 1953 and is a lawyer by training, educated at the Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo and Columbia University in New York. A career diplomat, Mr Afonso has been Mozambique's ambassador to the United Nations and to Portugal. His most recent post was as Director of the Legal and Consular Affairs Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. Ambassador Afonso is also an elected member of the UN International Law Commission.

Slovakia's new ambassador Alojz Mészáros was born in 1952 and has pursued an academic career in the natural sciences. Among other positions, Mr Mészáros has been Senior Research Fellow at Budapest University of Technology and Economics in Hungary and Head of the Department of International Projects of the Faculty of Chemical and Food Technology at the Slovak Technical University. Ambassador Mészáros has also been politically active in the local district of Podunajske Biskupice.

Vietnam's new ambassador Trinh Quang Thanh was born in 1949. He has served in his country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1972, holding numerous positions including Deputy Director-General of the Policy Planning Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Hanoi and Ambassador in Ottawa. His most recent post has been that of Director-General at the Institute for International Relations in Hanoi.

Finland's new ambassador Alec Aalto was born in 1942 and has a degree in law. He entered Finnish government service in 1973. Ambassador Aalto has held numerous positions, including that of Ambassador to Austria with concurrent accreditation in Slovenia, foreign policy adviser to the Prime Minister and State Secretary for EU Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Most recently, Mr Aalto has been Ambassador to Italy and Malta.

The new US Ambassador, Michael M. Wood, was born in 1947 and is a graduate of Yale University. He is a businessman specialising in media and real estate and is Chairman of Redwood Investments. Ambassador Woods has been a member of the Republican National Committee's Team 100 since 2004.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

International conference on trafficking in human beings on 9 June

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is arranging an international conference on regional cooperation against trafficking in human beings. Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson will host the conference in his capacity as chair of the Nordic Baltic Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings. Regional and international organisations are invited.

The conference will be held at Rosenbad Conference Centre in Stockholm, on Friday 9 June, 10.00-18.00. Members of the media are welcome. Please notify Petra Hansson at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press and Information Department if you wish to attend.

The Nordic Baltic Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings was established at the initiative of Sweden at the Nordic-Baltic foreign ministers meeting in Tallinn in August 2002. The main role of the Task Force is to improve support for these issues at the political level in all participating countries. Among its activities, the Task Force has initiated a pilot project for the safe return and support to victims of trafficking in human beings.

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Key word: 64985 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation: Annika Söder to meet Somalia's Minister of Planning and International Cooperation

State Secretary Annika Söder and Abdirizak Osman Hassan, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation in Somalia's transitional government, will hold a press conference at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on Friday 2 June at 12.30.

TIME AND PLACE

Friday 2 June at 12.30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Gustaf Adolfs Torg 1
Stockholm

Assembly at the main entrance at 12.20

Please bring your press credentials

The press conference is being arranged in conjunction with a visit to Stockholm by members of the parliament and government of Somalia. The purpose of the visit is to discuss the arrangements for development assistance coordination and to plan a donor conference for Somalia.

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Key word: 64864 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden's initiatives for Java earthquake victims

The Swedish Government has to date allocated SEK 10,7 million for humanitarian aid to the victims of the earthquake in Java in Indonesia on 27 May.

Sida has granted SEK 5 million in aid through the Swedish Red Cross to the efforts of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which include the provision of food, water and emergency shelter.

The Swedish Rescue Services Agency has received SEK 1,7 million in funding from Sida for two

initiatives. The Agency has dispatched one member of staff to support the UN in setting up a telecommunications system together with Norway. In addition, the UN has asked the Agency to make preparations to establish a joint field coordination office for humanitarian aid organisations in the affected area.

Sida has granted SEK 3 million to the World Health Organisation (WHO) in support of initiatives and coordination in the health sector.

Sida has granted SEK 1 million to Save the Children Sweden for the provision of household goods, and educational and play materials for children, etc.

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Key word: 64827 Sustainable development Health care, health, social issues/insurance Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Somali delegation in Sweden on 1-2 June

A delegation made up of members of the parliament and government of Somalia is visiting Stockholm on 1-2 June. The purpose of the visit is to discuss the arrangements for development assistance coordination and to plan a donor conference for Somalia.

Italy, the European Commission, the United Nations and the World Bank will also be represented at the meeting. Sweden and Italy are responsible for the donor conference and have a leading role in the efforts of the international community to promote peace and development in Somalia.

"It is good that we now have an opportunity to discuss the great challenges facing Somalia and what the donor community can do to help. The support of the international community is crucial for lasting progress," says State Secretary Annika Söder, who is hosting the visit.

Sweden has provided active political and economic support to the peace process since 2003. Swedish support to humanitarian measures and peace and reconciliation is expected to total SEK 160 million in 2006. If the process moves forward Sweden is prepared to provide further support, in the context of the donor conference and in other ways.

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Key word: 64825 Foreign policy and international cooperation Democracy and human rights EU

PRESS RELEASE

2006-06-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

WMDC report: New proposals to reduce threats by weapons of mass destruction

After two years work, the independent international Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, WMDC, chaired by Hans Blix has put forward a number of concrete proposals on how the world could be freed of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

The report entitled "Weapons of Terror" analyses the threats under which the world is living today - above all, 27 000 nuclear weapons and efforts by individual states and perhaps terrorist groups to develop or obtain different kinds of weapons of terror. The report discusses how these threats and risks can be addressed, including current issues such as Iran and the Middle East, North Korea, India and Pakistan.

The Commission's 14 members from all continents state that common global efforts to achieve arms limitation and disarmament have stagnated. After 50 years of cold war, we even see the risk of arms races involving new types of nuclear weapons, space weapons and missiles.

It is high time to revitalise global cooperation on disarmament and the Commission presents a list of 60 recommendations. At the top are the recommendations that all governments must accept the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty that was agreed ten years ago, that states currently possessing nuclear weapons must reduce their arsenals and that they must stop producing plutonium and highly enriched uranium for more nuclear weapons.

The world must aim at achieving a ban on both possession and use of nuclear weapons, in the same way as bans that apply to biological and chemical weapons. All states - even the great powers - must prepare to live without nuclear weapons and other weapons of terror.

As part of a new, concerted effort, the Commission proposes that a world summit be called at the United Nations in New York on disarmament, non-proliferation and terrorist use of weapons of

mass destruction. The summit should also discuss and decide on reforms to make the UN disarmament apparatus more effective.

To break the deadlocks at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, the Commission proposes that unanimity should no longer be required for issues to be put on the agenda, but that a two-thirds majority should suffice.

"Existing international treaties have shown weaknesses. At the same time, a policy based on unilateralism and military actions has failed and has been costly in terms of lives and resources. Efforts to jointly create global security must now be intensified. All states - especially those with nuclear weapons - have a responsibility and must take part in the process," says Hans Blix.

The Commission's 14 members have unanimously endorsed the report which, after having been presented to the UN Secretary-General in New York on 1 June, will be presented to governments, non-governmental organisations and the general public around the world.

The report is available on the WMDC's website (link in the right column).

Members of the Commission, all of whom have participated in their personal capacity:

Hans Blix, Chair

Dewi Fortuna Anwar, Indonesia

Alexei G. Arbatov, Russia

Marcos de Azambuja, Brazil

Alyson J. K. Bailes, United Kingdom

Jayantha Dhanapala, Sri Lanka

Gareth Evans, Australia

Patricia Lewis, Ireland

Masashi Nishihara, Japan

William J. Perry, United States

Vasantha Raghavan, India

Cheikh Sylla, Senegal

Prince El Hassan bin Talal, Jordan

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to UN high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will lead the Swedish delegation taking part in the UN high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS in New York on 31 May-2 June.

During the course of the meeting, the General Assembly will follow up the implementation of the commitments made in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, agreed on by the world's countries at the special session of the Assembly in June 2001. The UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan will present a report to the Assembly on the progress made to date and the challenges that remain.

Ms Jämtin will participate in a panel discussion on the prevention of HIV and AIDS. This will give her an opportunity to take up the conclusions from the Stockholm meeting "Standing Up for Prevention: Building a Constituency", which Sweden and UNAIDS arranged jointly with RFSU on 8-9 May this year. Ms Jämtin will also take part in one of the five round-table meetings that will discuss how the commitments made by the world's countries in 2001 have been realised and the new measures and decisions that will be required. The Swedish address to the General Assembly on 2 June will be delivered by State Secretary Annika Nilsson from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.

The number of NGOs to take part in this UN meeting - almost 800 - is larger than ever. A special hearing with representatives of civil society will also take place.

The Swedish delegation will include Members of the Riksdag Ms Ewa Björling (Moderate Party) and Ms Marina Pettersson (Green Party), and six representatives of Swedish NGOs.

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Key word: 64831 Sustainable development Health care, health, social issues/insurance Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports debt cancellation

The Government has decided to support the World Bank's participation in the multilateral debt relief initiative for the poorest and most heavily indebted countries that was launched by the G8 countries last summer.

"Through this decision, Sweden shows its support for debt cancellation as an important step in the work of reducing poverty," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"It is now vitally important that other donors confirm their earlier promises of compensating the World Bank for costs that arise through participation in the debt relief initiative.

"The World Bank must be able to help by providing favourable loans to the developing countries' fight against poverty in the future as well."

Sweden's share of the costs for participation is expected to amount to about 2.6 per cent. The Riksdag is expected to take a decision in the near future on Sweden's contribution to debt cancellation for the initial ten years.

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Key word: 64599 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-26

Ministry of Defence
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden continues to support peace in Aceh

The Government has decided to extend the assignment for six Swedish Sida observers who are part of the civilian EU Aceh Monitoring Mission, which monitors the peace agreement in Aceh Province in Indonesia. The Government also decided to extend the assignment of ten or so logistics personnel from the Swedish Rescue Services Agency responsible for logistics and communications support for the mission.

On 15 August 2005, a peace agreement was signed between the government of Indonesia and leaders of the Movement for a Free Aceh (GAM). At the request of the Indonesian Government and GAM, the EU, together with five ASEAN countries, undertook to monitor the agreement. The original mandate for the mission has previously been extended to 15 June, but since it is not expected that local elections in Aceh can be held until August, the mission has been extended until 15 September.

Sweden's contribution to the mission, which is channelled via Sida and the Swedish Rescue

Services Agency, has a total value of SEK 57 million. Sweden has also recently provided a judge within the framework of the mission who is to determine whether a number of imprisoned GAM members are to be granted amnesty.

Contact with Swedish Rescue Services Agency personnel in Aceh is handled by the Agency's Head of Press Services, Mats Oscarsson, tel: +46 70 321 88 73 or +46 54 13 51 03.

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Key word: 64555 Defence, emergency management and safety Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Bolivia

The Government has decided to send one long-term and two short-term observers to Bolivia ahead of the elections for the Constituent Assembly scheduled for 2 July 2006. The election observers will be part of a joint EU team.

"By sending election observers, Sweden and the EU can help to ensure that democratic elections are held in the country. This is crucial to the important process that the Constituent Assembly represents," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The task of the Constituent Assembly is to review the constitution so as to enable changes that include giving marginalised indigenous people in the country greater influence. A referendum on increased regional autonomy will also be held in conjunction with the elections.

Sida is responsible for the recruitment and training of Swedish election observers. Questions may be addressed to Sida's election monitoring group.

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Key word: 64551 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Communication on Sweden's global development policy presented to the Riksdag

The Government has presented to the Riksdag its third communication on the results of Sweden's policy for global development.

In the communication, all the ministries have drawn a picture of how policies in their particular area affect global development.

"The communication describes the steps the Government has taken towards a coherent policy for fair and sustainable global development," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The third communication describes the situation in the areas of environmental policy, international trade policy, agricultural policy, migration policy and security policy.

Sweden is the first country in the world whose national parliament has decided on a coherent policy to promote global development.

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Key word: 64537 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Mexico

The Government today appointed Anna Lindstedt, Ambassador in Hanoi, as Ambassador in Mexico. She has also been stationed in Jakarta and Islamabad.

Ms Lindstedt will take up her new post in Mexico in the autumn of 2006.

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Key word: 64509 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Chile

The Government today appointed Maria Lundqvist, Minister at the Embassy of Sweden in Berlin, as Ambassador in Santiago de Chile.

Ms Lundqvist has served at Sweden's embassies in Lisbon and Paris and at the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the European Union in Brussels and has been Deputy Director-General for Political Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm.

She will take up her new post in the autumn of 2006.

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Key word: 64506 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Joint Polish-Swedish project for Belarusian students

Today Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson met his new Polish colleague, Minister of Foreign Affairs Anna Fotyga. At their talks, they discussed continued EU enlargement, the Constitutional Treaty, neighbourhood policy including Baltic Sea issues, and UN reform.

The two foreign ministers agreed on a joint press release on Belarus. The press release presents the Polish-Swedish undertaking to offer scholarships to students from Belarus.

Joint press release:

This week the Government of Sweden will give the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, instructions to work out the details of a scholarship programme for Belarusian students in the coming months, to be implemented together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland.

Poland and Sweden are both deeply concerned about the political situation in Belarus. The democratisation process and promotion of civil society in Belarus are important priorities for us.

The Swedish and Polish Prime Ministers discussed the situation in Belarus in March in Stockholm and the specific difficulties for young people and students, in particular those expelled from Belarusian universities and high schools. By providing Belarusian students with the possibility to study in Sweden and Poland, both governments wish to contribute to democratic development and a transition to a market economy in Belarus. The Swedish and Polish Foreign Ministers have therefore decided to cooperate within the framework of a programme providing scholarships for Belarusian students and to give them a possibility to study in Poland and/or Sweden.

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Key word: 64424 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish budget support to Mozambique

The Government has authorized Sida to prepare budget support to Mozambique for 2007. The Government considers that budget support is an effective way of supporting efforts by Mozambique to reduce poverty.

"Mozambique's poverty reduction plan has been successful. Swedish budget support will further contribute to this already positive development," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Sida plans to give SEK 300 million in budget support during 2007. This amounts to about 40 per cent of all development cooperation with Mozambique.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) recently conducted an evaluation of budget support assistance to Mozambique, which showed that this form of support produced good results in the country.

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Key word: 64412 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Polish Foreign Minister to visit Sweden

Poland's new Minister of Foreign Affairs Anna Fotyga will visit Stockholm for the first time on 23 May for discussions with Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson.

TIME AND PLACE

Tuesday 23 May, 13.30-13.45

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Gustav Adolfs Torg 1
Stockholm

Assembly at the entrance at 13.15

Please bring your press credentials.

Ms Fotyga and Mr Eliasson will also address the opening of the "EU enlargement - Experiences in Poland, Ireland and Sweden" seminar, whose arrangers include the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies (Sieps).

The media are invited to a press conference with Mr Eliasson and Ms Fotyga at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on Tuesday 23 May at 13.30.

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Key word: 64406 EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New cooperation strategy for the Middle East and North Africa

The Government has approved a new regional cooperation strategy for Swedish development cooperation with the Middle East and North Africa for the period 1 May 2006-31 December 2008.

The overall objective of the strategy is to create conditions that will enable poor people to improve their lives and to promote the development of democracy, good governance and respect for human rights.

"By adopting a regional strategy for the Middle East and North Africa, Sweden is demonstrating its will to further strengthen its contact with the people of this area and contribute to the development of regional cooperation," says Minister for International Development Cooperation, Carin Jämtin.

Development assistance will primarily involve regional initiatives, but where these could be strengthened by bilateral initiatives at country level, the latter will also be possible. The budget for cooperation for the period is SEK 400-500 million.

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Key word: 64237 Democracy and human rights Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-15

Ministry of Defence
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish peace force to Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Government has presented a Bill to the Riksdag requesting the Riksdag's consent to take part in an EU-led military force in support of UN peace-keeping operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The EU-led mission will take place within the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy.

"After many years of war, the Congolese people are finally getting the chance to vote in democratic elections. It is absolutely essential the elections are conducted in a proper manner. For this reason, the Government proposes that Sweden contribute to the EU force that will support UN peace-keeping operations in Congo during this important election period," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson.

"Our participation in the EU peace force is part of Sweden's increased ambitions for peace-support operations. The mission shows that the EU has the ability to function as a global actor for peace and security under a UN mandate. It is important that the EU is prepared to contribute when the UN asks for help," says Minister for Defence Leni Björklund.

Sweden's contribution is expected to amount to some 70 people and will comprise a special forces unit including staff officers and air transport resources.

The EU force will include soldiers from Germany, France, Belgium, Poland, Spain, Portugal, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and Greece. A total of 1 500 soldiers will take part. The mission will take place under a mandate from the UN Security Council and will be for a limited period of time in conjunction with the Congolese elections, which are scheduled to be held on 30 June 2006.

Under a UN mandate in the summer of 2003, a special forces unit from Sweden took part in the EU's Operation Artemis in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. During 2003 and 2004, an airfield unit from Sweden took part in the UN MONUC mission in the town of Kindu. Sweden is currently supporting the EU Police Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with a communications expert from the Swedish Rescue Services Agency.

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Key word: 63941 Defence, emergency management and safety Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Leni Björklund

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

UN Secretary-General to receive report from Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission

The report from the international Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, WMDC, will be made public in New York on 1 June. The report will be presented to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan by the Commission's Chairman Hans Blix. The report will also be presented to Jan Eliasson, who will receive it in his capacity as both Sweden's Minister for Foreign Affairs and President of the UN General Assembly.

A press conference is planned at UN Headquarters on 1 June at 12.30 local time.

In 2003, late foreign minister Anna Lindh asked Hans Blix to set up an independent international commission to present proposals and recommendations on disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, i.e. nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. The Commission began its work in Stockholm in January 2004 and held its last ordinary meeting in March this year.

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Key word: 63792 Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Head of UNRWA to visit Stockholm

Karen Koning AbuZayd, Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), will visit Sweden on 15-16 May on her tour of major UNRWA donors.

TIME AND PLACE

Monday 15 May, 15.00

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Gustaf Adolfs Torg 1
Stockholm

Assembly at the main entrance, 14.50

Please bring your press credentials

During her visit, Ms Koning AbuZayd will meet Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin for bilateral talks on issues including UNRWA activities and the challenges facing the organisation. Ms Koning AbuZayd and Ms Jämtin will also take part in a panel discussion at the ABF building on 15 May.

The media are invited to a press conference with Ms Jämtin and Ms Koning AbuZayd at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on Monday 15 May at 15.00.

Sweden is UNRWA's third largest donor, providing annual activity support of more than SEK 200 million. In addition to this support, Sida contributed SEK 92 million to UNRWA's emergency appeals in 2005.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation: International meeting on the fight against HIV and AIDS

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin together with Peter Piot, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), are hosting an international meeting on HIV and AIDS in Stockholm on 8-9 May.

TIME AND PLACE

PRESS CONFERENCE

Tuesday 9 May, at 10.30

Norra Latin Conference Centre
Stockholm

Please bring your press credentials.

The purpose of the meeting is to strengthen preventive measures and global cooperation in the fight against HIV and AIDS and to create greater awareness of the issue internationally. Over a hundred representatives of governments, NGOs and the private sectors of a large number of countries will take part in the meeting.

The media are invited to attend a press conference with Ms Jämtin and Mr Piot at the Norra Latin Conference Centre on Tuesday 9 May at 10.30.

Every day more than 12 000 people in the world are infected with HIV and 8 000 die of AIDS. Some 40 million people are at present living with HIV and AIDS. More than 6 million AIDS sufferers are currently in need of antiretroviral drugs. Fewer than 1.5 million have access to them.

Sweden has had HIV/AIDS at the top of the Swedish development cooperation agenda, along with issues concerning sexual and reproductive health and rights, since 2003. This year Sweden is increasing its support to UNAIDS by SEK 50 million, to a total of SEK 200 million. At the same time, support to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria will be increased. Sweden also provides the WHO with special support for the fight against AIDS.

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Key word: 63596 Sustainable development Health care, health, social issues/insurance Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to Vienna summit

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will take part in the fourth summit between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) in Vienna on 11-12 May.

The theme for the summit is social cohesion and regional integration. Some of the matters on the agenda are democracy, human rights and poverty reduction. The issue of possible association agreements between the EU and a number of regional blocks will also be addressed at the meeting.

Previous EU-LAC meetings have taken place in Rio de Janeiro in 1999, Madrid in 2002 and Guadalajara in 2004. Heads of state and government and foreign ministers from some 60 countries will participate.

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Key word: 63481 EU Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Support to Swedfund for environmental investments in developing countries

The Government decided today to give the Swedish Fund for Industrial Cooperation with Developing Countries (Swedfund) a capital injection of SEK 80 million to finance environmental investments in developing countries.

In using the funds, special focus is to be given to such areas as water and sanitation, chemical safety, sustainable use of natural resources and environmental management.

"Increased investment in the environment provides a unique opportunity for Sweden to contribute to long-term sustainable poverty reduction through new strategic initiatives in developing countries," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision is part of the Billion for the Environment programme, in which SEK 1 billion of development cooperation funds will be invested in the environmental field during the three-year period 2006-2008.

As a consequence of the special programme and the great interest in developing countries for Swedish environmental technology, the Government has already decided to allocate SEK 250 million to Sida and the Government Offices. The total capital injection for 2006 thus amounts to SEK 330 million.

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Key word: 63344 Sustainable development Environment, energy and housing Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

King and Queen on official visit to Turkey

Their Majesties King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will pay an official visit to Turkey on 29 May to 2 June 2006 at the invitation of President Ahmet Necdet Sezer.

The Swedish Government will be represented during the visit.

A delegation from the business sector and a delegation with a special focus on health issues will visit Turkey at the same time.

The programme includes visits to Ankara, Ephesus and Istanbul.

To the editorial office:

Media representatives wishing to cover the state visit must apply for accreditation.

Additional information will be available soon on the website under the heading Press.

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Key word: 63204 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Number of asylum-seeking children with severe withdrawal behaviour falling

The national coordinator for children in the asylum process with severe withdrawal behaviour is today presenting her third report. It shows that the number of asylum-seeking children with severe withdrawal behaviour is falling.

At the beginning of March 2006 there were 65 asylum-seeking children with severe withdrawal behaviour under treatment by Sweden's child and adolescent psychiatric services. At the same time a further 82 children, former asylum seekers who had been granted residence permits, were being considered for treatment.

A follow-up in the middle of April 2006 showed that this figure had fallen in less than a month from 82 to 59, which shows that the statistics can change very fast. Only five asylum-seeking children have been reported as falling ill since November 2005.

The report also shows that neither trauma, culture nor the asylum process can provide general explanations for asylum-seeking children exhibiting severe withdrawal behaviour in Sweden.

The research has been carried out by Docent Nader Ahmadi. The research team for the study included psychologists Dr Kjerstin Almqvist and Andreas Tunström, political scientist Merrick Tabor and sociologist Dr Maria Appelqvist.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Somalia's transitional president visits Sweden

The transitional president of Somalia, Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, is visiting Sweden on 2-3 May.

The purpose of the visit is to discuss developments in Somalia and Swedish support for the peace and reconstruction work that is now under way in Somalia. During his visit, Mr Yusuf will meet representatives of the Government, the Riksdag, Swedish government agencies and organisations, and Swedish Somalis.

"I welcome President Yusuf's visit to Sweden and the opportunity for bilateral discussions on the great challenges that Somalia faces. Ever since the peace talks started, Sweden has played a prominent role in the international dialogue with the Somali parties. International support is crucial in the difficulties that the transitional leadership in Somalia has to wrestle with, if the progress that has been achieved is to last," says State Secretary Annika Söder, who is hosting the visit.

Sweden has provided active political and economic support to the peace process since 2003. Sweden expects to give humanitarian support and support for peace and reconciliation totalling SEK 160 million in 2006. If the peace process makes progress, there is a readiness for more extensive support, partly within the framework of the donor conference that is planned with Sweden and Italy as co-hosts.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-05-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to visit DR Congo and Rwanda

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will visit the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda on 2-6 May.

In Congo, Ms Jämtin will hold talks with representatives of the transitional government in Kinshasa, including President Kabila and Vice Presidents Ruberwa and Bemba, on the coming presidential and parliamentary elections, the importance of national security-building measures and Swedish support to the region. Ms Jämtin will also travel to eastern Congo and visit an army integration centre and a hospital that treats women who have been subjected to sexual violence.

In Rwanda, discussions are planned with President Kagame, Minister of Foreign Affairs Murigande, Minister of Finance Musoni and others on developments in Rwanda and Swedish development assistance. The discussions will consider regional issues as well. Ms Jämtin will also visit the coffee cooperative that was awarded the City of Göteborg Environmental Prize and attend a court hearing at one of the people's courts that are dealing with some of the crimes committed during the genocide.

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Key word: 63115 Sustainable development Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-04-28

Ministry of Sustainable Development
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden gives SEK 4 million to environmental fund for the least developed countries

Sweden will contribute SEK 4 million to a fund for the least developed countries (the LDC Fund) under the Climate Convention (UNFCCC).

The main purpose of the fund is to finance the preparation of national action plans for adaptation to climate change. Sweden is one of the donors that have made previous contributions to the fund.

"The climate issue is an important part of work on sustainable development and Sweden is taking energetic action to support the implementation of the Climate Convention and the Kyoto Protocol," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"By its contribution to the LDC Fund, Sweden is emphasising that climate issues are a shared responsibility. We attach great importance to supporting the efforts of the least developed countries to respond to climate change," says Minister for the Environment Lena Sommestad.

The LDC Fund was created in 2002 to support the least developed countries in their adaptation measures. The fund is administered by the World Bank.

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Key word: 62977 Sustainable development Environment, energy and housing Foreign policy and international cooperation Lena Sommestad

PRESS RELEASE

2006-04-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election monitor to Azerbaijan

The Government has decided to send an election monitor to Azerbaijan ahead of the new parliamentary elections to be held on 13 May. The parliamentary elections that took place in November 2005 were declared invalid in ten of the 125 constituencies.

"By sending an election monitor to Azerbaijan, Sweden can contribute to the development of a functioning electoral system in the country," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). This time the OSCE will be sending a limited election observation mission consisting of ten election monitors.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-04-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan Eliasson to meet EU and NATO ministers in Sofia

Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson will travel to Sofia on 27 April to take part in an informal working dinner with foreign ministers from other EU countries and the NATO countries.

EU High Representative Javier Solana and NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer will also take part. Bulgaria's Minister for Foreign Affairs will host the meeting.

Discussions at the dinner will focus on various current issues.

The United States and Belgium have both previously hosted similar informal meetings. The first meeting took place in conjunction with the UN General Assembly in September 2005 and the second in Brussels in December of the same year.

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Key word: 62879 EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-04-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press Secretaries to Jan Eliasson

The Press Secretaries to Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Eliasson are Dan Svanell and Kerstin Olsson.

The Minister's Political Adviser is Jenny Ohlsson.

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Key word: 62604 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-04-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin a member of international commission on growth

In connection with its annual spring meeting in Washington, the World Bank presented a new, independent high-level "Commission on Growth and Development". The purpose of the Commission is to broaden and intensify understanding for sustainable economic growth as part of poverty reduction.

The Commission will base its work on national and international experience drawn from the economic policies of recent decades and try to find relevant, concrete and country-specific tools that will lead to long-term, stable growth and to identify the factors required for this growth to lead to improvements for the poorest people in the world.

The Commission, whose work will last two years, is composed of leading politicians, business leaders and academics from all over the world. It will be led by Nobel Laureate Michael Spence. The Commission consists of 20 commissioners, including Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The Commission is a cooperative body, including the World Bank, the governments of Sweden, the UK and the Netherlands and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

A final report will be presented in 2007.

Members of the Commission:

Montek Ahluwalia (India), Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission.

Edmar Bacha (Brazil), Director of the Casa Das Garças Institute for Economic Policy Studies in Rio de Janeiro, former President of the National Bank for Economic and Social Development.

Dr. Boediono (Indonesia), Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs.

Lord John Browne (UK), CEO, British Petroleum.

Kemal Dervis (Turkey), Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, former Minister of Finance of Turkey.

Alejandro Foxley, (Chile), Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Chok Tong Goh (Singapore), Senior Minister in Cabinet and Chairman of the Monetary Authority of Singapore.

Duck Soo Han (Korea), Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economy.

Danuta Huebner (Poland), European Commissioner for Regional Policy.

Carin Jämtin (Sweden), Minister for International Development Cooperation.

Pablo Kuczynski (Peru), Prime Minister.

Trevor Manuel (South Africa), Minister of Finance.
Mahmoud Mohieldin (Egypt), Minister of Investment.
Ngozi N. Okonjo-Iweala (Nigeria), Minister of Finance and Economy.
Robert Rubin (USA), Director, Chairman of the Executive Committee and Member of the Office of the Chairman of Citigroup, former Secretary of the US Treasury.
Robert Solow (USA), Nobel Laureate, Professor Emeritus, Massachusetts Institute of Technology MIT.
Michael Spence (USA), Nobel Laureate, Professor Emeritus, Stanford, Chair of the Growth Commission, former Dean of Stanford Graduate Business School.
Sir K. Dwight Venner (Saint Kitts and Nevis, West Indies) Governor of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank.
Ernesto Zedillo (Mexico), Director of the Center for the Study of Globalisation, former President of Mexico.
Xiaochuan Zhou (China), Governor of the People's Bank of China.

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Key word: 62557 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-04-20
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan Eliasson to meet Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre

TIME AND PLACE

Monday 24 April at 15.15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Gustav Adolfs Torg 1

Assembly at the entrance at 15.05.

Please bring your press credentials

On Monday 24 April, his first day on the job as Minister for Foreign Affairs, Jan Eliasson will receive his Norwegian colleague Jonas Gahr Støre for bilateral discussions at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Among the topics the foreign ministers will discuss are current international issues, including conflict management, and regional issues.

The media are invited to a press conference with Mr Eliasson and Mr Støre at the Ministry for

Foreign Affairs at 15.15.

Jonas Gahr Støre will also meet Deputy Prime Minister Bosse Ringholm on Monday morning.

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Key word: 62410 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-04-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Four new ambassadors in Stockholm

Four newly appointed ambassadors, from Ethiopia, Macedonia, Pakistan and Zambia, will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 20 April.

Ethiopia's newly appointed Ambassador Dina Mufti was born in 1963. He holds a BA in Political Science and International Relations from Addis Ababa University and undertook postgraduate studies at Carleton University, Ottawa. He entered the Foreign Service in 1983. Ambassador Mufti's posts in recent years have included Press Counsellor at the Ethiopian Embassy in Washington and Director of the Press, Information and Documentation General Directorate at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Addis Ababa. His most recent appointment was as Ambassador in Zimbabwe.

Macedonia's newly appointed Ambassador Agon Demjaha was born in 1960 and is a qualified engineer. He holds an MA in International Relations and European Studies from the Central European University in Budapest. Ambassador Demjaha is actively engaged in civil society in Macedonia and is the founder and Executive Director of a non-governmental organisation, the Centre for Development of Civil Society. Prior to his appointment as Ambassador, he was the Executive Director of the regional Balkan Children and Youth Foundation in Skopje.

Pakistan's newly appointed Ambassador Shaheen A. Gillani was born in 1948 and is a career diplomat. He entered the Foreign Service in 1973. In recent years he has served as Ambassador in Hungary and South Africa. Ambassador Gillani's most recent appointment was as Additional Secretary, Policy Planning, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Islamabad.

Zambia's newly appointed Ambassador Joyce Chembe Musenge was born in 1957. She holds a BA from the University of Zambia in Lusaka and a postgraduate diploma from the Institute of Foreign Trade in New Delhi. During the period 2004-2005, she held the post of Counsellor and Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Zambia in Stockholm. In addition, she has served as Counsellor at the Embassy in Brussels and as Director for European Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

in Lusaka. Her most recent appointment was as Assistant Director of Political Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Lusaka.

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Key word: 62353 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-04-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund spring meetings

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is to take part in the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) spring meetings in Washington on 22-23 April.

One of the main issues at the World Bank meeting is a report identifying reforms and measures that should be taken by both poor and rich countries, together with the World Bank and other international organisations, in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals on halving world poverty. The report focuses on good governance and its importance for being able to fight poverty effectively. The aim is to create a greater dialogue between rich and poor countries on this area.

In connection with the meeting, Ms Jämtin will meet representatives of the World Bank executive to discuss institutional issues of current interest. She will also meet her ministerial colleagues from a number of countries, including Tanzania, Indonesia, Colombia and Bolivia, to discuss bilateral cooperation and strategic issues on the World Bank agenda.

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Key word: 62340 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-04-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New cooperation strategy for Afghanistan

The Government has decided on a strategy for Swedish development cooperation with Afghanistan for the period 2006-2008.

The overall objective of the strategy is to create conditions that will enable poor people to improve their lives and to promote respect for human rights.

"The needs of Afghanistan remain considerable, and continued support is necessary. It is particularly important that we increase our efforts to promote human rights and gender equality in Afghanistan," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The cooperation strategy for Afghanistan will comprise up to SEK 1.2 billion.

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Key word: 61901 Democracy and human rights Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-04-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to participate in meetings of EU foreign and development cooperation ministers

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is to take part in the General Affairs and External

Relations Council (GAERC) meetings in Luxembourg on 10 11 April.

TIME AND PLACE

Monday 10 April, around 15.00

Tuesday 11 April, around 13.00

Swedish Briefing Room

Council building

Luxembourg

Please bring your press credentials.

The foreign ministers will be discussing, among other things, Ukraine and Belarus following the elections. With regard to Belarus, the EU is expected to decide on further restrictions on the regime. The lunch discussion will be dominated by the peace process in the Middle East following the elections in Israel and the installation of the Hamas-led Palestinian government. The foreign ministers will also debate the EU strategy for sustainable development. As a final point, Sweden has called for a discussion on UN reforms.

The meeting of international development cooperation ministers will include a discussion on enhancing the efficiency of EU development efforts. The ministers will also discuss how the EU can strengthen the ongoing reforms of the international humanitarian system.

Press briefings with Carin Jämtin are scheduled to take place after the foreign ministers' lunch on Monday at approximately 15.00, and after the conclusion of the meeting of international development cooperation ministers on Tuesday at around 13.00 in the Swedish Briefing Room at the Council in Luxembourg.

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Key word: 61725 Sustainable development EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-04-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Press Counsellors in Paris and Washington

Arne Kallin has been appointed new Press Counsellor at the Swedish Embassy in Paris. He is currently Head of the information section at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press, Information and Cultural Affairs Department (PIK). Mr Kallin has previously served in Berlin (the former GDR), Brussels and Copenhagen. He has also been Head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre.

Arne Kallin will take up his post in September 2006.

Anders J Ericson has been appointed new Press Counsellor at the Swedish Embassy in Washington. Mr Ericson has previously served as Press Secretary to former Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and has been Press Counsellor at the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the European Union in Brussels. Before joining the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1999 he worked, among other things, as Sveriges Radio's European correspondent in Brussels.

Anders J Ericson will take up his post in June 2006.

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Key word: 61703 Culture, the media, leisure activities Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New cooperation agreement with Macedonia

State Secretary Annika Söder and Macedonia's Deputy Prime Minister Radmila Sekerinska today signed a new five-year cooperation agreement between Sweden and Macedonia.

Cooperation with Macedonia will be targeted at poverty reduction by supporting the process for the country's future membership of the EU. Support will focus on the agricultural sector, the promotion of human rights, social collaboration and environmental initiatives.

"The agreement enhances the opportunities for cooperation in areas of vital importance to Macedonia's integration in the EU," says Ms Söder.

The cooperation comprises SEK 70 million per year, an annual increase of SEK 10 million compared with the previous period.

On 28 February, the Government approved a new cooperation strategy for development cooperation with Macedonia for the period 2006-2010.

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Key word: 61353 EU Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Continued Swedish support to European Migration Network

The Government has decided to contribute to the funding of the European Migration Network (EMN) for a further year.

Statistics Sweden (SCB) has been designated as the national contact point for the network in Sweden and is the agency that will manage the Government's additional contribution of SEK 600 000. SCB will carry out the assignment in close cooperation with the Swedish Migration Board and the Swedish Integration Board.

The purpose of the network is to improve availability and exchange of statistics and information in the area of migration and asylum in the EU.

"Since no country can solve migration issues on its own, information and statistics on migration must also be circulated among EU member states," says Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg.

The Network has existed as a pilot project since 2002. It includes a database where member states have entered relevant statistics, research reports, law texts, descriptions of the respective countries' migration and asylum policies, etc.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-30

Ministry of Defence

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to African Union mission in Darfur

The Government today instructed the Swedish Rescue Services Agency to strengthen its health and medical care efforts in Darfur, Sudan. The Swedish Rescue Services Agency's task is part of EU support measures to the African Union (AU) and, through such means as training and advisory services, will enhance the AU's capacity to provide medical care for its staff.

"By strengthening the African Union's capacity, Sweden will provide additional support to efforts to create peace in Darfur," says Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs Carin Jämtin.

"The Swedish Rescue Services Agency has valuable knowledge about the medical care situation in Darfur which will now be of benefit to the African Union," says Minister for Defence Leni Björklund.

Under the UN mandate, the African Union has been monitoring the ceasefire between the Sudanese government and rebel groups in Darfur since May 2004. Through EU support measures, Sweden currently provides staff officers, military observers, police and funding to the AU.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Conference on strengthened partnership with the Mekong region

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sida and the Swedish Trade Council, together with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), are arranging a conference in Stockholm on development in the Mekong region - the Mekong Development

Forum. The conference will be held on 3-4 April.

TIME AND PLACE

Press conference with Vice President Liqun Jin

Tuesday 4 April at 10.00

La Plata, Sida
Sveavägen 20

Notification of attendance via press@sida.se

The conference aims at enhancing the conditions for long-term partnership between the Mekong countries and the Nordic countries, particularly with regard to the business community. Transport, energy and the environment will be highlighted. In addition, the question of how the Mekong countries can best benefit from Nordic knowledge and experience will be considered.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will give the opening address, and Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros will conclude the conference. Also taking part are Vice President of the Asian Development Bank Liqun Jin and representatives from Cambodia, China, Laos, Thailand and Viet Nam, including the Lao Minister with responsibility for the Greater Mekong Subregion, Somphong Mongkhonvilay. Representatives of the entire Nordic business community will take part.

The media are welcome to attend the conference as well as a special press conference with ADB's Vice President Liqun Jin, which will be held on Tuesday 4 April at 10.00. Notification of attendance is required and should be submitted to press@sida.se

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Key word: 61185 Sustainable development Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan Eliasson new Minister for Foreign Affairs

Jan Eliasson has been appointed new Minister for Foreign Affairs. He will take up his post on 24 April. From today, Ms Carin Jämtin will be Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs. As of 24 April, she will serve as Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and continue to be responsible for development assistance issues.

This was announced by Prime Minister Göran Persson at a press conference earlier today.

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Key word: 61041 Foreign policy and international cooperation Jan Eliasson

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Montenegro

The Government has decided to send a maximum of three long-term observers and four short-term observers to the referendum on independence in Montenegro on 21 May.

"By sending election observers, Sweden can help ensure that a democratic referendum on independence is held," says Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Sida is responsible for the recruitment and training of Swedish election observers. Questions may be addressed to Sida/International Recruitment and Training Division (RIU)/Electoral Group.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden deeply concerned at the situation in Belarus

"It is with concern that we are hearing reports from Belarus that security forces this morning have arrested further demonstrators in Minsk. All those arrested while trying to exercise their political rights must be released immediately," says Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs Bosse Ringholm.

The EU has stated that it is deeply regrettable that once again Belarus has conducted an election that cannot be considered free and fair. This means that the EU will consider the possibility of taking action against those deemed responsible for election fraud. The EU will, however, continue to support civil society in Belarus and work to promote democratisation.

"The extent to which the opposition has managed to gather itself for these demonstrations in the centre of Minsk, despite serious threats of reprisals, is an important step forward for democratic forces in Belarus," says Mr Ringholm.

Sweden is at present one of the largest bilateral assistance donors to Belarus. Contributing to the growth of a modernised, democratic and pluralist Belarussian society is the long-term perspective of development cooperation. Sweden intends to continue its support to democratic development and civil society in Belarus.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to meet Serbia's President Boris Tadic

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is to meet Serbia's President Boris Tadic, who is visiting Sweden on 27-28 March.

Among those whom President Tadic will also meet are HM The King, Prime Minister Göran Persson, Minister for Trade Thomas Östros, Minister for Defence Leni Björklund and the Chair of the Riksdag Committee on Foreign Affairs Urban Ahlin. A business delegation representing some 20 Serbian companies is accompanying President Tadic, to take part in a business seminar on 28 March.

Sweden has extensive development assistance cooperation with Serbia, primarily directed at democracy, human rights, the environment and economic growth. Closer ties between Serbia and Montenegro and the EU are an important aim of this cooperation.

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Key word: 60904 Democracy and human rights EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Bosse Ringholm to meet Turkey's State Minister for Economy

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs Bosse Ringholm will today receive Turkey's State Minister for Economy and Chief Negotiator with the European Union, Ali Babacan.

Mr Ringholm and Mr Babacan will discuss such topics as bilateral issues and Turkey's EU membership negotiations.

Sweden supports Turkey's efforts to join the EU. The Government's Turkey programme, aimed at increasing contacts with Turkish society, is one concrete example of this. At the same time, Sweden

and the EU are making demands for further reforms to strengthen respect for human rights.

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Key word: 60883 EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Bosse Ringholm

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation: Club of Madrid Executive Committee to meet in Stockholm

The Executive Committee of the Club of Madrid will hold a meeting in Stockholm on Monday 27 March.

TIME AND PLACE

PRESS CONFERENCE

Monday 27 March, at 17.00

Prince Eugen's Waldemarsudde

Assembly at 16.45

Notification of attendance to Karin O'Connor (karin@allies.se) or Henrik Lund (hlund@clubmadrid.org)

Please bring your press credentials.

Programme extracts:

8.30. Deputy Prime Minister and acting Minister for Foreign Affairs Bosse Ringholm receives representatives of the Club of Madrid at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Photo pool.

The King and Queen host a luncheon at Waldemarsudde. The Government will be represented by Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin. Photo pool.

17.00. Press conference with Ricardo Lagos, Mary Robinson and Kim Campbell at Prince Eugen's Waldemarsudde. Notification of attendance to Karin O'Connor (karin@allies.se) or Henrik Lund (hlund@clubmadrid.org).

The Club of Madrid was established in 2001 and is a network of some 70 former heads of state and government. The network is a forum for peer-to-peer counsel, strategic support and technical assistance, targeting leaders in countries and institutions working towards democratic transition and consolidation. Its activities consist of thematic programmes, such as supporting the democratic development of young political leaders and initiatives aimed at benefiting individual countries or regions.

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Key word: 60850 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government to support activities of the Club of Madrid

The Government has decided to grant SEK 7.8 million to the activities of the Club of Madrid. The focus of this organisation is the promotion of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

"The grant should be regarded as a further manifestation of Sweden's strong commitment to democracy and human rights around the world," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The Club of Madrid was established in 2001 and is a network of some 70

former heads of state and government. The network is a forum for peer-to-peer counsel, strategic support and technical assistance, targeting leaders in countries and institutions working towards democratic transition and consolidation. Its activities consist of thematic programmes, such as supporting the democratic development of young political leaders and initiatives aimed at benefiting individual countries or regions.

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Key word: 60730 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Communication on Nordic cooperation 2005 presented to the Riksdag

The Government today presented the communication "Nordic Cooperation

2005" to the Riksdag. The communication contains an account of the cooperation between the governments of the Nordic countries during 2005, with a primary focus on the activities of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The issues highlighted in this year's communication concern work to remove cross-border obstacles, cooperation with countries in the Nordic region's neighbourhood, Nordic cultural cooperation and Sweden's bilateral cooperation with other Nordic countries. In addition, there is a report on the structural reform of the Nordic Council of Ministers that was adopted in 2005, entailing a reduction in the number of Minister Counsellors from 18 to 11 in 2006.

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Key word: 60846 Foreign policy and international cooperation Berit Andnor

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Bill on EC Directives submitted to the Riksdag

The Government has submitted to the Riksdag the Bill "Implementation of the EC directives on transfer of passenger data and residence permits for studies".

The Bill proposes that airlines carrying passengers to Sweden from a state that neither belongs to the EU nor has entered into an agreement on cooperation under the Schengen Convention shall, at the request of the police, transfer information about the passengers as soon as check-in has been completed. Carriers who neglect to transfer data or who have transferred incomplete or incorrect data will be liable to pay a special charge.

Under the proposal, the amendment on transfer of passenger data will enter into force on 1 September 2006.

The Bill also proposes that a temporary residence permit for studies shall be subject to withdrawal if the holder, for example, never appears for registration at the school, if the studies are not begun or are interrupted prematurely or if the holder has inadequate means of support.

Under the proposal, the amendment on residence permits for studies will enter into force on 1 January 2007.

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Key word: 60621 EU Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications

Communication on strategic export controls presented to the Riksdag

The Government today presented the communication "Strategic export controls in 2005 - military equipment and dual-use items" to the Riksdag. The communication contains an account of Swedish military equipment exports during the year.

It is the Government's ambition to continuously increase and improve transparency in the annual communication. This year's communication includes an extended account of dual-use items and exports of nuclear material.

The value of actual Swedish military equipment exports in 2005 rose by 18 per cent compared with the previous year, from SEK 7.2 billion to SEK 8.6 billion. This year's increase is largely due to increased sales to other EU countries.

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Key word: 60575 Defence, emergency management and safety Industry, trade, regional development Ulrica Messing

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to take part in meeting of EU foreign ministers in Brussels

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will take part in the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) meeting in Brussels on 20 March. Topics on the agenda include the Western Balkans, the peace process in the Middle East and the situation in Sudan.

A press conference with Ms Freivalds will be held at approximately 15.00 in the Swedish briefing room in the Council building in Brussels.

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Key word: 60228 EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation: Juan Méndez visiting Sweden

Juan Méndez, Kofi Annan's Special Adviser on Prevention of Genocide and President of the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) is visiting Sweden on 15-17 March.

TIME AND PLACE

Friday 17 March at 13.30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Gustaf Adolfs Torg 1
Stockholm

Assembly at the main entrance at 13.25

Please bring your press credentials!

Mr Méndez is meeting Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin during his visit. He will also be speaking at a lunch seminar hosted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Media representatives are welcome to a press conference with Laila Freivalds, Carin Jämtin and Juan Méndez on Friday 17 March at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustaf Adolfs torg 1, at 13.30.

Juan Méndez was appointed Special Adviser on Prevention of Genocide in July 2004. The main tasks of the Advisor are to bring to the attention of the UN Secretary-General and the Security Council situations that may lead to genocide, and to recommend measures for preventing future genocides.

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Key word: 60083 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Four new ambassadors in Stockholm

Four newly appointed ambassadors, from Colombia, Morocco, Moldova and Malta, will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 16 March.

Colombia's newly appointed Ambassador Fernando Alzate Donoso was born in 1955. He is a lawyer whose special area of interest is maritime law. In recent years his posts have included

Director-General and Head of the Diplomatic Academy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Secretary-General of the regional maritime organ the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific, CPPS (Chile, Peru, Ecuador and Colombia). His most recent post was as Chargé d'Affaires in Oslo.

Morocco's newly appointed Ambassador Zohour Alaoui was born in 1965 and holds degrees in political science from the Mohammed V University in Rabat and Georgetown University in Washington D.C. Ms Alaoui, a career diplomat, entered the Foreign Service in 1987 and her past posts include serving at the embassy in Washington. Her most recent post was that of Director of the United Nations and International Organisations Directorate.

Moldova's newly appointed Ambassador Natalia Gherman was born in 1969, and her academic degrees include an MA from King's College, University of London. She entered the Foreign Service in 1985 and in recent years has served as Minister Counsellor in Belgium and as Deputy Head of the Mission of Moldova to NATO. Her most recent posts were as Ambassador to Austria and as Permanent Representative to the International Organisations in Vienna.

Malta's newly appointed Ambassador Dr Noel Buttigieg-Scicluna (concurrently accredited from Copenhagen) was born in 1951. His career has been in the diplomat corps with a special interest in multilateral issues and has also been active politically in the Maltese Nationalist Party (Christian Democratic Party). In recent years he has served as Ambassador to Austria, the Permanent Representative to both the UN and the OSCE in Vienna, and as Non-Resident Ambassador to Slovakia. He has subsequently served as Ambassador to Hungary and, since 2005, as Ambassador to Denmark.

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Key word: 60060 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-16
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to visit Colombia

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will visit Colombia on 19-22 March.

During her visit, Carin Jämtin will meet President Alvaro Uribe, Vice-President Francisco Santos, Minister for Foreign Affairs Carolina Barco and a number of representatives of the UN and Colombian civil society. She will also hold a direct dialogue on Swedish development assistance with the cooperation partners concerned.

Part of her stay will consist of an additional visit to the city of Medellin to meet unarmed

paramilitary soldiers who, through the ongoing disarmament process, and monitored by an OAS mission, are now on the way to becoming reintegrated into Colombian society.

Sweden has a long-term commitment to Colombia, aimed at contributing to the achievement of sustainable peace in the country. Since the end of the 1990s, Swedish development cooperation with the country has significantly increased. In 2005, bilateral development assistance amounted to SEK 108 million.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds is meeting Dr Javier Solana on 17 March

TIME AND PLACE

Friday 17 March

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

Photographers meet at 14.00

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Gustav Adolfs Torg 1

Dr Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union, will have talks with Minister for Foreign Affairs, Laila Freivalds on Friday 17 March.

Ms Freivalds and Dr Solana be discussing current foreign policy issues, including the Middle East, the Western Balkans and Sudan.

The media are invited to a photo opportunity at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

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Key word: 59977 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Inquiry on the right of asylum-seeking children to go to school

The Government has approved a decision to appoint an inquiry to review the conditions for regulating the right to education, pre-school activities and school-age childcare for children and young people who are avoiding enforcement of a refusal-of-entry or expulsion order.

Under the current regulatory framework, asylum-seeking children and young people are entitled to schooling on more or less the same terms as children who are resident in Sweden. However, municipalities are under no obligation to offer schooling to children and young people who are avoiding the enforcement of a refusal-of-entry or expulsion order. Nevertheless, today's provisions allow municipalities to offer them places at school voluntarily.

The remit of the inquiry includes examining the possible design of regulations and whether changes in school and aliens legislation may be necessary. The inquiry is to take a position on whether such a regulatory system is compatible with provisions on secrecy and provisions on the notification requirement, the need to submit information and the obligation to report, both to the police and social services. The inquiry includes a review of police procedures in enforcing refusal-of-entry and expulsion orders. The situation of personnel in schools and other facilities will also be reviewed. The inquiry is to report its findings no later than 15 February 2007.

Pending the results of the inquiry, municipalities have been allocated extra funds to be able to receive these children in schools.

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Key word: 59711 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Host Country Inquiry presented

The report on Sweden as host country for international organisations was presented to the Government yesterday.

The Host Country Inquiry was appointed to find solutions to a number of practical problems that had arisen for intergovernmental organisations in Sweden, and also to outline plans for a more active Swedish host country policy. The objective is for Sweden to become better at attracting international activities.

"International cooperation is a rapidly expanding field. Sweden should be in a good position to attract more international organisations", writes Professor Daniel Tarschys.

The Inquiry proposals include making it easier for existing organisations and their staff to work and serve in Sweden. This could be achieved by the granting of Swedish personal identity numbers, access to Swedish schooling and the introduction of freedom of choice as regards affiliation to the Swedish social insurance system, for example.

The Inquiry chair, Daniel Tarschys, considers that host country policy needs to be coordinated. A special coordinator should therefore be appointed at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to deal with international organisation issues that recur frequently. Another task should be to promote the establishment of more organisations on Swedish soil.

- - -

The number of international organisations worldwide is estimated at more than 6 000. Eleven of these are in Sweden, including the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), the Global Water Partnership (GWP), which deals with water and environmental issues, the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the World Maritime University (WMU) in Malmö, and the new European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDPC).

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Key word: 59475 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Belarus

The Government has decided to provide Swedish election observers for the presidential election in Belarus on 19 March.

The Swedish election observers will be members of the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) delegation totalling 440 observers.

"There is no sign of movement towards a break in the negative trend for democracy and human rights in Belarus. We intend this Swedish contribution to provide support for democratic development in the country," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"The political situation in Belarus remains difficult. The pressure on independent media, organisations and opposition figures remains hard. The opposition is working in a strong headwind and their possibilities of reaching voters through the media are minimal," Ms Jämtin continues.

"A full-scale international election observer mission is an important means of monitoring the conduct of the election in Belarus," Ms Jämtin concludes.

The decision to send election observers to Belarus follows a request from the OSCE.

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Key word: 59257 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden increases environmental aid

The Government has previously decided to use part - SEK 1 billion over a three-year period (SEK 330 million in 2006) - of the increase in development assistance funding for action in the environmental field. As a result of this special initiative for environment in development assistance

and the great interest in developing countries for Swedish environmental technology the Government has taken the following decisions:

- Sida is to receive SEK 235 million for action in the environmental field. The funds are mainly to be used in the areas of water and sanitation, chemical safety, renewable energy and climate issues, sustainable urban development, sustainable use of natural resources and education, capacity support and environmental management.
- SEK 35 million of these funds are to be allocated to action in environmental technology, especially renewable energy and sustainable urban development.
- The Government instructs Sida to set up a council to support its Director-General in matters concerning the orientation and distribution of funds in the special initiative. Council members will be appointed by the Government. The council will include representatives of business and environmental organisations.
- A further SEK 15 million will be distributed by the Government for international environmental programmes.
- The Government also intends to report to the Riksdag that an increase of SEK 80 million is being made in Swedfund's appropriation in order to finance environmental investments in developing countries.

The Government's decision is based on an agreement between the Social Democratic Party, the Left Party and the Green Party.

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Key word: 59259 Environment, energy and housing Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Seminar in Washington on Swedish gender equality

On Friday 3 March, the Embassy of Sweden in Washington together with the Council of Women World Leaders is holding a seminar on the situation of women in Sweden and Swedish efforts to promote gender equality.

The seminar is being organised in light of Sweden's top ranking in an international study on gender equality undertaken by the World Economic Forum. The report entitled "Women's Empowerment: Countries Closing the Gender Gap" compares, for example, the presence of women in the labour market, women's economic and political participation, and the access they have to education and training, and health and medical care.

Sweden will be represented by the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, Claes Borgström, and four Members of the Swedish Riksdag: Britt Bohlin Olsson (Social Democratic Party), Anders Karlsson (Social Democratic Party), Tina Acketoft (Liberal Party) and Magdalena Andersson (Moderate Party). Saadia Zahidi of the World Economic Forum, and one of the authors of the report, will also participate.

The seminar will take place at 12.00-14.00 on Friday 3 March at the Aspen Institute, 1 Dupont Circle NW, Suite 700, Washington DC, USA.

Media representatives are welcome to attend. If you wish to take part, please notify Ms Alison Drone.

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The World Economic Forum report is available via the link in the right-hand column.

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Key word: 59196 Employment and gender equality Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

James Wolfensohn to visit Sweden

James Wolfensohn is to visit Sweden on 6 March. Mr Wolfensohn is the Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement appointed by the Quartet (EU, UN, USA and Russia). Mr Wolfensohn will meet Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin to discuss the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories.

TIME AND PLACE

Press conference with Laila Freivalds, Carin Jämtin and James Wolfensohn at the Ministry for

Foreign Affairs on 6 March. Assembly at the entrance to Gustav Adolfs Torg 1 at 13.35. Please bring your press credentials.

The talks will primarily deal with possibilities to improve the humanitarian situation and create the conditions for long-term development and growth on the West Bank and in Gaza.

Media representatives are invited to a press conference with Laila Freivalds, Carin Jämtin and James Wolfensohn at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on 6 March. Assembly at the entrance to Gustav Adolfs Torg 1 at 13.35. Please bring your press credentials.

Mr Wolfensohn is the Special Envoy for Gaza Disengagement appointed by the Quartet, which is made up of the European Union, the United Nations, the United States and Russia.

In addition to ongoing development assistance to the West Bank and Gaza, the Swedish Government contributes SEK 40 million to the Quick Impact Programme launched by Mr Wolfensohn to promote positive economic development in Gaza. The funds are channelled through the UN refugee organisation UNRWA, which has a central role in improving the situation of Palestinian refugees. The Quick Impact Programme is intended to generate quick and positive development in Gaza after Israel's withdrawal. It includes measures to create jobs, build up infrastructure and improve the environment.

Of particular note among the initiatives undertaken by Mr Wolfensohn as Special Envoy is his work with the Israeli-Palestinian Agreement on Movement and Access signed in November 2005. A central part of this agreement was to open the Rafah Crossing Point to allow people to transit between Gaza and Egypt under third-party surveillance. This later resulted in the EU mission to monitor the operation of the crossing point, the EU Border Assistance Mission in Rafah (EU BAM Rafah). Sweden's contribution to the mission is extensive and currently includes six Swedes.

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Key word: 59187 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation: Laila Freivalds is meeting EU Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner

TIME AND PLACE

Tuesday 7 March, at 14.00

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Gustaf Adolfs Torg 1
Stockholm

Assembly at the main entrance, 13.55

Please bring your press credentials.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds has invited Benita Ferrero-Waldner to talks on Tuesday 7 March. Ms Ferrero-Waldner is the Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy in the European Commission.

Ms Freivalds and Ms Ferrero-Waldner will be discussing current foreign policy issues, including the Middle East and the European Neighbourhood Policy. The Commissioner will also be meeting the Riksdag Committee on Foreign Affairs.

The media are invited to a press conference with Freivalds and Ferrero-Waldner at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs at 14.00.

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Key word: 59088 EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New cooperation strategy for Central Asia

The Government has approved a new cooperation strategy for Swedish development cooperation with Central Asia for the period 1 March 2006-31 December 2009.

The overall objective of the strategy is to create conditions that will enable poor people to improve their lives and to promote respect for human rights.

Sweden will focus the bulk of its development cooperation on the poorest countries, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Swedish support is targeted at such areas as democratic governance, human rights, economic development and health.

"I welcome more extensive Swedish cooperation with Central Asia and the fact that support is being targeted at poverty reduction and increasing respect for human rights," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Cooperation for 2006 amounts to SEK 120 million, SEK 50 of which is expected to go to Tajikistan, SEK 50 million to Kyrgyzstan and SEK 20 million to other initiatives in the region. At the end of the period, cooperation is expected to increase to SEK 200 million per year.

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Key word: 59056 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New strategy for cooperation with Macedonia

The Government has approved a new cooperation strategy for development cooperation with Macedonia for the period 2006-2010.

Cooperation with Macedonia will be targeted at poverty reduction by supporting the process for the country's future membership of the EU. Support will be concentrated on the agricultural sector. Other areas to receive funds are human rights and social collaboration, and initiatives in the field of environment to contribute to sustainable development.

"Sweden is increasing its support to Macedonia, support that will be targeted at agriculture, the environment and efforts to support human rights. This will significantly back up Macedonia's efforts to form closer ties with the EU," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Cooperation with Macedonia will amount to SEK 70 million per year, an increase of SEK 10 million per year compared with the previous period.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New cooperation strategy for Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Government has approved a new cooperation strategy for Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2006-2010. The overall aim of this cooperation is to create conditions that will enable poor people to improve their lives.

"The new Swedish strategy for cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina demonstrates that Sweden supports the country's development in the long-term and wants to help its efforts to form closer ties with the EU," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"We can be proud of the fact that Sweden is the largest bilateral development assistance donor to Bosnia and Herzegovina," concludes Carin Jämtin.

Cooperation is based on Bosnia and Herzegovina's own development plans, focusing on EU membership and poverty reduction. Swedish support will be primarily targeted at two areas of central importance. It is intended, on the one hand, to help build up a sustainable state to facilitate both integration among the country's own entities and the formation of closer ties with the EU. On the other hand, the support is to facilitate the transition to a market economy.

Swedish development cooperation in the coming three-year period is expected to remain at the same level as current support, i.e. SEK 250 million per year. Sweden is thus the largest bilateral donor among the European countries.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-03-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Blix Commission holds concluding meeting

The independent international Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission (WMDC) will hold its final regular meeting in Stockholm on 3-5 March.

TIME AND PLACE

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

Sunday 5 March, 18.30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Gustav Adolfs Torg 1
Stockholm

Please bring your press credentials.

The Commission, which is headed by Hans Blix, started work just over two years ago. The final report of the Commission is expected to be completed in May. The report will be presented to both the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Swedish Government.

In connection with the meeting Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is hosting a dinner with the Commissioners on Sunday 5 March.

The Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission was launched by the Swedish Government and consists, in addition to the Chairman, of 13 Commissioners from all the continents of the world appointed in their personal capacity. They have worked independently of governments and states to arrive at proposals and recommendations aimed at disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction - i.e. nuclear, chemical and biological weapons - and, not least, to prevent the spread of such weapons to terrorist organisations.

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Key word: 59017 Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications

Thomas Östros meets Ukraine's Industrial Policy Minister

Ukraine's Minister of Industrial Policy Volodymyr Shandra is visiting Stockholm on 26-28 February at the invitation of Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros.

During the visit, Mr Östros and Mr Shandra will discuss state ownership, innovation issues and the bilateral economic cooperation between Ukraine and Sweden. Mr Shandra will also visit Vattenfall and take part in round-table talks with representatives of a number of Swedish companies.

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Key word: 58907 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Chair of the Ethics Council at the Swedish Migration Board

The Government today decided to appoint Justice of the Supreme Court Ella Nyström as Chair of the Ethics Council at the Swedish Migration Board. Ms Nyström has served as Justice of the Supreme Court since 2002.

"It is important that there is always ongoing discussion on how the Swedish Migration Board's activities and reception can be improved so that individuals feel they are treated well. The Ethics Council will be an important tool in the Migration Board's work," says Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg.

Other members of the Council are author Gerda Antti, Associate Professor Kalle Bäck, Bishop Martin Lind, author Yrsa Stenius, Bishop Hans Stiglund and Professor Charles Westin.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to visit Belgrade, Pristina and Tirana

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will travel to Belgrade, Pristina and Tirana on 28 February to 3 March.

The trip is being made in preparation for the informal meeting of EU Foreign Ministers in Salzburg, which will focus on the Western Balkans. The region faces major challenges this year. The central issues, above all, are the talks on the future status of Kosovo, the referendum on independence in Montenegro and suspected war criminals.

Ms Freivalds will begin her visit in Belgrade on 28 February to 1 March. There she will meet representatives of the Serbian government, the Montenegrin government and the state union of Serbia and Montenegro.

In Pristina on 1-2 March there will be meetings with representatives of the UN administration in Kosovo (UNMIK), the local government and opposition parties. A visit is also planned to Mitrovica in the northern part of Kosovo.

In Tirana meetings will be held on 2-3 March with government representatives, opposition politicians, international organisations and representatives of civil society. The Minister for Foreign Affairs will also open a Swedish-Albanian business seminar.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Barbro Holmberg to speak at European Parliament

On 22 February, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg will address the European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE). In her speech on migration policy, Ms Holmberg will take up issues such as the Refugee Fund and resettlement.

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Key word: 58596 EU Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Foreign policy and international cooperation Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swede to become EU Special Representative for southern Caucasus

The EU Council of Ministers appointed today Swedish diplomat Mr Peter Semneby as the EU Special Representative for southern Caucasus.

"This is a great success for Sweden and means that Sweden is strengthening its position in EU foreign policy. Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia are in the process of becoming increasingly important to the EU. There are enormous unexploited energy resources in the region and these countries are part of the new EU European Neighbourhood Policy," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

Mr Semneby will be engaged in developing contacts between southern Caucasus and the EU. His work will also include resolving conflicts that have created insecurity and prevented the development of the countries in southern Caucasus after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Mr Semneby has great experience of international crisis management, most recently as head of the extensive programme to promote minority rights, the return of refugees and legal reforms in Croatia, conducted by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Before that he led OSCE activities in Latvia.

The backing of Peter Semneby as the EU representative for southern Caucasus reflects a greater Swedish commitment to the region. A Swedish ambassador will be appointed for southern Caucasus and in the strategy for development cooperation with southern Caucasus adopted by the Government for the period 2006-2009, the Swedish contribution is expected to increase to SEK 120 million per year. In recent weeks, the Prime Minister has visited Georgia and the President of Armenia has been received in Stockholm.

At present, the EU has nine Special Representatives for different conflicts and regions requiring particular attention, including the Balkans, the Middle East, Afghanistan and Africa.

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Key word: 58569 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

High-level panel on UN development assistance

On Thursday 16 February, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan convened a high-level panel tasked with drawing up proposals for improving the quality and efficiency of UN support to the developing countries.

These efforts will primarily concern long-term development cooperation, humanitarian initiatives and environmental issues.

The panel is a concrete follow-up of proposals in Kofi Annan's report "In Larger Freedom" and of decisions taken at the UN World Summit last year. The panel's proposals will be presented in the autumn.

"I am pleased that the panel has now been set up. It is in line with the reform efforts in the UN that Sweden and the other Nordic countries have been pursuing since the mid-1990s. I regard Sweden's invitation as recognition of Ruth Jacoby's expertise and Sweden's commitment to development issues," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The high-level panel will consist of 15 people. Director-General for Development Cooperation Ruth Jacoby will be participating on behalf of Sweden. Other members include Norway's Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg, Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shaukat Aziz, Mozambique's Prime Minister, Luisa Dias Diogo, Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, former President of Chile, Ricardo Lagos, and Lennart Båge, the Swedish President of the UN International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

The Swedish Government plans to contribute financially to the panel's activities.

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Key word: 58444 Environment, energy and housing Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications

Lars-Olof Lindgren visits Egypt

State Secretary Lars-Olof Lindgren is heading a business delegation to Egypt on 17-21 February. The aim is to promote trade and investment between the two countries.

Among those he will meet during his visit are Egyptian Minister of Foreign Trade and Industry Rachid Mohamed Rachid and Minister of Communications and Information Technology Dr Tarek Kamel. A meeting with Minister of Health and Population Dr Hatem El Gabali is also planned.

In addition, Mr Lindgren will meet representatives of both Egyptian and Swedish trade and industry.

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Key word: 58438 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to inaugurate Consulate-General in Kaliningrad

On Friday 17 February Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will travel to Kaliningrad to inaugurate the Swedish Consulate-General.

"Kaliningrad's geographical position as an enclave in the middle of the EU and only an hour's flying

time from Sweden makes developments in the country of particular significance for Sweden", says Ms Freivalds.

The Consulate-General will start to issue visas at the beginning of March. Sweden will thus become the first country in Kaliningrad to issue Schengen visas.

"It is important that Kaliningrad is not isolated. Sweden will now be able to make it easier in a tangible way for the residents of Kaliningrad to travel to the EU."

The Government supports development in Kaliningrad in a number of areas, including democracy projects, social measures, and cooperation activities to create a better Baltic Sea environment.

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Key word: 58405 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Stronger support for asylum-seeking children

The Government decided today to strengthen support to child asylum seekers through an annual payment of SEK 50 million to municipalities for preventive measures in accordance with the Social Services Act. The payment will be based on the number of asylum-seeking children staying in the municipality.

"The circumstances of many children seeking asylum in Sweden are difficult, and they need support. The Government wants this payment to strengthen preventive work so that children and families can receive assistance at an early stage," says Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg.

Today there are more than 9 000 asylum-seeking children spread throughout most of Sweden's municipalities. Around 300 of them have come to Sweden without their parents. These children are in a particularly vulnerable situation. The Government has therefore also decided to make this payment to the municipalities permanent for social services studies of these children's current and future housing and any support measures necessary.

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Key word: 58388 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Special Advisers on Horn of Africa and Korean Peninsula

The Government has appointed Special Advisers on the Horn of Africa and the Korean Peninsula.

The Government's Special Adviser on the Horn of Africa, Ambassador Marika Fahlén, will lead and coordinate Swedish efforts to support a peaceful solution to the conflicts in Sudan and Somalia, and between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The assignment includes contacts and dialogue with the relevant governments and international actors as well as with Swedish stakeholders and organisations with active interests in the Horn of Africa.

The Government's Special Adviser on the Korean Peninsula, Ambassador Paul Beijer, will coordinate Swedish efforts to support a peaceful development and will actively promote international contacts. The assignment confirms the Government's ongoing interest in developments on the Korean Peninsula, partly in light of the continued division of the Peninsula and North Korea's suspected possession of nuclear weapons.

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Key word: 58324 Sustainable development Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds receives Serbia and Montenegro's Foreign Minister

Serbia and Montenegro's Minister for Foreign Affairs Vuk Draskovic will visit Sweden on Tuesday 14 February.

TIME AND PLACE

DOORSTEP PRESS CONFERENCE

Tuesday 14 February at 14.00

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Gustav Adolfs Torg 1

Stockholm

Please bring your press credentials.

Mr Draskovic will have talks with Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds on issues such as the status of Kosovo, the referendum on independence in Montenegro, the expected arrest of war crimes suspect Mladic and negotiations on a comprehensive trade agreement (Stabilisation and Association Agreement) with the EU.

Mr Draskovic will also meet State Secretary Lars Danielsson and give a lecture at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs on the subject "Serbia, Kosovo and Europe".

The media are invited to a doorstep press conference at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs at 14.00.

Key word: 58214 EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Legislation proposed on right of residence for Union citizens

Today the Government submitted to the Riksdag a Bill entitled "Implementation of the EC Directives on the free movement of Union citizens in the EU and on the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents".

The Bill includes a proposal to abolish the system with residence permits for EU citizens and their family members. Instead, the concept 'right of residence' will be introduced, a natural right that Union citizens have to reside in Sweden. Residence permits will be replaced by registration for Union citizens and residence cards for their family members. The Swedish Migration Board will be responsible for issuing the documents.

The proposal also introduces a new legal concept, that of third-country nationals who are long-term residents, into Swedish law. Under the general rule, a third-country national may be granted this status after residing in Sweden for five years.

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Key word: 58050 EU Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Legislation proposed on residence permits for family reunification

Today the Government submitted to the Riksdag a Bill entitled "Implementation of the EC Directive on the right to family reunification and certain issues relating to case processing and DNA analysis in connection with family reunification".

Under the proposed legislation members of the nuclear family will be entitled to a residence permit for the purpose of family reunification. In order to shorten processing times in family reunification cases, the present requirement for an oral process will be simplified, without neglecting the requirements of legal certainty.

Another consequence of the proposed legislation is that in certain circumstances, primarily when dealing with parent-child relationships, a person applying for a residence permit on family reunification grounds will be offered a DNA analysis to prove the relationship that is pleaded. Under the proposal, the legislative amendments concerning the possibility of DNA analysis will enter into force on 1 July 2006 and the other amendments on 1 May 2006.

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Key word: 58049 EU Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-08

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Thomas Östros receives Armenian Minister of Trade

On Wednesday 8 February, Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros will receive his

Armenian colleague, Minister of Trade and Economic Development Karen Chshmarityan.

The meeting is in conjunction with a visit that Armenian president, Robert Kocharyan, will pay to Prime Minister Göran Persson.

During the Armenian delegation's visit, Mr Östros and Mr Chshmarityan will sign a bilateral investment protection agreement.

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Key word: 57775 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish Government annual human rights reports published

On Friday 3 February, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds presented the Swedish Government's reports on the human rights situation throughout the world in 2005.

"The human rights situation deteriorated in many countries in 2005. People are being discriminated, persecuted, harassed, tortured and executed in total contravention of the common rules and values agreed upon by the countries of the world. People are being denied the right to express their opinions and to take part in free and fair elections," says Ms Freivalds.

There are, however, signs of progress. The peace processes in Aceh and Liberia and the elections in Liberia and the Middle East - in Iraq, Egypt, Lebanon and the Palestinian Authority. More and more countries are abolishing the death penalty. The genital mutilation of girls and women is now banned under a Protocol to the African Charter on Women's Rights.

"To increase respect for human rights Sweden must conduct a results-orientated policy for human rights and take every opportunity we can to put forward our message. This year's reports on the situation for human rights in the countries of the world are part of this important work," says Ms Freivalds.

All the reports are posted on the Government's website for human rights.

Key word: 57633 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Haiti

The Government has decided to send two short-term observers to Haiti prior to the presidential and parliamentary elections on 7 February. The election observers will be part of a joint EU team.

"By sending election observers, Sweden can contribute to the correct conduct of democratic elections in the country," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the European Commission.

The presidential and parliamentary elections in Haiti were scheduled to take place in November 2005 but have been postponed a number of times.

Sida is responsible for the recruitment and training of Swedish election observers. Questions may be addressed to Sida/International Recruitment and Training Division (RIU)/Electoral Group.

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Key word: 57465 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications

Thomas Östros to speak at WTO seminar

On 2 February Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros will speak at a seminar on the WTO and the Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong in December.

TIME AND PLACE

Thursday 2 February 16.00-17.30

Beskowsalen, ABF-huset
Sveavägen 41
Stockholm

The seminar is being held by ABF (Workers' Educational Association) and the Olof Palme International Center and is open to the public. The economist Stefan de Vylder and Bengt Nörby, Administrative Director, Confederation of Professional Employees (TCO), will also take part in the seminar. The head of the Olof Palme International Center, Viola Furubjelke, will lead the discussion.

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Key word: 57375 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2006-02-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Four new ambassadors in Stockholm

Four newly appointed ambassadors, from Portugal, Bangladesh, South Korea and Switzerland, will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Wednesday 1 February.

The newly appointed Portuguese Ambassador José Carlos Julio da Cruz Almeida was born in 1945. He holds a degree in law and is a career diplomat. After entering service at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1974 he has served as Consul-General in New York and Rio de Janeiro, and has been a negotiator on international water resource issues. His most recent appointment was as Ambassador on Cyprus.

The newly appointed Bangladesh Ambassador Muhammad Azizul Haque was born in 1955. He entered service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1983. In recent years he has been Director-General in charge of European issues at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as Deputy High Commissioner at the Bangladesh High Commission in London. He most recent served as Director-General (Personnel) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The newly appointed South Korean Ambassador Lee Joon-hee was born in 1948. He studied at Seoul National University and at Webster University in Amsterdam. He is a career diplomat and during recent years has been Ambassador in Prague and Director-General of the Middle East and African Affairs Bureau at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. His most recent appointment was as adviser for international relations to the Daejeon Metropolitan City government.

The newly appointed Swiss Ambassador Robert Reich was born in 1950. He holds a Licentiate

degree in economics from the University of St. Gallen. He entered service at the Department of Foreign Affairs in 1977 and has served as Deputy Head of the embassies in London and Buenos Aires. His most recent appointment was as Ambassador in Quito.

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Key word: 57251 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications

Thomas Östros to speak at the Palestine International Business Forum

On Tuesday 31 January at 09.00, Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros is to address the Palestine International Business Forum. This will take place at Berns Hotel in Stockholm.

The Palestine International Business Forum is a meeting place for Palestinian, Israeli and Swedish business representatives. It was set up on the initiative of the Swedish business sector and is supported by the Swedish Government. Its purpose is to contribute to economic growth and stability in the Middle East region. The Forum has some 30 members, all of which are companies in the private sector. Their task includes identifying and promoting investments among the parties.

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Key word: 57148 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to visit Tallinn

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will visit Tallinn on 1 February, when she will meet her Estonian colleague Foreign Minister Urmas Paet for talks. They will discuss EU enlargement, questions concerning the common foreign and security policy, and other issues.

Ms Freivalds will also visit the Estonian School of Diplomacy, where current students include civil servants from Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Sweden is contributing to this project.

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Key word: 57140 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to give support to West Africa

The Government has decided to enter into a cooperation agreement with ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States.

The agreement will form the basis for increased cooperation between Sweden and ECOWAS in support of the organisation's work for increased integration, security and development in Africa.

"West Africa is a region with great potential but with many transboundary obstacles to development. ECOWAS has the potential to be the strong regional actor needed to bring the countries in West Africa together," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The agreement covers support for conflict prevention work and conflict management, economic cooperation and integration and also common natural resources and infrastructure.

The agreement will be signed by State Secretary Lars-Olof Lindgren at ECOWAS Headquarters in Abuja, Nigeria on 2 February.

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Key word: 57093 Sustainable development Industry, trade, regional development Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation
Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Uganda

The Government has decided that Sweden will make two long-term and four short-term observers available for the parliamentary and presidential elections in Uganda on 23 February 2006.

The election observers will be part of a joint EU mission.

"By sending election observers to Uganda, we want to help strengthen democratic development in the country," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The elections are the first multiparty elections to be held in Uganda since President Museveni came to power in 1986.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the European Commission.

Sweden's development cooperation with Uganda amounted to about SEK 240 million in 2005. Sweden also contributed some SEK 125 million in humanitarian assistance, mainly targeted on northern Uganda.

Sida is responsible for the recruitment and training of Swedish election observers. Questions may be addressed to Sida/International Recruitment and Training Division (RIU)/Electoral Group.

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Key word: 57089 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ambassador Anders Oljelund to be mediator in the Darfur conflict

Ambassador Anders Oljelund has been appointed to be a member of the staff of the EU Special Representative for Sudan and to take part in the peace negotiations that the African Union is leading in Abuja, Nigeria. He succeeds Sten Rylander, who recently took up his post as ambassador in Zimbabwe.

"It is very positive that Swedish support for the peace negotiations on Darfur can continue in this concrete manner. A political agreement between the parties is vital to increasing security for the population in Darfur," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

Ambassador Oljelund has long experience from Africa and international security and development assistance policy. He will travel to Abuja this week to join the ongoing peace negotiations.

The conflict in Darfur in western Sudan is regarded as the most serious ongoing humanitarian disaster in Africa. Sweden is working on a broad front to help the vulnerable population in Darfur and to find a solution to the conflict.

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Key word: 57086 Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Ukraine

The Government has decided to send ten election observers to Ukraine for the forthcoming parliamentary election on 26 March.

"The election in Ukraine will decide the fate of democracy in the country and is the first election since the Orange Revolution in December 2004. Through this Swedish contribution, we want to show our support for a stable transition to democracy in Ukraine," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

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Key word: 56886 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-26

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New trade office in Romania

The Government decided today to open a trade office in Bucharest. The office will be run by the Swedish Trade Council and will open in February this year.

"By opening a trade office we will strengthen opportunities to assist Swedish companies in the Romanian market. At the same time, we will enhance Sweden's profile abroad and improve the prospects for Swedish exports to Romania," says Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros.

Sweden's presence in strategically important markets is being expanded gradually. In 2005 completely new trade offices were opened in Kuala Lumpur and Athens. Another office will open soon in Buenos Aires. Swedish Trade Council representation has also been reinforced in Toronto, Milan and Sao Paulo. An office will also be set up in Bangalore in India. This reinforcement is part of the Government's initiative for increased internationalisation of Swedish companies.

The Swedish Trade Council, which cooperates closely with embassies and consulates-general, has about 50 offices in some 40 countries and just over 400 employees. The Swedish Trade Council is jointly owned by the state and the business sector and has a turnover of approximately SEK 450 million a year.

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Key word: 56901 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Barbro Holmberg to speak at migration conference in Brussels

Tomorrow, Wednesday 25 January, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg will take part in the Conference on Reinforcing the Area of Freedom, Security, Justice and Prosperity in the EU and its Neighbours, organised by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the Belgian government.

The conference is part of the dialogue between EU countries and their neighbours on refugee and migration policy. Discussions at the conference will include the rights of refugees and migrants, cooperation in the fight against trafficking in human beings and organised crime, and the position of migration in EU external relations.

"It is important to strengthen international cooperation to manage today's migratory flows, take action against trafficking in human beings and human smuggling, and safeguard the right of asylum. The conference is a step in this important work," says Ms Holmberg.

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Key word: 56835 Foreign policy and international cooperation Asylum, migration, integration, minorities EU Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to attend funeral of President Rugova

The President of Kosovo, Ibrahim Rugova, died on Saturday 21 January. His funeral will take place in Pristina on Thursday 26 January.

The Swedish Government will be represented by Minister Carin Jämtin.

It had been known for some time that President Rugova was seriously ill with cancer.

Aged 61, Mr Rugova was the popularly elected president of Kosovo, which is administered by the United Nations under Security Council Resolution 1244. He became known during the 1990s for his peaceful opposition to President Milosevic.

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Key word: 56833 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Continued Swedish participation in Hebron

The Government decided today to continue Swedish participation in the civilian observer mission Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH), which monitors the situation in the West Bank city of Hebron in occupied Palestinian territory. Sweden has taken part since February 1997.

"TIPH plays an important role under conditions that are often difficult. Our participation is a concrete contribution in the attempt to reduce tensions between the parties and to act for a peaceful solution to the conflict," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

TIPH is made up of some seventy observers from Norway, Italy, Denmark, Turkey, Switzerland and Sweden. The observer mission was set up at the request of both the Israeli and the Palestinian parties to the conflict. So far, the parties have requested that TIPH's mandate be extended at six-month intervals. Israel and the Palestinian National Authority have requested that the participating states continue their involvement in TIPH for six months, from 1 February 2006.

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Key word: 56543 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New cooperation strategy for southern Caucasus countries

The Government today approved a new cooperation strategy for the countries of the southern Caucasus (Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan) for the period 2006-2009.

The overall objective of the strategy is to help create conditions that will enable poor people to improve their lives. Promoting respect for human rights will be given priority.

"The change of regime in 2003 created the conditions for increased cooperation with Georgia. In view of this, development cooperation with Georgia during the period will be increased to SEK 100 million per year," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Cooperation with Georgia will focus on strengthening democracy, increasing respect for human rights and measures to promote sustainable economic development. A gender equality perspective will be integrated into the cooperation.

During the period, support to Azerbaijan will amount to SEK 10 million per year and Armenia will receive SEK 20 million per year, focused on democracy and human rights.

The strategy includes a regional component to promote conflict resolution and cross-border contacts.

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Key word: 56541 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden provides support to southern Africa

The Government decided today to enter into a cooperation agreement with the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The agreement will form the basis for support to a series of regional initiatives in southern Africa which Sweden is providing through SADC. The aim is to strengthen SADC as a regional actor.

"Many of Africa's problems require cross-border cooperation. I hope that a stronger SADC will lead to increased cooperation among the countries of southern Africa, thus contributing to positive development in the region," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The agreement covers measures in areas such as conflict management, peace and security, human rights and democracy, economic integration, and support to the new SADC strategy for the fight against HIV/AIDS.

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Key word: 56532 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden increases support for the fight against avian influenza

Sweden is going to give SEK 70 million in multilateral support to a number of international organisations, including the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO), to fight avian influenza. This was announced by State Secretary Annika Söder at a meeting in Beijing on 17-18 January.

"The world must now act quickly and take effective, well-considered and coordinated action to prevent avian influenza spreading to people," says Ms Söder.

The meeting was held at the initiative of the World Bank and the EU together with the host country. The main purpose of the meeting was to establish better preparedness to deal with a possible worldwide spread of avian influenza.

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Key word: 56656 Health care, health, social issues/insurance Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

UN Emergency Relief Coordinator to visit Sweden

Head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) Jan Egeland will visit Stockholm on 19-20 January.

TIME AND PLACE

PRESS CONFERENCE

Carin Jämtin and Jan Egeland

Thursday 19 January at 14.40

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1

Assembly at the entrance at 14.30

Please bring your press credentials.

Mr Egeland's agenda includes a meeting with Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin to discuss current humanitarian issues, including the establishment of the new UN Central Emergency Response Fund, which was decided on in December 2005.

Sweden has contributed SEK 330 million to the Fund.

The media are invited to attend a press briefing with Ms Jämtin and Mr Egeland at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on Thursday 19 January at 14.40.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds presents report to Kofi Annan

On Thursday 19 January, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will present the concluding report from the Challenges Project on peace support operations to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

The report, "Meeting the Challenges of Peace Operations: Cooperation and Coordination", contains numerous proposals on how to strengthen the international community's peace support efforts.

Some points mentioned in the report are that measures to support justice in countries affected by conflict must be an integrated element early on in the planning stage of UN peace operations. Practical tools are needed for cooperation between the UN and various regional organisations, such as in Africa. This in turn places demands on education, which to an even greater degree must include both military and civilian experts.

"Through this report and its concrete recommendations, Sweden is providing an important contribution to UN peace support efforts. Sweden is taking part in 10 of the 18 current UN peace support operations. This is one more way for us to help strengthen this crucial work," states Ms Freivalds.

"The report and its recommendations have been developed in cooperation with authorities, organisations and governments in 14 countries throughout the world. The work on the report has contributed to greater consensus on how UN peace operations should be developed and how Member States can support these efforts."

The presentation marks the opening of a seminar at UN headquarters on peace support operations. The project's partner organisations, many Member States, representations from the UN Secretariat and other international organisations will take part in the seminar.

The purpose of the Challenges Project is to help enhance and improve the efficiency of international peace operations. Since its launch in 1997 the project has grown and now includes partner organisations and departments from 14 countries: Argentina, Australia, Canada, China, India, Japan, Jordan, Nigeria, Russia, the UK, South Africa, Turkey, the USA and Sweden. The project is coordinated by Sweden through the Folke Bernadotte Academy (chair), the Swedish Armed Forces, the National Police Board and the Swedish National Defence College.

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Key word: 56438 Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government Bill on continued Swedish presence in Liberia

The Government has decided to propose to the Swedish Riksdag that Swedish troops continue to participate in the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) until November 2006.

A Swedish mechanised infantry company of some 240 persons has been part of UNMIL since March 2004.

"The successfully conducted elections in Liberia last autumn, crowned today by the inauguration of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, are a sign of hope in the return of peace and stability to Liberia. The presence of Swedish troops has been an important contribution to UN and Liberian efforts in consolidating the peace process," states Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"UN measures in Liberia demonstrate the success of modern peace-building efforts, and how a steadfast, broad commitment by the international community can contribute to positive and peaceful development."

Sweden is further involved in the political efforts for peace and security in West Africa through State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren's assignment as the EU Presidency's Special Representative for the Mano River Union (Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea). Mr Dahlgren will be present at the presidential inauguration in Liberia which takes place today, Monday 16 January.

In 2005 Sweden contributed SEK 105 million to humanitarian measures and reconstruction in Liberia.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Barbro Holmberg to informal EU Council of Ministers meeting in Vienna

Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg is to take part in an informal Council of Ministers meeting on Justice and Home Affairs in Vienna on 13-14 January.

The agenda includes ways in which cooperation between the asylum agencies of member states can be improved. Discussions will also be held on how the EU, cooperating with the UNHCR, can increase its support to refugees in regions of origin and transit via regional protection programmes.

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PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Head of UNAIDS to visit Sweden

TIME AND PLACE

Wednesday 11 January at 15.00

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1

Assembly at the entrance at 14.50

Please bring your press credentials.

The head of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Peter Piot, will visit Stockholm on 11-12 January. Mr Piot's agenda includes a meeting with Minister for International

Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin to discuss Sweden's programme as chair of the UNAIDS Board during 2006.

The media are invited to attend a press briefing with Ms Jämtin and Mr Piot at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on Wednesday 11 January at 15.00.

Sweden had already placed HIV/AIDS - along with issues concerning sexual and reproductive health and rights - at the top of the Swedish development cooperation agenda in 2003. Sweden is increasing its support to UNAIDS this year by SEK 50 million, to a total of SEK 200 million. At the same time, support to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria will be increased. Sweden also provides the WHO with special support for the fight against AIDS.

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Key word: 55845 Health care, health, social issues/insurance Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Martti Ahtisaari to visit Stockholm

UN Special Envoy for the Future Status Process for Kosovo, Martti Ahtisaari, will visit Stockholm on Thursday 5 January 2006 for discussions with Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds. The agenda will focus on the issue of Kosovo's future.

Discussions will centre on Mr Ahtisaari's work with the status negotiations for Kosovo and the role of other actors in these efforts. The overall goal of the status negotiations is to reach an agreement on the future status of Kosovo that contributes to reforms leading to normal European standards and that the rights of minorities are strengthened. The EU policy for helping the countries of the Western Balkans achieve this can be summarised as stabilisation through integration.

In light of Mr Ahtisaari's commitment to the peace process between the Indonesian government and GAM, the issue of Aceh will also be discussed during his visit.

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Key word: 55776 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2006-01-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Swedish strategic plan for sexual and reproductive health and rights

The Government has adopted a policy document for Sweden's international policy for sexual and reproductive health and rights, (SRHR).

The document, which is the first of its kind, will form the basis of the bilateral, multilateral, operational and normative work that Sweden conducts internationally.

"It is important to clearly highlight Sweden's positions when it comes to sexual and reproductive health and rights. International opposition exists, and we are unfortunately often forced to focus on defending declarations already agreed on," states Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation.

"The policy document emphasises the importance that Sweden attaches to these issues - partly to realise the UN Millennium Development Goals, but primarily because they deal with every person's individual rights," Ms Jämtin concludes.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights apply to everyone's partnerships, relations and sexual lives. They involve the entire life cycle. They include knowledge about sexuality and reproduction, protection against HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, access to contraceptives and abortions. They also include adequate health care during pregnancy and childbirth, and care of the newly born.

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Key word: 55725 Health care, health, social issues/insurance Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-12-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Action plan against communicable diseases

The fight against communicable diseases is so important that it is being made a priority area for Swedish development assistance. The Government has decided on an action plan for Sweden's contribution to the global fight against communicable diseases.

The action plan is based on the proposal that was presented to Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin in October last year (Swedish Government Official Reports 2005:107).

"The fight against communicable diseases will be one of four priorities for Swedish development assistance," says Ms Jämtin.

"By adopting a special action plan, we are bringing greater coherence to Sweden's contribution to the global fight against communicable diseases. This enables us to set clearer priorities and coordinate our inputs so as to maximise their usefulness," concludes Ms Jämtin.

The action plan applies to all Swedish global development policy and will be characterised by long-term commitment and clear and measurable targets. The development of new knowledge and harnessing of research results have a key role.

The action plan singles out certain areas as particularly crucial in the fight against communicable diseases:

- better education and increased gender equality, access to clean water and sanitation, decent housing, good food and vaccines, development and correct use of new medicines;
- reinforcement of health systems in poor countries;
- studies of the spread of communicable diseases among both people and animals and application of the International Health Regulations (IHR).

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-12-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government updates its Asia policy

The Government today presented the communication "A Swedish Policy for Asia" to the Riksdag.

In the communication, the Government describes its Asia policy in a number of important areas: democracy and human rights; trade and investment; development cooperation; the environment; research; education; non-governmental organisations; cross-border networks; and culture, information and measures to promote Sweden. The perspective focuses on Sweden's interests in international issues, the desire to promote our welfare through employment and growth, and the goals and needs of the Asian countries themselves.

The impact of the changes taking place in many countries in the region is clearly global in nature. Asia's importance in the world economy continues to grow, which emphasises how important it is that Sweden works to develop its economic ties with the region as a whole. Even though poverty in Asia is decreasing, the majority of the world's poor still live in Asia, gaps within countries are increasing and many countries are having problems living up to several of the other Millennium Development Goals. There is a need to continue to support reform efforts in developing Asian countries and to continue their integration in the global economy. The environment is highlighted as a crucial issue for Asia that will require continued attention for a long time to come. In its cooperation with countries in Asia, the Government will continue to give high priority to human rights and democracy issues.

Developments in the world will be closely linked to developments in Asia during the coming century. For a small, open economy like the Swedish economy, this involves great opportunities and challenges. The pace of development in Asia is very rapid, and it is therefore warranted to analyse Asia's growing role in the world and to update the Government's Asia policy.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-12-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to UN Central Emergency Response Fund

The Government has decided to contribute SEK 330 million to the UN Central Emergency Response Fund in 2006.

This support means that the UN will have access to its own funds and will thus be in a better position to intervene more rapidly in humanitarian disasters.

"The Central Emergency Response Fund is an important component in the work of reforming the UN and will help secure predictable, rapid and fair funding in the event of humanitarian disasters," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Sweden presented the proposal on making UN emergency preparedness more efficient and has been an active force in the General Assembly negotiations on setting up the fund. The fund will be up and running at the beginning of January 2006. According to the General Assembly Resolution, the Central Emergency Response Fund will be administered by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

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Key word: 55378 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-12-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to withhold budget support to Uganda

The Government has decided to withhold SEK 65 million in budget support to Uganda in light of the negative democratic development in the country.

Instead, SEK 25 million of the funds allocated to Uganda will be used directly for disaster relief in the war-torn northern area of the country.

"After the elections at the beginning of 2006, we will make a new evaluation of the situation in the country regarding democratic development, including the way the elections are carried out, and then decide if we can pay the remaining funds earmarked for budget support," says Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation.

"Sweden will continue to carefully monitor the situation in Uganda, and maintain our dialogue with the government. The implementation of a multiparty system earlier this year was a step in the right direction. I hope the Ugandan government will resume the work for a pluralistic political system. This will be of major importance when we discuss a new cooperation strategy during the coming year."

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Key word: 55360 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-12-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden contributes to increased security in the Palestinian areas

The Government has decided to provide substantial support to improve security and living conditions in the Palestinian areas.

The Government is contributing SEK 20 million to support EU action to transform and modernise the Palestinian Civil Police. In addition, the Government has decided to provide SEK 40 million in assistance to the Quick Impact Program for positive economic development in Gaza. The funds will be channelled through the UN refugee organisation UNRWA, which has a central role in improving the situation of Palestinian refugees.

"For Sweden, it is important to contribute to international efforts to increase security in the Palestinian areas. Palestinians will be better able to combat terrorism. The support improves the prospects for a resumption of the peace process," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"By providing aid to the Quick Impact Program and the EU Police Mission we are helping to establish better and more secure living conditions in the Palestinian areas," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

At the turn of the year, the EU Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS), which is supporting the transformation of the Palestinian Civil Police, will be expanded. The purpose of the Mission is to assist in building up a modern police force that establishes law and order and promotes human rights. A more effective police force will be more able to combat terrorism. The Deputy Head of the Mission is a Swede and additional Swedish advisers are likely to join the Mission when it is expanded at the turn of the year. These contributions will make Sweden one of the largest donors to the Police Mission.

The Quick Impact Program is intended to generate quick and positive development in Gaza after Israel's withdrawal. It includes measures to create jobs, build up infrastructure and improve the environment. The Program is headed by James Wolfensohn, who has been appointed by the Quartet (EU, UN, USA and Russia).

Support for EUPOL COPPS and the Quick Impact Program is being provided alongside Sweden's substantial contribution to the EU mission to monitor the operation of the border crossing point at Rafah between Gaza and Egypt.

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Key word: 55297 Sustainable development Defence, emergency management and safety EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-12-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Palestinian parliamentary elections

The Palestinian parliamentary elections are scheduled to be held on 25 January 2006. The EU will send a team of election observers to monitor the elections. The Government has decided to place ten Swedish election observers at the disposal of the EU team. At the same time, a Swedish statistical expert will be part of the team's command group.

"The parliamentary elections are very important for strengthening the legitimacy of the Palestinian National Authority and for creating better conditions for resuming the peace process," says Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation.

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Key word: 55273 EU Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-12-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Support for election monitoring of Iraqi out-of-country voting in Sweden

Today, 15 December, parliamentary elections are being held in Iraq. Sweden is one of 15 countries chosen to hold out-of-country voting for Iraqi citizens living outside Iraq. Registration and voting for Iraqi citizens in Sweden has taken place on 13-15 December in Skarpnäck, Kista and Angered.

The International Mission for Iraqi Elections (IMIE), composed of independent election commissions and electoral experts from several countries and chaired by Canada, is charged with monitoring the out-of-country voting.

The Government has decided to place 22 election observers at the disposal of the IMIE to monitor out-of-country voting in Sweden.

"By providing election observers, we can help strengthen democratic development in Iraq," says Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-12-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Upgrading of consulate in Mariehamn

The Government decided today to upgrade the Swedish consulate in Mariehamn to a consulate-general.

All Sweden's salaried consulates around the world are consulates-general. The only exception has until now been the consulate in Mariehamn.

Relations between Sweden and Finland are extraordinarily close and cooperation between the two countries is continuously deepening. The upgrading marks the importance Sweden attaches to its good relations with Åland.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-12-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador to Seoul

The Government today appointed Lars Vargö as Ambassador in Seoul, the Republic of Korea.

Lars Vargö, who is currently Head of the International Department of the Riksdag, was previously the Ambassador in Vilnius. He has also served at the embassies in Tokyo, Washington and Tripoli.

Lars Vargö will take up his post in Seoul in January 2006.

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Key word: 55206 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-12-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden contributes to chemical weapons destruction in Russia

Sweden and the United Kingdom today signed a Memorandum of Understanding about support for chemical weapons disarmament in the Russian Federation.

A Swedish contribution of SEK 5.5 million will be made to the British-led infrastructure projects at Shchuch'ye in Russia. The objective of the project is to support the construction of facilities for destruction of Russian chemical weapons stockpiles. The contribution is a part of Sweden's participation in the G8 Global Partnership.

Sweden already contributes to the work carried out in this area by the NGO Green Cross.

Background

The Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons entered into force in 1997. It prohibits the production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons. Today, 175 states have joined the Convention. The Convention stipulates that all stockpiles of chemical weapons are to be destroyed within given time limits. Russia is one of the states which, at considerable cost, is in the process of destroying its stockpiles of these weapons.

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Key word: 55000 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-12-09

SEK 1.5 million to virtual world exhibition

The Government has decided to allocate SEK 1.5 million to the first world exhibition ever held on the Internet.

The virtual world exhibition is the result of a Swedish initiative, and Sweden will also have a prominent role in the project organisation. The aim of the exhibition is to increase interest in the world exhibitions and to reach new strategic target groups and cooperation partners.

Swedish participation is being financed by funds from the export promotion budget controlled by Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros, and the information technology budget controlled by Minister for Communications and Regional Policy Ulrica Messing.

The project is owned and operated by the International Exhibitions Bureau (BIE) in Paris, which is also responsible for the existing world exhibitions. The next physical world exhibition will be held in Shanghai in 2010.

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Key word: 54941 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Ulrica Messing

PRESS RELEASE

2005-12-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports UN Fund for the Tsunami Warning System

The Swedish Minister for International Development Cooperation, Ms Carin Jämtin, signed an agreement in Bangkok today between Sweden and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, UNESCAP.

The agreement which has been negotiated between UNESCAP and the Swedish Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, carries with it a Swedish contribution of USD 2,5 Million to the Multi-Donor Voluntary Trust Fund on Tsunami Early Warning Arrangements in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia. With the contribution, Sweden becomes a Key Donor and the second donor only after Thailand, the Fund's Foundation Donor.

Earlier today, Minister Jämtin announced the Swedish contribution in a meeting with Minister of

Foreign Affairs Kantathi Suphamongkhon. In the same meeting, the Ministers also discussed bilateral questions, including the Joint Plan of Action that was initiated by Prime Minister Thaksin and Prime Minister Persson of Sweden last year. The agreement has since been negotiated between the two kingdoms and is scheduled to be signed shortly.

The Joint Plan of Action covers a broad range of issues such as enhancing bilateral economic relations, areas of mutual interest such as agriculture and forestry, defense and military cooperation, education and research, energy and the environment, ICT, tourism and health care, post Tsunami recovery, cooperation in regional development projects and regular exchanges on global issues.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-12-06

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Thomas Östros to receive Iranian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

On Tuesday, 6 December, Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros will receive Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister responsible for Europe and America Said Jalili.

Mr Jalili is here for a meeting of the joint commission to discuss economic and industrial cooperation. The meeting of the joint commission is the sixth in a series and is taking place on 5-7 December. State Secretary Lars-Olof Lindgren is hosting the meeting and, together with Deputy Foreign Minister Jalili, will sign an investment protection agreement between Iran and Sweden.

During the meeting with Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros, the countries' trade exchange will be discussed, as will Iran's preparations ahead of its admission to the WTO.

Swedish exports to Iran have increased significantly in recent years and have turned a trade deficit to a surplus. The telecommunications and motor vehicle industries in particular have met with great success.

Imports from Iran consist almost exclusively of crude oil.

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Key word: 54616 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-12-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Head of the Press and Information Department at Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government today appointed Ambassador Cecilia Julin as new Head of the Press and Information Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Ms Julin is currently Sweden's Ambassador in Bratislava, Slovakia. She has previously served at the embassies in Washington, Tel Aviv, Lima and Pretoria.

Ms Julin comes from Göteborg. She holds a degree in economics and has been deeply involved with economic and trade policy issues. Her job in Washington was to promote Sweden on a broad front, and her work in Bratislava also largely consists of trade promotion.

Ms Julin will take up her position on 1 March 2006.

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Key word: 54417 Culture, the media, leisure activities Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

2005 Year of Design a success

The 2005 Year of Design was announced by the Government in 2002 and since then nearly 1600 design projects have been initiated and carried out in Sweden and abroad. During the year 40 missions abroad all around the world have focused on design. The purpose of the 2005 Year of Design has been to demonstrate the possibilities that design offers business, culture and society in general, while creating new opportunities for stylists, designers and architects.

"The 2005 Year of Design has promoted new contacts and meetings between the general public, the business sector and the design industry. The many exchanges of knowledge that have taken place this year have contributed to a long-term increase in awareness about the importance of design both in Sweden and abroad," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

On 1 December there will be a day of design activities around the country, Startskottet för Design. Startskottet will highlight activities carried out during the Year of Design but will also look to the future and formulate ideas about how to strengthen the role of design in society in the long term.

Further information is available via the links to the right.

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Key word: 54237 Culture, the media, leisure activities Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Increased support to OSCE mission in Tajikistan

The Government Offices has decided to increase support to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mission in Tajikistan against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) by providing an additional SEK 800 000.

The Swedish support will primarily be used to improve security at existing storage facilities to minimise the risk of theft and proliferation, explosion and other damage that can pose a danger to the civilian population.

"Sweden will now make a further contribution to the OSCE's important work of preventing

proliferation and safeguarding stockpiles of small arms and light weapons in Tajikistan. An important aspect of this mission is that it also promotes security for the civilian population," says Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation.

Sweden contributed SEK 800 000 to the OSCE mission in Tajikistan earlier this year.

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Key word: 54212 Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to visit Indonesia and Thailand

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will visit Indonesia and Thailand on 2-6 December.

In Indonesia Ms Jämtin will visit Aceh Province to take stock of how the work of reconstruction is progressing in the areas affected by the tsunami, which she visited shortly after the disaster on 26 December last year. Ms Jämtin will also visit the Aceh Monitoring Mission, the EU-led observation mission that is monitoring the implementation of the peace agreement between the Indonesian Government and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM).

The Minister for International Development Cooperation will then continue to Jakarta for bilateral talks with Indonesia's State Minister for National Development Planning Sri Mulyani Indrawati and representatives of the World Bank and the UN.

Finally, Ms Jämtin will travel to Bangkok where she will meet the Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand, Wissanu Krea-Ngam, and others.

Sweden has given extensive support to humanitarian measures in Aceh Province and to long-term reconstruction there. Sweden is also contributing to the EU observation mission, providing 13 civilian observers as well as logistics support through the Swedish Rescue Services Agency.

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Key word: 54139 EU Sustainable development Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Four new ambassadors in Stockholm

Four newly appointed ambassadors, from Latvia, Tanzania, Iceland and Poland, present their letters of credence to HM The King on Wednesday 30 November.

Latvia's new ambassador, Elita Kuzma, was born in 1964. After studying economics at the State University of Latvia, she later became a career diplomat. Ms Kuzma has been Director and Deputy State Secretary at the First Political Directorate of the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Her most recent position has been as Ambassador to Austria with concurrent accreditation to Liechtenstein, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland and Hungary.

Tanzania's new ambassador Dr Ben Gwai Moses was born in 1948. His educational qualifications include a Ph.D. in business administration from Curtin University of Technology in Perth, Australia. Dr Moses has previously served as Permanent Secretary and Executive Head of the Prime Minister's Office. He is now moving from the position of High Commissioner of Tanzania in Canada, with concurrent accreditation as ambassador to Cuba.

Iceland's new ambassador Guðmundur Árni Stefánsson was born in 1955. He is one of the most prominent figures in the Icelandic Social Democratic Party. Mr Stefánsson has been Party Vice-Chairman and served as Minister of Health and Social Security. Mr Stefánsson was elected to Althingi in 1991 and is currently its First Vice-President.

Poland's new ambassador Michal Czyz was born in 1954. He holds an MA in economics from the Central School of Planning and Statistics in Warsaw. Mr Czyz was first employed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1980. In recent years he has been Minister Counsellor at the Permanent Representation of Poland to the European Union in Brussels and Deputy Director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of the European Union. His most recent position has been as Director at the Secretariat of the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

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Key word: 54137 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden gives major contribution when the EU monitors the border in Gaza

The Government has today decided on extensive support to the EU border mission in Gaza, consisting of six advisers, housing and offices for the mission's personnel.

When the border station at Rafah between Gaza and Egypt opens tomorrow on 25 November, it will be done with the EU as a monitoring party. Sweden is one of the largest donors to the mission, providing five police officers, one logistical expert and 26 furnished containers intended for housing and offices for EU personnel.

"This is the first time that the EU is assuming a leading role in the Middle East conflict. I am very pleased that Sweden is playing an important role in this context," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"I am delighted that, starting tomorrow, the Palestinians in Gaza will once again be able to travel abroad. For Sweden, the EU mission represents an important contribution to create positive development in Gaza and better conditions for the resumption of the peace process," says Minister for International Development Corporation Carin Jämtin.

The EU High Representative Javier Solana has especially commented on the importance of Sweden's contribution to the mission.

On 15 November representatives of the Palestinian National Authority and Israel's government concluded an agreement on mobility and border crossings that included the border station at Rafah between Gaza and Egypt. This border station has largely been closed since Israel's withdrawal from Gaza in September 2005. The agreement of 15 November means that the parties have agreed on the forms for opening the border and that the EU, as a neutral third party, will be tasked with monitoring the operations of the border station.

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Key word: 53909 Sustainable development Defence, emergency management and safety EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

NEW TIME FOR PRESS CONFERENCE! International conference on the link between jobs and poverty reduction

The press conference with Carin Jämtin and Juan Somavía at Grand Hotel, Saltsjöbaden, on Friday 25 November has been changed from 13.30 to 11.00.

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Key word: 53776 Sustainable development Employment and gender equality Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-23

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to open trade office in Sao Paolo

Sweden is to establish a trade office in Sao Paolo. The Government took this decision today. The office will be managed by the Swedish Trade Council and will open at the beginning of January next year.

"There is great demand for consultancy services in the Brazilian market. By opening a trade office

in Sao Paolo we will strengthen opportunities to assist Swedish companies, particularly small and medium-sized companies," says Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros.

The Swedish Trade Council, which cooperates closely with embassies and consulates-general, has about 50 offices in some 40 countries and just over 400 employees. The Swedish Trade Council, which is jointly owned by the state and the business sector, has a turnover of approximately SEK 450 million a year.

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Key word: 53775 Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

International conference on the link between jobs and poverty reduction

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will host the international conference **Work Ahead: The Link between Jobs and Poverty Reduction**, to be held at Grand Hotel in Saltsjöbaden on 24-25 November.

TIME AND PLACE

PRESS CONFERENCE

Carin Jämtin and Juan Somavía

Friday 25 November, at 11.00 (new time!)

Grand Hotel, Saltsjöbaden

Please bring your press credentials.

The conference will bring together about eighty representatives of governments, trade unions and employers' organisations to discuss how more job opportunities and better working conditions can improve the lives of poor people. The scheduled speakers include the Director-General of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Juan Somavía.

There will be an opportunity for the press to meet Carin Jämtin and Juan Somavía at Grand Hotel, Saltsjöbaden, at 13.30 on Friday 25 November.

Some of the issues to be discussed are:

- Employment policies as an integral part of the economic policies and poverty reduction strategies of the developing countries.

- Properly working labour markets as a factor in preventing armed conflicts and terrorism.
- Strategies for youth employment at national and regional level.
- Gender perspectives on labour market issues.

Further information, the conference programme and discussion papers can be accessed via the link in the right column.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

PfP seminar on trafficking in human beings

On 24-25 November, Sweden will host a seminar on the Nato and Partnership for Peace (PfP) policy against trafficking in human beings. The purpose of the seminar is to promote integration of the policy and associated guidelines as a natural part of the planning and implementation of peace-support operations under Nato and PfP auspices.

The opening speakers at the seminar will be State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren and the new Norwegian State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Kjetil Skogrand. Mr Dahlgren will speak about the need for joint international efforts to combat trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation and abuse.

The seminar will also include discussion of how to deal with violations of the policy, which is based on zero tolerance.

The seminar is being arranged jointly with Nato and with the support of the Folke Bernadotte Academy. The PfP countries, together with representatives of the UN, EU and OSCE secretariats, have been invited to participate.

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Key word: 53643 Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Press Secretary to Barbro Holmberg

As of 21 November, Thomas Hartman is the new Press Secretary to Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg. His most recent appointment was as political adviser at Västerbotten County Council.

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Key word: 53619 Foreign policy and international cooperation Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to donor coordination office in Iraq

The Government Offices have decided to contribute SEK 16.6 million to the establishment of a donor coordination mechanism for the reconstruction of Iraq.

The donor coordination mechanism will contribute to a more strategic approach in the reconstruction efforts and promote the efficient use of assistance funding in Iraq.

Sweden will give the contribution to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) which, together with the Iraqi Ministry of Planning, is in charge of the project.

The Government Offices have also decided that a Swedish expert is to be employed at the coordination office with the task of assisting and supervising the mechanism.

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Key word: 53606 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to attend meeting of EU development ministers

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will take part in the meeting of EU development ministers to be held in Brussels on 21-22 November within the framework of the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC).

The ministers will discuss a new EU development policy, the effectiveness of EU development cooperation, an upcoming strategy for Africa, trade-related assistance and the situation after the earthquake disaster in Pakistan. They will also discuss the development aspects of the follow-up to the tsunami disaster in Asia.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds to visit Oslo

TIME AND PLACE

PRESS CONFERENCE

Friday 18 November at 10.35

Utenriksdepartementet
7. Juniplassen / Victoria Terrace
Oslo, Norway

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is visiting Oslo on 18 November. Her programme includes meetings with Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg and Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre. Laila Freivalds will also meet the Storting Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and participate in a Hammarskjöld seminar at Voksenåsen.

A press briefing will take place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at 10.35.

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Key word: 53432 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds rounded off Stockholm Initiative

On Thursday 17 November, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds opened the concluding conference in what is known as the Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration of former soldiers (SIDDR).

During the year, the Government initiative has gathered actors from 26 countries and 23 organisations to discuss how post-conflict societies can achieve peaceful and sustainable development.

"Helping to prevent, hinder and contain armed conflicts is a high priority in the Government's policy for global development. Uncontrolled armed groups represent a threat to fragile peace in a post-conflict society. By ensuring that these groups are disarmed and integrated into society, Sweden can help prevent new conflicts breaking out," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

The objectives of the concluding conference include drawing up a final report of the Stockholm Initiative, which will be handed over to the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and will be distributed to countries and organisations that are committed to peace-building and reconstruction processes.

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Key word: 53429 Sustainable development Legislation and justice Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Government decided today to send an election observer to the Democratic Republic of the Congo ahead of the referendum on a new constitution on 18 December. The election observer will be part of the EU mission that consists of 26 long-term observers.

The referendum is part of the process that will give the Democratic Republic of the Congo a popularly elected government for the first time in the country's history. Both parliamentary and presidential elections will be held during the spring of 2006.

"It is of the utmost importance that the referendum in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is free and fair. By sending an election observer Sweden can contribute to a transparent election process that we hope will strengthen democracy in the country," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Sweden's development cooperation with the Democratic Republic of the Congo amounts to between SEK 40 million and SEK 50 million a year. In addition, Sweden contributes SEK 110 million in humanitarian aid via the UN system and support to NGOs active in the country.

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Key word: 53409 EU Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

EU Commissioner for Enlargement to meet Ms Freivalds

EU Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn will visit Stockholm on 17 November at the invitation of Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

TIME AND PLACE

Press Conference

Thursday 17 November at 13.00

Arvfurstens palats
Gustav Adolfs torg 1
Stockholm

Assembly in the entrance hall at 12.55

Please bring your press credentials.

Mr Rehn and Ms Freivalds will discuss such issues as continued EU enlargement. The Commissioner will also have talks with State Secretary Lars Danielsson.

Media representatives are welcome to attend a press conference with Minister for Foreign Affairs Freivalds and Commissioner Rehn at Arvfurstens palats on Thursday 17 November at 13.00.

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Key word: 53179 EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Turkey and Croatia closer to EU membership

The EU Commission has presented monitoring reports on Turkey and Croatia. The reports are a first review of the countries' reform processes since accession negotiations began on 3 October.

The Commission considers that Turkey continues to sufficiently fulfil the political requirements of the Copenhagen Criteria, which is a fundamental condition for accession negotiations. Croatia is expected to fulfil this part of the criteria without any great difficulty. Both countries appear to be efficient market economies. At the same time, the Commission emphasises in the reports that the countries need to continue reform of their respective judicial systems.

"Sweden welcomes the fact that accession negotiations have now begun with Turkey and Croatia and that the Commission monitoring reports indicate continued progress in the countries' reform efforts," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

In the reports, the Commission also indicates the areas of reform that Turkey and Croatia should prioritise in the short and medium term.

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Key word: 52995 EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to attend memorial ceremony for Yitzhak Rabin

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will travel to Israel on 13-15 November to attend a memorial ceremony in Jerusalem at the invitation of the

Israeli government.

TIME AND PLACE

Meeting with journalists at the Swedish Embassy in Tel Aviv on 15 November from 15.30 to 16.00.

The ceremony will commemorate the tenth anniversary of the assassination of the then Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. The Foreign Minister will also speak at a conference in Netanya focusing on Yitzhak Rabin's commitment to the peace process in the Middle East. In connection with the visit, Ms Freivalds will meet with her Israeli colleague, Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom, for bilateral discussions.

Foreign Minister Freivalds will meet with Swedish journalists at the Swedish Embassy in Tel Aviv on 15 November from 15.30 to 16.00.

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Key word: 52991 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Macedonia's application for EU membership

The EU Commission has presented its response to Macedonia's application for EU membership which was submitted in April 2004.

The statement contains an evaluation of Macedonia's efforts to fulfil the Copenhagen Criteria, which the EU has made a condition of membership. The Commission recommends that the EU heads of state and government decide to give Macedonia the status of candidate country, which would also mean that Macedonia would receive pre-accession support.

"I welcome the EU Commission recommendation that Macedonia should be given the status of candidate country. Now it is important that the country continues with rapid implementation of the social reforms that have begun and that are necessary to enable the country to start EU membership negotiations," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"The recommendation sends an important positive signal to the whole region and shows that the EU stands by its commitment on membership prospects for countries in the Western Balkans."

The Commission proposes that accession negotiations should not begin until the country has implemented further reforms and social changes.

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Key word: 52987 EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Bulgaria and Romania towards EU membership

The EU Commission monitoring reports on Bulgaria and Romania presented on 25 October show that progress is being made in the preparations for EU accession on 1 January 2007.

The countries are very well prepared to live up to and take responsibility for the acquis and the workings of the EU. The Commission has however identified a number of areas in which the pace of reform should increase to enable accession on the planned date.

"Sweden looks forward to Bulgaria and Romania acceding as full members of the EU on 1 January 2007. It is important however that both countries increase their reform efforts in order to achieve the objective," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

The Commission will continue to monitor and report on Bulgaria's and Romania's reforms in preparation for accession to the EU.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to attend donor conference for earthquake victims

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is scheduled to visit Pakistan on 18-20 November. Ms Jämtin will be taking part in a donor conference on assistance to earthquake victims in Islamabad on 19 November. The following day she will be visiting earthquake-affected areas.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Riga Graduate School of Law passes to Latvian ownership

The Government has signed an agreement with the Latvian government to make it possible for the Latvian state to assume responsibility for the Riga Graduate School of Law (RGSL) which Sweden has been supporting.

The institution will retain its academic profile and will now be able to continue its activities in collaboration with the University of Latvia and with support from the Latvian government.

The RGSL was originally founded as part of the process to develop and strengthen judicial systems in Latvia and the other Baltic countries. This has also meant that RGSL activities have helped prepare the countries for EU membership.

Under an original agreement between Sweden and Latvia in 1997, the RGSL was to be transferred

to Latvian ownership at a later stage. Swedish support to the RGSL has amounted to a total of more than SEK 40 million.

The institution has a high academic profile and has awarded Masters degrees to some 200 students. It has also provided a large number of legal education and professional development opportunities for practising lawyers in public administration, the judiciary and the legal profession.

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Key word: 52834 Legislation and justice Education and research Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden takes international initiative against child abduction

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds hosted an informal ministerial meeting on unlawfully abducted children at Haga Palace on Friday, 4 November. Ministers and senior political representatives from Algeria, Latvia, Malta, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey took part in the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting - the first of its kind - was to discuss measures that can be taken to prevent the unlawful abduction of children, i.e., when one of the child's parents unlawfully abducts or retains a child in a country other than that in which the child lives on a permanent basis.

International cooperation, in which Sweden takes an active part, has so far concerned cross-border cooperation between officials and judges. Ms Freivalds now wishes to go one step further and involve political decision-makers in a number of countries.

"We want to initiate cooperation with these countries to strengthen the international regulatory framework and make processing cases that arise quicker and more fruitful. Foreign policy is just as much about the security of individuals as it is about the security of nations," states Ms Freivalds.

"It is vital to do everything possible to prevent children being unlawfully abducted by influencing or deterring a potential perpetrator, by increased vigilance at border crossings and by quick and efficient restoration of custody once an abduction has taken place."

At the meeting, the so-called Haga Declaration against child abduction was adopted, which established the following:

- The countries agreed about the importance of setting up Central Authorities*. These are considered to be of crucial importance in tracing abducted children and facilitating decisions on returning them to their custodian.
- By means of extensive training initiatives for judges, prosecutors, lawyers, social workers and administrative personnel, the "Haga countries" wish to improve the quality of and increase the speed in processing child abduction cases.
- The countries also established that it was important, particularly to avoid abductions, that use can be made of rights of access determined by a competent court, and that the countries should be able to improve their cooperation in areas such as visas.

*The responsibility of the Central Authorities is to process individual cases as well as to provide specialist skills and to facilitate the exchange of information between states.

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Key word: 52718 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

State Visit to Australia

Their Majesties King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will be paying a State Visit to Australia on 7-12 November 2005 at the invitation of Governor-General Michael Jeffery.

The Swedish Government will be represented by Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds. In connection with the visit, Ms Freivalds will have talks with Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Alexander Downer.

A large delegation led by Michael Treschow, Chairman of the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, will represent the Swedish business sector and will participate in a number of cooperative projects and seminars.

The State Visit will begin in Canberra, where the agenda includes a meeting with Prime Minister John Howard and visits to Parliament and to the National Museum of Australia. The itinerary will also take in Sydney, Adelaide, Ayers Rock/Uluru and Perth, where the visit will end. Events at these venues will include business seminars, company visits, opportunities to learn about the aboriginal population and meetings with official representatives of individual Australian states and territories.

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Key word: 52562 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation: Unlawfully abducted children

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is arranging an informal ministerial meeting on unlawfully abducted children at Haga Palace on Friday, 4 November. Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will host the meeting.

TIME AND PLACE

PRESS CONFERENCE

Friday 4 November at 14.00

Haga Palace, Solna

Please bring your press credentials.

The media are invited to a press conference with the Minister for Foreign Affairs at 14.00 at Haga Palace. Please bring your press credentials.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the measures that can be taken to prevent the unlawful abduction of children. It addresses cases where one of the child's parents unlawfully abducts or retains a child in a country other than that in which the child lives on a permanent basis. The participants at the meeting will also discuss ways in which countries can make international cooperation for returning unlawfully abducted children more effective.

Ministers and senior political representatives from Algeria, Latvia, Malta, Morocco, Tunisia and

Turkey will be participating in the informal ministerial meeting.

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Key word: 52561 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Increased Swedish support to operations in Sudan

The Government has decided to increase support to the African Union (AU) peace-support operations in Darfur by a total of SEK 15 million.

The support will go to AU operations in Darfur - the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS) - and to the political peace negotiations that are being held in Abuja.

"Sweden is now making a further concrete contribution to the AU's efforts to promote security in Darfur. For sustainable peace to be achieved, attention must be focused on the particularly vulnerable position of women. Targeted measures are being undertaken to increase women's participation in the political negotiations and to strengthen protection for women and girls," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

The support will be distributed evenly over three areas of priority. The AU operations in Darfur will receive increased Swedish support to measures including security building. Some of the support will go to the AMIS office for human rights and gender issues in Sudan. The remainder will go to the peace negotiations in Abuja, where some of the money is earmarked for active promotion of women's participation in the peace negotiations.

In addition to previous financial support of SEK 7 million to AMIS and the Abuja negotiations, Sweden is contributing military experts and police through EU support measures to AMIS, and also advisers for the political negotiations.

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Key word: 52529 Defence, emergency management and safety Employment and gender equality Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Increased Swedish presence in Afghanistan

In a proposal to the Riksdag, the Government suggests that Sweden increase its contribution to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF).

The Government's intention is for Sweden to take over command of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Mazar-e-Sharif, located in northern Afghanistan, in March 2006.

"The Government views the Swedish contribution to ISAF as a long-term commitment of high priority. It is therefore natural that we wish to assume greater responsibility in this important mission," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"A long-term international military and civilian presence is necessary in Afghanistan to support the developing democracy and to create the conditions for security and reconstruction. ISAF plays a very important role in this."

ISAF's main task in Afghanistan is to contribute to security. Improved security is essential for the reconstruction efforts of the Afghan government, the UN and other relief organisations to succeed.

Swedish units have taken part in ISAF since the mission was set up at the end of 2001 following a UN Security Council decision. In October 2003 the geographical mandate of the NATO-led force was expanded from Kabul so that it also covered other areas of the country.

Today some one hundred Swedish soldiers take part in ISAF. With the proposed increase, the Swedish presence in ISAF would double. Three civilian advisers would also be attached to the Swedish-led regional unit in Mazar-e-Sharif: one for political issues, one for development issues and one for police matters.

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Key word: 52513 Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Venezuela

The Government decided today to send three election observers to Venezuela for the forthcoming parliamentary election on 4 December. The Swedish observers will be part of a joint EU team.

"By sending election observers, Sweden can contribute to the correct conduct of democratic elections in the country," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the European Commission.

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Key word: 52492 EU Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Director-General for Consular Affairs

The Government today appointed Ambassador Carl-Magnus Hyltenius as Director-General for Consular Affairs.

His most recent appointment was as Ambassador in Copenhagen. Mr Hyltenius has also served as Ambassador in Tel Aviv and has been stationed in Geneva, London och Rabat. He takes up his duties on 1 November 2005.

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Key word: 52489 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Helsinki

The Government today appointed Deputy Director-General Eva Walder-Brundin as Ambassador in Helsinki.

At present she is head of the Department for Asia and the Pacific Region at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Prior to this, she was Ambassador in Singapore. Ms Walder-Brundin has also been stationed in Dhaka, New York och Vienna. She will take up her duties on 1 March 2006.

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Key word: 52485 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-11-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Four new ambassadors in Stockholm

On Wednesday 2 November four newly appointed ambassadors, from Ecuador, Serbia and Montenegro, Russia and Greece, presented their letters of credence to HM The King.

Ecuador's newly appointed Ambassador Roberto Betancourt Ruales, born in 1950, is a qualified economist and career diplomat. Mr Betancourt entered the Foreign Service in 1969. In recent years he has been Ambassador to the UN and the WTO in Geneva, and Under-Secretary for Bilateral Relations and Under-Secretary for Multilateral Relations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Serbia and Montenegro's newly appointed Ambassador Ninoslav Stojadinovic, born in 1950, holds a PhD in electrical engineering. In 1985 he was appointed Professor and Head of the Department of Microelectronics at the University of Nis. Until his recent appointment, Professor Stojadinovic was politically active as a Member of Parliament for Foreign Minister Draskovic's party, the SPO.

Russia's newly appointed Ambassador Alexander Mihajlovitj Kadakin, born in 1949, gained his degree from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations in 1972. Mr Kadakin is a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences. He entered the Foreign Service in 1972 and has spent the major part of his career in South Asia. In recent years he has been Ambassador in Nepal and New Delhi. His most recent appointment was as Ambassador at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Moscow.

Greece's newly appointed Ambassador Evangelos Carokis, born in 1944, has a degree in international affairs from the University of Georgetown in the United States. Mr Carokis entered the Foreign Service in 1979. In recent years he has been Consul-General in London and Head of the Hellenic Liaison Office in Kosovo. His most recent appointment was as Ambassador in Islamabad.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-26
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden takes part in donor meeting on Pakistan

On Wednesday 26 October, State Secretary Annika Söder will take part in an international donor meeting called by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and its Under-Secretary-General Jan Egeland in response to the earthquake in Pakistan.

The meeting, which is taking place in Geneva, will deal with support to both the humanitarian sector and reconstruction and more generally with the serious situation in Pakistan.

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Key word: 52151 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to present the Swedish PEN Tucholsky award

TIME AND PLACE

AWARD PRESENTATION

Wednesday 26 October at 15.00

Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre

Fredsgatan 4

Stockholm

On Wednesday 26 October, Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will present the 2005 Swedish PEN Tucholsky award to the Palestinian writer Samir El-youssef. The award ceremony will take place at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre, Fredsgatan 4, at 15.00.

Media representatives are welcome to attend.

The Tucholsky award is named after the writer Kurt Tucholsky. In the 1920s Tucholsky was one of Germany's better known social critics and one of the foremost objects of the Nazis' hatred. He came to Sweden at the beginning of the 1930s seeking refuge from the Nazis. He is buried in Mariefred.

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Key word: 52143 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to visit New York on United Nations Day

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will be addressing the UN General Assembly on United Nations Day, 24 October, in connection with Sweden's hosting of the annual United Nations Day concert.

The concert will be performed by the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Chief Conductor Alan Gilbert and soloist Anne-Sofie von Otter.

Other speakers will include Secretary-General Kofi Annan and President of the General Assembly Jan Eliasson.

"It is a great honour to be invited to address the General Assembly on the occasion of its 60th Anniversary, before all UN member states and UN Secretariat Staff. And in particular because it was a prominent Swede, Dag Hammarskjöld, who established these concerts as a tradition," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

During her visit to New York, Ms Jämtin will also launch "The Adventure of Peace", an anthology on Dag Hammarskjöld and the UN produced by the Swedish Government.

The Minister's visit to New York also includes meetings with Kemal Dervis, head of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and Margareta Wahlström, Deputy Head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA).

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Key word: 51998 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish advisers to Afghanistan

The Government decided today to place a development adviser and a police adviser at the disposal of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. At the same time, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs decided to appoint a political adviser to ISAF.

"ISAF plays an important role in establishing the security that is needed to build peace, democracy and development in Afghanistan. It is positive, therefore, that Sweden is also contributing civilian advisers," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"These advisers are important to enable the peace-support force to cooperate effectively with the Afghan authorities. It is also important for Sweden as one of the largest development assistance donors to Afghanistan that the interaction between the military crisis management force and the development assistance and humanitarian organisations works well."

Sweden has participated in ISAF, which has been acting on a mandate from the UN Security Council, since the beginning of 2002.

A Government Bill on increased Swedish presence in Afghanistan will shortly be presented to the Riksdag. The Government has asked the Swedish Armed Forces to prepare for Sweden to take over the management of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Mazar-e-Sharif in northern Afghanistan, provided the Riksdag approves an increased Swedish presence in ISAF.

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Key word: 51914 Defence, emergency management and safety Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Consul-General in St Petersburg

The Government has today appointed the Minister at the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the European Union in Brussels, Gunnar Klinga, as Consul-General in St Petersburg, Russia.

Mr Klinga has previously served as Deputy Head of the Department for Eastern Europe and Central

Asia. He has also been stationed in Moscow and Singapore.

Mr Klinga will take up his position on 24 April 2006.

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Key word: 51898 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Consul-General in New York

The Government has today appointed the Swedish Ambassador in Helsinki, Ambassador Ulf Hjertonsson, as Consul-General in New York, USA.

Mr Hjertonsson has previously served as Director-General for Political Affairs, Ambassador in Madrid and Minister in Washington. He has also been stationed in Brussels, New York and Santiago de Chile.

Mr Hjertonsson will take up his position on 1 March 2006.

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Key word: 51897 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Dakar

The Government has today appointed Ambassador Agneta Bohman as Sweden's Ambassador in Dakar, Senegal.

Ms Bohman is currently coordinator for the Stability Pact for the Western Balkans at the Department for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. She has previously served as Ambassador in Amman and has also been stationed in Bonn, Damascus, Gaza, Paris and Vienna.

Ms Bohman will take up her position at the beginning of next year.

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Key word: 51895 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

World Bank President to visit Stockholm

World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz is to visit Stockholm on 21 October at the invitation of Minister for Finance Pär Nuder and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin. Mr Wolfowitz is to take part in a meeting with the Nordic and Baltic finance or development cooperation ministers, who are also governors of the World Bank.

The focus of the meeting is the role of the World Bank in the fight against poverty. Among the issues to be discussed are income distribution in development cooperation and how development assistance that places greater focus on rights issues, such as the rights of women and the right to education, can lead to growth and development. Discussions will also be held on the importance of cooperation between various organisations and on assistance resources being used as effectively as possible.

The photo opportunity and press briefing will take place at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1.

TIME AND PLACE**PHOTO OPPORTUNITY**

Friday 21 October, at 09.45

PRESS BRIEFING

Friday 21 October, at 15.40

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Gustav Adolfs Torg 1
Stockholm

Assembly at the entrance 10 minutes before

World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz is to visit Stockholm on 21 October at the invitation of Minister for Finance Pär Nuder and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin. Mr Wolfowitz is to take part in a meeting with the Nordic and Baltic finance or development cooperation ministers, who are also governors of the World Bank.

The focus of the meeting is the role of the World Bank in the fight against poverty. Among the issues to be discussed are income distribution in development cooperation and how development assistance that places greater focus on rights issues, such as the rights of women and the right to education, can lead to growth and development. Discussions will also be held on the importance of cooperation between various organisations and on assistance resources being used as effectively as possible.

The photo opportunity and press briefing will take place at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1.

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Key word: 51741 National economy and budget Industry, trade, regional development Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to European conference on human trafficking

TIME AND PLACE**DOOR-STEP**

Wednesday, 19 October, 09:00

Ground floor, Charlemagne-building
170 Rue de la Loi
Brussels

The Nordic-Baltic Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings, the European Commission and the UK Council Presidency are jointly organising a conference to enhance and strengthen efforts to fight trafficking in human beings in Europe. The Swedish Foreign Minister Laila Freivalds, Commissioner Franco Frattini and the British Minister for Organised Crime Paul Goggins are hosting the conference, which is taking place in Brussels on 19-20 October.

The aim of the conference is to determine and further develop the most suitable policy and best practices against trafficking in Europe. It also constitutes an opportunity to build on the existing body of work on human trafficking and concentrate on what EU-level action is needed.

At the conference Laila Freivalds will underline the work of the Nordic-Baltic Task Force as a model for regional cooperation in Europe. She will also present a newly launched pilot project for the safe return and rehabilitation of victims of trafficking in human beings.

The conference gathers representatives from all Member States, acceding and candidate countries and EU institutions, as well as from the European Parliament, civil society and other international organisations active within this field.

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Key word: 51628 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Democracy and human rights EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds signs space agreement with the US

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and US Ambassador in Stockholm

Teel Bivins today signed a bilateral framework agreement between Sweden and the United States on civil space cooperation for peaceful purposes.

The agreement provides the overall framework for civil space cooperation between Sweden and the United States and above all enables cooperation in space research between the Swedish National Space Board and the American NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration). The framework agreement gives both agencies the mandate to enter into specific project agreements.

The agreement, which entered into force upon its signing by the parties, will run for ten years with an option for extension.

For more information on the activities of the Swedish National Space Board, see the link in the right-hand column.

Press Officer at the Swedish National Space Board is Johan Marcopoulos, tel + 46 8-627 64 88.

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Key word: 51548 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to provide humanitarian assistance to earthquake victims

The Government has today authorised Sida to contribute SEK 82 million to the United Nations appeal for humanitarian assistance to the victims of the earthquake in South Asia.

"The earthquake in South Asia has caused a major humanitarian disaster. It is the duty of the international community to help the people who have been affected and it is most gratifying, therefore, that many countries and humanitarian organisations have been able to respond very quickly," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"By responding to the UN appeal, we want to offer rapid and flexible support to the UN in its efforts to lead and implement initiatives in the area. Sweden is prepared to provide further support as the situation develops.

With the contributions Sida has made so far to the Swedish Rescue Services Agency for help with UN measures in the area, and to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Sweden's support amounts at present to approximately SEK 105 million.

The UN estimates that four million people may be in need of humanitarian assistance following the earthquake in South Asia on 8 October. On 11 October, the UN made a joint appeal for humanitarian assistance for the area to a value of USD 271 million, or roughly SEK 2.1 billion. More than 30 states have initiated or offered help in the affected area.

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Key word: 51518 Health care, health, social issues/insurance Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Greater Swedish participation in EU mission in Sudan

The Government decided today to place a further three Swedish police officers at the disposal of the African Union as part of the European Union's support for AMIS, the African Union Mission in Sudan. Three police officers are already in Darfur.

This decision means that Sweden is contributing a total of six of the fifty police officers that have been pledged in support of AMIS.

"Sweden's increased participation on the EU mission underscores our commitment to finding a sustainable solution to the conflict in Sudan," says Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation.

In addition to police advisers, civilian support to the African Union includes measures to train police officers and development assistance in areas such as human rights, the situation of women and children and other humanitarian support.

Sweden has previously contributed a number of military experts to the EU mission.

Under UN mandate, the African Union has been monitoring the ceasefire between the Sudanese government and rebel groups in Darfur since May 2004.

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Key word: 51511 Defence, emergency management and safety EU Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Kazakhstan

The Government decided today to send three election monitors and four election observers to Kazakhstan for the forthcoming presidential election on 4 December.

"By sending election observers to Kazakhstan, Sweden can contribute to the development of an efficient election system in the country," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Sida is responsible for the recruitment and training of Swedish election observers. Information about recruitment to the election resource base is available at www.sida.se. Other questions may be addressed to Sida/International Recruitment and Training Division (RIU)/Electoral Group, telephone +46 8 698 50 00.

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Key word: 51501 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to take part in seminar on gender equality

On Friday 14 October Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will take part in an international seminar on "Gender Equality: Striving for Justice in an Unequal World".

TIME AND PLACE

Friday 14 September,
09.00-16.30

Sida
Sveavägen 20, 1st floor
Stora Hörsalen

The seminar represents the Swedish launch of a report from the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD). The report evaluates the progress that has been made since the Beijing Conference a decade ago, and the problems and challenges that still remain. The report was presented to the United Nations in New York in March this year. Sweden has been the largest financier of the work, which has also received support from the EU, Canada and the Netherlands.

Ms Jämtin will deliver the opening address at the seminar. Participants also include Maria Norrfalk, Director-General of Sida, Thandika Mkandawire, Director of UNRISD, as well as a number of researchers who have contributed to the report.

The seminar, which will be held in English, is being organised by Sida in cooperation with UNRISD.

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Key word: 51466 EU Health care, health, social issues/insurance Employment and gender equality Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to receive report on communicable diseases

TIME AND PLACE

QUESTION TIME WITH PROFESSOR BJORVATN

Friday at 10.30

Arvfurstens Palats
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Assembly in the entrance hall at 10.25

Notification of attendance to Christian Carlsson
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On Friday 14 October, Professor Bjarne Bjorvatn, who has chaired the Government inquiry, will present his proposal for a strategic action plan (2006-2008) for contributions by Sweden to the global fight against communicable diseases (Inquiry Terms of Reference 2005:30). Minister Carin Jämtin will receive the report on behalf of the Government.

There will be an opportunity for media representatives to put questions to Professor Bjorvatn immediately after he has delivered his report. A summary of the report will be available at the question time.

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Key word: 51455 Health care, health, social issues/insurance Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds visits Slovakia and Slovenia on 12-13 October

On 12-13 October, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is visiting Slovakia and Slovenia.

In Bratislava on 12 October the Minister for Foreign Affairs will meet Slovakia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Eduard Kukan, Deputy Prime Minister Pál Csáky and the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic Pavol Paska. A number of EU-related issues will be discussed at these talks.

EU issues are also on the agenda for the visit to Ljubljana on 13 October. Ms Freivalds will meet Slovenia's President Janez Drnovsec, Prime Minister Janez Jansa and Minister of Foreign Affairs Dimitrij Rupel.

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Key word: 51427 Foreign policy and international cooperation EU Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden contributes to increased cooperation between UN and civil society

This week Aleksander Gabelic, President of the United Nations Association of Sweden, begins his work in support of Jan Eliasson's presidency of the United Nations General Assembly.

Mr Gabelic's assignment will include maintaining contacts with NGOs and following the processing of the recommendations presented in the Cardoso Panel Report on relations between the UN and civil society.

"It is essential that the UN has good and close relations with civil society, not least now that we are to implement the decisions from the UN Summit in September. We are pleased, therefore, that Mr Gabelic is able to serve as the link between Mr Eliasson's office and civil society during the 60th General Assembly," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

The assignment has been made possible by means of a contribution from the Government to the United Nations Association of Sweden.

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Key word: 51399 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to attend launch of UN report on the State of World Population

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will take part in the launch of the annual UN report on the State of World Population. The launch will take place at Rosenbad on Wednesday 12 October.

TIME AND PLACE

Wednesday 12 October,
10.00-11.00

Bella Venezia
Rosenbad

Prior notification of attendance is not required

The message of this year's report is clear: equality between the sexes reduces poverty and saves and improves lives. The report links up the UN Millennium Development Goals, gender equality and reproductive health (the right to have safe sex and to choose freely when to have children and how many children to have, without risk to one's own health or life).

The report describes discrimination against women - whether in the labour market, in health care or in the education system - as a direct obstacle to poverty reduction. The Millennium Development Goals cannot be achieved without respect for women's human rights, the report states.

Panellists:

Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation

Björn Andersson, Chief of Staff, UNFPA

Ann Svensén, Director of External Relations, Swedish Association for Sexuality Education

Moderator:

Zanyar Adami, Editor-in-Chief, Gringo

A number of copies of the UNFPA's "State of World Population 2005: The Promise of Equality" will be available at the launch.

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Key word: 51384 Sustainable development Democracy and human rights Employment and gender equality Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

International review of Swedish development assistance

Richard Manning, head of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is to visit Sweden on 12 October at the invitation of Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Mr Manning is coming to Sweden to follow up the review of Swedish development assistance that DAC presented last spring. The report's recommendations will be discussed with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sida, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, representatives of NGOs and the business sector who have an interest in development assistance issues, and journalists.

The report highlighted Sweden as a model for its global development policy and the fact that as from next year Sweden will be giving one per cent of its gross national income in development assistance. The report also emphasised Sweden's leading role in harmonisation and decentralisation.

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Key word: 51376 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-10-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swede elected to top job in Council of Europe

The head of the Olof Palme International Center, Thomas Hammarberg, was today elected the new Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights.

"It is extremely gratifying that Thomas Hammarberg has been elected to this important post. Human rights issues require constant attention, and I am convinced that with his knowledge and his long experience, Mr Hammarberg will do an excellent job," says Laila Freivalds, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The Commissioner's task is to promote respect for human rights in the Council of Europe's 46 member states. One way for the Commissioner to accomplish this is to visit individual countries, identify problems and provide recommendations as to what should be improved. This may involve shortcomings in legislation or the way groups or individuals are treated.

Mr Hammarberg will take up his duties as Commissioner in the beginning of 2006. He will then succeed Alvaro Gil-Robles of Spain, who will step down after holding the post for six years. Mr Hammarberg has long experience of working with human rights. He has had a number of UN assignments and has also been Secretary-General of both Amnesty International and Save the Children Sweden.

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Key word: 51166 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to take part in seminar on genocide and other violations

On Friday 30 September, four of the world's foremost experts on genocide and other crimes against humanity will be attending the Göteborg International Book Fair. They will join Laila Freivalds for a seminar on some of the most vital issues of our time and the future, in connection with the publication of the new book "Beyond the 'Never Agains'". The book is based on the four conferences held within the framework of the Stockholm International Forum.

TIME AND PLACE

Date and time: Friday 30 September at 16.00

Venue: Göteborg International Book Fair

Journalist Cecilia Uddén will lead the discussion on the possibility of preventing genocide, and on international law, willingness to learn from history and the value of reconciliation. Will we never be able to say "never again"? And does Sweden have a special responsibility to intervene when the eyes of the world turn towards vulnerable areas such as Darfur in Sudan?

During the Stockholm International Forum, Stockholm became a meeting place for many world politicians, decision-makers, experts and NGO representatives. People who had themselves survived persecution and violation, during the Holocaust and in the genocides in Rwanda and Cambodia, for example, also shared their own experiences. The new book contains interviews with many of the participants. Four of them will be taking part in the seminar:

Payam Akhavan, USA.

Born in Iran. Expert in international law who has worked for the UN at the tribunals for Rwanda and Bosnia.

Youk Chhang, Cambodia.

Survived the genocide in Cambodia, 1975-79. Head of the Documentation Centre in Phnom Penh, which gathers documentation and memories of the genocide.

Esther Mujawayo-Keiner, Rwanda.

Sociologist and psychotherapist who survived the genocide in Rwanda in 1994.

Hédi Fried, Sweden.

Psychologist, author and Holocaust survivor.

The STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL FORUM conferences:

- Preventing Genocide - Threats and Responsibilities, 2004
- Truth, Justice and Reconciliation, 2002
- Combating Intolerance, 2001
- The Holocaust - Education, Remembrance and Research, 2000

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-27

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Breakthrough for Swedish sustainable solutions in China

Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros and China's Minister of Construction Wang Guangtao signed an agreement on Tuesday on sustainable urban development - the "Sustainable City".

The ministers have agreed to send a group of Swedish experts to two or three cities in western China to conduct a sustainability review of planned infrastructure investments. The new agreement will bring an enlargement of cooperation already existing within the framework of the Sustainable Cities Programme.

Large-scale migration to Chinese cities and rapid economic development are leading to major environmental and social problems. These include water shortages, air, ground and water pollution, and greenhouse gases with global consequences.

"Here Sweden and Swedish companies are in a position to contribute their useful experience in the area of environmental issues and infrastructure. This opens up great opportunities for international exchange, consultancy services and environmental technology exports," says Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-23

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Industry and Trade Östros to visit China

Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros will visit Beijing on 25-29

September.

TIME AND PLACE

Textile factory visit: Wednesday 28 September 10.45-12.15. Departure from SAS Radisson Hotel 09.15. Pre-registration to Torbjörn Hållö, tel: +46 70 266 34 33.

Renmin University: Tuesday 27 September 09.30-10.30. Assembly outside University main entrance 09.15.

He will meet a number of representatives from line ministries and business from both China and Sweden to promote Swedish interests. Among those he will meet is Wang Guangtao, Minister of Construction, to discuss the development of environmental cooperation within the framework of the Sustainable City project.

During his visit Mr Östros will also hold talks with Bo Xilai, the Chinese Minister of Commerce, to discuss trade, investments, WTO issues and other topics.

While in China, Mr Östros will give particular attention to the issue of corporate social responsibility from the perspective of free trade. His itinerary includes a visit to textile factory Beijing Pengda Clothing Co. Ltd, one of fashion company H&M's largest suppliers.

Mr Östros is also invited to Renmin University, where he will deliver a speech on "Globalisation and welfare - Trade policy in the WTO Doha Round".

In addition, the Minister, in the presence of Crown Princess Victoria, will open the Swedish-Chinese exhibition in the Forbidden City, "China and Sweden: Treasured Memories".

The media are invited to cover the visit to the textile factory on Wednesday 28 September from 10.45-12.15. Departure will be from SAS Radisson Hotel at 09.15. Pre-registration should be made with Torbjörn Hållö, tel: +46 70 266 34 33.

Mr Östros will also be available for comments in connection with his speech at Renmin University, Tuesday 27 September from 09.30-10.30. Assembly outside the main entrance to the University at 09.15.

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Key word: 50539 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to participate in World Bank Annual Meeting

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will participate in the World Bank Annual Meeting in Washington DC on 24-25 September.

One of the main issues at the meeting will be the G8 countries' proposal on debt cancellation for the poorest and most heavily indebted countries. The aim is to cancel all these countries' currently outstanding debts to the World Bank (IDA), the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Fund.

"Sweden welcomes the G8 proposal on debt cancellation as an important step in solving the debt problems of the poorest countries. The details of the proposal are however still unclear and need to be specified," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"Promises of debt cancellation must be followed by more money for financing. Otherwise there is a risk that the poor people who have set their hopes on the G8 countries' promises will be greatly disappointed."

"The rich countries must contribute more resources to the World Bank and the African Development Fund if this debt cancellation really is to be implemented. It is also important to guarantee that the poorest countries will also be able to take advantage of loans and donations for poverty reduction from these institutions in the future," concludes Ms Jämtin.

The Minister for International Development Cooperation will also chair a separate meeting between a number of countries and the World Bank's new president, Paul Wolfowitz, to discuss the issues to be addressed at the Annual Meeting.

Ms Jämtin will also have a series of meetings with the World Bank vice presidents to discuss how developing countries should be able to take advantage of increased trade and to discuss the new World Bank strategy for Africa.

A press conference with Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin and State Secretary Jens Henriksson will be held in conjunction with the meeting. The time and venue will be announced shortly. If you have any questions, please contact John Zanchi, +46 70 260 26 64.

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Key word: 50491 National economy and budget Industry, trade, regional development Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Stockholm

Four newly appointed Ambassadors will today present their letters of credence - their authorisation to represent their countries in Sweden - to HM The King. The Ambassadors are from Botswana, Kuwait, Egypt and Italy.

Botswana's new Ambassador is Bernadette Sebage Rathedi, who was born in 1950. She holds a Masters Degree from Indiana State University in the United States and began work at Botswana's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1990. Prior to that she worked at the regional office of the UN Children's Fund in Nairobi. Ms Rathedi was stationed at Botswana's Embassy in Stockholm from 1992-1997.

Sami Mohammed Al-Sulaiman is Kuwait's newly appointed Ambassador. He was born in 1961 and holds a BA in Sociology from Kuwait University. The Ambassador has worked at Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1985 and his previous postings include Ankara and Bonn.

Egypt's new Ambassador, Samah Mohamed Sotohy Sarhan, was born in 1950 and holds a Masters Degree in Law from Ein Shams University in Cairo. He is a career diplomat whose most recent position was head of security issues at Egypt's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Samah Mohamed Sotohy Sarhan has also served as Consul-General in Kuwait and has been Egypt's Ambassador in Helsinki.

Francesco Caruso is Italy's newly appointed Ambassador in Stockholm. He was born in 1940 and holds a degree in Political Science from the University of Naples. Mr Caruso is a career diplomat whose previous positions include that of Ambassador to UNESCO in Paris, Head of Cabinet to Italy's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Consul-General in Paris.

Key word: 50430 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds and women foreign ministers demand gender equality when UN peace-building commission is set up

At the recently concluded UN Summit in New York, the decision was taken to create a peace-building commission to assist countries in dealing with the transition from conflict to sustainable peace.

In a letter to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and President of the General Assembly Jan Eliasson, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and 13 women foreign ministers write that gender equality must prevail when the commission is set up.

"Experience shows that women's involvement in peace-building efforts is extremely important. It must be an integral part of UN efforts. Women and representatives of women's organisations from countries that are expected to be part of the peace-building commission must be allowed to actively participate in its conception. The goal must be a peace-building commission that has an equal representation of women and men at all levels," states Ms Freivalds.

The initiative to the letter was taken at a dinner attended by women foreign ministers in connection with the 60th session of the UN General Assembly, hosted by Ms Freivalds. The letter is also signed by Benita Ferrero-Waldner, EU Commissioner for External Relations.

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Key word: 50338 Defence, emergency management and safety Employment and gender equality Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Crown Princess Victoria visits China

Crown Princess Victoria today began the first part of a two-week programme in Beijing with a study week, where her agenda includes following the work at the Embassy.

An official programme will follow, which includes attending the opening of a large Swedish-Chinese exhibition in the Forbidden City and meetings with Chinese Minister of Culture Sun Jiazheng and with State Councillor Chen Zhili. The Crown Princess' official programme then continues in Canton and Hong Kong.

It is the Crown Princess' first visit to China. For her, an important aim of the trip is to learn more about the emerging world power.

The Crown Princess' official programme coincides in part with a visit to Beijing by Thomas Östros, Minister for Industry and Trade.

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Key word: 50332 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-16

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish security marketed in the USA

Marketing of Swedish security-related products and systems in the USA will be improved. At Thursday's cabinet meeting a decision was made to allocate SEK 400 000 to special promotion efforts.

"There is great potential to increase Swedish exports in this area," says Thomas Östros, Minister for Industry and Trade.

"Last year, the American government purchased security-related products and systems from private companies to a value of USD 8 billion. This can be compared to the USD 12 billion spent by the World Bank and the USD 4.5 billion spent by the UN on purchases."

According to the Swedish Trade Council, Sweden has cutting-edge skills in areas such as ID systems and biometrics, sensors and communications, personal protective equipment, public security networks and security connected with transport and logistics.

"There is every indication that the US will invest more on defences against bioterrorism, on border security and on secure IT networks in the future. Swedish companies have excellent prospects to succeed in this market," states Mr Östros.

The marketing project is being carried out in cooperation between the Embassy in Washington, the Swedish Trade Council and the Swedish-American Chamber of Commerce. Swedish companies, government agencies and organisations are also taking part, as are local cooperation partners.

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Key word: 49999 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-16

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New trade offices in Italy and Canada

Sweden is to open trade offices in Milan and Toronto. This was decided by the Government today. The offices will be run by the Swedish Trade Council and will be opened this autumn to strengthen Sweden's presence in these countries.

"Both Italy and Canada are already among Sweden's fifteen largest export markets," says Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros. "There is potential here to further increase our trade. This leads to growth and more employment in Sweden.

"Opening trade offices enhances opportunities to assist Swedish companies, not least small and medium-sized companies in these markets," says Thomas Östros.

The Government has appointed Marie Rosenkrantz to be Trade Commissioner in Italy, moving from her latest position at the Swedish Embassy in Rome. Åke Ryhagen, who has served most recently as head of the cooperation groups at the Swedish Trade Council, has been appointed Trade Commissioner in Canada.

The Swedish Trade Council, which cooperates closely with embassies and consulates-general, is currently represented in about 40 countries and has some 400 employees.

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Key word: 49963 Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden among the first to support convention against nuclear terrorism

In connection with the ongoing UN Summit in New York, the Prime Minister yesterday signed the UN Convention against Nuclear Terrorism and the UN Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States.

The former is one of a number of global terrorist conventions aimed at terrorist crimes including threats or the use of nuclear material or fuel. Sweden has made an active contribution in this area and is one of the first countries to sign the agreement. The latter, the convention on state immunity, regulates the extent to which a charge may be brought against a State in the courts of other States. It advocates limited immunity for States. By signing the conventions, Sweden has come one step closer to adopting both conventions.

The Prime Minister also presented Sweden's ratification of the Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture. The aim of the Protocol is to establish, under the UN Committee against Torture, a Visiting Committee comprising independent experts with the purpose of enabling the experts to access all the places where detained persons are being held.

Sweden is now bound by the Protocol, which however has yet to enter into force. Before the Protocol can enter into force it must be adopted by a total of twenty States.

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Key word: 49840 Foreign policy and international cooperation Göran Persson

PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-15
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

More Swedish police to Kosovo

The Government has decided today that Sweden will contribute a further five police officers to the UN police operation in Kosovo for a six-month period. This means that the Swedish contribution to the operation now amounts to 41 Swedish police officers.

"Law and order is a precondition if reconstruction efforts in Kosovo are to gain momentum," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin. "By strengthening the Swedish police operation, we can contribute to democratic development."

The Swedish police officers are to assist the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo) in its long-term police operations. The UN Mission's main aim is to support reconstruction efforts in Kosovo, to uphold law and order and to establish and train a local police force.

Background

Police operations in Kosovo are carried out by international UNMIK police officers, at present some 2 600 officers from 44 countries, and by the local Kosovo Police Service (KPS), which was established in 1999. KPS is a multiethnic force consisting of some 7 200 officers at present. Sweden has been contributing police officers to the UN in Kosovo since the end of 1999. Swedish bilateral development assistance to Kosovo amounts to approximately SEK 100 million per year. Since 1999 we have also been contributing to KFOR, the NATO-led crisis management force, at present with approximately 330 troops.

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Key word: 49827 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to visit Zambia for Hammarskjöld ceremony

Carin Jämtin, the Swedish Minister for International Development Cooperation, will be taking part in a memorial ceremony in honour of Dag Hammarskjöld in Zambia on 18 September. It was in the night between 17 and 18 September 1961 that the plane carrying the former Secretary-General of the United Nations crashed in what is now Zambia. As this year is the centenary of Dag Hammarskjöld's birth, a special ceremony is to be held in Ndola, where the plane crashed.

"Zambia makes an admirable contribution to keeping the memory of Hammarskjöld alive," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"It does so not just by holding annual memorial ceremonies, but also by organising courses in Hammarskjöld's spirit, in human rights and conflict management."

The visit to Zambia will also provide an opportunity to conduct a discussion with the Zambian Government on Swedish development cooperation and its guidelines and ambitions. Sweden has long had an active role as a driving force in coordinating development assistance in Zambia. This work, which has now entered an intensive phase, means that donors are moving towards a common strategy and more effective cooperation.

On her trip, the Minister for International Development Cooperation will also be visiting Mozambique. Here, too, resolute efforts are being made to make development assistance more effective. Sweden has an active role as this year's chair of the group of donors cooperating on budget support for Mozambique.

"Sweden has an important role to play as a driving force for more effective development assistance in cooperation with the national governments," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

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Key word: 49761 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to attend UN summit in New York

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will be in New York on 13-20 September to take part in the UN summit and be present at the opening of 60th General Assembly.

Heads of state and government from the 191 UN Member States will participate in the summit. Central issues include reforms of the UN institutions and implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

Prime Minister Göran Persson will head the Swedish delegation.

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Key word: 49503 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Launch of UNDP Human Development Report 2005

TIME AND PLACE

Wednesday 7 September, 15.00-17.00

Bella Venezia
Rosenbad 4
Stockholm

Obligatory pre-registration

Please bring your press credentials

Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation, will participate at the presentation of the annual UNDP Human Development Report. The launch will take place at Rosenbad on Wednesday 7 September, 15.00-17.00.

Media representatives are welcome to participate.

Please note that pre-registration is obligatory. The number of places is limited. To register, please contact Irma Norrman at the UNDP Nordic Office, telephone: +46 8 545 231 60, or email: irma.norrman@undp.se.

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Key word: 49151 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jonas Weiss Memorial Fund gives awards to Swedish diplomats

The Jonas Weiss Memorial Fund's honorary distinction for 2005 goes to Jonas Hafström, Swedish Ambassador in Bangkok. The Memorial Fund's annual grant is awarded to First Secretary Diana Janse at the section office in Kabul.

Jonas Hafström receives the award for "resolute action and steadfast behaviour in connection with the devastating tsunami disaster in Thailand in December 2004". Mr Hafström, who took up his post as Ambassador in Bangkok in June 2004 and has previously been Head of the Department for Consular Affairs and Civil Law at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, was one of the first observers to visit the area after the disaster struck. He saw the destruction and the human suffering in Phuket, the Khao Lak region and Takua Pa, and reported his observations back home to the Ministry. In a statement giving the reason for its decision, the board of the Memorial Fund, which is comprised of representatives of the Weiss family and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, says that the honorary distinction was conferred because "his determination to personally see and report the consequences of this disaster was that of a field worker, a reminder that diplomacy is also the ability to face a cruel reality undauntedly".

The Jonas Weiss Memorial Fund's annual grant of SEK 30 000 goes to Diana Janse, stationed at the Swedish section office in Kabul, for "her courageous field work in the Balkans, in Russia and now most recently in Afghanistan". Ms Janse, who has worked at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs since 1999, took up a temporary post in Kabul last year. The statement explaining the reasons for the decision also says that Diana Janse, "by combining curiosity and an interest in people with an interest in the complexity of the societies she has chosen to examine in greater depth, has also helped increase the Swedish Foreign Service's understanding of these areas".

The memorial grant and the honorary distinction will be presented at a ceremony at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on Jonas Weiss's birthday, 10 November.

The Jonas Weiss Memorial Fund was established in 2002 after 33-year old Counsellor Jonas Weiss was killed in a car accident while travelling on official business between Baghdad and Amman. Mr Weiss, who had previously served at the embassies in Belgrade and Moscow, was stationed in Amman at the time, but his main task involved working in Iraq. His time at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs was characterised by commitment to diplomatic fieldwork. The grant and the honorary

distinction are awarded to individuals who act in his spirit.

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Key word: 49065 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden offers support for hurricane victims

"Together with the other EU Foreign Ministers, and on Sweden's behalf, I have today expressed our deep concern and sympathy for all those affected by the hurricane in the United States. Both the EU and Sweden have offered to assist the United States in rescue efforts, if the United States requests this," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds after the informal meeting of EU Foreign Ministers in Newport, Wales.

"This is a tragedy for everyone in the area affected, particularly the people who have lost family members and homes. Disasters often hit people with limited resources hardest. Today's government decision to offer Swedish support is a way for us to show our solidarity with the Americans who have suffered. The important thing right now is to get a clear idea of the concrete needs at the present time. To this end, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is in close dialogue with the United States," says Ms Freivalds.

"The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is still trying to contact a few Swedish citizens who we believe were in the area. Intensive efforts are being made to get in touch with them, above all by the Swedish Consulate-General in New York in cooperation with the US authorities," says Ms Freivalds. "The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has also set up a special coordinating group for Hurricane Katrina, headed by the Director-General for Administrative Affairs, and we will be maintaining continuous contacts with the US authorities in Washington and Stockholm."

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish help to prison and probation services in Côte d'Ivoire

The Government Offices have decided to contribute two Swedish prison and probation experts to the UN peace support operations (UNOCI) in Côte d'Ivoire for a period of 12 months. The experts are leaving for Côte d'Ivoire on 1 September.

"It is positive that Swedish prison and probation staff are taking part more often in international peace support operations. Different forms of civilian help are an increasingly important part of UN peace support operations - a development that Sweden has contributed to and supports," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

The experts will help to build up the prison and probation system in Côte d'Ivoire as part of the reform of the country's judicial system.

Since April this year, UNOCI has been headed by Pierre Schori, former Ambassador to the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the Office of the United Nations in New York. The Operation has been in place since April 2004 and currently has a military strength of over 6 000 men. The primary task of the UN force is to monitor the ceasefire and support the implementation of the peace agreement concluded in January 2003.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Press Secretary to Laila Freivalds

As of 1 September, Press Secretary to Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will be Anders J. Ericson. His most recent appointment was as Press Counsellor at the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the European Union in Brussels.

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Key word: 48873 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Consul-General in Gdansk

The Government today appointed Eva Emnéus, Director at the Nordic Council of Ministers Office in Riga, as Consul-General in Gdansk.

Ms Emnéus has previously been Chargé d'Affaires in Kinshasa and has served at Sweden's embassies in Riga, Bangkok and Beijing.

Ms Emnéus will take up her post in Gdansk in the middle of November 2005.

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Key word: 48863 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-09-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish police to Darfur

The Government decided today to place three Swedish police officers at the disposal of the African Union as part of the European Union's support for the mission in Sudan (African Union Mission in Sudan, AMIS).

"EU support for the African Union's mission is crucial to its ability to stabilise the situation in Darfur and thereby bring an end to the killing. I am pleased that Sweden can contribute to this mission," says Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation.

In addition to police advisers, civilian support to the African Union includes measures to educate police officers and also development assistance in areas such as human rights, the situation of women and children and other humanitarian aid.

The Swedish contribution to the EU effort already includes a number of military experts.

Under UN mandate, the African Union has been monitoring the ceasefire between the Sudanese government and rebel groups in Darfur since May 2004.

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Key word: 48856 EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to attend informal meeting of EU foreign ministers

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is to take part in an informal meeting of EU foreign ministers on 1-2 September at Newport, near Cardiff, in the UK.

Topics on the agenda include the Middle East peace process, Iran's nuclear programme, relations

with Russia and the continued role of the EU in Kosovo. Other discussions will centre on EU enlargement and the starting date for Croatia's and Turkey's entry talks. The UK, holder of the EU presidency, would also like to receive comments on a proposal to begin the drafting of a legally binding global arms trade agreement.

The meeting will start with a working lunch on 1 September and end after lunch on 2 September.

Informal meetings of EU foreign ministers take place once per presidency and are intended to allow for freer and more forward-looking discussions. No formal conclusions are adopted.

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Key word: 48837 Foreign policy and international cooperation EU Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Four new ambassadors in Stockholm

Four newly appointed ambassadors, from Ireland, Hungary, Cyprus and Mali, present their letters of credence to HM The King on Wednesday 31 August.

Ireland's newly appointed Ambassador Peter Barrie Robinson was born in 1954 and has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Trinity College Dublin. He entered the Department of Foreign Affairs in 1975. In recent years he has been Deputy Political Director of the Department's Political Division and has been Consul-General in New York. His most recent position has been as Ambassador in Brussels and head of Ireland's liaison office for Partnership for Peace.

Hungary's newly appointed Ambassador Gábor Iklódy was born in 1959 and has an MA in International Relations from the Budapest University of Economics. Ambassador Iklódy is a career diplomat and his previous posts have included Ambassador to Norway and Iceland. Most recently he has been Director-General at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs with responsibility for European political cooperation and for the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy.

Cyprus's newly appointed Ambassador Pavlos Anastasiades was born in 1953 and was educated at the Universities of Birmingham and Oxford. He joined the Diplomatic Service of the Republic of Cyprus in 1991. His subsequent posts have included Counsellor at the Embassy of the Republic of Cyprus in Stockholm. In recent years he has served at the EU Division of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Nicosia and has been Director of the Foreign Minister's Office.

Mali's newly appointed Ambassador Fatoumata Siré Diakite (concurrently accredited from Berlin) was born in 1952 and is a qualified teacher of English. She founded and has for many years chaired the women's rights organisation "Association pour le Progrès et la Défense des Droits des Femmes Maliennes". Ambassador Diakite is active in the international community's fight against trafficking

in women and children. In this capacity, she has participated in a number of UN-led conferences on the rights of women and children.

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Key word: 48798 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Nordic foreign ministers strengthen emergency preparedness

At a meeting on Bornholm today, the Nordic ministers for foreign affairs agreed on a series of measures aimed at increasing the help available to Nordic citizens in the event of an emergency abroad.

"This summer's terrorist attacks in London and Sharm el-Sheik show that it is not only natural disasters such as the tsunami in Thailand that make great demands on our emergency preparedness. It is therefore important that we now expand Nordic cooperation in future emergency situations," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

The Nordic foreign ministers also discussed consumer protection in the event of major disasters. They agreed that this protection also needs evaluation.

"It is of the greatest importance to consumers to have clear information about their rights and about the ability of the travel industry to assist them and meet its obligations if a major disaster occurs," says Ms Freivalds. "It is good if we Nordic countries share the same high level of ambition regarding the responsibilities of travel companies and the insurance industry."

The package of measures agreed on by the foreign ministers includes:

- More intense consultation and exchange of information between the Nordic capitals. Preparation for transportation home from emergency areas.
- Instructions to Nordic embassies and consulates to make joint plans and above all have joint local training exercises in emergency leadership and management.
- In places where a Nordic country has no mission, another country's embassy/consulate will be nominated to take care of citizens of the country without representation.

- The rescue services will take steps to make transportation of personnel and equipment in emergency situations more effective.

Sweden and the other Nordic countries are also working in the EU context for closer cooperation on effective emergency preparedness within the European Union and elsewhere.

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Key word: 48685 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Krister Thelin re-elected to Yugoslavia Tribunal

Krister Thelin of Sweden, Chief Justice of Appeal (on leave) at the Scania Court of Appeals, was re-elected at the UN yesterday as ad litem judge with the Yugoslavia Tribunal. Mr Thelin will serve an additional four years in the pool of ad litem judges he has been part of since 2001.

On 25 May 1993 the United Nations Security Council decided to establish the ad hoc International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in order to prosecute persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in former Yugoslavia up until 1 January 1991. The Tribunal, located in The Hague, has jurisdiction over four types of crimes: grave breaches of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, violations of the laws or customs of war, genocide and crimes against humanity. In order for the Tribunal to conclude its mandate as quickly as possible the Security Council decided in 2001 to establish a group of 27 ad litem judges.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedes to monitor peace agreement in Aceh

The Government decided today to send 15 Swedish observers to Aceh in Indonesia to monitor the peace agreement between the Indonesian Government and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM).

On 15 August, the Government of Indonesia and the leadership of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) signed a peace agreement in Helsinki. The peace agreement creates a basis for a solution to the conflict that for many years has raged in Aceh Province. Under the agreement the Indonesian military will withdraw from Aceh Province in parallel with the handover of weapons by GAM.

At the request of the Indonesian Government and GAM, the EU together with five countries from ASEAN has undertaken to monitor the agreement. This is a civilian operation comprising 250 observers. The observers will also be monitoring the protection of human rights.

"The role of the EU is very important for ensuring that the agreement is implemented so a lasting peace can be built in the region. The cooperation with the ASEAN countries gives the mission greater weight and credibility. For this reason, Sweden has chosen to give strong support to this mission," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

In addition to the 15 observers, the Government decided on 8 August to contribute full logistical support to the mission. Sida has allocated up to SEK 40 million for this purpose. The Swedish Rescue Services Agency will be responsible for the operation.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Azerbaijan

The Government decided today to send three election monitors and four election observers to Azerbaijan ahead of the forthcoming parliamentary elections on 6 November.

"By sending election observers to Azerbaijan, Sweden can contribute to the development of a functioning electoral system in the country," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

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Key word: 48592 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Abuja

The Government today appointed Lars-Owe Persson, currently Consul-General in Gdansk, to be the Swedish Ambassador in Abuja, Nigeria.

Mr Persson has previously served at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York and at the embassies in Lagos and Tokyo, as well as at the Consulates-General in Rotterdam and Chicago.

Mr Persson will take up his appointment in Abuja in mid-September.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-25

Ministry of JusticeMinistry for Foreign Affairs

International meeting on gender justice in post-conflict societies

TIME AND PLACE

PRESS CONFERENCE

Friday 26 August, 10.20 am

Hilton Hotel Slussen
Guldgränd 8, Stockholm

Please bring your press credentials.

Women are often at risk during periods of conflict and war. This concerns not least the risk of sexual abuse, but also issues such as marginalisation from decision-making processes. The concept of gender justice covers, for example, violence against women and the deficiencies in or absence of civil law that takes women's rights into account.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC) are co-organising an international meeting on the theme "Building Partnerships for Promoting Gender Justice in Post-Conflict Societies".

The meeting will be held at the Hilton Hotel Slussen in Stockholm on Thursday 25 and Friday 26 August. State Secretary Annika Söder will be the moderator.

Minister for Gender Equality Jens Orback will be holding the opening address on the importance of highlighting gender justice in post-conflict situations. The closing address will be given by Baroness Amos, Leader of the British House of Lords.

On Friday 26 August at 10.20 am, the South African Justice Minister and equality and women's affairs ministers from Liberia, Haiti and Afghanistan will be holding a press conference at the Hilton Hotel Slussen.

The meeting will be attended by representatives from different parts of the world, donor countries, UN representatives and experts in the area. The purpose of the meeting is to follow up and implement the recommendations adopted at the Gender Justice Conference in September 2004. The meeting will focus on, for example, how the UN and other relevant actors could best support the reconstruction and reform of the rule of law in post-conflict countries and how gender aspects should subsequently be safeguarded.

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Key word: 48558 Employment and gender equality Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Jens Orback

PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Director of Nordic Africa Institute

The Government has decided to appoint Carin Norberg as new Director of the Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala.

Ms Norberg, who will succeed Lennart Wolgemuth in January, most recently held the post of Director of the Global Programmes Department at Transparency International in Berlin. She has previously held various senior posts at the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

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Key word: 48450 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swede to head OSCE office in Belarus

Swedish diplomat Åke Peterson has been appointed Head the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Office in Belarus.

The Government decided today that Mr Peterson, whose previous posts include that of Ambassador to Ukraine, should be made available for the assignment.

"I am very pleased that the OSCE Chairmanship has appointed Mr Peterson to this important post," says Laila Freivalds, Minister for Foreign Affairs. "The OSCE Office in Minsk plays an important role in supporting institution building, developing the legal system and strengthening relations with civil society in Belarus. The Government's decision to make Mr Peterson available to head the office reflects Sweden's strong support for the OSCE and its field activities.

Fact box

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe is an instrument for establishing long-term security in Europe. All European countries participate in the OSCE, as do Canada, the United States and the Central Asian States - at present 55 countries in all. The OSCE takes a broad view of what constitutes security, and its activities cover three dimensions: military policy issues, democracy and human rights, and economy and environment. The organisation has field missions in a total of 16 countries.

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Key word: 48319 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Liberia

The Government decided today to send six election observers to Liberia ahead of the coming elections on 11 October.

On that date, Liberia will hold presidential and parliamentary elections for the first time since the end of the civil war.

"It is of the utmost importance to progress and democracy throughout West Africa that the elections in Liberia are free and fair. By sending Swedish election observers we wish to contribute to this important process," says Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation.

The decision to send election observers has been taken following a request from the European Commission to all EU Member States.

Sweden has a special commitment to peace and security in West Africa through State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren's assignment as the EU Presidency's Special Representative for the Mano River Union countries (Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea) and through the presence of Swedish peace-keeping forces in the UN mission in Liberia (UNMIL).

In 2005 Sweden will contribute SEK 105 million to humanitarian measures and reconstruction in Liberia.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Initiative for Indian investments in Sweden

The Government wishes to attract Indian investments in Sweden. The decision was taken today to allocate SEK 1 450 000 to the Invest in Sweden Agency (ISA) to create interest in India for Sweden and Swedish expertise.

"There is an interesting potential for Indian investments in Sweden," says Thomas Östros, Minister for Industry and Trade. "The Indian economy is growing strongly and India will soon be an important actor in the international business community."

The ISA will primarily market high-tech industries and areas where Sweden has a high degree of expertise, and where there is a clear demand from India. These areas include information and communications technology and biotechnology.

"This kind of initiative also promotes a general exchange of business between India and Sweden, which will probably also lead to increased exports and more job opportunities in Sweden," Mr Östros explains.

The ISA will cooperate with local Indian business organisations, the Swedish Embassy and the Swedish Trade Council in New Delhi. In addition to information and marketing measures, initiatives will be taken to cultivate business relationships, arrange seminars and visits by delegations.

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Key word: 48314 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government to back import promotion

The Government decided today to allocate SEK 2.5 million to the Swedish Federation of Trade for activities aimed at promoting imports.

"The Swedish business community and Swedish consumers are both dependent on effective imports," says Thomas Östros, Minister for Industry and Trade.

"It contributes to healthy competition in the Swedish market and to greater choice and lower prices for consumers. Moreover, high quality input goods at competitive prices increase competitiveness in Swedish industry."

In addition to nearby markets in the Baltic Sea region and the rest of Europe, particular emphasis is also being given to countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

"Promoting imports from developing countries is also one aspect of Swedish development cooperation, where mutual trade plays an increasingly important role," says Mr Östros.

Initiatives to promote imports include networking activities, competence building, market research and advice to businesses and organisations. The initiatives are carried out in close cooperation with the Swedish Trade Council, Swedish embassies, Sida, chambers of commerce and other trade promotion organisations and projects.

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Key word: 48308 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Support to the Folke Bernadotte Academy's Challenges Project

The Government decided today to award a financial grant to the Folke Bernadotte Academy of SEK 1 885 000 for the completion of the second phase of the international project, Challenges of Peace Operations.

The purpose of the project is to develop and enhance the international community's peace-support operations.

"The Challenges Project provides an important opportunity for Sweden to contribute to the development of UN peace support activities and the crisis management ability of a number of key countries and institutes in the field," says Laila Freivalds, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The intention is for Ms Freivalds to deliver a final report from the second phase of the project to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan during the autumn.

The project "Challenges of Peace Operations: Into the 21st Century" began in 1997 and is currently coordinated by the Folke Bernadotte Academy. The project assembles partner organisations from some fifteen countries, many of which are active in the field of peace support. The Government has supported the Project for several years.

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Key word: 48267 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Colombian Vice President to visit Sweden

Colombian Vice President Francisco Santos Calderón will visit Sweden on Thursday 18 August. Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is among those he will meet during his visit.

The talks will deal with political and economic developments and promoting human rights in Colombia. Ms Freivalds and Mr Santos will discuss the conditions for the ongoing demobilisation of the country's paramilitary groups.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Freivalds most recently met Vice President Santos in March 2004.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Freivalds on Akbar Ganji

"I am very concerned about the deterioration in the state of health of Iranian journalist and prisoner of conscience Akbar Ganji, after more than 50 days on hunger strike," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"I call on the Iranian authorities to release Akbar Ganji immediately and unconditionally. Politically motivated accusations have no place in any society." It is also essential that the Iranian authorities clarify the accusations against Mr Ganji's lawyer, Abdolfattah Soltani. The authorities must also clarify the circumstances surrounding the murder of Prosecutor Massoud Moghaddas," Ms Freivalds says. This message was delivered to the Iranian Chargé d'Affaires today by Acting Director-General for Political Affairs Peter Tejler.

Background

Akbar Ganji has been in prison since being convicted in 2001 of opinions critical of the government. Abdollah Soltani, one of Ganji's lawyers, was arrested on 30 July on an accusation of having disclosed secret nuclear information. Massoud Moghaddas was the judge who sentenced Ganji and was involved in a number of high-profile political cases.

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Key word: 48120 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds on Iran's nuclear programme

"I am very concerned about Iran's message to the IAEA that the country has decided to resume uranium conversion," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"If Iran does take this step it will be contravening the Paris Agreement and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board Resolution, both from November 2004.

"France, Germany and the UK put forward a new proposal for solving the issue on 5 August. I hope the negotiations will be able to continue. This is conditional on the Paris Agreement being respected," Ms Freivalds says.

This message was delivered to the Iranian Chargé d'Affaires today by Acting Director-General for Political Affairs Peter Tejler.

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Background

There is widespread concern in the international community that Iran's nuclear programme may give the country the capacity to produce nuclear weapons. Sweden shares this concern. Three European countries and the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, backed by the entire EU, have been negotiating with Iran for a considerable time in an attempt to reach an agreement that would include guarantees that the nuclear programme has exclusively peaceful purposes. The negotiations are based on an undertaking by Iran to suspend all

uranium enrichment and related activities as long as talks continue. It is this undertaking that Iran has recently said it intends to abandon.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-08

Ministry of Defence
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to contribute to EU mission in Aceh

The Government decided today to contribute support to the EU mission in Aceh Province in Indonesia. Sweden will be the only country providing logistical assistance to EU personnel in the area.

On 15 August, the Government of Indonesia and the leadership of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) are expected to sign a peace agreement in Helsinki. The peace treaty is a historic agreement and a solution to many years of conflict in Aceh Province. The Indonesian Government and GAM have asked the EU to monitor the agreement. The EU observer mission will be a civilian operation whose assignment will be to monitor implementation of the peace agreement.

The Government decided today to contribute logistical support to the EU mission and to allocate up to SEK 40 million for the purpose via Sida's budget. The operation will be carried out by the Swedish Rescue Services Agency, which will initially provide about eight staff members. Their task will include ensuring that the EU observers have access to office facilities, transport, telecommunications and IT. The Swedish Rescue Services Agency is prepared to travel to Aceh on Wednesday this week. The Swedish support will enable EU personnel to take up their positions swiftly so as to be able to monitor the agreement, which is to enter into force on 15 August.

"The peace agreement is a unique opportunity for lasting peace in Aceh Province and the EU observers will fulfil an important function in monitoring it," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"Earlier this summer the Government allocated SEK 150 million to reconstruction after the tsunami disaster in Indonesia. Sweden's contribution to the EU mission is an additional part of the long-term support for peace and development that we are giving to the region," Ms Jämtin continues.

"The Swedish Rescue Services Agency has a very good international reputation for its international disaster and aid operations and is in demand as a partner in cooperative activities. In response to the

tsunami disaster, for example, the Swedish Rescue Services Agency is on the ground in Indonesia and Sri Lanka to support UN aid efforts," says Minister for Defence Leni Björklund.

"The Swedish Rescue Services Agency will now have the task of supporting EU efforts to monitor the peace agreement in Indonesia. The fact that this task has been assigned to the Swedish Rescue Services Agency is further evidence of Sweden's expertise in the field of logistics," adds Ms Björklund.

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Facts about the EU mission

- * On 17 July 2005 the Indonesian Government and the leadership of GAM agreed on a peace treaty.
- * After the tsunami disaster the political will existed for renewed dialogue between the parties.
- * The parties have turned to the EU to request it to monitor the treaty, and the EU has agreed to do so.
- * The EU plans to monitor implementation of the agreement for a period of six months.
- * The EU mission will be civilian and will consist of about 200 observers.

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Key word: 48090 Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Leni Björklund

PRESS RELEASE

2005-08-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for International Development Cooperation Jämtin to attend funeral of Sudanese leader Garang

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will travel to Sudan today to attend the funeral of the country's vice-president, Dr John Garang. The funeral will take place in Juba in southern Sudan, which was also the base of Dr Garang's Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM).

Earlier this year Dr Garang succeeded in negotiating a peace agreement with the government of Sudan, after 21 years of civil war. He took office as a member of the new government of national unity just three weeks before his death in a helicopter crash in southern Sudan.

"Sweden considers it important to attend the funeral of Vice-President John Garang," says Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation. "By travelling to the funeral in southern Sudan we are underlining that the peace process must continue and that Sweden remains committed to peace and development in Sudan."

Many international and African leaders will attend the ceremony on Saturday, along with representatives of major aid organisations.

"I want to use the opportunity to speak with leading members of the Sudanese government about the urgent need to find a solution to the Darfur conflict and about the importance of a continued peace process," says Ms Jämtin.

The Minister for International Development Cooperation will also talk with representatives of other African governments about African development issues and about the conflicts raging on the continent.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-07-29

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

WTO eliminates trade barriers to Swedish vehicle exports to Taiwan and India

Sweden and the Swedish vehicle industry have enjoyed success in two cases concerning technical barriers to trade brought before the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Taiwan recently declared that, contrary to previous announcements, it would not be introducing special national regulations on the height of buses. The changes would have caused substantial problems for exports of buses by Swedish companies such as Volvo and Scania and were therefore brought before the WTO as technical barriers to trade.

A lack of capacity at the Indian authority responsible for testing lorry engines and parts has also been raised as a barrier to trade. This lack of capacity has previously forced Volvo to have its tests done by competing companies in India, which has been unjustifiably costly and time-consuming. However, after two years of discussions and pressure in the WTO, India has now chosen to expand capacity at its domestic testing authority.

"These are two good examples of how problems involving technical barriers to trade can be resolved in the WTO", says Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros. "They also illustrate how Sweden's membership of the EU lends force to our actions in the WTO."

"It has been important to find an acceptable solution to these problems in which Sweden has clear interests," he adds.

However, certain regulations in India still constitute technical barriers to trade for the Swedish vehicle industry. These problems could be resolved if India acceded to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) international agreement concerning motor vehicles.

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Key word: 47979 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-07-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications

Personal export advisers for every county

The Government decided today to increase the number of personal export advisers available through the Swedish Trade Council so that in future there will be export advisers for every county.

The extended remit of the Swedish Trade Council, which involves an investment of SEK 4.5 million, means it will be possible to increase the number of export advisers from 15 to 21.

In 2004 there were six export advisers. There was an increase to nine at the beginning of 2005, and

on 22 June 2005 the Government instructed the Swedish Trade Council to increase the number by a further six, to 15 export advisers.

By now increasing the number of regional advisers to 21, it is estimated that approximately 1 500 companies annually will be able to obtain advice and help in preparing to enter new markets and expand internationally.

"Many small Swedish companies have export potential. It is important that the Swedish Trade Council is able to assist with special advisory services to make it easier for them to get out into the international market. It must be possible to obtain this support everywhere in the country," says Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros.

"With the right support, more companies can gain access to the international market more rapidly. In this way we help Swedish companies to expand internationally, while also promoting growth and employment in Sweden."

The Swedish Trade Council has offered personal export advisory services to companies with fewer than 50 employees since 2002. These advisers work in close cooperation with regional and local business organisations throughout the country.

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Key word: 47963 Foreign policy and international cooperation Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-07-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to press conference with Anna Tibaijuka on the demolition of Zimbabwe's slum areas

TIME AND PLACE

Time: 13.30, Friday 29 July

Place: Press Centre, Rosenbad

Please bring your press credentials

Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, head of UN-HABITAT (the UN housing and human settlements programme) has been commissioned by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to investigate the clearance actions being undertaken by the Zimbabwean government in the country's urban slum

areas. The actions have made 700 000 homeless and have meant that more than 2 million people have lost their means of support.

Ms Tibaijuka will present her report at a press conference on Friday 29 July.

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Key word: 47940 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-07-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

EU to establish rapid reaction units

EU foreign ministers decided today to establish civilian rapid reaction units. It will be possible to despatch the units at short notice to crises and conflicts around the world. The aim is to enhance EU capability to contribute to peace and security.

In November 2004, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds submitted a proposal to improve EU capacity to rapidly deploy civilian crisis management resources in conflicts. Despite the need to act quickly, it has previously often taken weeks or months for support to be in place.

"The decision we have taken today means that by the end of next year, the EU will be able to deploy civilian rapid reaction units with only five days notice. The units will include experts in areas such as conflict resolution, human rights and conflict mediation," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

Experience from the Balkans and Africa, for instance, shows that the quicker the international community is in place in an escalating trouble spot, the greater the chances of preventing violent developments.

In crisis situations, civilian experts can play an important role by building up trust between different groups in a community, enhancing local capability to solve conflicts and monitoring the implementation of a peace agreement. Also in cases where a military force has been deployed, civilian supplements are usually needed to help solve the political, economic and legal aspects of the conflict.

EU civilian rapid reaction units will supplement the military rapid reaction capacity that the Union previously decided to establish. Together with Estonia, Finland and Norway, Sweden will contribute to a joint military rapid reaction force.

EU civilian crisis management is part of the Union's Common European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). The EU is already working with training and advisory programmes for local police services in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the past year, the Union has also supported the reform of the legal sector in Georgia and has begun training officials in the Iraqi police force and legal system. Further, the EU provides both civilian and military support to the African Union operation in Darfur. Two additional operations are being planned at present: a police operation for the Palestinian National Authority and an operation for observing the potential peace agreement in Aceh province in Indonesia.

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Key word: 47756 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-07-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Swedish election observers to Ethiopia

Sweden is sending additional election observers to Ethiopia. During the election of 15 May Sweden contributed six election observers to the joint EU election observation mission.

In response to a request by the EU Commission, Sweden is now sending an additional four Swedish election officials to Ethiopia to observe the process concerning appeals against the election results in certain election districts and the new round of elections expected to take place in August.

"The Government has followed developments in Ethiopia following the general election on 15 May with deep concern. The violence, the deaths and the large number of arrests in the wake of the demonstrations protesting the way the government handled the aftermath of the election deeply regrettable," Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds states.

"It is therefore of the utmost importance that follow-up of the election in Ethiopia is carried out in good democratic order, showing respect for human rights. By sending additional Swedish election observers, we wish to contribute to this important process at what is a sensitive point in time for Ethiopia," Ms Freivalds continues.

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Key word: 47719 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-07-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador to Kuala Lumpur

The Government today appointed Helena Sångeland as Ambassador in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Ms Sångeland currently holds the post of Counsellor at the embassy in Hanoi. She has previously served in Helsinki and Rome.

Ms Sångeland will take up her post on 1 August 2005.

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Key word: 47655 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-07-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador to Ottawa

The Government today appointed Ambassador Ingrid Iremark as Ambassador in Ottawa.

Ms Iremark has been Head of the Press, Information and Cultural Affairs Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs since 2000. Prior to that she was Press Secretary at the Prime

Minister's Office and at the Ministry of Finance. She has also been Director of Press and Information at the Swedish Riksbank and Head of the Press Centre for Foreign Correspondents at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Ms Iremark will take up her post in Ottawa on 3 October 2005.

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Key word: 47651 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-07-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador to Harare

The Government today appointed Ambassador Sten Rylander as Ambassador in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Mr Rylander has been Ambassador in Dar es Salaam, Windhoek and Luanda. He has also served at the embassy in Gaborone, the OECD delegation in Paris and at the World Bank in Washington.

Mr Rylander will take up his post in Harare in December 2005.

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Key word: 47649 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-07-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish contribution to the UN debate: Reform of the Security Council is needed now

At yesterday's debate in the UN General Assembly on reforming the Security Council, Sweden spoke along with 20 other Member States.

In the Swedish address, which is enclosed in English, Sweden's Ambassador to the UN, Anders Lidén, emphasised the need for a decision on the issue now.

Reforming the Security Council, which has been discussed for quite some time, is one of the most complex reform issues facing the world community, and perhaps the most important. The composition of the Security Council must better reflect the considerably enlarged membership of the UN in order to win relevance and legitimacy. Since the UN Charter was adopted 60 years ago, a number of countries, mainly in Africa, Asia and Latin America, have developed into major political and economic actors. These countries must be given a role in the Security Council that reflects their importance.

Prior to the UN Summit in September, the Government is working towards coordinated, concrete decisions on reform issues that aim at strengthening the UN and multilateralism. The Government supports Secretary-General Annan in his desire that the issue of reforming the Security Council be resolved prior to the Summit.

The Government also supports Secretary-General Annan in his view that the right of veto should not be extended to potential new members of the Security Council. Instead, the Government wishes to work for a "veto-free" culture in the Council. Furthermore, the Government feels that a periodically recurring review mechanism should be introduced that regularly examines the potential new permanent members of the Security Council.

The debate continues today and on Wednesday.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-07-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds takes part in Srebrenica memorial ceremony

Tomorrow, 11 July, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will take part in the memorial ceremony for the victims of the 1995 Srebrenica massacre to be held in Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

"The ceremony is being held to honour the victims of the worst massacre in Europe since World War II. My participation is intended to show that Sweden does not forget, that we want to keep the memory alive and continue to contribute to lasting peace and reconciliation in the Balkans," says Laila Freivalds.

The invited guests will participate in the laying of wreaths at a commemorative monument and visit a mass grave. Speakers at the memorial ceremony include UK foreign minister Jack Straw, the representative of International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) Theodor Meron and the Mayor of Srebrenica Abdura Hman Malkic.

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Key word: 47596 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-07-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New strategy for cooperation with Russia

The Government has decided on a new country strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Russia. The strategy applies to the period 2005-2008.

Two major changes in the new strategy are a reduction of Swedish support to Russia and altered prioritisation of areas for cooperation.

The reduction of financial support will take place in stages to SEK 160 million per year towards the end of the period covered by the strategy. This is a consequence of good economic growth in Russia in recent years. The reduced support is part of a transition to normal neighbouring-country cooperation between Sweden and Russia.

Support for economic transition, i.e. stimulation of business and the economy, will decrease sharply. At the same time areas like the deepening of democracy and social security will continue to have priority. Several cooperation projects undertaken in the environmental field in recent years are nearing completion and therefore support will also decrease in this area.

"Recent good growth in Russia justifies a reduction of Sweden's financial support for the reform process in Russia," says Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation. Priority in future cooperation will be given to democracy issues, administrative reform, child welfare and the fight against HIV/AIDS.

The other cooperation areas will be democracy and human rights, environmental protection, social security, economic transition, common security, and research and education.

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John Zanchi

Key word: 47549 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-07-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden doubles its cooperation with Ukraine

The Government has decided on a new country strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Ukraine for the period 2005-2008.

The most important change in the new strategy is a much clearer commitment to supporting Ukraine's efforts to form closer ties with the EU. In addition, Sweden will strengthen its commitment to Ukraine. The goal is annual support amounting to SEK 150 million by 2008, which is almost double the current figure.

"It is important to support the recent democratic development in Ukraine," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin. "Together Sweden and the EU have a great responsibility to support Ukraine in its efforts to implement political and economic reforms and to move closer to the EU," says Ms Jämtin.

Cooperation with Ukraine will create conditions to allow poor people to improve their circumstances. An important tool in this work will be support for the country's efforts for integration with the EU. Cooperation will be directed at deepening democracy and human rights, environmental protection, social security, economic transition, common security, and research and education.

CONTACT

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Key word: 47548 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-07-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Decision in indicative matter involving a child

The Government has today taken a decision in the indicative matter of

asylum-seeking children with symptoms of devitalisation.

The Government has made an overall assessment of the family's situation. The child's very serious condition, combined with the situation in Uzbekistan and the risk that returning there would cause the child further harm formed the basis of the decision.

At the same time the Government has given the National Board of Health and Welfare the task of drawing up recommendations to prevent children from developing symptoms of devitalisation and to create early support measures.

Summary of decision on practices

- The Government grants the child and the other members of the family a permanent residence permit on humanitarian grounds.

The decision is based on an overall assessment of the child's state of health, the climate of uncertainty in the country of origin and that returning there would seriously affect the child's condition.

- The Government affirms that all asylum cases will be assessed on an individual basis. This is a fundamental principle of asylum.

- A child's own grounds for seeking asylum are to be examined and assessed independently. Children may experience persecution and fear differently from adults and this shall be taken into consideration when assessing a child's grounds for asylum.

- Greater consideration shall be given to how children are affected by a refusal of entry. The Government emphasises that the risk of a child's psychosocial development being permanently harmed if he or she returns to the country of origin shall carry greater weight.

- Considering the situation in Uzbekistan, people from Uzbekistan should currently be granted a temporary residence permit.

Task for the National Board of Health and Welfare

The National Board of Health and Welfare has been tasked to draw up recommendations to prevent children from developing symptoms of devitalisation and to create early support measures.

The task also includes drawing up recommendations for the care and treatment of these children. The role of social services is given special attention. The recommendations are to be presented by 1 November 2005 at the latest.

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Key word: 47521 Foreign policy and international cooperation Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2005-07-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin regrets attack on Red Cross staff member

Minister for Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin deeply regrets the news this weekend from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) that

one of its staff members had been found dead in Port-au-Prince in Haiti. The staff member was kidnapped on 29 June.

"Humanitarian aid workers are protected by international law from attacks of all kinds. It is extremely serious if the protection of Red Cross staff and all humanitarian aid workers cannot be maintained. They are doing very important work in Haiti and we must continue to uphold their safety," says Ms Jämtin.

As a result of floods and political disturbances Haiti is currently undergoing a difficult economic and social development. In the past year Sweden has taken decisions to contribute more than SEK 20 million to humanitarian assistance via the UN, the Red Cross and other organisations to meet the immediate needs that have arisen as a result of these difficulties.

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Key word: 47339 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-07-01

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New board members of the Swedish Export Credits Guarantee Board (EKN)

The Government decided yesterday Thursday on the board of EKN (Swedish Export Credits Guarantee Board) for the period 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006. The following people were appointed to the board:

Chair Lennart Nilsson, Managing Director
First Deputy Chair Göran Johansson, General Secretary
Second Deputy Chair Lena Rooth, Director
Kristina Alsér, Managing Director
Wille Alstermark, Director
Karin Apelman, Finance Director
Ulla Holm, Director
Anna-Karin Jatko, Director
Ulf Stange, Director

EKN has the role of promoting Swedish exports by issuing guarantees. An EKN guarantee functions as insurance cover where the Swedish State takes certain risks, such as the risk of non-payment. EKN's customers are exporters and banks.

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Key word: 47238 Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden increases support to world's poorest countries

The Government decided today to contribute a total of SEK 6.15 billion to the International Development Association (IDA).

Within the World Bank, IDA is the institution that focuses on the poorest countries by providing both interest-free loans with favourable repayment periods and aid in the form of pure grants. This makes Sweden the sixth largest donor to IDA's lending to poor countries.

This decision is the 14th replenishment of IDA and applies to the period 2006-2008. The Government's decision increases Sweden's contribution by 67 per cent compared with the previous level of support, which applied to the period 2003-2005.

"The World Bank is one of the most important institutions in the fight against poverty. By being able to offer aid and loans of favourable terms we give poor countries the opportunity to borrow for investments in infrastructure and to carry out social reforms," says Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation. This lending is based on countries' own priorities of what measures are most appropriate in their particular national context.

"Because our aid is increasing, Sweden can play a more and more important international role in the fight against poverty and in efforts to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goal of halving poverty by 2015," concludes Carin Jämtin.

The World Bank has undergone major change in recent years, and today poverty reduction is its overall objective. Sweden is continuing to working actively for World Bank reform as the Bank is without comparison the largest single financier of development cooperation today. Total lending by the World Bank in the previous fiscal year amounted to some USD 20 billion.

The operations of IDA (International Development Association) focus strongly on low-income countries and on Africa, in particular. IDA gives the world's poorest countries the opportunity to take interest-free loans with very long repayment periods but it also works with pure grant aid.

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Key word: 47192 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Pretoria

The Government today appointed Ambassador Anders Möllander as Ambassador in Pretoria, South Africa.

Mr Möllander is currently Sweden's Ambassador in Sarajevo. He has previously been Ambassador in Luanda and has served in Pretoria, Bonn, Lusaka and Dar es Salaam.

In 1999, Mr Möllander was chair of the UN Panel of Experts established by the UN Security Council to investigate and report on compliance with UN sanctions against UNITA in Angola, which resulted in the Fowler Report.

Mr Möllander will take up his post in Pretoria in the autumn of 2005.

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Key word: 47085 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Consul-General in Phuket

The Government today appointed Minister Alf Karlsson at the Embassy in Berlin as Consul-General in Phuket.

Mr Karlsson has previously been stationed at the Embassies in Washington, Tokyo, Dar es Salaam and The Hague. He will take up his post in Phuket in the autumn of 2005.

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Key word: 47083 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-28

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden enters reservation against new tariff rules for developing countries

On 27 June the EU Council of Ministers adopted new rules for tariff preferences for developing countries in relation to the EU. Sweden entered a reservation against the decision.

"The idea of these new rules is to make things easier for developing countries. We do not think that they go far enough," says Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros.

Sweden considers that the system is still too restrictive and limits export opportunities for developing countries, partly through the introduction of safeguard clauses. This makes access to the EU market more difficult rather than enhancing it.

One new feature is the system of duty free access for certain goods from countries that fulfil international conventions in areas like human rights, environment and labour law. However, here too, there are complicated requirements that limit the use of these exemptions.

"This is a step in the right direction, but we would have liked to go further and open up the system even more," says Thomas Östros.

The new regulation enters into force on 1 January 2006. The system of duty free access based on international conventions has itself been in force since 1 July 2005.

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Key word: 47026 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to press conference: World Drug Report 2005

On Wednesday, Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the UN Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UNODC), will present the organisation's annual report on the world drug situation, "World Drug Report 2005", together with State Secretary Annika Söder.

TIME AND PLACE

Time: Wednesday 29 June, 11.00-12 noon

Venue: The Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre, Fredsgatan 4-6.

Please bring your press credentials.

The report is an analysis of the current drug situation in the world. It gives an account of trends regarding the use, production and seizure of drugs, and also considers the connection between HIV/AIDS and drug abuse.

The UNODC is the UN body for working against drugs and crimes such as corruption, terrorism and human trafficking, and is based in Vienna. An important task of the UNODC is to analyse and report on the world drug situation so that it is possible to assess the extent of progress being made in the fight against drugs by countries around the world. Sweden has long provided the UNODC with financial support and is one of the organisation's most important donors.

The report, "World Drug Report 2005", will be available from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre as of 11.00 on 29 June. It will also be available on the UNODC website.

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Key word: 46968 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports Asian Development Bank

The Government has decided to issue an initial promissory note amounting to SEK 86 million to the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The amount comprises one quarter of Sweden's total contribution of SEK 344 million to the ninth replenishment of the Asian Development Fund, which is the ADB fund for initiatives in the poorer countries of the region.

"For Sweden, the Asian Development Bank is an important multilateral cooperation partner in the fight against poverty in the region and for the promotion of sustainable and equitable development," states Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation.

Sweden's three remaining promissory notes will be issued during the period 2006-2008.

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Key word: 46869 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-23

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government to fund export advisers

The Government took a decision on 22 June to increase the number of personal export advisers available through the Swedish Trade Council.

The extra SEK 5 million provided means there will be new export advisers in Kalmar, Linköping, Örebro, Borlänge and elsewhere.

By increasing the number of advisers from 9 to 15, it is expected that 1 000 companies can be

helped each year. Previously these advisory services reached about 400 companies per year.

"We must make it easier for small Swedish companies to get out into the export market, and they often need special advice," says Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros.

"With the right support, more companies can gain quicker access to the international market. This is a way for us to help Swedish companies gain international visibility, while also promoting growth and employment at home."

The Swedish Trade Council has offered personal export advisory services to companies with fewer than 50 employees since 2002. The advisers work in close cooperation with regional and local business organisations around the country. The Government plans to further increase the availability of export advice in the future.

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Key word: 46900 Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports post-tsunami reconstruction

The Government decided today to allocate up to SEK 440 million over a five-year period for reconstruction after the tsunami disaster in Asia. The support will go mainly to Indonesia and Sri Lanka and to regional initiatives.

SEK 220 million has been paid out previously in humanitarian support, out of the SEK 500 million that was made available immediately after the disaster. Total Swedish support for post-tsunami humanitarian assistance and reconstruction thus amounts to SEK 660 million.

The earthquake in the Bay of Bengal on 26 December 2004 and the flood waves that followed caused one of the world's very worst natural disasters. As many as 300 000 people lost their lives and over a million were left homeless. Indonesia and Sri Lanka suffered most and large segments of the coastal population of these two countries are now without any means of support. India, the Maldives and Thailand were also affected by the tsunami.

Some of the support for Indonesia is being channelled via a reconstruction fund (Multidonor Trust Fund) established by the World Bank. Sweden is represented on the Steering Committee, as are the European Commission, the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Canada, Germany and the UK, among others.

"As a member of the Steering Committee, Sweden will do what it can to ensure that reconstruction in Aceh focuses on the needs of those who have been hardest hit," says Minister for International

Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"The reconstruction process must be careful not to recreate poverty; it must lead to socially and environmentally sustainable development. The issues we will emphasise are coordination, a focus on poor people in conflict-sensitive areas and ensuring that measures are guided by the countries' own priorities. Special attention must be paid to gender equality issues and the situation of children, and a close eye must also be kept on the risk of corruption," she continues.

No definite decision has yet been taken on the forms of support for Sri Lanka, but one possibility is to amplify the parts of bilateral cooperation that are relevant to the work of reconstruction over a certain period.

Regional initiatives will also receive Swedish support. An agreement has been entered into with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on support for an inventory of environmental damage following the disaster. Ongoing regional projects and programmes, primarily related to the marine environment of the Bay of Bengal, including fisheries, will also receive support. Extra funds may also be made available to the ILO and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), for use in job creation programmes.

Of the SEK 440 million allocated, SEK 150 million is intended for Indonesia, SEK 120 million for Sri Lanka and SEK 120 million for regional initiatives. In view of the great uncertainty at present about needs for funds during reconstruction, an unspecified reserve of SEK 50 million has been set aside.

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Key word: 46886 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-22

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Director-General of Inspectorate of Strategic Products

The Government today appointed Ambassador Andreas Ekman as new Director-General and Head of the National Inspectorate of Strategic Products (ISP).

Andreas Ekman's most recent position was with the Department for Export Promotion and the Internal Market (EIM) at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, where he coordinated government export support to the defence industry.

Mr Ekman was born in 1945 and holds a degree in economics. He began working at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1970 and has been stationed in Kinshasa, London, Dar es Salaam, Tokyo, Washington and Los Angeles.

The ISP controls Sweden's exports of military equipment and dual-use products, i.e., products that can be used both for civilian and military purposes. It is also the national agency of the UN Chemical Weapons Convention.

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Key word: 46882 Industry, trade, regional development Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Ulrica Messing

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-22
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support for Turkey as it seeks closer ties with the EU

The Government took a decision today on a new strategy for development cooperation with Turkey to support the country as it seeks closer ties with the EU. The strategy applies to the period 2005-2009.

The strategy reflects the Government's efforts to support Turkey's reform process and increase contacts with Turkish society. Greater respect for human rights, not least for women, minorities and people with disabilities, will be given priority. Non-governmental organisations, Swedish government agencies and municipalities will be encouraged to cooperate with players in Turkey.

"The strategy increases our potential to support Turkey's EU adaptation, particularly as far as respect for human rights is concerned. We very much want to involve Swedish society in this work," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

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Key word: 46879 EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Over 70 foreign ministers take part in Iraq conference

The conference on Iraq's future that will be held in Brussels on 22 June will be widely attended. More than 70 foreign ministers and over 80 delegations from around the world will participate. Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds, her American colleague Condoleezza Rice and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan are among the participants.

"The conference on Iraq manifests the unified international support for Iraq's democratic development and reconstruction," states Ms Freivalds.

"The UN has a key role to play in this process. The meeting can be seen as a powerful condemnation of the reckless violence aimed at sabotaging the democratic process."

Iraq's interim government has taken the initiative for the conference, which is being arranged jointly with the EU, the USA and the UN. The purpose is for the Iraqi government to have the opportunity to present its views on the continued political process, rebuilding the economy and developing the rule of law in Iraq.

In a statement, Ms Freivalds will emphasise the importance of continued international cooperation to support Iraq's efforts to become a democratic country governed by the rule of law. Iraq and the international community must also guarantee and promote human rights in reconstruction efforts, particularly for vulnerable groups in society such as women and children.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden opens Consulate-General in Mongolia

Luvsanvandan Boldkhuyag has been appointed Swedish Honorary Consul-General in Mongolia. This provides Sweden with permanent representation in that country for the first time.

The new honorary consulate-general is located in Ulan Bator and opens today.

Mr. Luvsanvandan Boldkhuyag's positions include that of President and CEO of Mongolia's largest private company, the Bodi Group, and board member of the Golomt Bank.

Sweden's Ambassador to Mongolia, Börje Ljunggren, welcomes the fact that Sweden now gains a permanent official presence in Mongolia and is convinced that Mr Boldkhuyag, with his long experience and extensive network, will help strengthen relations between Sweden and Mongolia.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-17

Ministry of Sustainable Development
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to press conference: Lena Sommestad on the environmental report and the results of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) in Stockholm

TIME AND PLACE

Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM), National Museum of Science and Technology, Friday 17 June at 13.00.

The negotiations in Stockholm between the Antarctic Treaty parties end today. Welcome to a press conference on Friday 17 June at 13.00 to present the final outcome of the meeting in Stockholm. Participation by: Lena Sommestad, Minister for the Environment; Hans Corell, Chair of the ATCM; Tony Press, Chair of the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP); and Director Anna Carin Thomér, Ministry of Sustainable Development.

Please bring your press credentials.

CONTACT

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Key word: 46590 Foreign policy and international cooperation Lena Sommestad

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election experts to Afghanistan

The Government has decided to send four election observers, three long-term observers and one short-term observer to Afghanistan for the parliamentary and provincial elections on 18 September.

"By sending election observers Sweden can help to strengthen the democratic development that picked up speed with the presidential election in the autumn of 2004. The enthusiasm shown by voters in the presidential election was good to see and clearly demonstrates the will of the Afghan people to build up a sustainable democratic system," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

This decision has been taken following a request from the European Commission to EU Member States to make a small team of election observers available.

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Key word: 46588 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador to Addis Ababa

The Government today appointed Counsellor Staffan Tillander as Sweden's Ambassador in Addis Ababa.

Mr Tillander is currently posted to the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the EU. He has previously served in Addis Ababa and Brasilia.

Staffan Tillander will take up his position in September 2005.

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Key word: 46539 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador to Copenhagen

The Government today appointed the Swedish Ambassador in Madrid, Lars Grundberg, as Ambassador in Copenhagen.

He will succeed Carl-Magnus Hyltenius, who will return to the Government Offices.

Mr Grundberg was formerly Head of the Department for Eastern Europe and Central Asia at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Ambassador in Tallinn. He has also served in Cairo, Rabat, Geneva and Mexico.

Mr Grundberg will take up his position in Copenhagen in autumn 2005.

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Key word: 46538 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador to Madrid

The Government today appointed Deputy Director-General Anders Rönquist as Ambassador in Madrid.

Mr Rönquist is currently Head of the Department for International Law, Human Rights and Treaty Law at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has previously served at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York and the embassies in The Hague, Buenos Aires, Guatemala and Paris.

Mr Rönquist will take up his position in autumn 2005.

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Key word: 46537 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador to Vienna

The Government today appointed Deputy Director-General Hans Lundborg as Ambassador in Vienna.

Mr Lundborg is currently Head of the Department for Global Security at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and has previously served at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in

New York.

Mr Lundborg will take up his position in Vienna in autumn 2005.

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Key word: 46536 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador to Warsaw

The Government today appointed Ambassador Tomas Bertelman as Ambassador in Warsaw.

Mr Bertelman has previously been Ambassador in Riga and Madrid. He has also served in Moscow, London and Hanoi.

Tomas Bertelman will take up his position in Warsaw on 1 September 2005.

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Key word: 46535 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Kofi Annan to attend memorial ceremony in Dag Hammarskjöld's Backåkra

This year marks the 100th anniversary of Dag Hammarskjöld's birth. One of the Government's main anniversary projects is a memorial ceremony at Backåkra in Skåne on Dag Hammarskjöld's birthday on 29 July. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan will be taking part.

Prime Minister Göran Persson will host the event. Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will also participate. Orkester Norden and the South African group Basadi Women of Jazz will provide the musical entertainment. The memorial ceremony will be open to the general public.

Earlier today, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ystad Municipality, Concerts Sweden and Musik i Syd, together with programme host Lena Endre, presented the programme for the memorial ceremony.

"I'm longing to immerse myself in Dag Hammarskjöld's words and thoughts. He was such a courageous and principled international statesman who challenged the world's most powerful men and stood up for the UN," said Lena Endre.

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Key word: 46460 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Liability rules for environmental emergencies in Antarctica adopted in Stockholm

After almost thirteen years of negotiations, the Antarctic Treaty parties have agreed on liability rules in the event of an environmental emergency in Antarctica.

"The parties' agreement on liability rules in the event of an environmental emergency in Antarctica is a major success for Antarctic cooperation. Sweden has been a strong driving force in obtaining legally binding liability rules. It is particularly gratifying, therefore, that the parties have been able to reach agreement at the Stockholm Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) under Sweden's leadership," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

The aim of the new Stockholm Annex is to prevent environmental emergencies in Antarctica. Everyone who operates in Antarctica must work to avoid emergencies. Should an environmental emergency take place nevertheless, whoever causes the damage must take measures to minimise and contain the impact.

The negotiations have been legally complicated. They have involved the rules of international law as well as national and international tort law, procedural law and insurance law. Since there is disagreement on sovereignty in Antarctica, the states have had to negotiate without touching on this sensitive issue. The Stockholm Annex is based instead on each state taking responsibility for its operators and all states cooperating.

"The Stockholm Annex is a unique and welcome document and now it is important that the states ratify the convention so it can enter into force," says Ms Freivalds. More information about the ATCM can be found in the column to the right.

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Key word: 46479 Environment, energy and housing Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-14
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to visit Russia to present new cooperation strategy

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is visiting Moscow and St Petersburg on 15-18 June to present Sweden's new cooperation strategy and to have bilateral discussions.

The new cooperation strategy will apply until 2008 and will be a first step in a transition from development cooperation to neighbourhood cooperation on equal terms.

The Minister's programme includes meetings with Deputy Minister Vladimir Chizhov at the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Deputy Minister Andrey Sharonov at the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, and Minister Mikhail Zurabov at the Ministry of Health and Social Development.

In addition, Carin Jämtin will meet the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), main donor countries, Russian NGOs and Swedish entrepreneurs. A number of study visits to Swedish-financed development projects in Moscow and St Petersburg are also scheduled during the trip.

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Key word: 46389 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan Eliasson elected President of the UN General Assembly

"Multilateralism is currently being put to the test. We must now live up to the challenges that development, security and human rights confront us with," Ambassador Jan Eliasson said today after he was unanimously elected President of the 60th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

"Reforms of the UN are based on building an organisation that effectively and with complete legitimacy addresses the urgent needs around the world and gives added value to our efforts for security, prosperity and a dignified life for everyone."

In his speech, Mr Eliasson also stated that Secretary-General Kofi Annan demonstrated visionary leadership and courage when he presented his reform proposals in the report, "In Larger Freedom".

Sweden and Gabon will co-chair the UN High-Level Meeting on 14-16 September where heads of state and government from most of the UN's 191 member countries are expected to participate.

Jan Eliasson will take over the presidency on 20 September when the ordinary UN General Assembly session opens and will lead its work during the coming year, when reform issues will be in focus.

A President's Office consisting of 12 Swedish and international officials will assist Mr Eliasson. Head of Office will be Ambassador Lars-Hjalmar Wide.

Minister Anna-Karin Eneström, Counsellor Signe Burgstaller and Third Embassy Secretary Monica Lundkvist are the other Swedish officials attached to the Office.

"Multilateralism is currently being put to the test. We must now live up to the challenges that development, security and human rights confront us with," Ambassador Jan Eliasson said today after he was unanimously elected President of the 60th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

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Key word: 46233 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-10
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation: Laila Freivalds on Dag Hammarskjöld and the future of the UN

This year marks the 100th anniversary of Dag Hammarskjöld's birth. One of the

Government's anniversary projects is a book entitled "Freden som äventyr. Dag Hammarskjöld och FN:s framtid", which will be published on 15 June. The book will be presented on the same day at the Royal Library in Stockholm by Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

TIME AND PLACE

Wednesday 15 June at 14.00-14.30

Royal Library
Stockholm

The Minister for Foreign Affairs will hold a half-hour talk on Dag Hammarskjöld's political legacy and the future of the UN. The question master will be journalist Patrik Peter.

The book contains discussions by Swedish and foreign researchers, diplomats and UN officials - including Hans Blix, Nikita Chrusjtjov's son Sergej, Margot Wallström and Bill Clinton's former security adviser Nancy E. Soderberg - on how to find solutions to current international problems using Dag Hammarskjöld's legacy as a starting point. The preface is written by Prime Minister Göran Persson. The book is published by Atlantis Bokförlag.

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Key word: 46257 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation: Memorial ceremony at Dag Hammarskjöld's Backåkra

This year marks the 100th anniversary of Dag Hammarskjöld's birth. One of the Government's main anniversary projects is a memorial ceremony at Backåkra in Skåne on 29 July, Dag Hammarskjöld's birthday.

TIME AND PLACE

Thursday 16 June, at 10.30
Gamla Rådhuset
Stortorget
Ystad

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ystad Municipality, Concerts Sweden and Musik i Syd will be presenting the programme for the memorial ceremony at a press meeting in Gamla Rådhuset in Ystad on 16 June. Lena Endre, the compere for the event, will also be attending the press meeting.

After the press meeting, Lena Endre and the main organisers will conduct a tour of Dag Hammarskjöld's Backåkra and the venue for the memorial ceremony.

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Key word: 46253 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-10

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Thomas Östros to visit Turkey

Together with Crown Princess Victoria, Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros will visit Ankara and Istanbul on 13-15 June.

The purpose of the visit is to promote Swedish business, to conduct a political dialogue on the EU process and to deepen relations between Sweden and Turkey.

On Monday 13 June, Mr Östros will address the Swedish Business Day seminar, where he will also meet Swedish companies operating in the area. On Tuesday he will take part in the presentation of the human rights scholarship which has been created in memory of Anna Lindh.

During his visit to Turkey, Mr Östros will meet Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Minister of State for the Economy Ali Babacan, who was recently appointed as chief negotiator for Turkey's EU entry negotiations.

Turkey is an interesting and expanding market for Swedish companies. Some 70 Swedish companies are represented in Turkey today. In addition, 400 Swedish companies have agencies in the country.

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Key word: 46159 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-09

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Simplified rules for providing temporary services in the EU

This week, the EU Competitiveness Council adopted a Directive on the mutual recognition of professional qualifications, such as degree certificates or professional licences.

The new Directive replaces 15 different directives and makes it easier for both employed and self-employed persons to practise their professions in another member country.

"This is another step towards achieving a functioning internal market in which the free movement of workers plays an integral part," says Thomas Östros, Minister for Industry and Trade.

A new feature is that simplified rules have been introduced with regard to providing services on a temporary basis in another member country. It will be sufficient for a professional to be established in one member country to be approved in another.

Some member countries have very specific requirements for particular professions, such as membership in special professional associations. With regard to providers of temporary services, such rules will only be in effect if the profession has an impact on health or security. However, the same disciplinary measures that apply to the professional group in the recipient country will also apply to providers of temporary services.

A special government agency in each member country will be responsible for ensuring that the new rules are followed and that citizens receive necessary information.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-09

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Thomas Östros to host Swedish-Russian meeting in Uppsala

Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros will be hosting a Swedish-Russian cooperation meeting in Uppsala on 10 June. Russian Health Minister Mikhail Zurabov will also be attending.

TIME AND PLACE

Thomas Östros will be available for questions on Friday 10 June between 14.15 and 14.45 at Värmlands Nation, Nedre Slottsgatan 2, Uppsala.

The meeting is a steering committee meeting at which the two ministers will function as the Swedish and Russian chair respectively.

Thomas Östros and Mikhail Zurabov will be discussing, in addition to the trade and economic situation, border crossing cooperation, conditions for economic growth, development cooperation and Swedish investments in Russia.

Sweden and Russia began meeting in the Steering Committee on a yearly basis eleven years ago. This year the meeting format has been extended and expert groups have been created to further deepen cooperation in four areas: IT and telecommunications, tourism, sky and space issues, and banking, finance and investments.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Democracy and environment on the agenda when foreign ministers meet

The thirteenth annual foreign ministers meeting of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) will be held on 9-10 June. Sweden will be represented by Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

The CBSS is an organisation for cooperation between the governments of the Baltic Sea States. The European Commission is also a member.

This year's meeting is being held in the Polish city of Szczecin. All eleven countries and the Commission are taking part. Sweden is going to underline the shared responsibility that the Baltic Sea countries have to further develop and deepen contacts with neighbouring countries. The aim is to persuade the circle of Baltic Sea countries to work together for a political dialogue that will strengthen democratic forces and respect for human rights.

The agenda also includes methods for improving environmental protection in the Baltic Sea Region, including the marine environment.

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Key word: 46079 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to visit Norway

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will take part in the Swedish royal couple's official visit to Norway on 10-11 June.

The programme includes a gala performance at Oslo City Hall, a visit to the East Indiaman Götheborg and the inauguration of the Nobel Peace Centre. The Minister for Foreign Affairs will also attend a dinner hosted by the Norwegian King and Queen at the Royal Palace on 10 June and the reciprocal lunch hosted by King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia at Voksenåsen, the Swedish Cultural Centre, the following day.

Media representatives wishing to participate in the programme should contact Inga-May Leander.

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Key word: 45981 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Sustainable Development

Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting about to begin

Some 300 delegates from all over the world are now gathering in Stockholm to negotiate topical Antarctic issues over the next two weeks. The meeting, which is being held at the National Museum of Science and Technology on Djurgården, is the first of its kind in Sweden with the parties who have signed the Antarctic Treaty - the international treaty that guarantees the continent's use for peaceful purposes.

Media representatives who wish to take part in the opening at 10.00 on Sweden's National Day, 6 June, must notify the contacts below in advance, preferably by e-mail, stating their own e-mail address. Both the Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and the Minister for the Environment Lena Sommestad will take part on the opening day. The Minister for the Environment will deliver the introductory address at 11.00 when the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting's environmental negotiations will begin. (The number of places available to the media is limited.)

On the morning of 8 June, King Carl XVI Gustaf will attend a scientific lecture at the conference. (Photo opportunity. The number of places available to the media is limited.) Advance notification for temporary accreditation is also necessary in this case.

In conjunction with the conference, on Friday 10 June at 13.00-14.15, a lunch seminar is being arranged on the subject of how researchers and countries can have better access to information via environmental monitoring programmes. The seminar is open to the media. (Advance notification to eva-lena.fahlstrom@sustainable.ministry.se)

A photograph of a more than 20 square metre sign welcoming the delegates to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting is available for free publication on the conference website at www.sweden.gov.se (heading: Photo Gallery).

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Key word: 45938 Foreign policy and international cooperation Environment, energy and housing Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Honorary consuls from Asia and the Pacific Region to visit Sweden

Fourteen honorary consuls from eight countries in Asia and the Pacific region will begin a week-long visit to Sweden on 5 June.

The consuls play an important role by spreading knowledge of Sweden and promoting Swedish business in their home countries. The purpose of the visit is to strengthen this role and to provide them with up-to-date information about Sweden.

In Stockholm the programme for the consuls will include visits to Electrolux and Ericsson in Kista. They will meet representatives of the Swedish Trade Council, the Swedish Import Council, the Swedish Institute, the Swedish Travel and Tourism Council and the Invest in Sweden Agency. On 6 June, Sweden's National Day, the consuls will visit Uppsala. The programme also includes an audience with the King and Queen and a visit to the Riksdag and Stockholm City Hall.

The fourteen honorary consuls come from Australia, Fiji, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Tonga.

During the last two years, consuls from India, Japan, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, South Korea and from South-East Asia have visited Sweden for the same purpose.

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Key word: 45910 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador to Sarajevo

The Government has today appointed Ambassador Lars-Erik Wingren as Sweden's Ambassador in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Lars-Erik Wingren has previously been Ambassador in Jakarta and Canberra. He has also served in Mexico, Brussels, Warsaw and Geneva.

Ambassador Wingren will take up his post in the autumn of 2005.

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Key word: 45814 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Ankara

The Government has today appointed Christer Asp, Sweden's Consul-General in Phuket, as ambassador in Ankara, Turkey.

Christer Asp has previously been head of the Department for Strategic Export Control at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has also served at Sweden's Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels and at the embassies in Washington and Jakarta.

Christer Asp will take up his post in the autumn of 2005.

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Key word: 45816 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador to Dhaka

The Government has today appointed Department Director Britt Falkman Hagström, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), as ambassador in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

She has previously been stationed in Addis Ababa, Dhaka and Colombo.

Ms Falkman Hagström will take up her post in the autumn of 2005.

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Key word: 45813 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador to Algiers

The Government has today appointed Sweden's ambassador in Pretoria, Ambassador Helena Nilsson, as ambassador in Algiers, Algeria.

Helena Nilsson will take up her post in the autumn of 2005.

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Key word: 45812 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-02

Ministry of Sustainable Development
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds to open the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM)

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will open the 28th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) on Sweden's National Day, 6 June, at 10.00 at the National Museum of Science and Technology in Djurgården in Stockholm. Journalists and photographers who wish to attend the opening of the conference must give advance notice -- preferably by email -- to the contact persons given below, stating their own email address.

Only a limited number of places are available for the media.

In the morning of the same day Environment Minister Lena Sommestad will open the environmental negotiations at the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting.

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Key word: 45766 Environment, energy and housing Foreign policy and international cooperation Lena Sommestad

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-02

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Thomas Östros speaks at Business Forum in Kiev

"The Orange Revolution has raised expectations and hopes in the Swedish business community. There are already close to 60 Swedish companies operating in Ukraine and the interest in this market just keeps growing."

This was what Thomas Östros said on Thursday when he took part in a business seminar along with the First Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine, Anatoliy Kyrylovych Kinakh.

Thomas Östros is on a two-day visit to Kiev to promote Swedish business in Ukraine, as well as to express his support for ongoing political and economic reforms.

Trade between Ukraine and Sweden increased sharply last year, with a jump of 55 per cent in Swedish exports to Ukraine and a 42 per cent rise in imports.

"The main reason for the growing interest is of course the new political situation. And even if it's impossible to solve all the problems overnight, what we've seen so far is extremely positive," says Mr Östros.

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Key word: 45763 Foreign policy and international cooperation Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Burundi

The Government decided today to send five election observers to Burundi for the forthcoming parliamentary election on 4 July.

This is the first parliamentary election since the signing of the peace accord in Arusha in August 2000 and it marks the end of a transitional period the country has been going through since that time.

"It is of the utmost importance that Burundi's first election after the peace accord is free and fair. By sending election observers Sweden can contribute to a functioning election process that we hope will strengthen Burundi's democracy," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers has been taken after a request from the European Commission to all EU Member States.

Sweden's development cooperation with Burundi amounts to about SEK 15 million a year. In addition, Sweden contributes some SEK 23 million in humanitarian aid via the UN system and NGOs that are active in Burundi.

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Key word: 45706 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-06-01

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Initiative for promoting more Swedish companies in World Bank procurement

The Swedish Trade Council has been commissioned by the Government to actively follow up World Bank procurement in new EU Member States and neighbouring countries.

This procurement includes installations and system solutions in fields where Sweden has cutting-edge skills: energy, environment, IT, healthcare and transport.

"Competition for procurement by multilateral institutions is cutthroat. This is why it is important to get involved in the project cycle at an early stage," says Thomas Östros, Minister for Industry and Trade.

"Swedish companies can be better when it comes to this type of international procurement. We are currently conducting an information campaign on UN procurement, but the World Bank is also a major financier of interest in this context."

The project is part of Government efforts to promote export of Swedish cutting-edge skills and special initiatives in strategically important markets.

The reason for undertaking these initiatives is that the new EU countries and their neighbours face extensive investments in areas such as infrastructure and environmental improvement. In February of this year the Government decided to allocate SEK 20 million for a special initiative targeting project exports.

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Key word: 45674 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Hans Dahlgren to visit China, Laos and Phuket

State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren will visit Beijing on 1-2 June for talks with Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Yesui on topical bilateral and international issues, and to commemorate 55 years of diplomatic relations between Sweden and the People's Republic of China.

On 3 June Mr Dahlgren will visit Laos to participate in a Dag Hammarskjöld Seminar. Dag Hammarskjöld visited Laos in 1959 while serving as Secretary-General of the UN. Mr Dahlgren will also hold talks with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Somsavat Lengsavad and others.

The trip will conclude with a visit to the Swedish Consulate-General in Phuket and to the disaster areas.

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Key word: 45607 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Thomas Östros to visit Kiev

Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros is scheduled to visit Kiev on 1-2 June, together with representatives of some 30 Swedish companies.

The aim of the visit is primarily to promote Swedish business in Ukraine and to discuss how Sweden, which is one of the largest development assistance donors to Ukraine, can support the country's economic and political reforms.

During his visit, Thomas Östros will meet Ukrainian government representatives, including First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Kinach and Minister for the Economy Serhiy Teriochin, to discuss the reform process, development cooperation and Swedish companies' interests in Ukraine.

Thomas Östros' agenda also includes meetings with Swedish entrepreneurs and participation in a round-table discussion on business opportunities in Ukraine. Opportunities will also be given to meet representatives of the Ukrainian business sector.

A press briefing with Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros will be held at the Embassy of Sweden at 18.30 on Wednesday 1 June.

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Key word: 45448 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Result document on global development presented to the Riksdag

The Government has presented to the Riksdag its second result document on the policy for global development.

Presentation of the document follows the decision taken in December 2003 on a new Swedish policy in which the goal of contributing to equitable and sustainable development is to apply to all policy areas.

"Sweden is the only country that has adopted such an ambitious policy for global development that includes all policy areas. We have attracted considerable international attention and many people are following how we now put this radical new policy into practice with great interest," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Further work by the Government will place special emphasis on areas in which global impact is considerable and where the chances of achieving concrete results within a reasonable time are regarded as good, including conflict prevention, migration, environment and trade and agricultural policy.

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Key word: 45412 Foreign policy and international cooperation Sustainable development Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Washington

The Government today appointed former minister Gunnar Lund as Sweden's ambassador in Washington.

Mr Lund has previously been Ambassador and head of the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the EU in Brussels, State Secretary at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Finance, and head of the Inspectorate of Military Equipment. He has also served at the OECD delegation in Paris and the Swedish Embassy in Copenhagen.

Mr Lund will take up his post on 1 September 2005.

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Key word: 45172 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Abu Dhabi

The Government today appointed Sweden's ambassador in Kuala Lumpur, Bruno Beijer, as Sweden's ambassador in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates.

He has previously served at the Swedish embassies in Copenhagen, Dar es Salaam, Bonn, Paris and Jakarta.

Mr Beijer will take up his post in Abu Dhabi in the autumn of 2005, and will succeed Lars-Erik Grundell, who will return to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

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Key word: 45171 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Four new ambassadors in Stockholm

Four new ambassadors - from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Austria, Guinea and St Kitts & Nevis - will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 26 May.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's newly appointed Ambassador Jakov Skocibusic was born in 1949 and holds a master's degree from Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt am Main. After working for many years as a teacher and interpreter in the Federal Republic of Germany, Ambassador Skocibusic entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2001. In recent years he has been an Inspector at the Ministry and Counsellor and Head of the Consular Department at the Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Vienna.

Austria's newly appointed Ambassador Stephan Toth, who was born in 1944 and is a lawyer, entered the Foreign Service in 1974. He was stationed in Stockholm from 1975 to 1977. In recent years he has headed the International Affairs Department of the Austrian Parliament and the Political Section of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and has been Ambassador in Canberra.

Guinea's newly appointed Ambassador El Hadj Aboubacar Dione (concurrently accredited from Berlin) was born in 1951 and holds a licentiate in economics from the University of Conakry. He has been a member of the Foreign Service since 1985. In recent years he has been Ambassador of the Republic of Guinea to Germany, Libya and Malta and Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Guinea to the United Nations in New York.

The newly appointed Ambassador of St Kitts & Nevis James E. Williams (concurrently accredited from London) was born in 1949. He has a bachelor's degree in French and Spanish from the University of the West Indies and a master's degree in educational management and administration from the University of Bristol. The Ambassador has devoted most of his professional life to secondary and higher education. In recent years he has been High Commissioner of St Kitts & Nevis in London and Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Education, Labour and Social Security.

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Key word: 45167 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

OECD examines Swedish development assistance

The OECD Development Assistance Committee, DAC, is currently conducting an examination of Swedish development cooperation. The examination will conclude on 25 May with a question and answer session in Paris. The evaluation is being conducted by the DAC Secretariat. Two other

OECD Member States, Belgium and Australia, are taking part as co-examiners.

The examination covers the volume, focus and effectiveness of Swedish development assistance as well as the new Swedish global development policy in which all policy areas are to help reduce poverty.

The final OECD report on Swedish development assistance will be published later this year. A press release about the examination will be issued by the OECD on Thursday.

Among those participating in tomorrow's examination are Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin, State Secretary Annika Söder, Sida's Director-General Maria Norrfalk and Sida's Deputy Director-General Staffan Herrström.

CONTACT

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Key word: 45074 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press briefings by Laila Freivalds on the EAPC Security Forum in Åre

TIME AND PLACE

Press briefing in the Press Centre at Holiday Club on Tuesday 24 May at 15.30.

On 24-25 May, the first EAPC (Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council) Security Forum will be held in Åre with participants from the 46 NATO and Partnership countries.

The meeting is being hosted by Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds, who will provide information on the programme at a press briefing in the Press Centre at Holiday Club on Tuesday 24 May at 15.30.

The Minister will also give a briefing for Swedish journalists in the Press Centre on Wednesday 25 May at 08.30.

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Key word: 45027 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish trade council office in Malaysia

Sweden is to open a new trade council office in Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia. This was decided by the Government yesterday. The Office, which will be run by the Swedish Trade Council, will open on 1 July this year.

"Malaysia is one of the countries with strongest growth in South-East Asia. Private consumption is increasing, as are both imports and exports. This provides major opportunities for Swedish companies," says Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros.

The high growth and the rapidly expanding market have increased demand for consultancy services in the Malaysian market. By having a trade council office in Kuala Lumpur, Sweden will also be reinforcing its presence in South-East Asia.

In addition to a commercial counsellor, who will soon be appointed, around another four people will be employed at the trade council office. Their prime task will be to work on the Malaysian market, but nearby areas may need to be covered in the future.

The Swedish Trade Council, which cooperates closely with embassies and consulates-general, is currently represented in 40 countries and has some 400 employees.

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Key word: 44935 Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-20

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Thomas Östros to visit Norway

TIME AND PLACE

Thomas Östros and Børge Brende will hold a joint press conference on Monday 23 May at 11.45 at Voksenåsen.

Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros is visiting Oslo on 23 May to take part in a seminar on Swedish-Norwegian business cooperation.

In connection with the conference he will meet his Norwegian colleague Minister for Industry and Trade Børge Brende.

Programme points:

10.05 Thomas Östros to speak at the business conference
11.45 Press conference at Voksenåsen, Ullveien 4 in Oslo

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Key word: 44907 Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Nordic initiative for a new high-level commission

Representatives of the Nordic foreign ministries are meeting on 20 May in Stockholm to establish the organisation and mandate of a new international high-level commission.

Its task will be to draw up concrete recommendations for improving the abilities of poor countries to make use of the informal sector's potential for poverty reduction.

Former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and the Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto have expressed a willingness to lead the commission, which is planned to begin its work in September. The initiative is being launched by the Nordic countries, supported by Canada, Egypt, Guatemala, Tanzania, the UK and South Africa.

"Through this initiative, the Nordic countries will be able jointly to contribute to removing unnecessary obstacles to human creativity and enterprise, security and development. Sweden and the other Nordic countries hope to make a new and important contribution to efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The overwhelming majority of the world's poor people live and support themselves in the informal sector. Women and men produce goods, build housing, cultivate land, run businesses and do countless other things independently of the legal structures that we in the richer part of the world take for granted. They establish their own systems and solutions for health and other care and for irrigation, electricity supply, sanitation and other everyday services. All these efforts and assets are invisible for the surrounding world, since they lack legal recognition.

CONTACT

Torgny Holmgren

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

28th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) soon to start in Stockholm

Lunch briefing at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre, 31 May at 12.00

TIME AND PLACE

Tuesday 31 May, 12.00-13.15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre,
Fredsgatan 6

Around 300 government representatives, researchers and experts from some 50 countries and international organisations will meet in Stockholm on 6/17 June at the 28th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) for negotiations on the Antarctic.

Two main themes of the conference are environmental issues and an international agreement on liability and compensation in the event of environmental disasters. Increased tourism in the Antarctic, research and biological prospecting are other issues on the agenda. The meeting is the first of its kind to be chaired by Sweden since Sweden acceded to the Antarctic Treaty 21 years ago. This Treaty is an international agreement that has guaranteed the demilitarisation of the Antarctic and its use for peaceful purposes since 1959.

The media are invited to an advance briefing at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre, Fredsgatan 6 on Monday 31 May at 12.00-13.15. The head of the Swedish Secretariat, Ambassador Folke Löfgren, and the leader of the Swedish Delegation, Ambassador Greger Widgren, will take part in the briefing, along with Marie Jacobsson, Principal Adviser on International Law at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and Deputy Director Anna Carin Thomér of the Ministry of Sustainable Development.

A light lunch will be served in conjunction with the briefing. We therefore need your registration in advance by email to one of the two contact persons given below.

Please bring your press credentials.

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Key word: 44893 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Albania

The Government decided today to send two election monitors and four election observers to Albania for the forthcoming parliamentary election on 3 July.

"It is important that the parliamentary election in Albania can be carried out in good democratic order. Sweden is providing election monitors and election observers to support continued democratic development in the country," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Parliamentary elections were last held in Albania in June 2001.

Sweden's development cooperation with Albania amounts to about SEK 60 million a year. The main focus is on support for closer ties between Albania and the EU and the country's integration into the structures of European cooperation. Specific areas for support include institution building, gender equality and the environment.

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Key word: 44870 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Sustainable Development

Nobel laureate Wangari Maathai to visit Sweden

Wangari Maathai, Nobel peace laureate and Kenya's Assistant Minister for Environment and Natural Resources is to visit Stockholm on 20-24 May.

TIME AND PLACE

SEMINAR

Friday 20 May at 9.30-11.30

Rotundan, Rosenbad

Please notify Eva-Lena Fahlström if you wish to attend.

On Friday 20 May, Wangari Maathai will take part in a seminar on the importance of environmentally sustainable development work for poverty reduction, global development, justice, peace and security. The seminar, which will take the form of a round-table discussion, will be opened by Minister for the Environment Lena Sommestad.

The seminar has been organised by the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) and will take place between 9.30 and 11.30 at Rotundan, Rosenbad. Media representatives are welcome to the seminar. Please notify Eva-Lena Fahlström if you wish to attend.

Wangari Maathai will also visit the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. On Monday 23 May, State Secretary Annika Söder will host a lunch and on Tuesday Ms Maathai will meet State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren. Ms Maathai is also scheduled to meet Minister for Sustainable Development Mona Sahlin and to give an open lecture organised by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in cooperation with Stockholm University. Her programme also includes a meeting with Green Cross International and a service for peace at St. Clara's Church.

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Key word: 44741 Environment, energy and housing Foreign policy and international cooperation Lena Sommestad

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Kyrgyzstan

The Government decided today to send three election monitors and four election observers to

Kyrgyzstan for the forthcoming presidential election on 10 July.

"By sending election observers to Kyrgyzstan, Sweden can contribute to the development of a working election system in the country," says Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Previously this year, Sweden made election monitors and election observers available to the OSCE for the two rounds of parliamentary elections held in Kyrgyzstan.

Kyrgyzstan is one of the poorest countries in Central Asia and has been given priority in Swedish development cooperation for the region. Recent events in Central Asia, such as those in neighbouring Uzbekistan, emphasise the importance of democracy and free, open elections.

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Key word: 44723 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation: Ahead of the EAPC Security Forum in Åre

Ahead of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council's first Security Forum in Åre on 24-25 May, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will be holding a seminar in Stockholm on 23 May.

TIME AND PLACE

PRESS CONFERENCE

Monday 23 May, at 11.45

Stora Björn

Drottninggatan 21

Stockholm

Please notify Ingrid Palmklint by 9.00 Monday 23 May at the latest, if you wish to attend.

Assembly at the entrance at 11.35

Please bring your press credentials

Media representatives are welcome to attend a press conference with the participants on Monday 23

May at 11.45 in Stora Björn, Drottninggatan 21, Stockholm.

Taking part in the seminar will be Anders Bjurner, Ambassador and Head of the European Security Policy Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs; Alyson Bailes, Head of SIPRI; and Robert F. Simmons, Deputy Assistant Secretary General of NATO and the Secretary General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia. Ten visiting journalists from Central Asia, southern Caucasus and Eastern Europe will be also be attending.

Please notify Ingrid Palmklint by 9.00 Monday 23 May at the latest if you wish to attend.

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Key word: 44716 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador to Buenos Aires

The Government today appointed Sweden's envoy in Santiago de Chile, Ambassador Arne Rodin, as ambassador in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Mr Rodin has previously been stationed in Geneva.

Mr Rodin will take up his post in the autumn of 2005.

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Key word: 44676 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador to The Hague

The Government today appointed Deputy Director-General Hans Magnusson as Sweden's ambassador in The Hague, Netherlands. Mr Magnusson is currently head of the Department for Eastern Europe and Central Asia at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Mr Magnusson has previously served as ambassador in Riga and has been stationed in Brasilia, Geneva, Belgrade and Moscow.

Mr Magnusson will take up his post in the autumn of 2005.

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Key word: 44675 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador to Lisbon

The Government today appointed Sweden's ambassador in Vienna, Ambassador Gabriella Lindholm, as ambassador in Lisbon, Portugal.

Ms Lindholm has previously been stationed in Havana, Brasilia and Bonn.

Ms Lindholm will take up her post in the autumn of 2005.

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Key word: 44674 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden receives prize for fighting polio

On Tuesday 17 May, Carin Jämtin, in her capacity as Sweden's Minister for International Development Cooperation, accepted the "Polio Eradication Champion" award presented by Rotary International.

The prize has been awarded to Sweden for a special grant of SEK 210 million given to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative in December 2004. The prize was presented at the Grand Hotel in Stockholm.

Rotary International's global campaign has contributed in limiting the geographical spread of polio and the total number of outbreaks of the disease. When the campaign against polio began just under 20 years ago, a total of over 1 000 children in 125 countries were afflicted every day. Last year, the corresponding figure came to 3 children in 20 countries. The containment of polio means that greater resources can be directed to other health-related areas in countries in need.

"Progress in the fight against polio is extremely important in promoting new successes, such as in our efforts on poverty-related communicable diseases, where we now raise the level of ambition and investment together with increasing development assistance and new achievements in the area," says Ms Jämtin.

Previous "Champions" selected by Rotary International include UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

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Key word: 44588 Health care, health, social issues/insurance Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to visit the Palestinian areas and Israel

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is to visit the Palestinian areas and Israel on 18-23 May.

Carin Jämtin will meet government representatives, representatives of civil society and international organisations on the Palestinian side. Her programme also includes a field visit to the West Bank, including a visit to the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH) international observer force.

On the Israeli side, Carin Jämtin will take part in meetings with Socialist International Women and will also hold bilateral meetings with Israeli representatives.

The focus for Swedish development cooperation with the Palestinian areas today is the welfare of

children, programmes to create employment, support to the maintenance of social services and humanitarian relief. Support is also given to initiatives that may directly promote resumption of the peace process. In 2004, payments amounted to SEK 148 million. As a result of the situation in the Palestinian areas, efforts in the humanitarian field have increased during the past two years from SEK 15 million in 2001 to SEK 78 million in 2004. Sweden also gives considerable grants to the UN bodies tasked with support to Palestinian refugees (UNRWA); a total of SEK 195 million in 2004. Twelve Swedes are currently participating in the TIPH international observer force.

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Key word: 44470 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Protection of witnesses before international courts and tribunals

The Government decided today to refer a proposal to the Council on Legislation concerning residence permits for witnesses before international courts and tribunals.

"In order to bring individuals suspected of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes to trial, it's important to be able to offer threatened witnesses protection," says Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg.

Sweden has agreements with international courts and tribunals to allow witnesses, and if necessary their families, to come to Sweden if an international court or tribunal so requests. This applies in cases where such individuals need protection against harassment or threats because of bearing witness.

In the proposal referred to the Council on Legislation, the Government proposes that the individuals the agreements refer to should have a statutory right to a temporary residence permit in Sweden lasting at least one year. Sweden already receives witnesses and their families, but this occurs within the framework of the refugee quota.

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Key word: 44361 Foreign policy and international cooperation Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to visit Ukraine

During her visit to Ukraine on 12-13 May, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will meet Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko, Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko and Minister of Foreign Affairs Boris Tarasiuk.

The agenda includes Ukraine's relations with the EU and organising the increased Swedish development assistance to Ukraine.

"The Orange Revolution means that a completely new political situation has arisen in Ukraine. The country now has a government that has undertaken to implement political and economic reforms, fight corruption and consolidate democracy."

"As one of Ukraine's friends, Sweden wishes to assist and support this process in all possible ways," says Ms Freivalds ahead of her visit to Kiev.

During the spring, Sweden has intensified the political dialogue with Ukraine, which means an increase in the number of exchange visits. On 1-2 June Thomas Östros, Minister for Industry and Trade, will travel to Kiev with a Swedish business delegation. Besides these trips, official level contacts are also taking place to organise the practical cooperation and support.

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Key word: 44359 Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

International marketing of Swedish ICT and biotechnology

The Government is investing SEK 4.5 million to market Sweden internationally in the fields of ICT and biotechnology. This was decided at today's cabinet meeting.

The Invest in Sweden Agency (ISA) will receive SEK 2 million for a new project in the field of information technology and telecommunications, ICT Sweden, and SEK 2.5 million will go to the project Biovetenskap/Life and Bio Sciences.

The aim of both projects is to market Sweden's cutting-edge expertise in these fields and so increase foreign investment in Sweden. The projects will also help promote Swedish exports.

Sweden is one of the world's most attractive countries for investment by knowledge-based companies, and we are already at the forefront in ICT and biotechnology, states Thomas Östros, Minister for Industry and Trade.

We can further strengthen Sweden's international competitiveness by means of increased exports and a greater influx of foreign investment.

The projects are being carried out by the ISA in cooperation with regional actors and companies, who are also co-financiers. The total cost is estimated at some SEK 8 million annually per project.

The projects are part of the Government's long-term strategy to promote Swedish ICT and biotechnology abroad. They also play a role in realising the strategy Innovative Sweden: A strategy for growth through renewal (Ministry Publications Series 2004:36).

The Government is currently preparing branch strategies with companies in the fields of ICT, biotechnology/pharmaceuticals and others where export and investment promotion play an important part.

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Key word: 44350 Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-12

Ministry of Finance
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to grant debt relief to Cameroon

The Government decided today to grant debt relief and rescheduling of payments to Cameroon within the framework of the international agreement aimed at achieving sustainable debt levels in the most heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC).

The agreement covers a total of SEK 72 million, SEK 64 million of which are repayments that were never made in 2004 and which have now been formally written off. Payment of the remainder has been rescheduled.

The decision on debt relief is based on multilateral agreements in the Paris Club which is an informal group of official creditors from 19 industrial countries.

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Key word: 44305 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Pär Nuder

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Director-General for Trade Policy

The Government today appointed Minister Anders Ahnlid at the Embassy in Washington as Director-General for Trade Policy at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has previously been stationed in Geneva and at the OECD delegation in Paris.

Mr Ahnlid will take up his post on 1 August 2005.

Key word: 44276 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Pyongyang

The Government today appointed Minister Mats Foyer at the Embassy in Beijing as Ambassador in Pyongyang, Democratic People's Republic of Korea. He has previously served in Moscow and Prague.

Mr Foyer will take up his post in Pyongyang in the autumn of 2005.

Key word: 44275 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Reykjavik

The Government today appointed the Ambassador in Buenos Aires, Madeleine Ströje-Wilkens, as Sweden's new representative in Reykjavik, Iceland. She has previously been Ambassador in Santiago de Chile and has served in New York and Nairobi.

Ms Ströje-Wilkens will take up her post in Reykjavik in the autumn of 2005.

Key word: 44274 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation. Ahead of the EAPC Security Forum in Åre, 24-25 May 2005

TIME AND PLACE

Monday 16 May at 10.00,
Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre, Fredsgatan 6.

On 24-25 May, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Councils first Security Forum will be held in Åre with participants from the 46 NATO and Partnership countries.

The media is invited to an advance briefing at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre, Fredsgatan 6, Monday 16 May at 10.00.

Participants at the press conference will include Ambassador Krister Kumlin, Secretary-General of the Swedish EAPC Secretariat; Ambassador Anders Bjurner, Head of the European Security Policy Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs; and Colonel Mats Ström, commander of the Skaraborg Brigade and with experience of peace-keeping actions in Bosnia, Kosovo and other areas.

Notice to attend should be sent to Maria Gotemark via email no later than 08.00 on Monday 16 May at: maria.gotemark@foreign.ministry.se.

Please bring your press credentials.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Barbro Holmberg to visit Washington DC and New York

Barbro Holmberg, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy, left for the USA on Wednesday for a two-day visit to Washington DC and New York. Ms Holmberg's trip is in connection with the report that the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) will present to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan this autumn. The presentation will be followed by a high-level dialogue on migration and development in the UN in September 2006.

"Migration affects all the countries of the world. For this reason we also need to get better at cooperating globally. Our ability to deal with increasing migration is one of the most important global issues of the future," says Ms Holmberg.

"The Commission's work is extremely valuable in putting migration issues on the international agenda and giving them a prominent place in the UN system," Ms Holmberg adds.

Ms Holmberg will meet representatives of the American administration and various UN bodies, including UN Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette.

The Global Commission was established at the end of 2003 by Sweden, Switzerland, Morocco, the Philippines and Brazil, with the support of Kofi Annan. It is headed by Jan O Karlsson, former Swedish Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, and Mamphela Ramphele, from South Africa. The Commission consists of 19 members from sending, transit and receiving countries.

The Commission's tasks include:

1. putting migration issues on the international agenda
2. identifying and analysing the current attitude to migration and examining inter-linkages with other issues
3. presenting recommendations to the Secretary-General and other actors on how control of international migration can be improved at national, regional and global levels.

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2005-05-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New press contacts

Press Counsellor Anders J Ericson at the Swedish Permanent Representation of Sweden to the European Union will take over as Press Secretary to Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds from 1 September this year. He succeeds Director Lars Georgsson, who will retire.

Mr Ericson's successor in Brussels will be Thomas Lindblom, Special Adviser in the International and EU Affairs Division at the Prime Minister's Office. Mr Lindblom has previously served at the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the European Union and has also worked with EU issues at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm.

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Key word: 43943 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government instructs Sida to prepare budget support to ten countries

Today the Government took the decision to authorise Sida to prepare budget support for ten countries - Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Honduras, Mali, Mozambique, Nacaragua, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia - and to disburse previously approved budget support to Malawi. The decision was made under the guidelines for cooperation strategies recently adopted by the Government, which entail giving Sida responsibility for handling Swedish budget support to poor countries.

"This budget support will give the recipient countries a better chance to control their own development. It is their own priorities that must be the guiding principle for poverty reduction in these countries," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

General budget support for poverty reduction means non-earmarked support to cooperation countries' budgets for implementing strategies to reduce poverty. Support is often given jointly with other donors. Development assistance donors follow up these strategies by careful monitoring of the economic and social measures taken by each country.

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Key word: 43941 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to visit Japan

On 6-7 May, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is to participate in the seventh Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) of foreign ministers in Kyoto, Japan.

Taking part in the meeting are the foreign ministers of Japan, China and South Korea, ten ASEAN countries and the EU, and the EU Commissioner for External Affairs, Benita Ferrero-Waldner.

Current international issues including the UN will be discussed at the meeting. Bilateral talks with the foreign ministers of Japan, China, South Korea and Vietnam are also planned in connection with the meeting.

During her visit to Japan, the Minister for Foreign Affairs will also visit the 2005 World Exposition in Aichi and hold talks with Japanese members of parliament.

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Key word: 43940 Culture, the media, leisure activities Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications

Thomas Östros to attend OECD ministerial meeting

Thomas Östros, Minister for Industry and Trade, will participate in the OECD annual ministerial meeting on 3-4 May. Sweden will chair the meeting this year.

During the ministerial meeting, Mr Östros will participate in discussions on reforms in the OECD. In addition, he will participate in the meeting of trade ministers which this year will give particular attention to the ongoing WTO negotiations known as the Doha Round.

Besides the official ministerial meeting, Mr Östros will participate in the parallel Forum, where NGOs, business, trade union organisations and others will take part. He will take part in two panel debates; one on corporate social responsibility (CSR) and one on the importance of success in the Doha round. Mr Östros is the official rapporteur from the Forum to the ministerial meeting.

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Key word: 43736 Foreign policy and international cooperation Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-05-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Lebanon

The Government has decided to send election observers to Lebanon in connection with the parliamentary election, which is expected to start on 29 May. The observers will be sent on condition that an EU mission is invited by the Lebanese Government.

Sida (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) has been instructed to recruit and train a maximum of 7 election observers, 5 of whom are to be short-term observers. The Swedish election observers will form part of the EU election observation mission that is now under preparation pending a formal invitation.

"Sweden supports democratic development in Lebanon and we therefore see it as important to contribute election observers in connection with the parliamentary election," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

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Key word: 43671 Democracy and human rights EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to take part in conference on the Non-Proliferation Treaty in New York

Laila Freivalds, Minister for Foreign Affairs, will leave for New York on 1 May to take part in the Review Conference on the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) which is held every five years.

In connection with the visit, Ms Freivalds will hold talks with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Jan Egeland, Under-Secretary-General and head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA). She will also meet with Jean Ping, President of the UN General Assembly.

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Key word: 43659 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Damascus

The Government has today appointed Deputy Director-General Catharina Kipp as Ambassador in Damascus.

At present she is head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Department for Global Security and has previously been Consul-General in Jerusalem. Ms Kipp has also served at the Consulate-General in Hong Kong and the embassies in Paris and Bonn.

She will take up her post in the autumn of 2005.

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Key word: 43586 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Consul-General in Jerusalem

The Government has today appointed Deputy Director-General Nils Eliasson as Consul-General in Jerusalem. He is currently head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Department for Migration and Asylum Policy.

Mr Eliasson has previously been Ambassador in Sarajevo and Ambassador for Human Rights Issues at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has also served at the CSCE delegations in Prague and Vienna, and at the embassies in Beijing, London, Rabat and Tokyo.

Mr Eliasson will take up his post in the autumn of 2005.

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Key word: 43580 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Colombia

The Government has today appointed Counsellor Lena Nordström as Ambassador in Bogotá DC, Colombia.

She is currently stationed at the embassy in Santiago de Chile and has previously worked in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Americas Department.

Ms Nordström will take up her post in the autumn of 2005.

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Key word: 43578 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-28
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Stockholm

The following four Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 28 April. The four Ambassadors come from Bhutan, Côte d'Ivoire, Cambodia and Trinidad and Tobago.

Bhutan's newly appointed Ambassador Sonam Tobden Rabgye was born in 1958. He has a BA Honours degree in History from New Delhi University and an MA in International Relations from Tufts University in Boston. The Ambassador entered his country's foreign service in 1979 and has served at the Permanent Mission of Bhutan to the United Nations in New York and at the Royal Bhutan Embassy in New Delhi. In recent years he has served as Ambassador in Kuwait. Ambassador Sonam Tobden Rabgye is concurrently accredited to the Permanent Mission of Bhutan to the United Nations in Geneva.

Côte d'Ivoire's newly appointed Ambassador Robert Djerou Ly was born in 1960. He is a lawyer and took his Bachelor of Law degree at Abidjan University in 1985. He entered his country's public administration service in 1990. In recent years, his posts have included Senior Adviser at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and he has also served at the African Union Commission. Ambassador Robert Djerou Ly is concurrently accredited to Copenhagen.

Cambodia's newly appointed Ambassador Hor Nambora was born in 1957. He has studied at university in Paris and is a graduate of the Institute of International Relations and Political Studies, University of Economics, in Budapest. Ambassador Nambora entered the foreign service in 1988 and in recent years has served as Ambassador in Australia and New Zealand. Ambassador Nambora is concurrently accredited to London.

Trinidad and Tobago's newly appointed Ambassador Glenda Morean-Phillip was born in 1944. She is a solicitor and was the first woman to qualify as a solicitor in Trinidad and Tobago. The Ambassador has worked with civil and criminal law issues throughout her professional life. In recent years, Ambassador Morean-Phillip's posts have included Chancellor of Justice and High Commissioner in London. Ambassador Glenda Morean-Phillip is concurrently accredited to London.

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Key word: 43514 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government to back export advisers

The Government wants to make it easier for small Swedish enterprises to break into the export market. The number of personal export advisers under the Swedish Trade Council is therefore being expanded to cover all regions in Sweden.

"I want to give small Swedish companies easier access to the export market. This is why our export promotion efforts are particularly focusing on smaller companies," says Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros.

"With the right support, more companies can gain quicker access to the international market. In this way, they can be strengthened internationally while we will be promoting employment and growth at home."

By increasing the number of advisers from 6 to 15, it is expected that the number of companies that can benefit every year from export advisory services can be expanded from 400 to 1 000. SEK 5 million in additional resources means, for example, that new export advisers will be assigned to Kalmar, Linköping, Örebro and Borlänge.

Since 2002, the Swedish Trade Council has offered personal export advisory services to companies with fewer than 50 employees. These advisers work in close cooperation with regional and local business organisations throughout the country.

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Key word: 43399 Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation: Children in the asylum process with symptoms of devitalisation

On 27 April, Marie Hessle, national coordinator for children in the asylum process exhibiting symptoms of devitalisation, will present her first report.

TIME AND PLACE

Date and time: Wednesday 27 April, 9.00 a.m.

Venue: Press Centre at Rosenbad

Language: Swedish

Please bring your press credentials.

The report is entitled "Asylum-seeking children with symptoms of devitalisation: status of knowledge and survey of cases". It contains information about the number of children who have exhibited such symptoms since 2003, the course of the disease and the countries from which the children come.

The research has been carried out by Docent Nader Ahmadi. Psychologist Andreas Tunström and child psychiatrist Frank Ståhl have served as expert consultants.

Marie Hessle and Nader Ahmadi will present the report at a press conference on 27 April.

The press conference will also be webcast.

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Key word: 43355 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government increases Sweden's contribution to UN operations in Sudan

The Government decided today to increase Sweden's contribution to UN peace support operations in southern Sudan by committing an additional four police officers.

"This is a step to further strengthen international presence in Sudan. Experts like these are in demand and they complement the extensive financial support we are providing to enable the implementation of the peace agreement between the government of Sudan and the rebel movement in southern Sudan," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

At the International Donor Conference for Sudan held on 11-12 April, Sweden pledged support amounting to a total of SEK 700 million up until 2007.

The UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) is responsible for monitoring and contributing to the implementation of the peace agreement signed on 9 January this year. The UN mission must also provide logistics, operative and other support to the African Unions efforts in Darfur.

Sweden had earlier decided to send three police officers, two of whom are already in the area. Sweden is also contributing staff officers and one police officer within the framework of the Multinational Stand-by High Readiness Brigade for UN Operations, which among other things will be responsible for part of the UN missions headquarters for a period of six months.

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Key word: 43109 Education and research Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Refugee law judges from 50 countries to meet in Stockholm

Refugee law judges from 50 countries will attend a conference on 21-22 April at the House of Trade and Industry in Stockholm to discuss issues such as rules of evidence in asylum cases.

In addition to rules of evidence, legal systems will be compared - in some countries asylum cases can be appealed to a special authority, while other countries have chosen a solution involving the courts. Even issues such as how humanitarian law, human rights and refugee law relate to one another will be discussed.

The conference, which has been preceded by a training seminar in Lund, will be jointly organised by the International Association of Refugee Law Judges and the Aliens Appeals Board.

Barbro Holmberg, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy, will open the conference.

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Key word: 43106 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Foreign policy and international cooperation Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to inaugurate the Anna Lindh Foundation in Alexandria

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is to travel to Alexandria today to take part in the official inauguration of the Anna Lindh Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures. The inauguration ceremony is to take place tomorrow, Wednesday.

Other participants include the EU Presidency, represented by Luxembourg's Minister of Culture, François Biltgen, the EU Commissioner for External Relations, Benita Ferrero-Waldner and Egypt's Minister of Culture, Farouk Hosni.

"This Foundation has an extremely important task, which is to help bridge the gap and strengthen the dialogue between different cultures," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

The Foundation's assignment is to promote greater understanding between the EU Member States and ten countries round the Mediterranean and in the Middle East within the framework of what is known as the Barcelona Process. The dialogue aims at building partnerships for social, cultural and other human issues, with the emphasis on greater contact between cultures.

The Foundation, which is based at the Swedish Institute and the Egyptian Library of Alexandria, will serve as a central forum for the national networks that each country has built up. An important aspect of the activities of these networks will be to promote contact between representatives of civil society in the different countries and cooperation on issues related to education, culture, science and communication. Particular emphasis will be given to human rights, democracy, sustainable development, gender equality and youth affairs. The National Museums of World Culture will serve as the contact point for the Swedish network.

During the first three-year period, the Foundation's board will consist of the Barcelona Process steering committee, in which the governments of all 35 countries are represented. In addition to the board, the Foundation will also have an advisory committee with 12 members, six of whom are from EU countries and six from partner countries. Its Director will be Dr. Traugott Schöfthaler from Germany.

The Foundation will be co-financed by the 35 members of the Barcelona Process. Total financial support amounts to more than EUR 12 million (approximately SEK 110 million).

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Key word: 42962 Culture, the media, leisure activities EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ambassadors from around the world to visit Kiruna and Narvik

On 20-22 April the heads of more than 70 foreign missions in Stockholm will visit the Kiruna region.

The visit has been arranged by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs together with the Norrbotten County Administrative Board and Kiruna Municipality. The purpose of the journey is to give the foreign ambassadors the opportunity to familiarise themselves with Sweden and Swedish conditions and to establish contacts at regional level. Similar tours to different parts of the country are organised on a regular basis.

The visit to Kiruna will be hosted by County Governor Per-Ola Eriksson and Municipal Council Chairman Thore Klippmark. The programme will include visits to the Swedish Institute of Space Physics, the Esrange Space Operations Facility and the LKAB mining company. The ambassadors will also visit the Ice Hotel in Jukkasjärvi.

As part of the celebration of the peaceful dissolution of the Union between Sweden and Norway in 1905, the ambassadors will then travel to Narvik on Malmbanan - the railway line used to transport iron ore, goods and passengers between Luleå and Narvik - at the invitation of Narvik Municipality and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Media representatives are welcome to take part in the whole programme or only part of it.

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Key word: 42899 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-15

Ministry of Sustainable Development
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government to take part in UN meeting on sustainable development

The thirteenth meeting of the UN Commission for Sustainable Development will take place on 11-22 April. The meeting is a follow-up to the World Summit in Johannesburg in 2002, which adopted a political declaration and implementation plan for sustainable development.

At this years meeting there is a special focus on the implementation of the UN Millennium Development Goals with regard to water, sanitation, housing and sustainable building.

Mona Sahlin will head the Swedish delegation and take part on 18-21 April. She will meet the US energy minister, open the Nordic Council of Ministers seminar on sustainable consumption and production, and deliver Sweden's main speech. Mona Sahlin will also meet Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) Anna Tibajuka as well as environmental and energy NGOs.

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will be taking part in the meeting on 20-21 April. She will be participating in discussions with finance and development cooperation ministers on the economic gains to be achieved by investing in water, sanitation and good housing. Carin Jämtin will also have talks with UN Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette, Kofi Annans Chef de Cabinet, Mark Malloch Brown, and Executive Director of the UN Population Fund Thoraya Obaid.

Minister for the Environment Lena Sommestad will attend the meeting in New York on 20-22 April. Among other things, she will take part in a minister-level discussion on the tsunami disaster and in the closing ministerial session on how political measures can be turned into action.

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Key word: 42851 Environment, energy and housing Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Lena Sommestad

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Spring Fiscal Policy Bill 2005: A stable economic basis for the biggest reform ever in the area of migration

Cases previously dealt with by the Aliens Appeals Board will instead be heard by the courts as from 1 January 2006.

In the spring the Government will present a bill on the new system in which the costs will be specified.

SEK 200 million has been allocated to transitional costs this year. This includes, for example, costs for premises, staff recruitment, continuing professional development and the phasing out of the Aliens Appeals Board.

Resources have been allocated to the Swedish Migration Board, which is now making decisions in a large number of cases. This is resulting in shorter processing times. The Aliens Appeals Board has been given a further SEK 25 million in 2005 to process and make decisions in as many cases as possible before 2006.

Costs for health and medical care for asylum seekers have increased and compensation to county councils has therefore been increased by SEK 15 million.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Spring Fiscal Policy Bill 2005: Sweden to increase development assistance

"The disparities existing in the world are enormous. Development assistance is one of many ways for Sweden to help achieve greater fairness. Next year, we will achieve the goal of one per cent of GNI in development assistance. We can be proud of the fact that Sweden is one of the world's largest development assistance donors," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

In 2005, development assistance will increase by SEK 2 billion compared with 2004. Between 2000 and 2005, Swedish development assistance has increased from 0.72 per cent of GNI, corresponding to SEK 14 billion, to 0.8824 per cent of GNI, which is SEK 23.7 billion. In 2006, the goal of one per cent in development assistance will be achieved. Sweden is one of five countries to exceed the UN goal of 0.7 per cent of GNI in development assistance. The others are the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Norway and Denmark.

The priorities for development assistance in 2005 are the fight against HIV/AIDS, conflict management, labour market initiatives and gender equality, including sexual and reproductive health and rights. Initiatives in the environmental area and to intensify the fight against communicable diseases are being prepared for 2006.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish delegation to visit Ghana

A Swedish delegation comprising officials from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Swedish Export Credits Guarantee Board, the Swedish Trade Council, Sida (the Swedish International

Development Cooperation Agency) and Swedfund (the Swedish Fund for Industrial Cooperation with Developing Countries) is to visit Ghana on 18-20 April.

The purpose of the visit is to broaden and deepen trade cooperation between Sweden and Ghana and to begin negotiations on a bilateral agreement on the mutual promotion and protection of investment. In conjunction with the visit, issues concerning social and environmental responsibility will be discussed with Swedish companies on the basis of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

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Key word: 42590 Sustainable development Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

International seminar on rapid reaction capability for civilian crisis management

On Wednesday 13 April Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is opening an international seminar in Stockholm on the theme of rapid reaction capability for civilian crisis management.

Work is in progress in the EU on elaborating concrete proposals for rapid reaction teams for civilian crisis management. In this context Sweden is holding an international seminar in Stockholm on 13-14 April. Invited speakers include two of the EU's Special Representatives, Heikki Talvitie and Michael Sahlin, and Guido Bertolaso, head of Italy's Department of Civil Protection.

"I welcome this opportunity to discuss and elaborate the Swedish proposal to establish a rapid reaction capability in the EU for civilian crisis management. I am convinced that a capability to deploy civilian rapid reaction teams would be a good way to strengthen the EU's ability to manage crises and solve conflicts," says Ms Freivalds.

The purpose of the seminar, which is being arranged by the Folke Bernadotte Academy in cooperation with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Luxembourg Presidency of the EU, is to learn lessons from the crisis management experience of a range of actors, including the EU, the UN, the OSCE and individual countries.

EU civilian crisis management is part of the Common European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). So far the EU has initiated five civilian crisis management operations; two police operations in Bosnia, two in Macedonia and a mission in support of the justice system in Georgia. Decisions have been taken to start civilian crisis management operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Iraq.

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Key word: 42567 Defence, emergency management and safety EU Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Thomas Östros to visit Moscow

Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros is to visit Moscow on Wednesday 13 April.

During his visit, he will meet Russias Minister of Economic Development and Trade, German Gref, to discuss the situation with regard to the trade economy. Other issues to be taken up are investments and the development of small and medium-sized enterprises.

The Minister for Industry and Trade will also take the opportunity to meet Swedish companies during his visit. At a breakfast meeting on 14 April, he will discuss conditions for Swedish companies in Russia. Representatives of Ericsson, Ikea, Handelsbanken, Oriflame, Sandvik, Volvo Lastvagnar, Scania and Terra Kultur will participate.

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Key word: 42550 Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Inauguration of Anna Lindh Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures

The Anna Lindh Foundation has been established within the framework for EU Mediterranean cooperation to promote increased understanding between EU Member States and countries around the Mediterranean and in the Middle East. The official inauguration will take place in Alexandria on 18-20 April.

TIME AND PLACE

PRESS CONFERENCE

Laila Freivalds and Eva Gesang-Karlström

Wednesday 13 April, 10.30-11.00

Bagdad Café

Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities

Fredsgatan 12, Stockholm

Please bring your press credentials.

The Foundation will have its headquarters at the Swedish Institute and at the Egyptian library in Alexandria. To facilitate dialogue, the 35 participating countries will build up national networks. The National Museums of World Culture will serve as the contact point for the Swedish network.

"The Middle East is a cultural area dating back thousands of years, where Judaism, Christianity and Islam all have their roots. During recent decades, the EU and the countries in the Middle East have grown closer to one another, not least through immigration, tourism and trade. For this reason we also need to gain better understanding of each other's societies," says Laila Freivalds, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

"We are both honoured and pleased that the Foundation has been named after Anna Lindh. We believe that the joint Swedish-Egyptian administration of the Foundation forms a good basis for cooperation. Dialogue with countries in the Middle East must be based upon mutual respect."

Sweden is contributing EUR 500 000 (close to SEK 4.6 million) to the Foundation, thereby making it one of the biggest donors.

Ms Freivalds and Eva Gesang-Karlström, Director of the National Museums of World Culture, will present the Foundation and its Swedish network at a press conference at the Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities, Bagdad Café, on Wednesday 13 April, 10.30-11.00.

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Key word: 42416 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to take part in conference for Sudan in Oslo

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will be taking part in the international donor conference for Sudan in Oslo on 11 April. The conference is being arranged in light of the peace agreement between the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) signed in January this year following more than twenty years of civil war.

"Sweden will be contributing over SEK 700 million to Sudan in 2005-2007 to support the peace agreement for southern Sudan and in response to the enormous humanitarian needs throughout the country," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"The government of Sudan must now take responsibility for peace, human rights and development throughout the entire country. It is therefore absolutely crucial that progress is now also made in conflict-affected Darfur in western Sudan. In Oslo I will make clear that Sweden's continued and increased support to Sudan is dependent on positive developments in Darfur."

The civil war between the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in southern Sudan has lasted over two decades and has led to 4.5 million internally displaced persons and more than 2 million deaths. On 9 January 2005 the government of Sudan and the SPLM/A signed a comprehensive peace agreement.

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Key word: 42376 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish-Norwegian conference on peaceful conflict resolution

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and Norway's Foreign Minister Jan Petersen are to host a conference on peaceful conflict resolution on 12-13 April.

TIME AND PLACE

PRESS CONFERENCE

Laila Freivalds and Jan Petersen
Tuesday 12 April, 13.30

Winblad Conference Room
Frösundavik Conference Hotel

The conference is being organised as part of the activities to mark the centenary of the peaceful dissolution of the union between Sweden and Norway. There will be an opening address by Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Louise Fréchette, in addition to the foreign ministers.

The purpose of the conference is to discuss - ahead of the UN summit in New York in September 2005 - the UN's ability to prevent conflicts, find peaceful solutions and improve peace-building measures. Particular emphasis will be placed on UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's report "In Larger Freedom".

Some thirty countries will be represented at the conference, which will take place at Frösundavik Conference Hotel in Stockholm.

Laila Freivalds and Jan Petersen will hold a press conference on Tuesday 12 April at 13.30.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to host high-level meeting on poverty and SRHR

On 11-12 April the Swedish Government will host a high-level meeting on poverty and its link to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). The purpose of the meeting is to highlight these rights in order to promote economic and social development in the developing countries.

TIME AND PLACE

PRESS CONFERENCE

Carin Jämtin and Thoraya Obaid
Monday 11 April, 09.30-10.00

Sheraton Hotel
Tegelbacken 6, Stockholm

Please bring your press credentials.

Development, finance and health ministers from around the world, representatives of UN agencies and the World Bank are among those invited to the meeting. A common "Call to Action", i.e. an appeal in support of the issues, will be adopted at the meeting.

"People's right to decide if, when and with whom they want to have sex and have children must be strengthened. One woman is still dying in pregnancy every minute of the day. Almost half the abortions that are carried out each year are unsafe and 70 000 women die annually as a result," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"I hope the summit meeting in Stockholm next week will help move these issues higher on the political agenda, both in Sweden and internationally."

The meeting, which is being organised in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), will take place at the Sheraton Hotel in Stockholm.

Carin Jämtin and Thoraya Obaid, Head of the United Nations Population Fund, will hold a press conference on Monday 11 April at 09.30.

The Swedish Government gives priority to SRHR and HIV/AIDS in development cooperation. In line with these priorities, support to the UNFPA has increased from SEK 270 million last year to SEK 355 million in 2005.

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Key word: 42044 Employment and gender equality Democracy and human rights Health care, health, social issues/insurance Foreign policy and international cooperation
Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

"HOME SWEDish HOME" - theme exhibition at the Embassy in Tokyo

On 8 April, Crown Princess Victoria will open the design and lifestyle exhibition "HOME SWEDish HOME" at the Swedish Embassy in Tokyo. Design and lifestyles are the two themes of the Nordic Pavilion during the ongoing World Exposition in Aichi, Japan. The exhibition adheres to these themes and also attempts to capture the growing Japanese interest in Swedish design and lifestyles during the Year of Design 2005.

Thomas Östros, Minister for Industry and Trade, spoke on 'The Importance of Design' at a press conference at the Embassy on 5 April.

"HOME SWEDish HOME" will be on display at the Embassy in Tokyo until 20 May. During the summer it will be displayed in Okazaki, Sweden's friendship town during the World Exposition.

The exhibition shows a Swedish home in a timeless design. In it lives an imaginary family of four. The home is filled with Swedish furniture, design objects, books, food, music, textiles, toys, sweets, utensils adapted to the needs of the disabled etc. The family is also shown picking mushrooms while on a camping trip.

"HOME SWEDish HOME" has been produced by architects Caroline Heiroth and Lotta Cronsjö Gest in cooperation with Joachim Bergström, Press Counsellor at the Embassy. 'Come to our home and get to know us better' has been the lead motif in the work behind the exhibition.

More information about the exhibition as well as photos will be available for downloading from the Embassy's website.

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Key word: 42001 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Drive to promote Swedish eldercare exports to Japan

The Government wants to step up its efforts to promote Swedish eldercare exports to Japan. To increase interest in Swedish exports in this area, Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros is visiting Tokyo Dementia Training and Research Center on Tuesday 5 April.

"Sweden is a world leader in care for the elderly and disabled, particularly when it comes to assistive devices for people with dementia and people with disabilities. This means we have substantial opportunities to increase our exports of assistive devices, services, training and concept solutions in a market that is steadily expanding," says Thomas Östros.

"We already have effective cooperation in care for the elderly but we now want to go further and make a special effort to promote export opportunities in fields such as IT in health care and social services."

Sweden has had an exchange with Japan on care for elderly and disabled people since 2001. In that year the Swedish Care Institute in Japan was established to explore business opportunities for Swedish companies in these areas. The Swedish Government has financed some of the activities, which have included arranging courses, training programmes and study visits for Japanese people in Sweden. So far about 1000 Japanese people have been trained in Swedish eldercare.

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Key word: 41928 Industry, trade, regional development Health care, health, social issues/insurance Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden welcomes UN decision on the ICC in Darfur

"It is with great satisfaction that I note that the UN Security Council has now decided to refer the matter of legal proceedings for violations of international humanitarian law and human rights in Darfur to the International Criminal Court (ICC)," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds. "Sweden has worked very actively to achieve this decision in the Security Council."

"The Security Council decision is of the utmost importance to both victims and the rest of the population of Sudan. It also sends a clear message to perpetrators of similar international crimes around the world that these crimes cannot be committed with impunity. It is our hope that the decision will contribute to a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Darfur."

The Security Council decided last night (1 April Swedish time) by a vote of 11 in favour, none against to adopt a resolution (resolution 1593) referring violations of international humanitarian law in Darfur, Sudan to the International Criminal Court (ICC). This is the first time that the UN Security Council has used its authority under the statute of the court to refer a situation to the ICC. The United States, China, Algeria and Brazil abstained in the vote.

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Key word: 41733 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

ICRC President Kellenberger to visit Stockholm

Dr Jakob Kellenberger, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), is visiting Stockholm on 5 April.

TIME AND PLACE

PRESS CONFERENCE

Tuesday 5 April 12.30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Gustav Adolfs Torg 1.

Assembly at the entrance at 12.20.

Please bring your press credentials!

He will have talks with Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds, Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin and State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren.

The purpose of Dr Kellenberger's visit is to further strengthen cooperation between the ICRC and Sweden. The areas the talks are to cover include the role of the ICRC as a neutral and independent humanitarian actor, the continued relevance of international humanitarian law and the activities of the ICRC in current crisis areas.

Ms Jämtin and Dr Kellenberger will hold a press conference on 5 April at 12.30.

The activities of the ICRC are financed through voluntary contributions. Sweden has increased its contribution to a total of SEK 300 million, making it the organisations fifth largest donor.

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Key word: 41675 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-04-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Thomas Östros to visit Japan

Thomas Östros, Minister for Industry and Trade, will visit Japan on 5-6 April. He will have meetings with Japan's Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry as well as representatives for the Japanese business sector and research community. Mr Östros will also participate in a preview of a Swedish design and lifestyle exhibition in Tokyo and open an exhibition of Swedish products and toys for children in Nagoya.

On Wednesday, the Minister will take part in "Swedish Day" at the World Exposition in Aichi. Crown Princess Victoria will also join the festivities. Sweden is taking part in the World Exposition with a joint Nordic Pavilion under the slogan "Oasis in the North".

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Key word: 41664 Culture, the media, leisure activities Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New country strategy for development cooperation with India

A new country strategy for development cooperation with India was approved by the Government today. The country strategy applies to the period 2005-2009.

According to the strategy, development cooperation with India is to create conditions that will enable poor people to improve their lives. It focuses on respect for democracy and human rights, environmental protection that will benefit the poor and innovative research and development in areas that will benefit the poor.

The new country strategy does not involve traditional state-to-state cooperation. Instead, Swedish development cooperation with India will support and promote reforms and innovative thinking in areas that are of importance to the poor. Direct cooperation between various Indian and Swedish actors is encouraged. These actors can be public institutions at different levels, research institutes, the business sector and civil society. The Government wishes to lay the foundation for a partnership that has the potential for long term viability without financing from development assistance.

During the period 2005-2008, the volume will temporarily amount to no more than SEK 100

million per year when the ongoing projects are completed and the new cooperation is initiated. Development cooperation with India will be phased out in the long term.

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Key word: 41632 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Macedonia

The Government decided today to provide an election monitor ahead of the imminent third round of local elections in Macedonia on 10 April.

Sweden sent two election monitors and four election observers to the first round of local elections on 13 March and the second round on 27 March. In some constituencies, however, a third round must be held.

"By also providing election monitors in the third round of the local elections in Macedonia, Sweden is underlining its interest in supporting the country's continued democratic development," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

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Key word: 41598 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Visit by Lao Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Somsavat Lengsavad

The Deputy Prime Minister of Laos, Somsavat Lengsavad, who is also the Foreign Minister, will visit Sweden on 1-4 April.

He will have talks with Deputy Prime Minister Bosse Ringholm, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and State Secretary Annika Söder.

Discussions will be held on development assistance cooperation, human rights and democracy, trade and investments as well as international cooperation. For a number of years, a working group has been in existence where Sweden and Laos have discussed human rights issues.

Deputy Prime Minister Lengsavad and his delegation will pay a visit to Sida. A dialogue will be held with the National Board of Trade on topics such as Open Trade Gate Sweden, an initiative to reduce trade barriers for developing countries that want to export to Sweden and the EU. Also on the agenda are meetings with Swedish companies.

The visit is a continuation of the dialogue with Somsavat Lengsavad that began when State Secretary Annika Söder visited Laos in the autumn of 2004 in connection with the celebration of the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Sweden and Laos, and 30 years of development cooperation.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-31

Ministry of Finance

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden grants debt cancellation to Ghana

The Government decided today to grant debt cancellation to Ghana within the framework of the HIPC-initiative, i.e. the international agreement aiming at reaching sustainable debts in the poorest and most indebted countries. This is the second and final debt cancellation that Sweden grants to Ghana within the HIPC-initiative, the first being granted in February of this year.

The decision is based on a multilateral agreement in the Paris Club and consists in the cancellation of 25,3 million UD dollars, corresponding to 100 per cent of eligible claims.

The Paris Club is a group of official creditors from 19 industrialized countries.

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Key word: 41557 National economy and budget Foreign policy and international cooperation Pär Nuder

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Ethiopia

The Government decided today to contribute seven election observers ahead of the general elections in Ethiopia, to be held on 15 May.

The Swedish observers will be part of the joint EU election observation group that will follow the country's federal and regional parliamentary elections.

"It is of the utmost importance that the elections in Ethiopia are conducted democratically. By sending election observers, Sweden can help ensure a smooth election process and that the elections are free and fair. In this way we strengthen democracy in Ethiopia," says Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation.

Swedish bilateral development cooperation with Ethiopia is of long standing and includes a dialogue on issues concerning human rights, democracy and good governance.

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Key word: 41521 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Thomas Östros to meet Latvian Minister of Economy

Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros is to meet the Latvian Minister of Economy Arturs Krisjanis Karins on Thursday 31 March. The meeting will take place in connection with the Latvian President's state visit to Sweden.

Mr Östros and Mr Karins will have discussions on topics including Swedish-Latvian business and trade relations as well as EU issues of common interest such as the Lisbon Process and the Services Directive.

On Friday 1 April, the ministers will take part in a Swedish-Latvian business forum which will bring together representatives of the business sectors and organisations from both countries. The forum is being organised by the Swedish Trade Council, the Invest in Sweden Agency, the Swedish Travel and Tourism Council, the Swedish Federation of Trade and their Latvian counterparts.

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Key word: 41520 EU Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New press secretary to Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds

The new press secretary to Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is Lars Georgsson, a director in the Ministry. He succeeds Anders Hagquist, who takes up a position today as Director of Information at the National Police Board.

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Key word: 41482 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-24
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Barbro Holmberg to visit Bosnia

Barbro Holmberg, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy, is to visit Sarajevo on 29-30 March. During her visit the minister will meet government representatives, visit hospitals and talk to returnees from Sweden.

CONTACT

Odd Guteland

Key word: 41461 Foreign policy and international cooperation Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-24
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Proposal referred to Council on Legislation on new system for appeals and procedures in aliens and citizenship cases

The Government yesterday referred the proposal New system for appeals and procedures in aliens and citizenship cases to the Council on Legislation.

"This is the biggest reform in the area of migration ever undertaken. The Aliens Appeals Board will be replaced by court proceedings as of 1 January 2006. This will lead to a more transparent and open process in which people seeking asylum will have greater opportunities to present their cases orally. It will add to greater confidence in the way decisions are made," says Barbro Holmberg, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy.

"At the same time, we are submitting a draft for a new Aliens Act in which grounds for seeking protection are expanded. Refugee policy is to focus on the need for protection. We want to make it clear that asylum is a question of the risk of persecution in ones country of origin, not illness or other problems that might arise in Sweden."

The proposal referred to the Council on Legislation contains a new appeals system. The Aliens Appeals Board will be closed and replaced by a procedure in the courts. In the future, decisions by the Swedish Migration Board can be appealed to migration appeals tribunals and, after being granted leave to appeal, to a precedent-setting migration higher appeals tribunal as the court of last resort. It is the Governments intention that the three county administrative courts (in Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö) are to serve as migration appeals tribunals, and the Administrative Court of Appeal in Stockholm as the migration higher appeals tribunal. The Government is no longer to be able to have individual cases referred to it for decisions that would set guidelines.

A new procedural system is an important element of the reform. When an appeal is lodged, a legal process between two parties will be conducted in the courts, with the Swedish Migration Board as one party and the asylum applicant as the other. There will be an opportunity for the asylum seeker to be granted an oral hearing in the migration appeals tribunals corresponding to the general procedure at administrative courts. The procedural system is designed to achieve an expedited process. The main focus of hearings in aliens cases is to be placed on the court of first instance, i.e. the Swedish Migration Board.

The 1989 Aliens Act will be replaced by a new Aliens Act. The different grounds for residence permits will be more clearly defined and grounds for protection given more prominence. Provisions with regard to protection will be extended in the new Aliens Act, to include the proposal "persons who on grounds of serious conflict in their country of origin feel a well-founded fear of serious abuse shall also be deemed to be in need of protection".

The concept of humanitarian reasons as grounds for a residence permit will not be included in the new Aliens Act. Under exceptional circumstances, if none of the main grounds for a residence permit are applicable, the concept of particularly distressing circumstances may instead motivate granting a residence permit. In such cases, an overall assessment must be made, particularly of the applicants state of health, adjustment to Sweden and the situation in his/her country of origin. Regarding children, the Act makes it clear that these circumstances need not be of the same gravity or weight for a residence permit to be granted.

At present, people whose asylum applications have been rejected and, in this connection, have received a legally binding removal order are able to submit a new residence permit application to the Aliens Appeals Board. This system will cease. Instead, the Swedish Migration Board will, on its own initiative, examine new circumstances that come to light during the enforcement stage. The alien him/herself may also refer to any new circumstances related to the need for protection. In certain circumstances, a new examination regarding a residence permit may be conducted by the Swedish Migration Board.

In cases where security is at issue, decisions taken by the Swedish Migration Board will be able to be appealed to the Government. The migration higher appeals tribunal must then hold oral hearings and submit a statement to the Government. If the migration higher appeals tribunal finds that there are obstacles to enforcement, this position is binding for the Government.

The proposal referred to the Council on Legislation also contains draft amendments to the Citizenship Act and the Act concerning Special Controls in respect of Aliens.

After the Council on Legislation has dealt with the proposal, the Government intends to present a bill to the Riksdag in the spring. These amendments will enter into force on 1 January 2006.

The proposal referred to the Council on Legislation was initiated through an agreement between the Government, the Green Party and the Left Party, based on the budget agreement for 2005. This agreement also encompasses a joint commitment to finance the new system, which is expected to be considerably more expensive than the current system. The preparatory process regarding financing the reform is continuing.

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Odd Guteland

Key word: 41401 Legislation and justice Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

EAPC Security Forum 2005 - media advisory

The first Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council Security Forum with the participation of Foreign Ministers of NATO and Partner countries will take place in Åre, Sweden, on 24-25 May under the chairmanship of the NATO Secretary General, Mr. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer. The Foreign Minister of Sweden, Her Excellency Mrs Laila Freivalds will host the Forum. The "Holiday Club" in Åre is the venue for the Security Forum. The Media Centre will be located next to the "Holiday Club".

Accreditation and Security Checks

The Media Accreditation Office will be located in the Telecom Office building, on Town Square, within walking distance of the Media Centre.

Opening hours of the Media Accreditation Office:

Monday, 23 May 08:30-21:00 hours

Tuesday, 24 May 08:00-21:00 hours

Wednesday, 25 May 08:00-15:00 hours

Applications for accreditation can only be made electronically on-line at: <https://my.hq.nato.int/jas>
In order to complete your accreditation request, you will need to provide a digital picture. Only a 3,5 x 4,5 cm passport-size photograph in JPEG format will be accepted. Every applicant has to create a user name and password.

Applications for accreditation should be submitted to NATO before Thursday, 19 May 2005.

Applications received after that date will not be processed.

Press passes will be available for collection at the Media Accreditation Office from 09:00 hours on Monday, 23 May 2005. Press passes to be worn visibly will not be mailed to applicants. They can only be collected personally at the Media Accreditation Office on presentation of an I.D. card or passport and a valid press card (or letter of accreditation from a recognized media organisation) which should be presented at any time upon request of security personnel. All media representatives are informed that security personnel will examine and may test equipment and personal effects carried onto the site and are advised to arrive with sufficient time to clear the security checks.

Media Centre

The Media Centre is located next to Holiday Club and will be operational on the following hours:

Monday, 23 May 09:00-20:00 hours

Tuesday, 24 May 06:00-02:00 hours

Wednesday, 25 May 06:00-20:00 hours

Broadcasting

Television and radio interview rooms and facilities are located at the Media Centre. Satellite uplink trucks and O.B. vans will be parked along the Media Centre. Electricity in Sweden is 230V and Europlugs.

Television

The Host Television Broadcaster, SVT will provide coverage of arrivals of delegations, the plenary session, the official group photograph, as well as international news conferences.

For enquiries, please contact:

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Radio

The Host Radio Broadcaster, SR, will provide the signal and technical assistance.

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Communications

Laptop computers will need to be equipped with RJ 45 plugs in order to be able to connect to the high-speed communication network. ISDN lines will be available for radio transmissions. Please check if you need to use an adapter in "Euro ISDN" standard.

Programme and pools

The final programme of the meeting will be available upon accreditation.

The programme will begin on Tuesday, 24 May 2005 with a reception at about 19:00. The Secretary General's Press Conference will conclude the meeting on Wednesday afternoon. Pool cards will be distributed early in the afternoon of Tuesday, 24 May.

Visas, Accommodation and Transport

Visas

Please check the website www.sweden.gov.se/eapc, or with the nearest Swedish Embassy or Consulate General regarding visa requirements.

Accommodation

Media representatives are encouraged to stay in Åre and are advised to book their hotel rooms as soon as possible. Information on accommodation and hotel booking is available on-line at: eapc.nymans.se

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Transport

A bus service on arrival and departure will operate between Östersund Airport (OSD) and Åre from Monday, 23 May to Thursday, 26 May, noon. Details will be provided in the second media advisory.

Payment

All major credit cards and bank transfers will be accepted for payments. Currency exchange is available at banks and currency exchange offices in Åre.

Currency in Sweden: Swedish krona (SEK)

100 SEK = 10,9 Euro

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Key word: 41398 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government makes contribution to Multilateral Investment Fund

The Government decided today to sign the second Multilateral Agreement on Investments and to contribute USD 5 million (approximately SEK 36 million) to the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) for a period of up to five years.

The Multilateral Agreement on Investments will be signed in Okinawa, Japan, on 9 April. The Fund will make its first payments in 2007.

MIF is one of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) bodies specialising in the private sector. The Fund was established in 1993 with the aim of promoting private sector development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The focus today is on the development of small and microenterprises in the region's poorest countries and on a review of and work on money remittances. Three quarters of the projects are implemented in cooperation with NGOs and business organisations in the least-developed countries in the region. Activities to date have included more than 650 projects worth a total of approximately USD 1 billion (roughly SEK 7.2 billion). Sweden's involvement in the Fund is expected to lead to increased influence and an exchange of knowledge in an area where Sweden currently has relatively limited experience.

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Key word: 41381 Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government submits a written communication to the Riksdag on military equipment exports for 2004

The Government submitted to the Riksdag today a written communication on Swedish export control policy and the export of military equipment for 2004.

The value of actual Swedish military equipment exports rose from SEK 6.5 billion to SEK 7.2 billion during 2004.

"For the past 20 years, the Government has been able to give open, correct information on Swedish export control policy. This provides a good basis for the public debate. I take a very positive view of being able to give this information to the Riksdag so early in the year," says Minister for Communications and Regional Policy Ulrica Messing, who is responsible for export control issues.

"The increase in military equipment exports in 2004 shows that the Swedish defence industry is holding its own in the context of a restrictive export control policy. Most of this increase is due to exports to our traditional cooperation partners in this field. This is also important from the point of view of Swedish security policy."

In terms of export licences that were granted, however, there was a reduction of 28 per cent compared with the previous year. The total value of export licences granted amounted to SEK 6.5 billion in 2004.

Military equipment exports accounted for 0.8 per cent of Sweden's total exports of goods in 2004.

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Key word: 41301 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Ulrica Messing

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press Counsellor in London

The Government has today appointed Dan Svanell as Press Counsellor at the Swedish Embassy in London. At present Dan Svanell is Press Secretary to Minister of Finance Pär Nuder. In 2002-2003 he was Press Secretary to Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

Mr Svanell has worked in journalism and information services since the end of the 1970s, including spells as a reporter on the newspaper Dagens Politik and at the United Provincial Newspapers' Association (FLT). He has also been Press Secretary to a number of other ministers - Lena Hjelm-Wallén, Leif Pagrotsky and Maj-Inger Klingvall - and has been an information consultant at Geelmuyden.Kiese AB.

Mr Svanell will take up his appointment in May 2005.

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Key word: 40650 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-22

Government invites food industry to talks

Ann-Christin Nykvist, Minister for Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs, and Thomas Östros, Minister for Industry and Trade, have invited the food industry to talks on Tuesday 22 March.

TIME AND PLACE

PRESS CONFERENCE

Tuesday 22 March, at 14.00

Lilla pressrummet, Rosenbad

Please bring your press credentials.

The invitation has gone to a number of food companies, representatives of the food industry and trade union organisations. The discussions are a follow-up of the talks held in the autumn of 2003. They will mainly focus on how to increase food exports.

Swedish food exports have more than tripled over the past ten years. In 2004 they increased by 9 per cent and were valued at more than SEK 30 billion. However, there is still potential to increase exports in the food industry. Food exports are still low compared to exports from many other industries.

A press conference with both ministers will be held on Tuesday 22 March.

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Key word: 41211 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Ann-Christin Nykvist

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to increase its support to the peace process in Liberia

Sweden is to contribute a further SEK 25 million to the vocational training of former soldiers in Liberia. The aim is to help the tens of thousands of young people many of them teenagers who were previously forced to serve as soldiers

and who are now returning to a normal life and need to support themselves

This grant is being given via the UN development programme UNDP and is part of Sweden's endeavours to support the peace process underway in Liberia since 2003.

Via Sida, Sweden also contributes support to refugees wishing to return to their native districts and to various programmes aimed at creating employment in rural areas. Total Swedish support to reconstruction and humanitarian needs in Liberia is expected to amount to some SEK 100 million in 2005.

Sweden also contributes forces to the UN peace-keeping mission in Liberia (UNMIL).

The International Contact Group for the Mano River countries (Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea) is due to hold a meeting in Stockholm today, Monday, hosted by State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren.

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Key word: 41122 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to host international meeting on West Africa in Stockholm

The International Contact Group for the Mano River region in West Africa will meet in Stockholm on Monday 21 March, hosted by Hans Dahlgren, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs. The Contact Group regularly convenes to discuss developments in the peace processes in Liberia and its neighbouring countries.

State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren is chair of the Contact Group, together with Niger Minister of Foreign Affairs Aïchatou Mindaoudou, who represents the Chairmanship of the West African cooperation organisation ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States).

Some forty participants are expected to come to Stockholm, including Ghana's Foreign Minister Akufo-Addo, ECOWAS' Secretary-General Chambas, former Nigerian president General Abubakar, who led the peace negotiations on Liberia, and participants from the EU, the UN, the African Union, the United States, France, the UK, Morocco and Benin.

Mr Dahlgren has just returned from a trip to Liberia and Guinea, where he headed an EU delegation.

The International Contact Group for Liberia (ICGL) was formed in 2002 with the purpose of bringing an end to the prolonged civil war in Liberia. The Group's mandate has recently been extended to include the entire Mano River region: Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea-Bissau. Through his position as the EU Presidency's Special Representative for the Mano River countries, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren has been chair of the Contact

Group since its formation, together with the country holding the Chairmanship of ECOWAS.

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Key word: 40910 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New regulations on residence permits for third-country nationals

The inquiry on residence permits for family reunification and for long-term resident third country nationals yesterday submitted its interim report Family reunification and free movement for third-country nationals (SOU 2005:15) to Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg.

The remit of the Inquiry is to implement two EC Directives in Swedish law: Council Directive 2003/86 EC of 22 September 2003 on the right to family reunification (the Family Reunification Directive) and Council Directive 2003/109/EC of 25 November 2003 concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents (the Long-term Residents Directive).

The Family Reunification Directive provides that a third country national (a person who is not a citizen of an EES or EU state or Switzerland) who has a more permanent residence in the EU is entitled to be reunited with members of his/her nuclear family, if they are also third country nationals. The Inquiry proposes that regulations be incorporated into the Aliens Act (1989:529) to the effect that relatives (spouse, registered partner, cohabitee and children under 18 years) who are third country nationals shall be entitled to be granted residence permits on grounds of personal ties with a third country national who is living in Sweden. In addition, the Inquiry proposes that refugee children or children otherwise in need of protection shall also be entitled to be granted residence permits for family reunion in this country, if the parents and children are third country nationals. A permit may, however, be refused if the third country national is considered to represent a threat to public order or security and on certain other grounds.

The Inquiry also proposes that new regulations be incorporated in the Aliens Act on a new category, long-term resident third country nationals. A third country national who has been permanently resident in Sweden for five years should be able to obtain special status as a long-term resident. This means that the third country national will be assured certain rights, including free movement in the EU. This status confers the entitlement to settle in another EU state in order to work. Third country nationals who have the status of long-term residents in another EU state and want to move to Sweden will be covered by the same conditions that apply to EU citizens in Sweden.

The Inquiry proposes that a new regulation be incorporated in the Aliens Act to the effect that a

person with the status of long-term resident in another EU state may be expelled from the Unions territory if he or she is convicted of a crime by a Swedish court.

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Key word: 40887 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Foreign policy and international cooperation Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish design to be marketed internationally

The Government decided today to contribute SEK 250 000 to the Consulate-General in New York for the project "From Sweden with Style".

The aim of the project is to increase exports of Swedish design to the United States and a major part of this campaign will take place in connection with the International Contemporary Furniture Fair on 14-17 May 2005.

"Design is a crucial growth factor for many companies. It is of considerable importance to the development of the industry and therefore also to Sweden's labour market and prosperity," says Thomas Östros, Minister for Industry and Trade.

"We have placed particular emphasis on this in the campaign 'Sweden 2005: Year of Design', and since design is an area of special Swedish cutting-edge expertise, it is only natural that we market form and design internationally as well."

Sweden's participation at the furniture fair in New York goes via the Swedish Trade Council, which received SEK 2 million for its project Swedish Furniture Export 2005. Within this framework, the Swedish Trade Council is also planning a major initiative in connection with the Milan Furniture Fair on 13-18 April. In addition, Sweden will participate in the furniture fair in Shanghai in September and at the furniture and design fair in Tokyo in November 2005.

Earlier, Sweden's Consulate-General in Los Angeles received SEK 260 000 for the project "Beyond Blond" in Los Angeles on 15 March-15 April. The purpose of this project is also to develop and further establish business contacts in a number of lifestyle-related industries and areas, including design.

These initiatives are part of the Government's efforts to focus attention on design as a growth factor and to market Swedish form and design internationally in connection with "Sweden 2005: Year of

Design".

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Key word: 40816 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-17
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador to Eritrea

The Government has today appointed Ambassador Bengt Sparre as Sweden's envoy in Asmara, Eritrea.

Ambassador Sparre has previously been envoy in Triploi and Sana'a. He has also been stationed in Gaborone, Beijing and Cairo.

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Key word: 40648 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-16
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Yearbook on the EU 2004: Ten new Member States and a new Treaty

Today the Government submitted the annual communication on its work in the European Union to the Riksdag.

2004 was a very important year for the Union and was marked to a great degree by enlargement. On

1 May ten new Member States acceded to the EU: Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Negotiations with Bulgaria and Romania were concluded in December ahead of the accession of the two countries in 2007, and the decision was made to begin accession negotiations with Turkey and Croatia.

Work continued on a new Treaty, whose aims include more efficient decision-making processes and making the Union more transparent for citizens, and an agreement was reached in June. The Treaty was signed in Rome on 29 October and the ratification process was initiated in the Member States.

During the year, preparations were begun ahead of the mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy, the most important tool available to the EU for achieving sustainable growth and full employment. The importance of new environmentally-friendly technology as the driving force behind growth and a better environment was emphasised in accordance with Swedish priorities. Another important step was taken concerning cooperation in the area of justice and home affairs through a new five-year action programme called the Hague Programme. The terrorist attacks in Madrid on 11 March 2004 resulted in the adoption of a declaration on combating terrorism, which initiated intensified cooperation between Member States in efforts against terrorism.

The report is available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website and will also be available in libraries.

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Key word: 40725 EU Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government wants to improve product control

The Government has submitted a bill to the Riksdag on new and improved guidelines for market surveillance of products.

Market surveillance ensures that products meet the relevant requirements in areas including health, safety and environment. Today, however, market surveillance operates differently in different areas.

The Government therefore wants to improve coordination by strengthening the Market Surveillance Council at the Swedish Board for Accreditation and Conformity Assessment (SWEDAC). The Government is also proposing certain amendments to the Customs Act to facilitate cooperation between the customs and responsible authorities. The authorities will still be responsible for the

control itself.

"As international trade increases, the need for effective market surveillance also increases," says Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros.

"It is important that consumers can continue to buy products, secure in the knowledge that these products are safe. It is also vital for a continued high level of confidence in the EU internal market, where goods and services must be able to move freely," says Thomas Östros.

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Key word: 40577 EU Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to presentation of Sweden's contribution at the World Exposition in Aichi

The World Exposition in Aichi, Japan opens on 25 March. Sweden will take part in a joint Nordic Pavilion. A Swedish Day will be arranged on the Exposition grounds on 6 April.

TIME AND PLACE

Time: Thursday 17 March, 14.00

Place: Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre, Bankhallen, Fredsgatan 6.

Welcome to an information meeting where the Nordic Pavilion and the programme for the Swedish Day will be presented by Ingrid Iremark, Head of the Press and Information Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and Staffan Björck, Chairman of the working group.

The information meeting is intended for the press, national partners and other interested parties.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds to visit UN Commission on Human Rights and UN Conference on Disarmament

Foreign Minister Laila Freivalds will visit Geneva on 14-15 March to address the UN Commission on Human Rights and the UN Conference on Disarmament.

Ms Freivalds will also host a meeting of the Network of Women Foreign Ministers. The meeting of women foreign ministers will deal with the fight against trafficking in women and children and will compare various national and international initiatives in this area, including Nordic-Baltic cooperation.

The Foreign Minister will also meet the EU's newly appointed Representative on Human Rights, Michael Matthiessen. The appointment of a human rights representative in the EU has been a Swedish foreign policy objective. During the meeting, the Foreign Minister will discuss the future role of the Representative on Human Rights.

The speech to the UN Commission on Human Rights will be available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs human rights website from 15 March. (www.manskligarattigheter.gov.se)

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2005-03-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Report of the inquiry on permit applications based on personal ties submitted to Barbro Holmberg

The Inquiry on applications for residence permits on the basis of personal ties has submitted its report *More effective processing of applications based on personal ties (SOU 2005:14)* to Barbro Holmberg, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy.

The inquiry chair, Per Lilja of the Swedish Migration Board, has had the remit of determining how the present system can be made more effective. The task of the Inquiry has been to present proposals for measures that can reduce processing times and save costs without disregarding the need to protect the legal security of the individual. In this context the inquiry chair has been instructed to give special attention to the aspect of protection when there is reason to suspect that one of the parties in the relationship will be subjected to violence or other serious forms of abuse.

The present system is very resource-consuming and has resulted in long processing times at Swedish missions abroad and at the Swedish Migration Board. The Inquiry proposes a number of measures so that people who marry and want to be united with someone from another country will not have to wait for an unreasonably long time for a decision.

The number of applications on the basis of newly established relationships amounted to 15 360 in 2004, 80 per cent of which were granted. Sixty per cent of the applicants were women.

The Inquiry makes the following main proposals:

- The examination procedure should be made more flexible by changing the present verbal requirement in the examination so that the migration authorities are able to determine which examination method is most suitable and effective in each individual case.
- All sponsors should be checked against criminal records and records of suspected offenders. The authorities can then more easily discover and assess whether there is a palpable risk that the applicant and accompanying children may be exposed to violence or serious violation.
- It should be possible to revoke a temporary residence permit if the relationship ends during the two-year trial period.
- More uniform routines for receipt and registration of applications should be established at Swedish missions abroad and the Swedish Migration Board. This is to achieve better control over the flow of cases and to be able to measure and compare processing times correctly.
- In order to ensure high and even quality in examinations and decisions the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Swedish Migration Board should further intensify the training of personnel and also give clear instructions concerning the requirements for these activities.
- Measures should be taken to simplify the processing of other cases within the area of permits in order to free resources, thereby giving the Swedish Migration Board more scope to allocate its resources according to needs in its operations.

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Key word: 40962 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Foreign policy and international cooperation Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Global Fund to meet in Stockholm

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria will begin its first meeting on replenishment of the Fund on Monday 14 March. The purpose is to secure more stable, predictable and long-term support for the Fund's activities.

TIME AND PLACE

Monday 14 March, 10.00-10.30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Gustaf Adolfs Torg 1

Assembly at the main entrance, 09.50

Please bring your press credentials.

During the meeting in Stockholm, which will conclude on Wednesday, the delegates will review total financial needs in the fight against the three diseases and consider how large a share of these needs the Global Fund should assume.

Participants at the meeting will include UN Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette, the Executive Director of the Global Fund Dr Richard Feachem, the Executive Director of the United Nations Aids Program (UNAIDS) Dr Peter Piot and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"It is very pleasing that so many major donors are now gathering in Stockholm to agree on how to generate sufficient funds for the fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. The countries of the world have realised that further efforts are needed to win this battle," says Ms Jämtin.

There will be an opportunity for the press to meet Carin Jämtin, Richard Feachem and Peter Piot on Monday 14 March at 10.00.

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria was established at the beginning of 2002. It is independent but works jointly with the UN system and has the strong support of the UN Secretary-General. The Fund's actions are to be based on concrete needs and desires in the countries affected.

Over the period 2002-2004, Sweden has contributed a total of SEK 661 million to the Fund.

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Key word: 40427 Health care, health, social issues/insurance Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Inauguration of Open Trade Gate Sweden

TIME AND PLACE

Press meeting with both ministers in connection with the inauguration at 15.50 outside Pelarsalen at Norra Latin, Barnhusgatan 7B, Stockholm.

Please bring your press credentials.

On Monday 14 March Open Trade Gate Sweden, the contact point for exporters in developing countries, will be officially inaugurated at Norra Latin in Stockholm.

Open Trade Gate Sweden was set up by the National Board of Trade in autumn 2004. The idea of the service is to help entrepreneurs in developing countries who want to export to Sweden and Europe. They can get in touch with the contact point for advice and information on the relevant trade regulations.

Exports by developing countries to rich countries have doubled over the past 20 years. However, many developing countries have lagged behind. The share of total EU imports taken by the very poorest countries is now less than a third of what it was in 1960.

"Complicated trade regulations and bureaucratic administration are often as much of a barrier as tariffs and subsidies. This makes it difficult for poor countries to benefit from the increased trade opportunities that we know are a road out of poverty," say Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin in a joint comment.

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Key word: 40357 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

President Karume of Zanzibar visits Sweden

The President of Zanzibar Amani A. Karume is visiting Sweden this week at the invitation of Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin. Today the President had an audience with the King and met the Riksdag and the Swedish Trade Council. Tomorrow (Friday) Minister Jämtin and President Karume are visiting Visby. The visit is part of World Heritage cooperation between Zanzibar and Gotland Municipality.

Zanzibar forms part of the United Republic of Tanzania and has its own semi-autonomous government. Tanzania is one of Sweden's major cooperation partners and this year development cooperation is expected to amount to SEK 750 million.

Aid to Zanzibar, which forms part of the development cooperation with Tanzania, amounts to some SEK 10-15 million. In addition, Visby and Stone Town in Zanzibar are cooperating on the preservation of the cultural heritage.

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Key word: 40351 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation - More efficient processing of applications based on personal ties

The inquiry on applications for residence permits on the basis of personal ties will submit its report to Barbro Holmberg, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy, on Friday 11 March.

TIME AND PLACE

Friday 11 March, 11.00.

Press Centre at Rosenbad.
Please bring your press credentials.

The report includes proposals on how to make the present system more efficient. This is to be done without disregarding the protection of the individual's legal security. The inquiry also considers the

aspect of protection when there is reason to suspect that one of the parties, primarily a woman or a child, is subjected to violence or other serious forms of abuse.

After the report is submitted a press conference will be held where Per Lilja, the inquiry chair, will present the proposals.

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Key word: 40244 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-08
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds visits Jakarta

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is visiting Jakarta on 9-10 March to attend the 15th meeting of foreign ministers from the EU and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The agenda for the meeting includes the disaster in the wake of the earthquake and tsunami, cooperation between the EU and ASEAN, and international issues such as the situation in the Middle East, on the Korean peninsula and in Burma.

In conjunction with the meeting, Laila Freivalds will have bilateral talks with the Indonesian Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda and Justice Minister Hamid Awaluddin, as well as with ministers from other ASEAN countries.

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Key word: 40193 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Stockholm

On Thursday 3 March, four newly appointed Ambassadors present their letters of credence to HM The King. The four Ambassadors come from Sri Lanka, India, Senegal and Afghanistan.

Sri Lanka's newly appointed Ambassador Nagoorpitchai Sikkander was born in 1945. He has an academic training in economics and labour market issues in Sri Lanka and the United States. He joined the Sri Lanka Foreign Service in 1981 and in recent years he has been Ambassador in Moscow and Chief of Protocol of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

India's newly appointed Ambassador Deepa Gopalan Wadhwa was born in 1955. She has a post-graduate qualification in English and entered her country's Foreign Service in 1979. In recent years she has been a Counsellor at India's Embassy in the Hague and Deputy Director of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations in New Delhi. Her most recent post was as Director-General for UN Affairs at the Ministry of External Affairs.

Senegal's newly appointed Ambassador Henri-Antoine Turpin was born in 1950. He holds a degree in history. In recent years Ambassador Turpin has been a Director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with responsibility for Africa and Asia. His most recent post was as Ambassador to the Holy See.

Afghanistan's newly appointed Ambassador Mohammad Yahya Maroofi was born in 1939. His academic qualifications include a Masters degree in international relations from the United States. Ambassador Maroofi joined the Foreign Service in 1963 but was dismissed when the Soviet-backed regime took over power in 1979. During his forced exile in Switzerland (1981-2002) he worked for the International Organization for Migration (IOM). His most recent post was as Adviser to the President of Afghanistan in International Relations. Ambassador Maroofi is concurrently accredited from Oslo.

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Key word: 39834 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Latvian state visit to Sweden, 31 March 1 April 2005

The President of the Republic of Latvia Vaira Vike-Freiberga will pay a state visit to Sweden on 31 March 1 April at the invitation of His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf. The President will be accompanied by her husband Professor Imants Freibergs.

The visit will take place in Stockholm and Uppsala.

A Latvian business delegation headed by Minister of Economics Arturs Krisjanis Karins will visit Sweden at the same time.

Media representatives wishing to cover the state visit must apply for accreditation.

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Key word: 40029 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-03-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Pierre Schori chief of the UN Mission in Côte d'Ivoire

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan announced yesterday that he intends to appoint Pierre Schori, former Ambassador at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York, as his Special Representative and Chief of Mission at the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). The appointment has to be confirmed formally by the UN Security Council.

"I warmly welcome the appointment of Pierre Schori to this important senior position in the United Nations. The UN mission in Côte d'Ivoire is playing a prominent role in efforts to promote the implementation of the peace agreement from 2003. A lasting solution to the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire is of great importance for stability and development in the whole of West Africa," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

The conflict in Côte d'Ivoire broke out in 2002 and since then rebels have controlled the northern parts of the country. The UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire has been in place since April 2004 and has a military force of more than 6 000. The main task of this force is to monitor the ceasefire and support implementation of the peace agreement reached in January 2003. UN sanctions have been in force since November 2004 in order to increase pressure on the parties to reach a peaceful solution to the conflict.

Sweden has contributed a total of SEK 30 million in humanitarian assistance to Côte d'Ivoire over the past two years.

Pierre Schori, who was born in 1938, has been State Secretary for Foreign Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Minister for International Development Cooperation, a Member of the European Parliament and head of the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New

York.

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Key word: 39678 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Premiere for Swedish pavilion at world's largest equestrian fair

HRH Crown Princess Victoria will inaugurate the Swedish pavilion at the world's largest equestrian fair, Equitana, in Essen, Germany on Saturday 26 February. The Swedish Government will be represented by State Secretary Sven-Eric Söder.

This is the first time that the Swedish horse industry is making a concentrated effort at the annual Fair. During the summer, the Government allocated SEK 800 000 to the project, which is being carried out in cooperation between the Swedish state, the Swedish Horse Council Foundation, the Swedish Trade Council and the participating Swedish companies.

A total of 26 Swedish companies have exhibitions in the pavilion and five more are represented elsewhere in the Fair. Visitors can acquaint themselves with everything from Swedish research in veterinary medicine to individual products.

"Sweden is the EU country with the highest number of horses per capita, and there is no doubt that the horse has an important social, cultural and economic position in Swedish society. The Government feels that it is of great importance to encourage Swedish companies in the horse industry to focus more on exports. In addition, the industry plays an important role in developing tourism in Sweden," says Sven-Eric Söder.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden and Norway enter into agreement on development cooperation in Mali

The Government decided today that Sweden will enter into an agreement with Norway on development cooperation in Mali. Under the agreement Sweden will handle Norwegian development assistance to Mali in the sectors in which both countries are active, i.e. education, democracy and human rights, and the sustainable use of natural resources.

"I am very proud of the confidence Norway has placed in us through the agreement. I presented our joint plans to the government of Mali when I visited the country in September last year and the response was very positive. This is a step towards better donor coordination and increased ownership for Mali as a recipient country, which is something that Sweden gives high priority in development cooperation," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

In 2004 Swedish development assistance to Mali amounted to almost SEK 110 million. Up to 2006 it is expected to rise to an annual level of SEK 150-160 million. Norwegian development assistance to Mali will amount to NOK 45 million per year over the next few years.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sida to propose a cooperation strategy for China

The Government decided today to commission Sida to draw up proposals for a

new cooperation strategy for China for the period 2006-2010. The strategy will be drawn up in accordance with the Government's policy for global development. The relevant ministries will therefore also be involved in this work in addition to Sida.

In line with Government Bill 2002/03:122 Shared Responsibility: Sweden's Policy for Global Development the overall objective of development cooperation with China will be poverty reduction. Other objectives are to speed up the reform process in China and promote human rights, the development of the legal system and democratisation, to contribute to environmentally sustainable development and to stimulate action for gender equality and strengthen the social safety net in the country.

The appropriation for development cooperation with China is expected to remain unchanged at around SEK 60 million per year.

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Key word: 39467 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sida to propose a cooperation strategy for Afghanistan

The Government decided today to commission Sida to draw up proposals for a new cooperation strategy for Afghanistan for the three-year period 2006-2008. The strategy will be drawn up in accordance with the Government's policy for global development. The relevant ministries will therefore also be involved in this work in addition to Sida.

Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world and is the third largest recipient of Swedish development assistance. Since the fall of the Taliban regime developments have been moving in the right direction in many ways, but the country still has problems and will need support from the international community for a long time to come. One of the most serious and acute problems is the extensive production of drugs.

The objectives of Swedish support to Afghanistan should be to strengthen the conditions for reducing poverty in a long-term and sustainable way, to develop and strengthen the conditions for democracy, legal security and respect for human rights, including strengthening the position of women in society, to contribute to the development of the institutions of civil society and to enhancing external and internal security. Sida has been commissioned to present proposals for how Sweden best can support Afghanistan in these areas.

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Key word: 39392 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Swedish initiative for project exports

The Government decided today to contribute SEK 20 million in 2005 to a special initiative for Swedish project exports. This initiative covers exports of facilities and system solutions in areas like energy, environment, IT, health care and transport.

The initiative is mainly aimed at the markets in the EU's new Member States and its neighbours. These countries face substantial investments in areas like infrastructure and environmental improvement, making them particularly interesting to Swedish enterprises.

"In these areas Sweden and Swedish industry are well to the fore with advanced technology. We must build on this," says Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros.

"Swedish enterprises have a great deal to contribute to the modernisation of these countries, something that is in everyone's interest. At the same time we are promoting growth and jobs in Sweden in this way. Especially as a large proportion of the subcontractors for these projects are small and medium-sized enterprises. The purposes for which the new money will be used include increasing the expertise of Swedish enterprises in international procurement and financing relevant feasibility studies."

The EU is contributing EUR 22 billion up to and including 2006 to finance investments in infrastructure, environmental improvement and other areas in the new Member States. Thereafter EU funding is expected to rise to EUR 170 billion up to and including 2013.

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Key word: 39284 Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden contributes to the fight against HIV/AIDS in Asia

The Government decided today to authorise Sida to establish a special fund together with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to help developing countries in Asia fight HIV/AIDS. Sweden will contribute a total of SEK 100 million to the fund.

The agreement about the new fund will be signed in Manila next week by State Secretary Annika Söder and the head of ABD. In connection with the signing of the agreement Sweden will arrange a seminar on HIV/AIDS together with the ADB, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the national coordination body in the Philippines for action against HIV/AIDS.

"Asia is one of the parts of the world where HIV/AIDS is spreading most rapidly and the epidemic is a growing threat to development in large parts of the region. The fight against HIV/AIDS is a priority area in Sweden's international development cooperation. The establishment of a special HIV/AIDS fund is an important contribution to the joint commitment by the international community to reduce the spread of communicable diseases," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"The seminar in Manila will provide a forum for discussions on preventive action concerning HIV/AIDS and action for care and reconstruction. This includes issues like sexuality and gender equality, power relations in society and the role and responsibilities of men."

The ADB is a multilateral development bank based in Manila in the Philippines. The overall aims of the organisation are to fight poverty in Asia and the Pacific and to contribute to the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals. The ADB has a prominent position in the region as a provider of development assistance and is an important international cooperation partner for Sweden.

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Key word: 39130 Foreign policy and international cooperation Health care, health, social issues/insurance Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-16

Ministry of Finance
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to support environmental work in Russia

Sweden is to contribute EUR 6 million (SEK 55 million) to the Support Fund for the Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership (NDEP). This contribution will be for the period 2006-2008.

The aim of the NDEP Support Fund is to deal with environmental problems in north-western Russia. The Fund focuses on the environment and nuclear safety. Projects for extending water supplies, wastewater treatment, waste management and efficient energy use are financed in the environmental area. Initiatives for managing spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste are planned in the area of nuclear safety.

The NDEP is a partnership between bilateral donors, the EU Commission, Russia and a number of international financial institutions - the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Nordic Investment Bank (NIB) and the World Bank.

"The NDEP is an effective instrument for international environmental cooperation with Russia. Environmental issues also have high priority in bilateral Russian-Swedish development cooperation. As one of the initiators of the NDEP, Sweden feels special responsibility for its continued work," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The NDEP was organised during Sweden's Presidency of the EU in the spring of 2001 and is administered by the EBRD. In all, eight environmental projects have received financing from the NDEP Support Fund.

Sweden has previously contributed EUR 10 million (approximately SEK 91 million) to the Support Fund over the period 2002-2005.

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Key word: 39029 Environment, energy and housing Sustainable development Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

KRUT delivered to Ulrica Messing

On Tuesday, February 15, Anders Svärd delivered a report from KRUT (the Military Equipment Inquiry) to Ulrica Messing, Minister for Communications and Regional Policy. The report is entitled KRUT - Reformerat regelverk för handel med försvarsmateriel (SOU 2005:9) (KRUT - A reformed regulatory framework for trade in defence equipment).

During the 1980s a new regulatory framework for military equipment was developed. Since the new regulations entered into force in 1993, significant changes have taken place both as regards the production and acquisition of military equipment and in terms of Sweden's foreign and security policy stance towards the world around us. In addition, foreign owners now have a substantial stake in the Swedish defence industry.

Several of the inquiry's proposals concern the guidelines covering the export of military equipment and other overseas cooperation, which are the Government's policy document for use in determining the suitability of recipient countries. The proposals in brief are the following:

- The EU's Common Criteria should be integrated into the guidelines. This would mean an increase in the number of factors to be taken into account when examining export applications and would also mean replacing the current distinction between military equipment for combat purposes and other military equipment with the EU approach. Under this approach, the areas of use for the equipment are analysed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the intentions of the prospective recipient country.
- The regulation making export licences conditional on the Swedish Armed Forces needing the equipment the application refers to should be eliminated. This condition is considered to stand in the way of a necessary international restructuring of the Swedish defence industry and is incompatible with Sweden's EU commitment to develop a European defence capacity for crisis management. It is proposed that defence policy should instead be a reason for allowing exports.

- In addition to security and defence policy reasons, industrial policy considerations should also be permissible grounds for granting a licence. KRUT believes that international cooperation and exports of advanced equipment will enable new investments to be made so as to further develop the cutting-edge expertise that has been built up in the defence industry. The report emphasises that this is not about boosting employment or of regional policy.

- The positive presumption that applies to exports to the Nordic countries, neutral countries in Europe and the EU should be extended to the USA. The inquiry's arguments for this proposal are Sweden's dependence on US technology and our desire to strengthen cooperation on equipment with the United States. At the same time, the inquiry stresses that every single application involving these countries will still be subject to examination. There is no question of a carte blanche.

* * *

The inquiry has conducted a review of the Swedish supervisory system and has found that in all essential respects it works well and serves its purpose. The report proposes a number of measures to further develop the system. For example, KRUT would like the authority that examines applications for licences, the National Inspectorate of Strategic Products (ISP), to document the deliberations leading up to decisions in important cases (cases requiring consultation). KRUT would also like a strategy to be drawn up to strengthen the Export Control Council.

KRUT proposes that defence equipment imports and exports of services should be subject to regulation. The inquiry considers that requiring a licence for imports made by private individuals and arms dealers would be a means of increasing control over equipment in Sweden and reducing the risk of unlawful export or re-sale. Regulation of services, such as maintenance and testing of equipment, is needed so as to prevent such services being delivered to unacceptable countries. The report makes the assessment that companies that have received quality assurance certification from the ISP can be given a larger role in administering routine cases. They could, for example, be issued export licences that are valid for an extended period and allow repeated deliveries of a certain item, provided exports are subsequently declared to the ISP. KRUT emphasises that this can be done without lowering standards for supervision and examination. One positive effect of this change would be to give the ISP more time for complicated cases, cooperation with foreign authorities and follow-up of how previously exported equipment is being used.

With regard to the concept of military equipment (krigsmateriel), the inquiry proposes replacing this term with "defence equipment" (försvarsmateriel). One argument for doing so is that the determinant "krigs-" (meaning "war" or "military") has in general been replaced in Swedish public administration and in security and defence policy areas. In addition, the inquiry explains that several products now classified as military equipment are used by "blue light" agencies within the framework of civil defence and this is a trend that can be expected to grow stronger.

The inquiry takes the view that the regulation stating that military equipment may not be taken out of the country without a licence (Article 6 of the Military Equipment Act), which is usually equated in public debate with a general prohibition of exports, should continue to apply, with an amendment extending it to include services (technical assistance relating to military equipment).

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Key word: 38987 Industry, trade, regional development Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to visit Sri Lanka

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is scheduled to visit Sri Lanka on 16-18 February. Included in the delegation are representatives of the Riksdag, Sida and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

During her visit, Carin Jämtin will meet members of the government and opposition and representatives of the Tamil and Muslim ethnic groups. Also included in the programme are meetings with representatives of environment and human rights organisations, and discussions on coordination with multilateral and bilateral development assistance donors. The delegation will also pay a visit to an area affected by the tsunami.

"It is important to see the development of the humanitarian situation, almost two months after the tsunami disaster. At the same time, it is clear that the disaster will affect long-term Swedish development cooperation with Sri Lanka. This visit is therefore also part of the process prior to the forthcoming decision on Sweden's contribution to reconstruction," says Carin Jämtin.

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Key word: 38977 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Reminder! Press conference with Thomas Östros and EU Commissioner Peter Mandelson

On Tuesday 15 February, Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros will

lead a full-day seminar in Stockholm on the significance of external trade policy for the Lisbon Strategy. The main speaker at the seminar will be the EU Commissioner for Trade, Peter Mandelson.

TIME AND PLACE

Time: Tuesday 15 February at 13.00

Place: Grand Hôtel, Stockholm

Please bring your press credentials!

Representatives of the business sector and trade union organisations will take part in the seminar, which will also be open to the media. The programme is attached.

A press conference with Mr Östros and Mr Mandelson will be held at the Grand Hôtel in Stockholm on Tuesday 15 February at 13.00. Please contact Margareta Ternell on +46 8 405 35 76 or send an e-mail to margareta.ternell@industry.ministry.se no later than 14 February if you wish to attend.

Please bring your press credentials!

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Key word: 38852 Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation: KRUT - A reformed regulatory framework for trade in defence equipment

On Tuesday 15 February, KRUT (KRigsmaterielUTredningen) will submit its report KRUT - Reformerat regelverk för handel med försvarsmateriel (SOU 2005:9) (KRUT - A reformed regulatory framework for trade in defence equipment) to Ulrica Messing, Minister for Communications and Regional

Policy.

TIME AND PLACE

Tuesday 15 February at 11.00

Press Centre, Rosenbad

Please bring your press credentials.

The Inquiry's remit has been to review the Swedish regulatory framework for military equipment and to propose necessary changes.

In connection with the submission of the report, a press conference will be held at which Anders Svärd, the inquiry chair, will present the proposals.

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Key word: 38755 Defence, emergency management and safety Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds to visit Bern

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is visiting Bern on Friday 11 February for talks with her Swiss colleague, Foreign Minister Micheline Calmy-Rey.

The agenda includes reform of the UN, the situation in the Middle East and relations between Switzerland and the EU.

Switzerland is soon to hold referendums on the nine cooperation agreements recently negotiated with the EU. These agreements deal with matters including Swiss accession to Schengen cooperation and action to combat tax evasion.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Extra promotion money to embassies

The Government decided today to invest close to SEK 5.4 million on export promotion at Swedish embassies and consulates-general.

"We have to make the most of the potential offered by new and growing markets," says Thomas Östros, Minister for Industry and Trade.

"Swedish exports are thriving. We have increased exports from 30 to 45 per cent of GDP in ten years and have succeeded in turning a deficit of the current account balance to a surplus. But this does not mean we can sit back and relax. Especially not when we see the potential for exports that still exists among our small and medium-sized enterprises."

SEK 4.5 million of the extra funds invested will go to 17 embassies and consulates-general in dynamic, rapidly growing markets that are of particular interest to Swedish companies.

Similar funds were allotted in both 2003 and 2004. This year, the extra funds will be shared among Bangkok, Brasilia, Canton, Hong Kong, Los Angeles, Mexico, Moscow, New Delhi, New York, Peking, Pretoria, St Petersburg, Santiago, Shanghai, Singapore, Tokyo and Washington. The money will be used for special market activities aimed at improving business opportunities for Swedish companies.

Sweden's Embassy in Canberra will receive SEK 425 000 for the initiative "Swedish Style in Australia", with the aim of improving marketing of Sweden and increasing trade relations with Australia.

The Embassy in Seoul will receive SEK 380 000 for a special promotion initiative based on innovation and industrial design, in connection with the exhibition "Improving Life - The Design of Swedish Innovations". The aim is to strengthen contact between Sweden and South Korea in the field of technology and industrial design.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Finance

Sweden contributes to newly-established IMF fund to subsidise loans to poor countries affected by natural disasters

The Government took the decision today to contribute SEK 70 million to support poor countries affected by natural disasters and needing assistance in reconstruction via loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The Swedish contribution means that it will be possible for the IMF to offer loans at very low interest rates to the countries affected.

The decision to set up the IMF-administered fund was recently taken by the IMF Executive Board. However, a precondition for enabling the fund to start up has been that bilateral donors take part in financing the grant component. One example of a country that is expected to make use of the new interest subsidy fund is Sri Lanka.

- We are not only supporting reconstruction after the tsunami disaster via development assistance, but are now making it possible for poor countries hit by natural disasters to borrow at very low interest rates, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

- The Government has a high level of ambition with regard to debt. By giving direct bilateral contributions to interest subsidies, we shoulder our role as reliable lenders to vulnerable countries while taking responsibility to ensure that the financial position of the IMF is not undermined. This is an objective that the Government is actively pursuing, adds Minister of Finance Pär Nuder.

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Key word: 38708 National economy and budget Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-10
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Director-General of the National Board of Trade

The Government has today appointed Lena Johansson as new Director-General of the National Board of Trade. She will take up her new post on 14 March 2005 and will then succeed Elisabeth Dahlin who has been Acting Director-General since 1 April 2004.

Lena Johansson was born in 1955 and is at present Director-General of the Swedish Institute for Food and Agricultural Economics. She has previously been Head of the International Secretariat at

the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Head of the EU Budget Department at the Ministry of Finance. She also has experience from the Swedish Board of Agriculture and the Ministry of Agriculture in matters concerning international trade and cooperation issues within the framework of WTO/GATT, OECD and FAO.

On Friday 11 February at 12.15 Lena Johansson and Minister for Trade and Industry Thomas Östros will make a joint visit to the National Board of Trade.

The National Board of Trade is the Swedish agency for foreign trade and trade policy. The role of the agency is to work for an efficient internal market, an open trade policy in the EU and a strengthened multilateral trade system within the WTO.

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Key word: 38702 Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press invitation: UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan, Manuel da Silva, to meet Carin Jämtin

The UN's Deputy Special Envoy and Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan, Manuel da Silva, is visiting Stockholm on 10-11 February. Mr da Silva's engagements include talks with Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin. In connection with his visit, a meeting with the press is being arranged on Thursday 10 February.

TIME AND PLACE

Thursday 10 February, 12.30-13.00

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Gustaf Adolfs Torg 1
Stockholm

Assembly at the main entrance, 12.20

Please bring your press credentials!

The main topic of the talks will be the situation in Sudan and the role of the international community in the country in the context of the peace agreement that was signed on 9 January this year. Internally displaced people are now beginning to return to southern Sudan and there is an extensive need for reconstruction assistance in that part of the country. Meanwhile, the humanitarian situation in Darfur remains acute and there have been recurrent breaches of the ceasefire.

The UN Work Plan for Sudan is the largest single UN appeal in 2005. The UN is planning relief measures totalling USD 1.5 billion, with USD 725 million of this expected to take the form of food aid.

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Key word: 38647 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Östros to lead seminar on significance of trade for Lisbon Strategy

On Tuesday 15 February, Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros will lead a full-day seminar in Stockholm on the significance of external trade policy for the Lisbon Strategy. The main speaker at the seminar will be the EU Commissioner for Trade, Peter Mandelson.

The purpose of the seminar is to discuss how external trade policy can help achieve the objective of the Lisbon Strategy, namely that the EU should be the world's most competitive economy - with full employment and sustainable welfare - by 2010.

The seminar will also contribute to the mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy that will be undertaken at the EU summit this spring.

"A more open external trade policy is needed if the EU is to achieve the Lisbon Strategy's ambitious goals. Freer trade, including across Union borders, provides increased export opportunities for companies while consumers benefit from lower prices and greater choice," says Mr Östros.

"As a small country dependent on exports, we in Sweden have succeeded in advancing our prosperity by means of an open trade policy. That is why it is natural for us to pursue this policy in the EU as well, and it is gratifying that Commissioner Mandelson so clearly supports us," says Mr

Östros.

Representatives of the business sector and trade union organisations will take part in the seminar, which will also be open to the media. The programme is attached.

A press conference with Mr Östros and Mr Mandelson will be held at the Grand Hôtel in Stockholm on Tuesday 15 February at 13.00. Please contact Margareta Ternell on +46 8 405 35 76 or send an e-mail to margareta.ternell@industry.ministry.se no later than 14 February if you wish to attend.

Please bring your press credentials!

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Key word: 38642 Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Elisabeth Palm new member of the UN Human Rights Committee

Ms Elisabeth Palm, previously President of the Administrative Court of Appeal, has today been elected to the UN Human Rights Committee. Elisabeth Palm has considerable experience of working with human rights through, for example, her work as a judge at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

Elisabeth Palm will take the place in the committee that became vacant after the death of Margareta Wadstein in the autumn of 2004.

The UN Human Rights Committee, which normally meets in Geneva, is a monitoring committee for the 1996 UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Its most important task is to monitor states compliance with the binding commitments of the Covenant. It does so by means of regular meetings where the States parties reports to the Committee are examined.

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Key word: 38591 Democracy and human rights

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin speaks at conference on the UN and global security

TIME AND PLACE

9 February, at 09.10 a.m.

Radisson SAS Royal Park Hotel
Frösundaviks allé 15, Solna

On Wednesday 9 February, Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will take part in a conference on the UN and global security. The conference is organised by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the United Nations Association of Sweden and is the opening event for the Dag Hammarskjöld Centenary 2005. The conference will bring together Swedish and foreign UN experts to discuss the UN's ability to meet the challenges of the future.

Carin Jämtin will give an address on the theme of "The Millennium Development Goals and Swedish Policy for Global Development - Development and Security".

The centenary of Dag Hammarskjöld's birth will be commemorated in 2005. Together with other organisations such as the United Nations Association of Sweden, the Government is undertaking a number of projects to honour the memory of Hammarskjöld and increase knowledge of, and commitment to the United Nations.

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Key word: 38581 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish officers to Sudan

The Government decided Thursday to contribute six staff officers to the UN rapid deployment force SHIRBRIG in southern Sudan and one staff officer to the African Unions (AU) peace support initiative in Darfur.

The African Union

The AU has been monitoring the ceasefire between the Sudanese Government and the two rebel groups in Darfur since May 2004. On 20 October the Peace and Security Council of the African Union took a decision to expand the current observer mission. The mission will consist of 3 320 persons, including 450 observers and 815 civilian police officers. Sweden has already sent an observer to the AU's mission in Darfur and has given financial support of SEK 5.7 million to the AU and to the political peace negotiations.

The Government decided Thursday to contribute a Swedish staff officer to the African Unions initiative in Darfur. The decision was made after an enquiry from the AU and is part of a coordinated EU contribution to the AU's efforts to create peace and security in the region. Sweden is thereby making a further contribution to strengthening the international presence in Sudan.

UN Mission in Sudan

The civil war between the Sudanese Government and the rebel movement SPLM (the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement) ended on 9 January 2005, when a peace agreement was signed. The fighting, which has been going on since 1983, has cost more than 2 million lives and more than 4 million refugees inside and outside the country.

The UN has long been preparing an operation after a peace agreement in southern Sudan. The UN Mission in Sudan (UNMISUD) will consist of military observers, protective and supporting forces as well as police and other civil personnel numbering almost 11 000 people. The UN Security Council will probably adopt a resolution on UNMISUD in February.

In 2004 many major steps were taken in the peace process for southern Sudan and SHIRBRIG, a rapid deployment force supporting the UN, was activated by the UN in order to plan its operation. The role of SHIRBRIG is to act as the command for military operations in the initial phase of the UN mission in southern Sudan. The Government decided Thursday that Sweden will contribute 6 staff officers to the mission over a six-month period.

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Key word: 38371 Defence, emergency management and safety Leni Björklund

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Folke Bernadotte Academy to administer Peace Million grants

The Government decided today to authorise the Folke Bernadotte Academy to grant financial support for projects and activities relating to information and studies on security policy and peace development. This support is given within the framework of Fredsmiljonen, "The Peace Million".

"For approximately twenty years now, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has channelled grants to projects and support to organisations that have made valuable contributions to the promotion of knowledge about security policy and peace development. Now the administration of this support is being transferred to the Folke Bernadotte Academy, and is strengthened by two million Swedish kronor (approximately USD 290 000) for information on security and development, mainly in developing countries. It is my hope that the activities now will have an even greater impact," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"The Peace Million" with its current working procedures was established in 1983, when the Government decided to allocate funds for information projects relating to peace and disarmament efforts. A "processing group" was set up and tasked to assess applications from organisations and project applications, and then to present its recommendations to the Government. Organisational support has been allocated once a year and project grants twice a year.

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Key word: 38329 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Moldova

The Government decided today to send two election monitors and four election observers to Moldova for the forthcoming parliamentary election on 6 March.

"It is extremely important for Moldova's future development that the tradition of free, fair elections, which is still frail, continues and is strengthened," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

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Key word: 38310 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Macedonia

The Government decided today to send two election monitors and four election observers to Macedonia for the forthcoming local government elections on 13 March.

"By sending election observers to Macedonia, Sweden emphasises its interest for the country's continued democratic development," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The main objective of Sweden's development cooperation with Macedonia is to support the country as it seeks closer ties with the EU.

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Key word: 38305 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Olle Wästberg appointed new head for Swedish Institute

The Government today appointed Mr Olle Wästberg as Director-General and head of the Swedish Institute. He will take up his post on 1 March 2005.

Olle Wästberg served as Consul-General in New York from 1999 to 2004. His career prior to that included spells as editor-in-chief of Expressen newspaper, State Secretary at the Ministry of Finance, Member of the Riksdag and Managing Director of Dagspressen Marknadsinformation AB.

The Swedish Institute is responsible for disseminating knowledge about Sweden abroad and for organising exchanges with other countries in the spheres of culture, education, research and public life in general.

There will be an opportunity for the press to meet Olle Wästberg and Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds today, Thursday, at 13.30 at Rosenbad Press Centre.

Please bring your press credentials!

Mr Wästberg can be contacted by telephone at +46 (0)703 74 20 81.

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Key word: 38262 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-02-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Dag Hammarskjöld Centenary to open with conference on the UN and global security

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the United Nations Association of Sweden will open the Dag Hammarskjöld Centenary in 2005 with a conference on the UN and global security. The conference will bring together Swedish and foreign UN experts. The main theme is the UN's ability to meet the challenges of the future.

TIME AND PLACE

8-9 February

Radisson SAS Royal Park Hotel
Frösundaviks Allé 15, Solna

Included among the speakers are Gareth Evans, President of the International Crisis Group and member of the high-level group that presented 101 proposals for the reform of the UN in November 2004, Finland's former Minister for Defence Ms Elisabeth Rehn and the former Head of the Office of Legal Affairs at the UN Secretariat, Mr Hans Corell. The opening speaker will be Prime Minister Göran Persson. Some 250 people are expected to attend the conference.

Five parallel seminars will discuss the themes of prevention, intervention, reconstruction, development and security, and promotion and communication.

Interviews with individual participants can be arranged with Pekka Johansson, Press Secretary at the United Nations Association of Sweden.

The programme and background information are available on www.dh100.se.

The conference will be held in English.

The centenary of Dag Hammarskjöld's birth will be commemorated in 2005. Together with organisations such as the United Nations Association of Sweden, the Government is undertaking a number of projects to honour the memory of Hammarskjöld and increase knowledge of and commitment to the United Nations.

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Key word: 38191 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Initiative for Swedish music export to the USA

To help promote Swedish music export in the USA during 2005, the organisation Export Music Sweden has been granted SEK 300 000.

The initiative will help finance Swedish participation at the music festival South by South West (SXSW) in Austin, Texas in March 2005, where Swedish artists and music groups with good international potential will be presented. In addition, events in New York are being planned.

"In recent years, the adventure industry, of which music is an important part, has become a new growth area. Established industries with a long history behind them and new creative industries together form an exciting platform to serve as the basis for future Swedish development," says Thomas Östros, Minister for Industry and Trade.

The initiative is a joint effort on behalf of Export Music Sweden, small and medium-sized Swedish companies in the music industry, Sweden's Consulate-General in New York and others.

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Key word: 37930 Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Tajikistan

The Government decided today to send two election monitors and four election observers to Tajikistan for the forthcoming parliamentary election on 27 February.

"By sending election observers to Tajikistan, Sweden can contribute to the development of an efficient election system in the country," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Tajikistan is one of the poorest countries in Central Asia and has been given priority in Swedish development cooperation for the region.

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Key word: 37922 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Consul-General in Phuket

The Government decided today to appoint Director Christer Asp as Consul-General in Phuket, Thailand. The appointment took effect as of 4 January 2005 until further notice, but no longer than 31 August 2005.

Christer Asp has worked at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs since 1977. Between 1995 and 1999 he served as Head of the Cabinet of the then EU Commissioner, Anita Gradin. His most recent appointment was as Head of the Department for Strategic Export Control at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

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Key word: 37917 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Human rights in the world's countries in 2004

In January each year, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs publishes a report on human rights in the world's countries. For the third year in a row, the report is available on the Government's website for human rights:
www.manskligarattigheter.gov.se.

These reports describe civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights in each country. They also give an account of the situation for various groups in society with regard to their specific abilities to enjoy their rights, such as the rights of children and women. Even though respect for human rights is growing internationally, serious crimes against human rights are committed in many places in the world, particularly in countries affected by conflict.

"Thousands of people every year are executed and threatened because of their opinions, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation or religion without even a previous trial," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"The right to life is a fundamental human right. When a state chooses to ignore the right to life by failing to provide protection for certain groups or when a state tries to protect itself by violating certain individuals' right to life, the international community must shoulder the responsibility to protect. Sustainable peace and security can only be built on a foundation of states that respect the human rights of their inhabitants."

The promotion of human rights is one of the cornerstones of Swedish foreign policy. The annual publication of these reports has become a useful instrument and important source of information for the Government Offices and other Swedish government agencies and organisations. Response to publication of the reports has been predominantly positive and has encouraged greater exchange between a number of different actors in Sweden and abroad.

Up to now, Sweden and the USA are alone in publishing annual reports on the situation of human

rights in the world's countries.

(The country reports are available in Swedish only.)

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Key word: 37557 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support for UN action plan for human rights

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has decided to contribute SEK 5 million to Action 2, the UN's three-year action plan for human rights.

The main objective of the programme is to increase awareness and respect for human rights in countries where the UN has field offices. The programme will include skills development for field workers to enable them to better support efforts by member countries / programme countries to establish and strengthen national norms and standards for human rights. In addition, the programme aims to further promote cooperation between the UN bodies concerned and improve coordination in the field, issues that Sweden has long supported.

Sweden is the first country to provide financial support for the programme.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Stockholm

On Thursday 20 January, four newly appointed Ambassadors present their letters of credence to H.M. The King. The four Ambassadors come from Belarus, Syria, Thailand and the Holy See.

The newly appointed Ambassador of Belarus, Andrei Grinkevich, was born in 1960. In addition to his education as a radio technician in Minsk, he also has a degree in economics. Ambassador Grinkevich's appointments in recent years have been as Head of the Department for EU Affairs and of the Department for European Cooperation at the Foreign Ministry in Minsk.

Syria's newly appointed Ambassador, Mohammad Bassam Imadi, was born in 1950. He holds a Master's Degree from the University of Colchester, UK. After entering service at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1981, Ambassador Imadi's appointments have included that of chargé d'affaires at Syria's embassy in Dar es Salaam and Head of the Ministry's Department for European Affairs.

Thailand's newly appointed Ambassador, Apichart Chinwanno, was born in 1956. Ambassador Chinwanno holds a Ph.D. in political science from Oxford University. He entered the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1985 and his appointments include that as Minister Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Thailand to the international organisations in Geneva. His most recent post was as Head of Department for East Asia Affairs at the Ministry in Bangkok.

The Holy See's newly appointed Apostolic Nuncio, Giovanni Tonucci, was born in 1941. Nuncio Tonucci holds a Ph.D. He entered the Vatican's diplomatic service in 1971 and bears the title of Archbishop of Torcello. His most recent appointments included those of Nuncio in Kenya, preceded by Bolivia.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Kyrgyzstan

The Government today decided to send two election monitors and six election observers to Kyrgyzstan for the forthcoming parliamentary election on 27 February.

"By sending election observers to Kyrgyzstan, Sweden can contribute to the development of an efficient election system in the country," says Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Kyrgyzstan is one of the poorest countries in Central Asia and has been given priority in Swedish development cooperation for the region.

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Key word: 37466 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-20
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in the Caribbean

At today's cabinet meeting, Sten Ask was appointed envoy in Saint George's (Grenada).

The Government has previously appointed Mr Ask envoy in the following countries as well: Basseterre (Saint Kitts and Nevis), Castries (Saint Lucia), Kingston (Jamaica), Port of Spain (Trinidad and Tobago), Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic), Kingstown (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Saint John's (Antigua and Barbuda), Roseau (Dominica), Port-au-Prince (Haiti), Bridgetown (Barbados) and Georgetown (Guyana).

Mr. Ask works in the Office of Swedish Ambassadors Stationed in Stockholm.

Alongside the assignment as envoy, Sten Ask is head of the Secretariat for the Dag Hammarskjöld Centenary during 2005.

Mr. Ask has previously served as envoy in Sofia. He has also been stationed in New York, Paris,

Vienna and Vientiane.

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Key word: 37452 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin at Nordic development cooperation meeting

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is taking part in a Nordic-African ministerial meeting in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, on 19-20 January. The purpose of the meeting is to strengthen the dialogue on trade and development between the Nordic countries and 20 African countries.

"Fair and open free trade can be a powerful motor for growth, thereby contributing to the fight against poverty. The World Bank estimates that protectionism by rich countries costs poor countries more than USD 100 billion per year. My hope is that one result of the meeting will be more knowledge about what can and should be done to remove barriers to trade," says Carin Jämtin.

In addition to Nordic and African ministers, WTO Director-General Supachai Panitchpakdi and representatives of a number of international and regional organisations are attending the meeting. The issues to be dealt with include how trade can contribute to greater growth in Africa and thereby contribute to the achievement of the millennium development goal of halving world poverty by 2015.

During her visit to Tanzania Carin Jämtin will also have bilateral talks with representatives of the Tanzanian government, including President Mkapa and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Jakaya Kikwete.

The ministerial meeting in Dar es Salaam is taking place within the framework of the Nordic Africa Initiative. It is a follow-up to the high-level seminar held in Dar es Salaam on 24-25 November 2004.

The African countries covered by the Initiative are: Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

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Key word: 37285 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Information on relief efforts in Aceh

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has been informed of an increased level of risk for international humanitarian relief organisations operating in Indonesia's Aceh province.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs immediately forwarded the information to the United Nations in Jakarta and to the Swedish organisations operating in the area. The Ministry has urged Swedish organisations in the area to exercise caution and to maintain regular contact with other organisations regarding developments in the situation.

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin stressed the importance of humanitarian organisations having safe access to the affected area on an ongoing basis in order to assist those in distress.

CONTACT

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Key word: 37195 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to present Millennium Project final report

TIME AND PLACE

Press conference

Date and time: Tuesday 18 January, 11.30-12.00

Venue: Rosenbad Conference Centre, Drottninggatan 1

Please bring your press credentials!

On Tuesday 18 January Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is to present the United Nations report Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The presentation will be made together with Bruce Jenks, Assistant Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and Amina J Ibrahim, Task Force Coordinator for the Millennium Project.

"As with all disasters, the tsunami has affected the poorest the most seriously of all. Poverty and ecological mismanagement have made the consequences of the disaster even worse. The fight against world poverty is a fundamental prerequisite if our societies are to be more secure and better equipped to deal with crises and disasters. Global threats and challenges must be faced together," says Ms Jämtin.

The aim of the Millennium Project has been to produce concrete proposals on how developing countries and donor countries can help achieve the agreed Millennium Development Goals on halving world poverty by 2015. Hundreds of researchers worldwide have been working on the project.

CONTACT

John Zanchi

Key word: 37194 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government Bill on continued Swedish participation in UN mission in Liberia

Today the Government will present a Bill to the Riksdag proposing continued Swedish participation in the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) for an additional 12 months.

Since the middle of March 2004, Sweden has been participating in UNMIL with a mechanised infantry company of some 230 persons, within the framework of the Irish battalion. The Swedish unit helps to maintain law and order within the scope of their mission.

"The Swedish force constitutes an important contribution to security in the country and should also be viewed as an expression of Sweden's strong commitment to the prevention and management of conflicts in Africa," says Laila Freivalds, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Sweden is a significant donor of humanitarian support to Liberia and allocated SEK 60 million via multilateral channels during 2004. In addition, Sweden will allocate approximately SEK 75 million for reconstruction initiatives during 2004-2005.

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Key word: 36892 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Iraqi election in Sweden to be monitored

The Government has decided to commission Sida to recruit and train electoral observers to monitor the part of the Iraqi election that will be held for Iraqi citizens in Sweden. A minimum of 14 and up to 50 observers will perform this task.

"The Iraqi election constitutes the beginning of a political process that will hopefully lead to democracy being firmly established in Iraq," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"It is important that Iraqis in Sweden are able to take part in the election and that it is conducted in a manner that strengthens credibility for the democratic process."

The Iraqi parliamentary election is planned to take place on 30 January. Voter registration in Sweden is planned for 17-23 January. The elections will be held on 28-30 January. It will be possible to vote in Göteborg and Stockholm.

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Key word: 36888 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministry for Foreign Affairs appeals to GAM for ceasefire and solution to conflict in Aceh

Today the Ministry for Foreign Affairs met leaders of the Movement for a Free Aceh (GAM) in Stockholm. The purpose of the meeting was to urge GAM to honour the ceasefire that was promised after the earthquake disaster in northern Sumatras particularly hard-hit Aceh province.

Director-General for Political Affairs Olof Skoog welcomed the ceasefire statements issued by GAM after the disaster and appealed for continued compliance with what had been promised.

"The international community, including Sweden, has contributed a considerable amount of disaster relief to the province and it is of utmost importance that this aid is allowed to reach the victims in the area. All else must be set aside," says Mr Skoog.

"I hope the GAM leaders will now do everything in their power to bring about a permanent and peaceful solution to the prolonged conflict in the province. The international community would not accept the conflict being allowed to hinder the ongoing relief efforts, nor the conflict continuing as before," says Mr Skoog.

"Sweden, together with a number of other major donors, has conveyed the same message to the Indonesian government. It has been emphasised that the parties must now unite in a responsible and serious effort to assist the victims and also to bring about a peaceful solution to the conflict."

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Coordination group formed to manage gifts and contributions from companies and organisations to assist those affected by tsunami disaster

At the initiative of the Government Offices, a coordination function has been formed between a number of NGOs, government agencies and the Swedish business sector to manage the considerable number of contributions and ideas received by the Government Offices and NGOs in support of victims of the tsunami disaster.

The purpose of the coordination effort is to ensure that all ideas and contributions received from organisations and companies are put to good use, says Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation.

We urge individual organisations and companies wishing to contribute to contact the newly established coordination group that will be operational as of 09.00 on Tuesday, Carin Jämtin continues.

The coordination group has set up a switchboard that will be manned by 58 persons. The telephone number is: +46 (0)8 452 88 90. Private individuals wishing to contribute gifts and services are still encouraged to contact NGOs directly.

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds welcomes peace agreement for Sudan

On 9 January the government of Sudan and the Sudan Peoples Liberation

Movement/Army (SPLM/A), the rebel movement in southern Sudan, signed a comprehensive peace agreement after decades of civil war.

We welcome the fact that the parties have reached an agreement paving the way for peace in war-torn Sudan, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

We congratulate both parties, as well as the East African cooperation organisation the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and other international actors, on the completion of this part of the peace process. It is now essential that the agreement is implemented in order to promote peace, stability, democracy and human rights throughout Sudan, continues Ms Freivalds.

I hope this agreement will also lead to a solution to the conflict in Darfur where the situation continues to be extremely serious. It is important the agreement that has now been signed is accompanied by respect for the ceasefire in Darfur that was previously agreed on by the parties concerned. Long-term, sustainable peace in Sudan also requires a solution to the conflict in Darfur, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

The civil war between the government of Sudan and the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in southern Sudan has been going on for decades and has led to 4.5 million internally displaced persons and over 2 million dead. Peace negotiations were intensified during 2002 and have continued since then. During this period, however, fighting flared up in the western region of Sudan, Darfur. At the moment, the situation in Darfur continues to be extremely serious and a number of breaches of the ceasefire have been reported. The United Nations estimates that some 2 million people in Darfur will be in need of humanitarian aid in the coming years.

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Key word: 36659 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to take part in UN ministerial meeting on aid to tsunami-hit countries

On Tuesday 11 January, a UN ministerial meeting will be held in Geneva on international aid to the countries around the Indian Ocean that have been affected by the tsunami disaster.

The meeting will be chaired by United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator Jan Egeland. Sweden will be represented by Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin. The agenda will include discussions on continued humanitarian aid to the disaster area, support to

early reconstruction initiatives and the organisation of continued international support.

The development assistance donors taking part will also be given the opportunity to present their responses to the United Nations request for humanitarian aid to the people affected by the tsunami disaster.

In addition to the ministerial meeting, Ms Jämtin will also have personal discussions with the President of the International Red Cross, Jakob Kellenberger, and with the Executive Director of the World Food Programme, James Morris.

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John Zanchi

Key word: 36644 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to take part in seminar After the disaster: What is being done in Indonesia?

On Wednesday 12 January, Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will take part in a seminar organised by the Olof Palme International Center and the Workers Educational Association (ABF) in Stockholm on the situation in Indonesia in the aftermath of the tsunami disaster.

The seminar will take place at ABF-huset, Sveavägen, Stockholm, on Wednesday 12 January at 18.30-20.00.

CONTACT

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Key word: 36641 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to inaugurate development assistance conference on human vulnerability

On Wednesday 12 January, Minister for International Development

Cooperation Carin Jämtin will open a research conference organised by Stockholm University in cooperation with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

TIME AND PLACE

Wednesday 12 January at 14.00, Aula Magna, Stockholm University

Researchers specialising in economic development, development cooperation, geography, history, climate research and medicine will present research projects currently being undertaken as well as projects that have already been completed on the theme of human vulnerability.

Subjects for discussion include children and young people, womens reproductive rights, climate, corruption, environment, ethnicity, food and water, gender, health, infrastructure, law and order, religion, urbanisation, war and violence, and welfare.

For further information: www.vulnerability.se

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John Zanchi

Key word: 36640 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government decides on support to tsunami-hit areas

The Government has today authorised the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to pay out up to SEK 150 million in response to the United Nations flash appeal of 6 January for humanitarian aid to the people affected by the tsunami in the Indian Ocean.

The decision makes it possible for Sida to continue to pay out the funds pledged to UN emergency relief efforts. The SEK 150 million is included in the SEK 500 million that has been allocated initially to the acute emergency situation.

The funds will be taken from the government budget for international humanitarian aid.

CONTACT

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PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to take part in conference on disaster in Asia and visit Aceh province

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is travelling to Indonesia to take part in a regional high-level meeting in Jakarta on 6 January. At the meeting, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan will launch the UN joint appeal for donations to international relief efforts in the region following the disaster in the Indian Ocean. If possible, Ms Jämtin also plans to visit the areas affected by the tsunami disaster in the Aceh province.

Initially Sweden has allocated some SEK 500 million for assistance to the disaster-hit areas in Asia. To date, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) has taken decisions on a total of SEK 68.3 million in support to organisations including the International Red Cross, UN agencies, the Swedish Rescue Services Agency and Swedish NGOs. Sweden will be contributing to the UN joint appeal in the region.

CONTACT

John Zanchi

PRESS RELEASE

2005-01-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish measures for cholera vaccination in Sri Lanka and India

Sweden has received a request from the World Health Organisation (WHO) to undertake cholera vaccination measures in the areas affected by the natural disaster in Asia. Sweden will therefore assist by providing 400.000 doses of cholera vaccine which will be sufficient to vaccinate 200.000 people in the affected areas. Supplies held by the National Bacteriological Laboratory (SBL Vaccin) probably make Sweden the only country in the world to have such a large stock of vaccine readily available.

"If measures of this kind are not undertaken, there is the risk that cholera epidemics will break out in these areas that have already been so incredibly severely affected," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The disaster has destroyed water catchments, demolished drainage systems and polluted drinking water. The World Health Organisation considers there to be a great risk that different kinds of epidemics will break out. The WHO assesses the most acute risk to be that of a cholera outbreak.

The WHO proposes that vaccination should take place in Sri Lanka and southern India.

The National Bacteriological Laboratory (SBL Vaccin AB) already cooperates with the WHO and has offered the available supplies of 400.000 doses of Dukoral cholera vaccine for WHO use.

Sweden will finance the whole initiative through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). The initiative is expected to get under way in the affected areas within ten days. The Swedish Rescue Services Agency will be responsible for transport to Asia, where the WHO will take over the operation.

CONTACT

John Zanchi

Key word: 36452 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish aid to Asia

Initially Sweden is setting aside some SEK 500 million for assistance to the disaster-hit areas in Asia. The terrible scale of the disaster is still not known and we must be prepared to contribute in every way we can, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Aid is being channelled via Sida and mainly consists of support to UN bodies, the International Red Cross, the Swedish Rescue Services Agency and Swedish NGOs.

So far Sida has taken decisions on contributions amounting to SEK 52.9 million. The aid measures implemented and planned so far include SEK 25 million to the International Red Cross and SEK 20 million via UNICEF to the worst-hit countries Indonesia, Sri Lanka and the Maldives. The Swedish Rescue Services Agency has, for example, sent personnel on behalf of the UN to Sri Lanka and has also sent a freight plane with tents and blankets. In addition, the Agency is planning a field coordination office for the UN in Aceh province in Indonesia. The Swedish Red Cross is preparing relief work in these countries, including the provision of water for hospitals in Sri Lanka. Aid is also being channelled through organisations like the Church of Sweden/Church of Sweden Aid, Diakonia, the Swedish Section of the IOGT, PMU InterLife and the Swedish Mission Council.

Today it also became known that UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has appointed Margareta Wahlström, a Swedish national, as the special coordinator for UN relief work in the crisis-hit area.

CONTACT

John Zanchi

Key word: 36318 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Additional air transport from Thailand

On Thursday the Swedish Civil Aviation Administration will be assisting the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in sending two medical transport aircraft to Thailand. SAS is providing the aircraft and Västerbotten County Council is responsible for the medical services. Each aircraft has 35 seats and space for 24 stretchers. Doctors and other medical staff will be on board the aircraft. The two aircraft are MD80s and will take off from Stockholm Arlanda for Phuket.

Germany has made an offer to Sweden to use any spare capacity to bring home Swedish citizens on board two medically-equipped German Airbus aircraft.

Today the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, together with representatives of the Danish and Norwegian foreign ministries, has reached agreement with SAS on the transport home from Thailand of the respective countries' citizens. These air transports will be able to accommodate a total of 2000-2300 people and will be undertaken during the period 30 December - 1 January. The first three aircraft are already on their way.

The agreement with SAS also includes further flights using the aircraft that have been reserved. Initially these are three Boeing 737s which will be making six flights from Bangkok to airports in Scandinavia. Each such flight can take 100 passengers. Thai shuttle flights will be used for transport from Phuket. Five Airbuses are being used in the current arrangement in addition to the 737s already mentioned. Four of these can accommodate 262 passengers. The fifth aircraft is equipped with 130 seats and space for 15-20 stretchers.

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Key word: 36244 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministry for Foreign Affairs launches SMS service for victims and relatives

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has launched an SMS service to receive SMS text messages from relatives in Sweden and victims in South East Asia.

To send an SMS text message to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs:

1. The SMS number is 71160 (Please note: No international prefix is necessary from abroad).
2. Begin your message by writing UD.
3. Follow this with a space.
4. Then write your message.

Please note: It is important you follow these instructions otherwise your message will not reach the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

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Key word: 36243 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds to travel to disaster area in Thailand

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will travel to Phuket in Thailand this evening together with the support team from the Swedish Rescue Services Agency. The group also includes the Director-General of the Swedish Rescue Services Agency, Christina Salomonson.

Once in Thailand Ms Freivalds will try to get a picture of the situation and determine what further measures need to be taken by Sweden.

CONTACT

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Key word: 36113 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Prime Minister's Office

Press meeting concerning the situation in Asia after the earthquake

TIME AND PLACE

Monday 27 December, 15.00
at Rosenbad Conference Centre, entrance from Drottninggatan 1.

Prime Minister Göran Persson, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will inform about the measures taken by the Swedish Government.

Press card is required.

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Key word: 36055 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish contribution to UN protection in Iraq

The Government decided today to contribute EUR 1.5 million to a UN fund for establishing a special protection force for UN staff in Iraq. The decision is based on a direct request from the UN Secretary-General to the EU countries. Some ten EU countries are contributing to the fund.

"We regard the UN presence in Iraq and its participation in the democratic process as essential in efforts to create peace and development. The contribution to a protection force is one means of helping the UN to return to Iraq," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

In June this year, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1546, which provides the basis for an independent Iraq and a stronger role for the UN in the country's road to democracy. The protection force is vital for enabling UN staff to return to Iraq more extensively, despite the serious security situation existing in the country. The most pressing task of the UN will be to provide

assistance at the general elections planned for 30 January 2005.

UN activities in Iraq received a setback last summer when an act of terror against the UN office in Baghdad led to a large number of UN employees losing their lives.

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Key word: 36011 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Meeting of the Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs

There will be a meeting of the Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs on Wednesday 22 December at 2 pm at the Royal Palace.

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Key word: 35818 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Human rights representative established in the EU

At today's EU summit in Brussels, it was decided to establish a representative for human rights, under Javier Solana, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union and High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy.

"Sweden welcomes this decision. As EU foreign policy efforts in support of human rights are strengthened, the need of a cohesive force increases. A special representative for human rights will help strengthen the coherence and continuity of EU action in this very important area," says Laila Freivalds, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The proposal for an EU representative for human rights was originally put forward by Sweden within the framework of the RIO (rules-based international order) initiative, which was launched in the EU in May 2004.

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Key word: 35821 EU Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden waits until further notice with payment of budget support to Rwanda

On 25 November, the Government approved budget support of SEK 40 million to Rwanda. In consultation with Sida, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has decided to postpone its payment of budget support as a result of Rwanda's actions in the current regional crisis in the Great Lakes region.

CONTACT

John Zanchi

Key word: 35745 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish contribution to UN police operation in Kosovo

The Government has decided today that Sweden will contribute a further eight civilian police officers to the UN police operation in Kosovo. The Swedish contribution will thus be increased from 28 to 36 civilian police officers.

The Swedish police officers are to assist UNMIK, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, in its long-term police operations. The main aim is to support the rebuilding of Kosovo, to uphold law and order and to establish and train a local police force.

The reform of the local police service is part of the work to achieve stabilisation and normalisation of conditions in the region.

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Key word: 35543 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds on new NGO law in Zimbabwe

On Thursday 9 December, Zimbabwe's Parliament passed a law prohibiting non-governmental organisations working with human rights and democracy from operating in the country. The law also prohibits foreign financing of Zimbabwean organisations that are active in these areas.

"The new law is yet another blow to respect for human rights and democracy in Zimbabwe. It makes it more difficult for civil society to function, which is serious not least bearing in mind the coming election," says Laila Freivalds.

"I call upon Zimbabwe's government to desist from repressive legislation and respect the right of its citizens to freedom of association."

Against the background of the negative political developments and serious violations of human rights, Sweden broke off bilateral development cooperation with Zimbabwe in January 2001.

However, Sweden still cooperates with civil society and is also a significant humanitarian donor both bilaterally and through the UN system.

Key word: 35443 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to give further support to peace efforts in Liberia

The Government Offices have decided to contribute a further SEK 10 million (1,1 million Euro) to a programme for the disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation and reintegration (DDRR) of ex-combatants in Liberia.

The contribution will be channelled via the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which is administering a donor fund for the programme. Sweden has previously contributed SEK 14 million (1,55 million Euro) to the Fund.

The DDRR programme is part of the peace agreement reached by the conflicting parties in Liberia in August 2003 after many years of civil war. The part of the programme connected with the disarmament of 100 000 soldiers is now complete. A large number of them are minors. The next stage in the process is the repatriation and education of these people.

"A well-implemented DDRR programme is of great importance for the peace process in Liberia and for the security of the whole region. It is essential that the people who have been disarmed now have the chance to readjust to civilian life. Particular attention should be paid to the returning child soldiers," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Sweden is participating with a mechanised rifle company of more than 230 troops in the UN peace support mission, UNMIL (the United Nations Mission in Liberia), and is supporting humanitarian measures and the reconstruction of the country by contributing some SEK 88 million (9,8 million Euro) during 2004. Sweden is also participating actively in the political and diplomatic peace efforts in Liberia and the countries in its vicinity. One of the ways it contributes is through State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren's role as the EU Presidency's Special Representative in the Mano River Union countries (Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea).

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to new election in Ukraine

The Government decided today to send four long-term observers and twenty short-term observers to the re-run of the second round of elections in Ukraine on 26 December. The Swedish Embassy in Kiev intends to register another ten Swedes with the OSCE election observer mission locally. A total of 25 Swedish observers took part in the previous round of elections on 21 November.

"To emphasise the importance Sweden attaches to a democratic development in Ukraine - one of the largest countries in our vicinity - we are increasing our input in support of the elections," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

As was the case in earlier election rounds, the decision to send observers has been taken following a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to attend meeting of Foreign Ministers of

Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council on 9 December

On 9 December 2004, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will be in Brussels to attend a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).

The agenda includes crisis management and security enhancing operations by NATO and the EAPC in the Western Balkans, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia. This meeting will be held in connection with a corresponding NATO meeting.

The meeting will be followed by a press conference with Laila Freivalds.

Time: approx. 17.25

Venue: NATO Headquarters, Brussels

The EAPC was established in 1997 as the political framework for PfP (Partnership for Peace) operations. PfP is a practically-oriented cooperation programme between NATO and non-NATO countries in Europe, Central Asia and Southern Caucasus. Today, forty-six countries participate in EAPC/PfP cooperation.

In the spring of 2005, Sweden will be hosting an informal ministerial meeting within the framework of EAPC/PfP.

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Key word: 35197 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to send election observers to Ukraine

"It is gratifying that the Ukrainian Supreme Court has pronounced in favour of re-running the second round of the presidential election. As Sweden and the EU have repeatedly pointed out, irregularities of such a serious nature occurred that the official results did not reflect the will of the people. It is now of the utmost importance that the election is conducted in a proper manner, and to accomplish this a comprehensive effort by international election observers is required. Sweden plans to contribute 30 observers to the OSCE/ODIHR election observer mission," says Laila Freivalds, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The election date has been set for Sunday 26 December. Sweden participated in both of the

previous election rounds by sending 16 election observers, 4 of whom were long-term observers, and by also providing a number of locally recruited observers (including personnel from Swedens Embassy in Kiev).

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Key word: 35007 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to support climate issues in developing countries

The Government has decided to contribute SEK 10 million to the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) for the purpose of assisting the developing countries in their adaptation to climate change.

"Climate issues are an important part of the Governments sustainable development work. The orientation of the Special Fund, with its emphasis on adaptation and technology transfer, is well in line with Swedens policy for global development," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"Climate issues are a common responsibility that all countries should pay attention to. Our support for the Special Fund improves developing countries' chances of adapting to climate change while underlining Sweden's commitment to environmental issues," says Minister for the Environment Lena Sommestad.

The Special Fund, like the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), was established at the meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in November 2001. The purpose of the two funds is to assist the developing countries in their adaptation to climate change and their endeavours to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

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Key word: 34999 Foreign policy and international cooperation Sustainable development Environment, energy and housing Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Palestinian presidential elections

The Government has decided to send election observers to the Palestinian territories for the forthcoming presidential elections on 9 January 2005.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) has been instructed to recruit and train a maximum of 11 election observers, 7 of whom are to be short-term observers. The Swedish election observers will be part of the joint EU election observation mission.

"Sweden supports democratic development in the Palestinian territories and we therefore consider it important to contribute election observers to the forthcoming presidential elections. Free and democratic elections in the Palestinian territories would be an important step forward in the Palestinian reform process and can contribute to better conditions for a resumption of the peace process," says Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation.

The decision to send election observers was taken after an invitation from the Palestinian Central Elections Commission (CEC) to international organisations to monitor all phases of the election process.

The Palestinian territories will hold presidential elections on 9 January 2005 to appoint a successor to the late President Yasser Arafat. The purpose of election observers is to reduce the risk of irregularities in connection with the elections.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to visit South Africa and Ethiopia

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is scheduled to visit South Africa on 6-8 December for talks with South Africa's Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel, and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Azziz Pahad. Ms Jämtin will also be launching the new country strategy for cooperation between Sweden and South Africa. This strategy will mark a shift in cooperation between the two countries from traditional development assistance to a broader form of cooperation based on mutual interests and joint financing.

Ms Jämtin will then visit Ethiopia on 9-10 December where she will be meeting with Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin to discuss, inter alia, the border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Ms Jämtin will also hold talks on Swedish development cooperation with Ethiopia and visit a project for street-children supported by Swedish Save the Children. In connection with this visit, Carin Jämtin will sign an investment protection agreement between Sweden and Ethiopia.

The visit to Addis Ababa also has a regional dimension in the form of meetings with the Chairman of the Commission of the African Union Alpha Oumar Konaré and Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa K.Y. Amoako.

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Key word: 34923 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-12-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds comments on the report from the UN High-Level Panel

Yesterday the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change formally presented its report to Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The report constitutes a basis for continued discussions, to be held until the summit next September, on how the UN can meet present and future threats and challenges.

"In all essentials, this report comes up to our expectations. The report provides a good basis for creating international consensus on collective security. Today's potential threats include poverty, HIV/AIDS and environmental threats as well as terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. These threats are interlinked and borderless. To meet them, we need a strong United Nations," was Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds initial comment.

"The report contains forward-looking proposals in such areas as the collective security system, the use of violence, terrorism, the obligation to protect civilians, disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The proposals presented on the reasons for reforming the UN are also generally far-reaching and well-founded."

"Where Sweden is concerned, it will be one of our priorities to actively promote broad-based support for the Secretary-General in his reform efforts," says the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

"Kofi Annan has shown both clarity of vision and courage in his efforts to reform the organisation. The international community must take advantage of this opportunity to change, brought about on his initiative. Sweden will continue to be active in various forums, both in the EU and the UN and in other ways, to support these efforts and help move the process towards a decision during the Summit."

The High-Level Panel's report and the report on the Millennium Development Goals will constitute the basis of the Secretary-General's March report in the run-up to the Summit in September, which will be devoted to the five-year follow-up of the Millennium declaration and to discussions of the reform proposals.

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Key word: 34866 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour to visit Sweden

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, will visit Sweden on Wednesday 1 December.

TIME AND PLACE

Press conference

Time: 10.30-10.45

Venue: The Living History Forum, Stora Nygatan 10 - 12, (Old Town)

Contact: Press Secretary Johan Perwe, Tel: 070-259 38 19.

Please bring your press credentials!

During her visit to Stockholm, Ms Arbour will meet with Laila Freivalds, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation, Hans Dahlgren, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs and others.

Laila Freivalds will also host a lunch seminar at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the topic of Security under the rule of law. State Secretary Dan Eliasson from the Ministry of Justice will take part along with specially invited guests. The seminar will be held in English.

During the day, Ms Freivalds and Ms Arbour will visit the government agency, The Living History Forum. Ms Arbour will also meet with representatives of the Foundation for Human Rights, Sida, Amnesty International and others.

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Key word: 34592 Legislation and justice Foreign policy and international cooperation Democracy and human rights Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to take part in EU meeting within the

Barcelona Process

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will take part in a meeting with the foreign ministers of all the EU countries, eight Arab countries, Israel and Turkey on 29 and 30 November.

The meeting will be held in the Hague within the framework of EU cooperation with countries in North Africa and the Middle East, the Barcelona Process.

Ms Freivalds will deliver the opening address on EU dialogue with the partner countries on a better understanding between Europe and the Middle East. The new foundation for dialogue within the Barcelona Process has been named after Anna Lindh and will begin its work next year. The foundation will have its headquarters in Alexandria, Egypt, and will be hosted by the Swedish Institute and the Alexandria Library.

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Key word: 34529 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Increased compensation for health care of asylum-seekers

The Government decided today to increase compensation to the county councils for health care of asylum-seekers. The increase will come into force on 1 January 2005.

"The costs of health care for asylum-seekers in certain age groups have increased. The decision taken today means that the state is compensating the county councils for this. Compensation to county councils is being increased by up to 36 per cent, depending on the age of the people seeking care," says Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg.

Under the agreement child psychiatric treatment will now also include care for parents when this is necessary for the health of the children.

Another new point in the agreement is that all new arrivals must be offered medical examinations or health interviews as soon as they have obtained housing in the area of the county council and have been registered by the Swedish Migration Board.

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Key word: 34344 Health care, health, social issues/insurance Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Stockholm

On Thursday 25 November, four newly appointed Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to H.M. The King. The four Ambassadors come from Iraq, Algeria, Turkey and Croatia.

Iraq's newly appointed Ambassador Ahmed Abu Baker Hassan Bamerne was born in 1971. He is of Kurdish origin, and holds a doctors degree from the Sorbonne University in Paris. Before his appointment as Ambassador, he has mainly been politically active as a parliamentarian and representative abroad for Kurdish interests. Since 1997, Ambassador Bamerne has represented the Kurdistan National Federation and the provincial government of Kurdistan in northern Iraq in Paris and Brussels respectively.

Algeria's newly appointed Ambassador Merzak Bedjaoui was born in 1953. He is a lawyer, with degrees, inter alia, from École Nationale d'Administration (ENA) in Paris. Ambassador Bedjaoui entered his country's foreign service in 1978, and has specialised in marine law and territorial border issues. Recent posts have included that of Deputy Head of the Algerian Embassy in Moscow and Head of the Foreign Ministry's Department for Legal Affairs.

Turkey's newly appointed Ambassador Necip Egüz was born in 1951 and holds a degree from the Middle East Technical University. He is a career diplomat and in recent years has been Counsellor at Turkey's mission to the international organisations in Geneva and Head of the Foreign Ministry's Department for the Council of Europe and Human Rights. His most recent appointment was as Deputy Head of the Foreign Ministry's Department for Cyprus Issues.

Croatia's newly appointed Ambassador Svjetlan Berkovic was born in 1952. He holds a doctors degree in international law from the University of Zagreb. In connection with his service at the former Yugoslavia's consulate in Malmö in the mid-1980s, he studied law at licentiate level at Lund University. Previous posts include that of chargé d'affaires at the Embassy in Copenhagen and Ambassador in Israel. His most recent appointment was as Head of the Department for Consular Affairs at the Foreign Ministry in Zagreb.

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Key word: 34193 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish Ambassador Jan Eliasson the next President of the United Nations General Assembly

Today, Sweden's Ambassador to the United States, H.E. Mr. Jan Eliasson, was endorsed as President of the United Nations General Assembly for its sixtieth session, due to begin in September 2005.

The President of the General Assembly will play a central role in the negotiations concerning UN reform and implementation of the Millennium Goals, and will chair the summit of heads of state and government, that is due to take place at UN Headquarters in New York, in September next year.

- With Jan Eliasson as President of the General Assembly, Sweden will have an opportunity to influence the outcome and follow-up of the summit of 2005. It is a great pleasure for Sweden that we have received such wide-ranging support for Ambassador Eliasson's candidature to provide leadership during such a crucial year for the United Nations, says Sweden's Foreign Minister Laila Freivalds.

- With Mr. Eliasson's diplomatic experience, in particular his unique UN background, there is now a good opportunity to achieve a successful outcome of the 2005 summit and the follow-up process, not least as regards delicate issues concerning UN reform. At the same time, it should be noted that this is a complicated and challenging assignment, Laila Freivalds says.

At a meeting of the regional group of Western European and other States (WEOG) in New York on Wednesday, there was a unanimous decision to launch Ambassador Jan Eliasson to the office of President of the sixtieth session of the United Nations General Assembly, which is due to begin in September 2005. The formal decision will be made by the General Assembly in June, 2005. According to the established practice of rotation between the regional groups, the office of President will be filled by the endorsed candidate of the WEOG.

This will be the first time in United Nations history that a Swede holds this important office.

Jan Eliasson currently serves as Ambassador of Sweden to the United States. He is a former State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, and a former Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations.

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Key word: 34245 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Östros to Competitiveness Council meeting in Brussels

Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros is to take part in a meeting of the Competitiveness Council in Brussels on Thursday 25 November. The Council meeting will begin with an informal dinner organised by the Presidency on the evening of Wednesday 24 November.

The Council's agenda includes discussions on the Services Directive and the REACH chemicals strategy. The Ministers will also discuss the mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy and the report that was presented recently prior to the review, the Kok report.

A press meeting with Thomas Östros is planned in the Swedish Briefing Room in the Council Building, Rue de la Loi 175, at 16.00.

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Key word: 34179 EU Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds to take part in Arctic Council meeting

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is to take part in the Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Reykjavik on Wednesday 24 November. The meeting will focus on sustainable development, climate change and environmental issues in the Arctic area.

A press conference will take place at Nordica Hotel at 17.00.

The Arctic Council is a forum for consultation and cooperation among the governments of the Arctic countries (the five Nordic countries as well as Canada, Russia and the United States). The Arctic Council also includes representatives of six indigenous peoples' organisations as Permanent Participants. Activities focus on general circumpolar issues of importance to the whole of the Arctic area.

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Key word: 34137 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

State Secretaries to Tanzania to discuss trade and development

The State Secretaries responsible for trade and international development cooperation respectively, Lars-Olof Lindgren and Annika Söder, will participate in a high-level meeting in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, on 24-25 November.

The purpose of the meeting is to strengthen dialogue on trade and development between the Nordic countries and a number of African countries. The meeting will take place within the framework of the Nordic Africa Initiative which will also follow up the high-level meeting with a ministerial meeting at the beginning of next year.

The background to the Initiative is the breakdown of the World Trade Organisation (WTO)

ministerial meeting in Cancún in the autumn of 2003, which is attributed partly to inadequate dialogue between industrialised countries and the poorest of the developing countries.

Focus during the two days will be on how international trade can promote development in Africa. Topics to be dealt with include trade policy regulations, how rich countries can open up their markets, and the need for trade-related capacity building in developing countries.

In addition to the WTO, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been invited to attend, together with a number of regional organisations, such as the African Union and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

The African countries covered by the Initiative are: Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

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Key word: 34129 Foreign policy and international cooperation Industry, trade, regional development Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden pushes for civilian rapid reaction units in EU

At today's meeting of the European Council, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds launched a proposal for the EU to establish civilian rapid reaction units in the context of the EU's Security and Defence Policy. The proposal was given a positive reception.

The idea of civilian rapid reaction units is that the EU's civilian crisis management capacity should have the same level of ambition as its military rapid reaction forces, i.e. it should be possible in certain situations to deploy units 5-10 days after a decision approving deployment.

Deploying civilian as well as military rapid reaction forces would strengthen the EU's capacity to act in crises. To give an example, let me mention our military operation in Congo last year. The operation was a success, but it could have made an even greater impact if it had also included a civilian crisis management component. We must learn from this example, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

A capacity to deploy civilian rapid reaction forces would be a good supplement to the EU's ability to manage crises and solve conflicts, Ms Freivalds emphasises.

Civilian rapid reaction units have several potential uses. Apart from supplementing military rapid reaction forces with civilian instruments in a conflict zone, they could also be used as a preventive instrument in conflicts where the EU wants to establish a presence quickly so as to stabilise the situation. An additional area of use is to deploy civilian rapid reaction units in preparation for larger-scale civilian actions.

EU civilian crisis management is part of the common EU Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), which was established at the meeting of the European Council in Cologne in 1999. At present the EU has three ongoing civilian crisis management operations, two police operations in Bosnia and Macedonia and a mission in support of the justice system in Georgia. In addition, planning is under way for possible civilian missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Iraq.

At the Civilian Capabilities Conference held by EU foreign ministers in connection with the Council meeting today, Sweden has announced its preparedness to contribute personnel to EU operations, which may also be offered to the United Nations for its missions. Sweden has announced the availability of 160 police officers, 48 specialists in the rule of law, 24 in civil administration and 202 in rescue services. Sweden has also volunteered 60 advisers to the field offices of EU special representatives and 45 civilian observers. The last two categories are new in EU civilian crisis management.

Key word: 34072 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to participate in meeting of EU Ministers for International Development Cooperation

The EU Ministers for International Development Cooperation will meet in Brussels on 23 November to discuss EU measures to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals of halving world poverty. The Council meeting will include discussions on the annual report of EU development assistance in 2003. The issue of how well the EU is living up to the commitments made at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994 will also be raised at the Council meeting.

"The EU is responsible for more than half of the world's development assistance and must therefore display strong leadership in the fight against poverty. Much more money is needed to combat poverty. At the same time, we must become more efficient in development assistance and not act in a contradictory manner towards the developing countries. It is neither effective nor consistent to provide development assistance with one hand whilst imposing tariffs and granting subsidies that obstruct developing countries' export opportunities with the other," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"In poor countries, the primary cause of death for girls between the ages of 15 and 19 is the complications they suffer during pregnancy. This is a cruel indication of how differently people's lives are valued. At the Council meeting, Sweden will actively pursue the issue of sexual and reproductive rights. Women's rights also play a key role in combating poverty and it is important, therefore, that the EU expresses support for the Cairo Agenda and includes these issues in its

Millennium Development Goal Report," says Ms Jämtin.

"In order to reduce poverty effectively, a cohesive policy is needed in which trade, research, and development assistance policies, for example, mutually reinforce each other in the fight against the HIV/AIDS epidemic. We will therefore be asking the Commission to draw up a new action plan for the fight against HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis by April 2005," says Ms Jämtin.

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Key word: 34003 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Thomas Östros to attend informal meeting of ministers for trade

On Sunday 21 November, Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros is scheduled to take part in an informal meeting of EU ministers for trade in Brussels.

This is Thomas Östros' first meeting in his capacity as minister responsible for trade issues.

At the meeting, the ministers for trade will discuss the Doha round, relations with the EU's most important trade partners and the importance of trade for competitiveness. In addition, Pascal Lamy who is retiring from his post as Trade Commissioner will be thanked for his services and Peter Mandelson, his successor, welcomed to his new post.

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Key word: 33994 Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-19

Ministry of Justice
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

International conference on combating patriarchal violence against women - focusing on violence in the name of honour, in Stockh

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and Minister for Gender Equality Jens Orback are to

host an international conference on combating patriarchal violence against women - focusing on violence in the name of honour. The conference, which is co-sponsored by the Left Party and the Green Party, will be held in Stockholm on 7-8 December.

The conference is expected to bring together about 200 international and national participants: ministers and governmental representatives from more than 30 countries, representatives of the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, Swedish government agencies, and international and national organisations, as well as politicians, opinion-formers, representatives of religious communities and researchers.

The general aims of the conference are to emphasise the importance of women's rights for combating and preventing patriarchal violence against women, to exchange experience and to promote cross-border dialogue and joint working. The intention is also to take the outcomes forward nationally and internationally and to strengthen the work being done in arenas such as the EU, the Council of Europe and the UN with regard to patriarchal violence against women, including violence in the name of honour. Read more about the conference at www.manskligarattigheter.gov.se

MEDIA INFORMATION

Special media accreditation is required to cover the conference. The accreditation form and information about media arrangements are available at the Government website on Human Rights.

Deadline for accreditation: 1 December

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Key word: 33962 Democracy and human rights Jens Orback

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to open a new Consulate-General in Houston

The Government has decided to establish a Consulate-General in Houston, Texas. This is part of the Government's export promotion campaign and the Consulate-General's main task will be to promote trade, investment and other exchanges between Sweden and the USA.

"The USA is already Sweden's largest export market and it is steadily growing. This is why we are investing in yet another presence in one of the main growth regions in the USA," says Minister for Industry and Trade Thomas Östros.

"The south of the USA is also a region with a strong university and research base, which opens the way for greater exchange in other areas as well. Particularly with regard to IT, telecom and biotechnology, we have much to gain from closer cooperation with the region."

The Consulate-General in Houston will be Sweden's third. Sweden already has Consulates-General in Los Angeles and New York. Sweden is also represented via its Embassy in Washington, the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York and thirty honorary consulates in the country.

The honorary consulate in Detroit was recently upgraded to an honorary Consulate-General, a step that is occasionally taken in regions that are particularly significant for Swedish interests. This was also part of the investment in the US market and particularly the vehicle industry that is so important to Sweden.

Last year, Swedish exports to the USA amounted to over USD 12 billion, which was an increase of 11 per cent from the previous year. At the same time, imports amounted to just over USD 3 billion. US companies are the largest international investors in Sweden, with some USD 30 billion in assets and 110.000 employees. Swedish companies have invested approximately the same amount in the USA and have more than 230.000 employees. Particularly important sectors are the car and manufacturing industries, telecommunications and pharmaceutical products.

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Key word: 33878 Foreign policy and international cooperation Industry, trade, regional development Thomas Östros

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-18
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Liberia's Head of Government to visit Sweden

The Chairman of Liberia's national interim government, Gyude Bryant, is scheduled to visit Sweden on 19-22 November. During his visit, Bryant will be holding talks with representatives of the Swedish Government on such subjects as development in Liberia and Swedish support to the peace process in the country.

"I welcome Gyude Bryants visit to Sweden. Bryant has been given the important task of leading Liberia into free and fair elections in November 2005. With the peace agreement of 2003 and the broad UN mandate supporting its implementation, Liberia has been given a unique chance to break the vicious circle of violence and misrule that has long existed in the country", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"A peaceful development in Liberia is vital to the stability of the whole of West Africa. To achieve this, the active support and commitment of the international community is needed."

In 2003, the conflicting parties in Liberia signed a peace agreement that put an end to the civil war that had gone on in the country for many years and that resulted in enormous streams of refugees and extensive human suffering. A UN mission (UNMIL) of 15 000 forces was established to support the implementation of the agreement.

Sweden contributes with a mechanised infantry company of 235 persons to UNMIL and has allocated a total of SEK 65 million to support humanitarian initiatives and reconstruction of the country during 2004. Sweden also takes an active part in political and diplomatic efforts to support peace in Liberia and the countries in its vicinity. One of the ways it contributes is through State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren's role as the EU Presidency's Special Representative in the Mano River Union countries (Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea).

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Key word: 33827 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Carin Jämtin on the murder of Margaret Hassan

- I am dismayed and appalled to hear the news of the murder of aid worker Margaret Hassan in Iraq. My thoughts go to her family, to the dedicated colleagues that Margaret Hassan had in CARE International in Iraq and to the Iraqi people, who have lost a citizen who untiringly devoted her energy to alleviating the suffering of the Iraqi people.

- My colleagues at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sida have born witness to Margaret Hassans selfless commitment to fighting oppression and towards peaceful development in Iraq. With her extensive knowledge of the Iraqi society, Margaret Hassan acted as a link for Swedens commitments in Iraq. I shall be extending my condolences directly to her family and to the leadership of CARE International.

- It is particularly serious when impartial humanitarian aid workers become victims of conflicts. Humanitarian assistance aims at saving lives and alleviating suffering, without discrimination. I hope that it will be possible to create the conditions for humanitarian aid to be conducted so that the work undertaken is respected.

Margaret Hassan was head of the CARE International office in Iraq. She was married to an Iraqi and had both Iraqi and British citizenship. She was active in Iraq for 30 years. Since 2000, Sweden has been contributing via CARE International to water purification projects in central Iraq.

CONTACT

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Key word: 33782 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin to take part in summit on the Great Lakes Region

On 19-20 November, Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will take part in a summit in Dar es Salaam within the framework of the International Conference for Peace, Security, Democracy and Development for the Great Lakes Region in central Africa.

"The situation in the Great Lakes region over the past ten years has been marked by war and severe hardship for the civilian population. I hope that the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region will be an important mechanism for managing regional antagonisms. I hope that our political and financial support will contribute to a peaceful development in the region," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan will be taking part in the meeting. In addition, many of the region's heads of state and government are expected to participate.

The aim is to adopt a pact on stability, security and development. The summit in Dar es Salaam will be followed up by a second summit in 2005.

Sweden has contributed financially to the preparations of the Dar es Salaam summit and is prepared to support the follow-up of the International Conference.

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Key word: 33733 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-16

Ministry of Defence
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish Embassy in Côte d'Ivoire evacuated

The remaining staff at the Swedish Embassy in Côte d'Ivoire left the country on Monday evening because of the danger of new disturbances. They travelled out on the Swedish Hercules aircraft that was sent to help with the evacuation of Swedish and foreign citizens following a Government decision. The Swedes were flown to Accra in Ghana. The Swedish Embassy in Abidjan will be closed until further notice.

The more than fifteen Swedes still in Côte d'Ivoire have previously been offered the possibility of evacuation. Most of them have expressed a wish to leave the country later in the week.

The use of the Hercules aircraft is being financed by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The aircraft, which comes from the F7 wing in Sätenäs, will make a number of flights in the region over the next few days and is expected to return to Sweden at the weekend. The aircraft is part of an operation being led by France.

In the past week some 6.000 foreign citizens have been evacuated as a result of the disturbances in the country and the sharp deterioration of the security situation. At the end of last week and during the weekend around ten Swedish citizens were evacuated using aircraft made available by other EU countries.

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Key word: 33648 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Barbro Holmberg to visit Belgrade and Pristina

On 15-16 November Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg will travel to Belgrade and Pristina.

On Monday 15 November Barbro Holmberg will meet Serbia and Montenegro's Minister for Human and Minority Rights Rasim Ljajic and Serbia's Interior Minister Dragan Jovic. One purpose of these meetings is to discuss current and future bilateral migration cooperation. In Belgrade the Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy will also meet Serbia's Commissioner for Refugees Dargisa Dabetic.

On Tuesday 16 November the visit will continue in Pristina, where Barbro Holmberg will meet representatives of UNHCR. One purpose of this meeting is to discuss the situation of minorities in Kosovo. The programme in Pristina also includes a visit to the Swedish International Force at Camp Victoria. In the afternoon ministers from several countries and the head of UNMIK (United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo) will hold round table talks. The issues the talks will focus on include the return of people who come from Kosovo.

Barbro Holmberg will be available to meet the media both in Belgrade and in Pristina.

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Key word: 33515 Foreign policy and international cooperation Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jonas Weiss Memorial Fund's honorary distinction to Samantha Power

The 2004 honorary distinction from the Jonas Weiss Memorial Fund will be awarded to American journalist and university lecturer Samantha Power. The Board of the Memorial Fund, which is composed of representatives of Weiss's family and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, gives Power the award for "her passionate devotion to victims in the holocausts of our time and for her endeavour to uncover the motives of the perpetrators".

TIME AND PLACE

Date and time: Monday 15 November at 17.00

Venue: Arvfurstens palats, Gustav Adolfs torg 1

The ceremony will be led by State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren. The press are welcome to attend. For further information please contact the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Service or Chairman of the Memorial Fund Board Lars Weiss, tel: +46 (0)70 554 81 32.

Power will receive the award at a ceremony at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm on 15 November. On the same occasion, the Memorial Fund's annual grant of SEK 30.000 will be presented to Dag Juhlin-Dannfelt, who is currently at the Swedish Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Samantha Power received the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for her book "A Problem from Hell", an examination of the history of genocide and a scathing description of the world's - and especially the USA's - inability or unwillingness to intervene in time. Power is currently a lecturer at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, but has previously worked as a reporter for the Economist and the Boston Globe in the Balkans and in Africa.

After the award ceremony, at 18.30, Samantha Power will hold a lecture at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs on the post-election mood in the US, under the heading: Can American

Foreign Policy be fixed?

The Jonas Weiss Memorial Fund was established in 2002 when the 33-year old Counsellor Jonas Weiss died in a car accident while travelling on official business between Baghdad and Amman. Weiss, who had previously served at the embassies in Belgrade and Moscow, was stationed in Amman at the time, but his main duties involved working in Iraq. His time at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs was characterised by commitment to fieldwork in diplomacy, and the grant and honorary distinction are awarded to individuals who act in his spirit.

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Key word: 33394 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-09
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin visits Brazil

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is visiting Brazil on 8-10 November. Carin Jämtin is taking part in a conference arranged by UNESCO on the UN Millennium Development Goal of achieving universal primary education. She is also taking part in a meeting on the financing of education programmes in developing countries, the so called Fast Track Initiative.

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Key word: 33240 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to visit Spain

On 11 November Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will visit Madrid for talks with her Spanish colleague Miguel Ángel Moratinos.

Current EU affairs are on the agenda. The Middle East and Iraq are two other issues that are expected to come up in the course of the ministers discussions. Mr Moratinos was the EUs special envoy in the Middle East from 1997 until 2003.

In conjunction with her visit to Madrid, Ms Freivalds will conduct a street naming ceremony on Gran Canaria in memory of Anna Lindh. The street is situated in the popular tourist area of Puerto Rico in Mogán Municipality in south-west Gran Canaria. In view of the strong links the tourist sector has created between Gran Canaria and Sweden, the municipal administration in Mogán and the Swedish Travel and Tourism Council have decided to honour the memory of Anna Lindh by naming a street after her and erecting a memorial in a green area adjacent to the street.

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Key word: 33200 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-11-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Georgias EU Integration Minister visits Sweden

The State Minister of Georgia for EU Integration Issues, Ms Tamar Beruchashvili, is visiting Sweden from 6 to 10 November. Ms Beruchashvili is

also responsible for coordination of international assistance to Georgia.

TIME AND PLACE

Date and time: Tuesday 9 November at 4 p.m.

Venue: Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Lilla Nygatan 23, Stockholm

Anyone wishing to attend should please notify the Institute by telephone: 08-696 05 00, fax: 08-20 10 49 or email: info@ui.se

During her visit Ms Beruchashvili will be discussing trade, development assistance and other issues as well as learning more about how the Swedish Government Offices work on EU issues.

On Tuesday 9 November the Minister will be giving a lecture on the subject of Georgia and the Future. The lecture is open to the public.

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Key word: 33203 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Albanian Minister of Foreign Affairs to visit Sweden

On Monday 1 November, Albanias Minister of Foreign Affairs Kastriot Islami is scheduled to visit Sweden.

TIME AND PLACE

Press briefing and photo opportunity at 12.30. Assembly at 12.20 at the entrance to Arvfurstens palats, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1.

Please bring your press credentials with you.

During his visit, Islami will have talks and a working lunch with Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds. The agenda includes Albanias closer ties with the EU, the political situation in the region and bilateral relations.

Islami will also meet the third Deputy Speaker of the Riksdag, Ms Helena Höij and State Secretary

Sven-Eric Söder at the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications.

Islami will also be giving a lecture entitled European Orientation of Albania and the Western Balkans, arranged by the Olof Palme International Center and ABF huset.

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Key word: 32625 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministry for Foreign Affairs inquiry proposes an increase in research and analysis

In a time of new opportunities, challenges and threats, Sweden needs to strengthen its research and analysis capacity in the field of foreign policy. The report "Thinking about the world" (Ds 2004:46), submitted to Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds on Wednesday, presents proposals for how to achieve this. The report points to the need for new institutes and think-tank institutions and greater exchange between academia and the Government Offices.

The report, written by Ambassador Bengt Säve-Söderbergh and Senior Adviser Monica Andersson, presents a number of proposals for ways in which research and analysis capacity can be strengthened.

- Initiatives should be taken to set up policy-forming institutes and think-tank institutions in foreign and security policy. In the EU too, Sweden should advance the idea of establishing research institutes that develop common foreign policy.
- Contacts between the academic world and the Government Offices should be improved through exchange programmes and an annual Researchers Forum.
- Research and analysis capacity on the new Swedish policy for global development should be strengthened.
- Cooperation at the Government Offices should increase to improve its ability to formulate needs for research and analysis on today's security policy.

In its work, the inquiry has had the following points of departure:

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

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Key word: 32622 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to African Union initiative in Darfur

Sweden makes a further contribution of SEK 5.7 million to African Union (AU) efforts for peace and security in the Darfur region of western Sudan.

Through this support, Sweden will contribute to the establishment of an integrated civil-military function, whose role will be to support and plan for the various efforts in the region. Support will also be given to the AU-led political negotiations in Abuja, Nigeria, where, on behalf of the EU, Swedish Ambassador Sten Rylander is assisting the African Union and participating in the mediation team.

"In view of the continuing critical situation in Darfur, Sweden welcomes the African Union's decision to expand the mission. The Swedish contribution is an important part of the international community's support to continued peace efforts and negotiations", comments Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

Since May 2004, the African Union has been monitoring the ceasefire between the Sudanese government and the two rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) in Darfur. On 20 October the Peace and Security Council of the African Union took a decision to expand the current observer mission, AMIS. The mission will consist of 3320 persons, including 450 observers and 815 civilian police officers.

Sweden already contributes with one observer to the AU mission in Darfur and two police officers and three military observers to the Joint Military Commission/Joint Monitoring Mission (JMC/JMM), which monitors the local ceasefire in the Nuba mountains of southern Sudan.

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Key word: 32611 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government proposes abolishing housing allowances for asylum seekers making their own housing arrangements

The Government is to present today a bill to the Riksdag on housing allowances for asylum seekers. The bill proposes abolishing housing allowances for asylum seekers who choose to make their own housing arrangements rather than live in refugee residential centres provided by the Swedish Migration Board. Under the proposal, the change will enter into force on 1 March 2005.

"We have ten years experience of asylum seekers making their own housing arrangements. We have seen that this leads to overcrowding and social problems for many asylum seekers," says Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg.

"It is not reasonable to actively encourage asylum seekers to choose their own housing solutions when we can see that this has serious consequences," says Ms Holmberg.

The monthly housing allowance today is SEK 350 for individuals and SEK 850 for families. Approximately half of all asylum seekers in Sweden are at present living in housing they themselves have chosen. Most of them are in major-city suburbs.

(Please note that the Government Bill is available in Swedish only.)

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Key word: 32569 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to host conference on Somalia's reconstruction

On Friday 29 October, a conference will be held in Stockholm on the Somali peace process and how the international community can coordinate its reconstruction support initiatives to Somalia. Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation, will take part in the conference.

TIME AND PLACE

Media is invited to a press briefing at 1.30 pm at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1.

Please bring your press credentials.

For thirteen years, Somalia has been the only country in the world to be entirely without a central government. However, after decades of chaos and conflict, an election was held during the autumn in which a transitional parliament and a president were appointed. President Abdullahi Yusuf is expected to form a transitional government in the near future.

- We welcome this development that, despite all the difficulties that remain, shows that the will exists to move the peace process forward. It is very important that the rest of the world now shows its support for the reconstruction of Somalia. However, international commitment is conditional upon the transitional government gaining widespread support from the Somali society, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The purpose of the meeting is to clarify the roles of the various donors and to reach consensus as to which principles should be used to guide future support to a Somali transitional government.

Among those taking part in the conference - besides Sweden, the UK and Italy, who has led the

work in the EU - are the European Commission, the UN, the Arab League, the African Union, the Eastern Africa regional organisation Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the World Bank, the United States, France, Germany, China, Japan and Egypt.

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Key word: 32493 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Consultations of the Member States of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC) in Korea

Representatives of Poland, Sweden and Switzerland, the three Member States of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC) in Korea, met in Warsaw on 25-26 October 2004 for their annual consultations.

The agenda included a discussion on the involvement of the NNSC countries in the peace process on the Korean Peninsula in view of recent developments in the region and of the domestic situation in the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK). The parties also reviewed the results of the Six-Party Talks in Beijing. The NNSC Member States reaffirmed their governments commitment to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and encouraged the continuation of the inter-Korean dialogue.

The NNSC was established 50 years ago through the Armistice Agreement of 27 July 1953. Stressing that the 1953 Armistice Agreement remains the only legal instrument for the avoidance of hostilities on the Korean Peninsula as long as it is not superseded by a comprehensive peace treaty, the Member States of the NNSC underlined the necessity that its implementing mechanisms continue to function and to provide channels of communication for the settlement of divergences through negotiations.

While reiterating their commitment to continuing their active participation in the NNSC at the service of the Armistice, Poland, Sweden and Switzerland affirmed their readiness to contribute to the efforts towards peace on the Korean Peninsula, getting the most out of the rich experience gathered in more than 50 years of uninterrupted presence in the NNSC, either by acting together or in association with other partners, or by operating individually depending on circumstances, in any framework that will be determined in the future.

The situation on the Korean Peninsula remains a matter of deep concern to the international

community, as numerous problems causing regional tensions continue to obstruct efforts aimed at the conclusion of a definitive peace arrangement. The representatives of the Member States of the NNSC expressed their strong support for all genuine efforts aimed at achieving a negotiated and sustainable solution that addresses the concerns of all parties involved. In this spirit, they welcomed the third round of the Six-Party Talks, which took place in Beijing on June 23-26 this year, as a significant contribution to easing tensions on the Peninsula. Poland, Sweden and Switzerland share the opinion that the continuation of the Six-Party process is necessary for improving the situation on the Peninsula.

The NNSC Member States noted that the situation on the Korean Peninsula continues to be characterised by the issue of denuclearization on the one hand, and the severe humanitarian situation in the DPRK, and the resulting need for aid, on the other. With reference to denuclearization, the DPRK is strongly encouraged by the participant States to revert to a total freeze of activities at its nuclear facilities, to return to full compliance with the NPT and to readmit IAEA inspectors. The Parties agreed on looking into the possibility of expanding assistance measures in favour of the DPRK, inter alia in the form of technical assistance. It was noted that progress in the process of denuclearization would enhance the possibilities of more substantial development co-operation with the DPRK.

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Key word: 32467 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Barbro Holmberg to visit Warsaw

On 21 October, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg will travel to Warsaw to meet with her Polish colleague Ryszard Kalisz, Minister of Interior and Administration.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the respective priorities of Poland and Sweden in future EU cooperation regarding the asylum and migration policy area. The meeting is part of Swedish preparations for the European Council meeting on 5 November this year in which a multi-annual work programme focusing on all judicial and domestic policy cooperation is to be decided.

Barbro Holmberg will also meet with Piotr Stachanczyk, who is head of the Polish equivalent of the Swedish Migration Board.

Barbro Holmberg will be available to meet the media during the day.

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Key word: 32098 Foreign policy and international cooperation Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Mexico's Secretary of Trade and Industrial Promotion to visit Sweden

Mexico's Secretary of Trade and Industrial Promotion Fernando Canales Clariond is scheduled to visit Sweden on Wednesday 20 October at the invitation of Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

TIME AND PLACE

Press briefing and photo opportunity at 13.10.

Assembly at the entrance at 13.00.

Please bring your press credentials.

Arvfurstens palats, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1.

Discussions between the ministers will include WTO-issues, trade policy and bilateral economic relations. Canales will also meet State Secretary Jonas Bjelfvenstam at the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications to discuss transport policy.

The visit will also include a meeting with representatives of the business sector at the Swedish Trade Council and participation in a seminar on financing issues and investments in Mexico.

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Key word: 31917 Industry, trade, regional development Foreign policy and international cooperation Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Justice

Czech Minister of the Interior to visit Sweden on 14-15 October

The Minister of the Interior of the Czech Republic, Frantisek Bublan, will visit Stockholm on 14-15 October to meet Minister for Justice, Thomas Bodström. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss issues relating to police cooperation and judicial cooperation in criminal matters.

Minister of the Interior, Frantisek Bublan, will also be meeting Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy, Barbro Holmberg, inter alia to discuss common interests between the two countries in the field of asylum and migration issues in the EU.

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Key word: 31852 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Legislation and justice Foreign policy and international cooperation Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to contribute USD 70 000 to IGC

The Government decided today to contribute USD 70 000 to the IGC during 2004. IGC stands for Inter-Governmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration Policies. Sweden supports its activities with a certain sum every year.

The IGC is an association of 15 countries in Europe (including Sweden), Canada, the USA, Australia and New Zealand. The aim of the IGC is to serve as an informal forum for discussions on and the exchange of information dealing with international asylum and migration issues.

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Key word: 31807 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The right of EU citizens to move freely in the EU

The Government has today appointed an inquiry on how an EU directive on the freedom of movement for EU citizens and members of their families should be integrated into Swedish legislation.

The new directive, which is primarily composed of nine previous directives and two regulations, aims at making it as simple as possible for EU citizens and members of their families to move between EU Member States. It will be implemented on 30 April 2006.

Justice of the Supreme Court Per Virdesten has been appointed to lead the inquiry.

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Key word: 31806 EU Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to a press briefing: Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds presents Government initiatives to commemorate Dag Hammarskjöld

Next year is the centenary of Dag Hammarskjöld's birth. On Monday 18 October, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will present the Government's upcoming initiatives for honouring the memory of Hammarskjöld. The presentation will take place at Dag Hammarskjöld's Backåkra in Skåne.

TIME AND PLACE

14.00 Guided tour of Backåkra and an opportunity to talk to the participants

15.00 Minister for Foreign Affairs Freivalds' presentation / press briefing

Dag Hammarskjöld's Backåkra (approx. 25 km east of Ystad)

The jubilee celebration will include a number of major projects, both in Sweden and abroad. The aim is to draw attention to Hammarskjöld's achievements as the United Nations' (UN) Secretary-General and to spread knowledge about the UN.

In connection with the presentation, a number of organisers will provide information about their own country-wide activities. These will be focused both on popular educational activities such as seminars and study circles on Hammarskjöld as a visionary thinker and cultural personality.

A guided tour of Backåkra will be given in connection with the presentation.

Dag Hammarskjöld was born on 29 July 1905 and appointed as UN Secretary-General in 1953. He died in an air crash on 18 September 1961 in Ndola, Zambia, on his way from an official mission in Congo.

Hammarskjöld bought Backåkra in 1957 in order to have a place to return home to when he had completed his mission as UN Secretary-General. The farm was left in his will to the Swedish Touring Club and now contains an exhibition with personal items from Hammarskjöld's time at the UN.

Participants:

Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial Fund in Uppsala
Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation in Jönköping
Documentary film makers Stig Holmqvist and Göran Gunér
National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations (LSU)
Lund University
Skåne county administrative board
Concerts in Sweden/Musik i Syd
Sensus educational association
Stockholm Concert Hall
United Nations Association of Sweden
Swedish Institute
Swedish Touring Club
Ystad municipality

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Key word: 31791 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-13
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Stockholm

On Wednesday 13 October, four newly appointed Ambassadors present their letters of credence to HM The King. The four Ambassadors come from Denmark, Guatemala, Chile and Iran.

Denmark's newly appointed Ambassador Ole Lønsmann Poulsen was born in 1945. He took a Master of Law degree in 1971 and has worked for his country's foreign service since 1973. He has previously served in Vienna and London and as State Secretary at the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His most recent appointment was as Ambassador in Beijing.

Guatemala's new Ambassador Susana Barrios Beltranena was born in 1951. She has studied languages, education, communication and administration in a number of countries. Between 1986 and 1994 the Ambassador worked, inter alia, for the Red Cross, EFTA and the Spanish Olympic Committee. Most recently, she has served as an administrative official at the Embassy of Colombia in Oslo.

Chile's newly appointed Ambassador Alvaro García was born in 1954. He is an economics graduate with a PhD from the University of California (Berkeley) in the USA. Before 1990 he worked, inter alia, at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) with issues relating to economic and social development in Latin America. Since then he has held various positions including as Minister of Economy and Energy and as Minister of Coordination at the General Secretariat of the Presidency. Most recently he has been Managing Director of a consulting company.

Iran's new Ambassador Hassan Ghashghavi was born in 1957 and is a qualified lawyer. After entering service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1991, Ambassador Ghashghavi has had two periods of service as a member of parliament, working in the Foreign Policy and Security Committee. In recent years he has served as Ambassador in Kazakhstan and as a member of the parliamentary Foreign Policy and National Security Committee.

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Key word: 31678 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-12
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Mrs. Shirin Ebadi, Nobel Peace Prize winner in 2003, to visit Stockholm on 14 October

Iranian lawyer Mrs. Shirin Ebadi, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2003, will

visit Stockholm on Thursday 14 October for talks with Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

TIME AND PLACE

Photo opportunity.

Assembly at the entrance to Arvfurstens palats, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1 at 12.10.

Please bring your press credentials.

Mrs. Ebadi will also be meeting Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin, State Secretary Lisa Bergh at the Ministry of Justice and the organisers of the upcoming conference on honour-related violence on 7 December.

Mrs. Ebadi has visited Stockholm on several previous occasions, most recently in June 2002. On that occasion she took part in a panel debate led by the late Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh on the topic of "Women and democracy in the Middle East", which was arranged in connection with the Re:Orient Festival.

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Key word: 31668 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds to visit the Balkans, 11-13 October

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is to visit Skopje, Pristina and Belgrade on 11-13 October.

The visit will begin in Skopje, Macedonia on 11-12 October when Ms Freivalds will be received by Minister for Foreign Affairs Ilinka Mitreva, Prime Minister Hari Kostov, Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs Teuta Arifi and Macedonias President Branko Crvenkovski. Ms Freivalds will also hold talks with the recently appointed EU Special Representative, the Swede Michael Sahlin.

On 12 October in Pristina, Laila Freivalds will meet Larry Rossin, Deputy Special Representative of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Prime Minister of the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG), Bajram Rexhepi, and Oliver Ivanovic, Kosovo Serbian Member of Parliament in the interim government.

On 13 October in Belgrade, Laila Freivalds will meet the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia and Montenegro, Vuk Draskovic, Serbian President Boris Tadic and Serbias Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica. She will also inaugurate Swedens new embassy building in Belgrade.

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Key word: 31477 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Celebration of 40 years of diplomatic relations between Sweden and the Lao People's Democratic Republic

State Secretary Annika Söder will visit the Lao PDR to celebrate the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Sweden and Laos. Her visit will take place on 11-13 October at the invitation of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Phongsavath Boupfa.

Ms Söder will conduct talks with Laos' Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister / Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Subjects for discussion will include our 30 years of bilateral development cooperation, human rights and democracy, trade and investment, and international and regional cooperation. Ms Söder will also visit Swedish development cooperation projects.

In connection with the visit, a trade seminar will be held on design, Open Trade Gate Sweden (a Swedish initiative to help exporters in developing countries with exports to Sweden and the rest of Europe), and trends in the telecom and energy sectors. A Swedish business delegation will take part in the seminar.

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Key word: 31337 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish initiative for reintegration of former soldiers

Within the framework of the Government's policy for global development, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has initiated an international process aiming to improve current DDR-programmes (Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration) for former soldiers.

DDR-programmes are part of a society's endeavours to move from conflict to peaceful development. Military and civilian actors alike must cooperate to create conditions for security and an alternative to the use of violence.

State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren and State Secretary Annika Söder are inviting relevant donor countries, UN bodies, international organisations and individual experts, as well as countries with experience of implemented programmes, to an international meeting in Stockholm in November. In the course of the following year, the participants in the meeting are expected to make in-depth studies of the practical challenges that the DDR programmes encounter.

The Swedish National Defence College and the Government Offices will jointly coordinate and compile the conclusions of the different working groups.

The objective is to present concrete recommendations on ways of improving the DDR-programmes by autumn 2005.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish Style in Tokyo 2004 shows modern Swedish design, art and architecture

Today Swedish Style in Tokyo will open for the fifth consecutive year. The theme of this year's exhibition, which will be shown until 16 October 2004, is: "Express Sweden, the Art of Communication."

This year's exhibition includes architecture and public art from Stockholm's "underworld" - the underground. The task of transforming the entrance of the Swedish Embassy and the exhibition hall to resemble an underground station has just been completed. The project's curator at the Embassy is architect Caroline Heiroth, who has previously been responsible for the presentation of the Swedish EU Presidency in 2001 and for the Swedish pavilion in Milan earlier this year.

A number of works at the cutting-edge of Swedish art and design will be displayed at the Embassy's "underground station". The Embassy is intended as a starting point for some 50 other Swedish exhibitions and events, which will be shown around town in Tokyo for a period of ten days. By offering visitors an exciting mix of experiences in areas such as design, graphics, architecture and food, Swedish Style aims to reflect a multi-faceted picture of contemporary Sweden.

Swedish participants include design strategist, Stefan Ytterborn, the architect trio Claesson Koivisto Rune and artists Timo Solin and Erik Sandelin. There will be photography exhibitions by Walter Hirsch and Jan Dahlqvist and musical performances by Nordic Lounge, MMM and Sweet Jazz Trio.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports poverty reduction in Bolivia

The Government has decided to grant SEK 70 million to poverty reduction in Bolivia.

Despite political and social difficulties Bolivia, the poorest country in South America, is making efforts to pursue responsible economic policies and implement important reforms. Sweden's grant, in the form of budget support, aims to strengthen Bolivia's own poverty reduction strategy.

The budget support is one component of Sweden's overall development cooperation with Bolivia. The aims of the cooperation programme are democratisation, broader popular participation and growth that will benefit the poor. The overarching objective is to combat poverty.

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Key word: 31150 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds to visit Turkey 5-7 October 2004

Laila Freivalds, Minister for Foreign Affairs, will hold talks with her Turkish colleague Abdullah Gül in Ankara. The issue of Turkey's EU candidacy and the reform process will be high on the agenda.

The trip coincides with the assessment presented by the EU Commission as to whether Turkey has now come so far in its reforms and respect for human rights that the country should be invited to start negotiations on EU membership.

"We see great value in Turkish membership and hope that the EU Commission submits a positive report", states Laila Freivalds.

"The best way to help strengthen democracy and human rights in Turkey is to bring the country closer to the EU. For this reason we will also increase our bilateral contacts with Turkish society".

In Istanbul, the Minister for Foreign Affairs will meet with representatives of Swedish companies, civil society and others. In Diyarbakir, in south-eastern Turkey, meetings will be held with

representatives of the Kurds and of the Christian minority in Turkey, as well as NGOs focusing on womens rights.

In connection with her visit, the Foreign Minister will also announce the establishment of a scholarship in memory of Anna Lindh. The scholarship will make it possible for Turkish students to come to Sweden to study human rights.

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Key word: 30986 EU Democracy and human rights Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-10-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to host meeting on women's rights

The Government and the United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA, are organising an international experts meeting on gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights to be held in Stockholm on 5-6 October.

TIME AND PLACE

Panel-discussion on 5 October, 14.30-16.00, at Berns salonger.
Bring press-ID.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss how investments in gender equality and greater rights for women, especially rights in the area of health and sexuality, can contribute to the achievement of the internationally agreed millennium development goal of halving poverty in the world by 2015.

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin and UNFPA representative Mari Simonen will be chairing the meeting along with Director General of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) Steven Sinding. The meeting will be attended by representatives from a large number of countries and organisations, including Denmark, Germany, Ghana, Great Britain, the African Development Bank, the World Bank and the World Health Organization (WHO).

The meeting is part of the Governments comprehensive programme for gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights within development cooperation. The meeting will be followed up by an international high-level meeting in early 2005, where the objective will be to adopt a far-reaching declaration.

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Key word: 30936 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-30
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to international operation in southern Sudan

Sweden will make an additional contribution of over SEK 1 million to the international monitoring operation in the Nuba Mountains, Joint Military Commission/Joint Monitoring Mission. Sweden is already taking part by providing five of a total of 43 international observers.

The operation plays an important role in improving the security situation for the inhabitants of the Nuba Mountains. Through this decision, Sweden now provides additional sought-after assistance to help keep the operation running, comments Laila Freivalds, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The Joint Military Commission/Joint Monitoring Mission (JMC/JMM) monitors and helps with the implementation of the local ceasefire between the rebel movement SPLA and the Sudanese government in the Nuba Mountains in southern Sudan. The operation also provides support to the humanitarian and other international actors in place in the region, and also to the African Unions (AU) monitoring mission in Darfur. The AU has also modelled the planning and implementation of their operation in Darfur in part on the JMC/JMM.

The operation, which has been functioning since April 2002, currently consists of 43 international

observers and slightly fewer participants from both parties. The personnel provided by Sweden consist of three military observers and two civilian police officers.

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Key word: 30888 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Mozambique

The Government decided today to send election observers to Mozambique ahead of the presidential and parliamentary elections that will take place on 1-2 December.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) has been instructed to recruit and train a maximum of two long-term and four short-term observers to monitor the elections. The Swedish observers will be members of the joint EU election observation team.

- It is of utmost importance that the elections in Mozambique are conducted democratically. I mentioned this in a meeting earlier this week with presidential candidate Guebuza of the government party Frelimo. By sending election observers, Sweden can contribute to the development of a functioning electoral system in the country and strengthen democracy in Mozambique, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

On 1-2 December, Mozambique will be holding its third democratic elections since independence in 1975. One important purpose of international observers is to reduce the risk of irregularities and manipulation in connection with the elections.

Sweden has long-standing bilateral development cooperation with Mozambique, including dialogue on issues of human rights, democracy and good governance.

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Key word: 30810 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin to attend World Bank and IMF Annual Meeting in Washington

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is to attend the Annual Meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Washington D.C., 1-3 October. One of the main issues at the meeting will be how poor and rich countries in cooperation with multilateral organisations can achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals.

The meeting will also include discussions on new sources of financing and the link between development assistance initiatives and the strategies of recipient countries. The poorest countries' influence on the institutions will also be discussed along with ways of making their debts more manageable.

Among Sweden's main messages at the meeting will be the effective use of development assistance and the need for coordinating initiatives between countries and institutions. Another Swedish priority is the debt issue, which should take into account the specific conditions of each individual country.

- To make cooperation more efficient, the World Bank and the IMF:s initiatives should be taken in consultation with the country in question. It is important that decision-makers and citizens in the countries concerned have the opportunity to participate and exert influence. The sustainability of reforms that are implemented without the support of the population can and should be questioned, says Carin Jämtin.

In connection with the Annual Meeting, Ms. Jämtin will also be meeting with representatives of the World Bank, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and from Brazil, Jordan, Canada, the Netherlands, Great Britain and the Nordic countries.

The World Bank, the largest single source of development assistance, has undergone major changes in recent years and today poverty reduction is the overarching objective of its activities. Sweden considers it vital that the World Bank's reform efforts continue and that their impact on its activities increases.

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Key word: 30785 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Better conditions for Swedish-Chinese trade

Sweden and China have agreed to increase mutual protection of investments. This is the essence of an agreement signed in Stockholm today by Swedens Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky and Chinas Vice Minister of Commerce Zhang Zhigang.

This agreement establishes even better conditions for trade between our countries. The possibility of having a dispute examined through international dispute resolution is of great importance to investors, noted Leif Pagrotsky in connection with the signing of the agreement.

China is the worlds largest recipient of foreign direct investment and Sweden has substantial investments in China. However, the investment protection agreement that the countries have had since 1982 has lacked a provision on the right of the investor to international dispute resolution in the event of disputes with the host country. The supplementary agreement signed today introduces this possibility.

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Key word: 30636 Industry, trade, regional development Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to conference on international terrorism and international law

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Folke Bernadotte Academy extend invitations to attend a conference on the subject: The threat from terrorism and respect for international law - a report on international terrorism

TIME AND PLACE

Friday, 1 October 2004,
9 am - 5.30 pm,
Sergel Plaza Hotel, Stockholm

Some of the issues to be discussed are:

- the use of violence as a response to terrorism
- trends in the fight against terrorism since 11 September 2001
- respect for human rights in the fight against terrorism
- terrorism and international humanitarian law.

In recent years, the threat from international terrorism has presented the international community with a range of challenges regarding international law. As a response to these challenges, the International Bar Association has appointed a working group charged with the task of examining these issues. The working group consists of international experts and lawyers who, in 2003, compiled the report that now serves as the basis for the conference on 1 October 2004.

Government officials and representatives of international organisations and bilateral bodies will participate in the conference.

The conference is being arranged by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Folke Bernadotte Academy in cooperation with the International Bar Association in London and the International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC) in Stockholm.

Everyone is welcome to attend!

Notification of attendance should be submitted to Anna Strömqvist (formerly Brändström), Folke Bernadotte Academy,
anna.brandstrom@folkebernadotteacademy.se,
+46-612-823 06, no later than 28 September 2004.

For additional information about the conference, please contact one of the following persons:

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Key word: 30444 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Barbro Holmberg to take part in selection of quota refugees in Thailand

On 24-26 September, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg will observe the selection of about 150 quota refugees in Thailand.

The selection process will be carried out in cooperation with UNHCR. Sweden intends to substantially increase the number of quota refugees it accepts from around 1000 to approximately 1700.

PROGRAMME

Friday 24 September

10.00 Bangkok, Meeting with UNHCR Regional Representative

14.00 Bangkok, Meeting with NSC Secretary-General

15.00 Bangkok, Press conference at Landmark Hotel

Saturday 25 September

Afternoon, Mae Sot, Observe the delegations work on selection process

18.00, Mae Sot, Dinner hosted by the Embassy, with participants from the delegation, local representatives of UNHCR and NGOs

Sunday 26 September

08.30 Mae Sot, Visit to refugee camp

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Key word: 30443 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden-Norway 1905-2005; one hundred years since the dissolution of the union

The year 2005 is the centenary of the dissolution of the union between Sweden and Norway. In Norway this will be highlighted with various events throughout the year. The Swedish Government has today allocated SEK 2.6 million for the preparation of a number of cultural and informative activities within the framework of the Norwegian programme. Several of these will be undertaken by the Swedish Institute in cooperation with the Swedish cultural centre Voksenåsen in Oslo.

The overall programme for the centenary anniversary includes the inauguration of the new Svinesund Bridge on 10 June 2005, which will take place in the presence of both royal couples. The ceremony is also the start of an official state visit by the Swedish royal couple in Norway. A return visit on the part of Norway will take place in September 2005.

Two large-scale, joint historical exhibitions will also be held; "Normän och svenskar, 1814-1905" (Norwegians and Swedes) and "Brödrafolkens väl" (The Welfare of the Brother Peoples). The exhibitions will first be shown in Norway and subsequently at the Nordiska Museet and the Royal Armoury in late autumn 2005. During the year each country will also issue special postage stamps on the theme of "Neighbours in Development".

Two conferences will be organised in Sweden on the theme of peaceful conflict resolution and the growth of democracy in Sweden and Norway in the 20th century.

In 2005, the Swedish and Norwegian business promotion agencies, the Swedish Business Development Agency (NUTEK) and Innovasjon Norge, also plan to establish a joint five-year programme for Swedish-Norwegian business cooperation. The programme, comprising several projects, aims at increasing growth in both countries.

The Swedish Riksdag and Norwegian Storting will hold a joint seminar on "State and Secession" and open an exhibition on the dissolution of the union.

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Key word: 30412 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-23

New Ambassadors in Stockholm

Four newly appointed Ambassadors present their letters of credence to His Majesty The King on Thursday 23 September. The four Ambassadors come from China, Brazil, Romania and Estonia.

China's recently appointed Ambassador, Lu Fengding, was born in 1946. He entered service at China's Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1973. As a diplomat, he has served at the embassies in Nigeria and Australia. His most recent post was as Deputy Director-General for Foreign Affairs at the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee.

The newly appointed Ambassador of Brazil, Oto Agripino Maia, was born in 1943. Following his diplomatic training, he has been active in his country's foreign service since 1967. The Ambassador's posts include service in London, at Brazil's EC-delegation in Brussels and in Pretoria. His most recent post was as Ambassador at the Holy See.

The new Ambassador for Romania, Victoria Popescu, was born in 1951 and is a trained interpreter/language teacher in English and French. She was appointed at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1990. Her posts in recent years have included working at Romania's UN-representation in New York and as Head of the Department for Global Affairs and UN Issues at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Estonia's new Ambassador, Jüri Kahn, was born in 1953. He is an economist with a Ph.D. from Moscow and further studies in Washington. In the last few years, his posts have included that of Ambassador in Denmark, concurrently accredited in Norway and Iceland. His most recent post was as Head of the International Office of the Estonian Parliament in Tallinn.

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Key word: 30396 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Chinas Vice Premier Wu Yi to visit Sweden

Chinas Vice Premier Madame Wu Yi will visit Sweden on 25-28 September at the invitation of Deputy Prime Minister Lars Engqvist.

The main purposes of Vice Premier Wu Yi's visit are to deepen bilateral relations between Sweden and China and to further reinforce the dialogue on trade policy and the expanding commercial relations between the two countries.

Wu Yi will visit Stockholm on 25-27 September and Göteborg on 28 September. In Stockholm she will have talks with Deputy Prime Minister Lars Engqvist, Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky and Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds. Vice Premier Wu Yi will have an audience with the King and will pay a courtesy call on Prime Minister Göran Persson. She will meet representatives of Swedish companies at a business dinner. In Göteborg Wu Yi will meet Göran Johansson, Chair of the Municipality's Executive Board, County Governor Göte Bernhardsson and business representatives. Wu Yi will be accompanied to Göteborg by Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

Vice Premier Wu Yi has special responsibility in the Chinese Government for economic and commercial matters and for health care.

A photo opportunity will be held in connection with the talks between Wu Yi and Lars Engqvist. At the photo opportunity Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky and China's Vice Minister of Commerce Zhang Zhigang will sign a protocol to the agreement between Sweden and China on mutual protection of investments.

The photo opportunity will be on Monday 27 September at 11.45 at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs torg 1. Assembly at 11.40 at the entrance to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Please bring your press credentials.

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Key word: 30339 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

South American honorary consuls to visit Sweden

Sweden's honorary consuls to Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Surinam and Uruguay, ten people in all, have been invited by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to take part in a Consuls Conference to be held 26 September-1 October. The consuls will be visiting Stockholm, Göteborg and Södertälje.

The programme includes an audience with their Majesties the King and Queen of Sweden, meetings with the Speaker of the Riksdag and a dinner at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The consuls will also be meeting County Governor Göte Bernhardsson and State Secretary Sven-Eric Söder. The programme also includes a number of company visits.

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Key word: 30283 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Professorship in memory of Anna Lindh at Harvard University

Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government in Cambridge, USA, has named a new endowed Professorship in Global Leadership & Public Policy in the memory of Anna Lindh, the late foreign minister of Sweden. The professorship will promote advanced scholarship, teaching, research and outreach in these areas.

The initiative has received strong support from Prime Minister Göran Persson, the family of Anna Lindh, the Anna Lindh Memorial Fund and the Swedish private sector. To establish the professorship, the Swedish telecommunications company Ericsson has donated a sum of USD 1 million.

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Key word: 30209 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-20

The Government proposes abolishing housing allowances for asylum seekers

The Government today submitted a proposal to the Council on Legislation regarding the abolition of the special housing allowances for asylum seekers who choose to make their own living arrangements.

This housing allowance was introduced as a special financial incentive to encourage more asylum seekers to make their own housing arrangements outside the Swedish Migration Board's centres. An incentive of this sort is no longer necessary.

In addition, there have proved to be a number of negative consequences for those who have made their own housing arrangements and for the municipalities receiving asylum seekers.

"We have seen that when people make their own housing arrangements, it leads to overcrowding and that several families live in the same apartment. This in turn has led to problems for the families in question and for the host family. The result is that many families are constantly moving and the children are forced to change schools, sometimes repeatedly," says Barbro Holmberg, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy.

"It is difficult for municipalities to come to terms with the problems associated with people making their own housing arrangements. For example, it is unclear how many people to expect, which makes planning their reception difficult, and at the same time it is difficult to inform asylum seekers about offers of medical examinations and schooling for the children," Barbro Holmberg continues.

"Abolishing the special financial incentives for people to make their own housing arrangements will not solve all the problems, but it can reduce the negative effects arising from it. We must continue our efforts to see what we can do to deal with the problems associated with people making their own housing arrangements," says Barbro Holmberg.

Under the proposal, the change will enter into force on 1 March 2005.

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Key word: 30249 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Foreign Minister Laila Freivalds to visit UN headquarters

On 21-24 September, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will visit UN headquarters in New York for the opening of the general debate of the 59th Session of the General Assembly.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs will also have a number of bilateral talks and, along with other EU foreign ministers, will meet her Russian and US colleagues.

On the morning of Tuesday 21 September the Minister for Foreign Affairs will take part in a meeting of EU foreign ministers. In the afternoon there will be bilateral meetings and in the evening Prime Minister Göran Persson will deliver Swedens address in the general debate of the General Assembly.

On the morning of Wednesday 22 September there will be a meeting of Nordic foreign ministers. Later that morning, EU foreign ministers will meet US Secretary of State Colin Powell. After that Ms Freivalds will participate in a working lunch for women foreign ministers. During the rest of the day, there will be further bilateral meetings.

On the morning of Thursday 23 September EU foreign ministers will meet Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. Afterwards the Minister for Foreign Affairs will attend a ceremony at which she will sign a ministerial declaration calling for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs will also take part in a meeting on reform efforts in the UN, together with several of her colleagues.

The bilateral talks will include meetings with the foreign ministers of Jordan, Iran, Ukraine and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Minister for Foreign Affairs has also requested a meeting with her colleague from Eritrea to discuss the case of journalist Dawit Isaac.

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Key word: 30195 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Shorter waiting times and greater legal security

A very large number of asylum-seekers are waiting for a decision. To reduce

waiting times, an additional SEK 20 million will therefore be provided to the Swedish Migration Board and an extra SEK 25 million to the Aliens Appeals Board. As more cases will be examined another SEK 60 million will be provided for public counsels and SEK 90 million for outward travel. Altogether the asylum process will receive an extra SEK 195 million.

Measures to shorten processing times and increase the clarity of asylum procedures are important. As a result of the long periods people stay in the country, many asylum seekers live under a great deal of pressure for an extended time, says Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg.

The Aliens Appeals Board will be closed. A new system for appeals and procedures will take its place. An inquiry will be appointed to prepare and take measures towards the establishment of a new system for appeals and procedures. The necessary preparations at the Swedish Migration Board and the Aliens Appeals Board will be carried out in 2005. The aim is to implement the reform in 2006.

Reforming the asylum process is important. Many people whose asylum applications are rejected today feel that not all their reasons for seeking asylum have been taken into account and that they have not had a chance to present their case. The asylum process will therefore be changed to make it more open, Ms Holmberg emphasises.

The Aliens Appeals Board will receive an extra SEK 15 million for the current year. The number of asylum cases being decided is increasing, which requires both more public counsels and the execution of decisions. Appropriations in 2004 will therefore increase by SEK 75 million for public counsels and by SEK 40 million for outward travel.

The county councils and the state have signed a new agreement to cover the increasing costs that health and medical care for asylum seekers cause county councils. The agreement gives the county councils extra compensation of SEK 65 million in 2005 for health and medical care for asylum seekers. SEK 20 million will also be added to enable municipalities to conduct social assessments of unaccompanied minors.

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Key word: 30137 Foreign policy and international cooperation Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Strong boost for export promotion

In the Budget Bill for 2005 the Government proposes an increase in resources for trade and investment promotion in 2005 and 2006. Export promotion will be

augmented by SEK 75 million for 2005.

We want to consolidate and reinforce the position that Sweden, Swedish companies and Swedish expertise have established in markets and areas where Sweden is particularly able to compete, says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

An increased presence and greater activity in dynamic and rapidly growing markets are an important element of Swedish growth policy. This applies both to the Baltic Sea area and new EU Member States and to more distant countries with great trade potential such as China, India and Brazil.

The new resources are for a number of areas including augmented export information, export development programmes, international marketing of selected industries and Swedish leading edge expertise in cooperation between public and private actors, as well as special trade promotion and trade policy initiatives.

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Key word: 30135 Foreign policy and international cooperation Industry, trade, regional development Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Increased development assistance to fight poverty

Swedish development assistance will continue to grow. In 2005 development assistance will come to 0.882 per cent of GNI. The development assistance framework will grow by SEK 2.194 billion, which will bring it to a level of SEK 23.946 billion in 2005. Development assistance will be raised to one per cent of GNI in 2006.

"The needs are endless and the assistance we provide makes a real difference," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin. "Things are moving in the right direction but it doesn't happen automatically. Political decisions, both in the rich world and in developing countries, are needed to make a fairer world possible."

"Next year's increase in development assistance means that we will be able to make concrete efforts in four major areas: HIV/AIDS, women's rights, conflict prevention and new action for human rights in working life in developing countries."

"From 2006 on, a billion kronor of the increased assistance will be used for a broad environmental programme in areas where Sweden can make valuable contributions. Socially, environmentally and

economically sustainable global development will have positive effects both in developing countries and in Sweden."

The fight against communicable diseases

The Government will intensify its fight against HIV/AIDS. Support to UNAIDS will increase from SEK 100 million to SEK 150 million and support to the global fund against HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB and to other action against HIV/AIDS will also increase. A forceful new development assistance commitment will be made, focusing on research, treatment and prevention of diseases such as HIV/AIDS, measles, TB and malaria.

Gender equality and womens rights

Conservative forces are trying to undermine progress made in the gender equality area. Sweden will resist this tendency and will increase its support to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to enable it to continue its important work for womens reproductive and sexual health and rights. Support to UNFPA will increase from SEK 270 million to SEK 355 million. This will make Sweden the worlds second largest aid donor in this area.

Conflict prevention and common security

The link between development, peace and security is becoming increasingly obvious. Security from violence or threats of violence is a basic prerequisite for poverty reduction. Particular attention will be paid to underlying structures that give rise to armed conflicts. The resources allocated to civil missions, such as police and rescue personnel in connection with peacekeeping operations, will increase. Support for children affected by war and refugee situations will receive priority.

Human rights in working life

The right to work under reasonable conditions for reasonable pay is a basic premise of a successful fight against poverty. Yet a majority of the planets population are outside the formal labour market. For this reason, the Government is making a special commitment to formalisation of labour markets and human rights in working life.

To ensure that Swedish development cooperation is effective and efficient, a special agency will also be established to evaluate development assistance.

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Key word: 30119 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for International Development Cooperation to visit West Africa on 21-24 September

The Minister for International Development Cooperation, Carin Jämtin, will visit Mali and Burkina

Faso on 21-24 September. The visit is part of Sweden's expanded development cooperation with West Africa. This will be the first visit by a Swedish minister to both countries.

During her visit, the Minister will meet Mali's President Amadou Toumani Touré and Burkina Faso's President Blaise Compaoré. Meetings will also take place with a number of representatives of the government and of various sectors of society. In addition, Minister Jämtin will be concluding cooperation agreements with both Mali and Burkina Faso.

- We can see how poverty and the weakness of government administrations undermine peace and stability in West Africa. We want to support democratic aspirations and the efforts being made in the region to prevent the outbreak of conflicts, says Minister Jämtin.

The objective of development cooperation with Burkina Faso and Mali is to combat poverty in these countries. Special emphasis is given to initiatives targeting women and children, for example, by supporting education. The annual amounts for development assistance to Burkina Faso and Mali are estimated at SEK 130 million and SEK 150 million respectively.

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Key word: 30031 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Honorary consuls from Norway and Iceland to visit Sweden

Swedens honorary consuls from Norway and Iceland are coming to Sweden to take part in a one-week consul conference beginning on Monday 20 September.

The aim of the conference is to enhance Swedens image as a modern, open and forward-looking welfare society at the forefront of many industries, both new and well-established. Today, in various ways, Swedish missions abroad involve honorary consuls as the valuable resource they are in their initiatives to promote Sweden.

The week-long visit begins in Stockholm, where the twenty or so consuls will be welcomed by Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds. The programme also includes an audience at the Royal Palace, a visit to Ericsson, the Karolinska Institute, Uppsala University and the Norden Association. They will also meet representatives of the Swedish Trade Council, the Invest in Sweden Agency and the Swedish Institute. The week will end in Småland with a visit to County Governor Sven Lindgren, Orrefors and the Crystal Kingdom, IKEA, Kalmar Castle and the Kronan exhibition.

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Key word: 30027 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government communication on Sweden's policy for global development presented to the Riksdag

Today the Government presented the first communication on the results of Sweden's policy for global development. In the communication, all the ministries have given an account of how policies in their areas of responsibility affect global development. The ambition is that all policy areas are to contribute to equitable and sustainable global development.

- The key to success in the fight against poverty is that all policies, not just development assistance, contribute to equitable development, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin. We cannot give support with the one hand while building up obstacles with the other; all policies must aim in the same direction.

This first communication describes the situation of the consensus policy. The aim is to bring to light conflicts of interest between the various policy areas. Presenting annual reports on conflicts of interest enables these to be openly discussed in the Riksdag, as well as among NGOs, trade unions and in the business sector. This provides a basis for decisions on issues affecting global development.

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Key word: 29898 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky concerned about rights of foreign inventors in the US

In two letters addressed directly to US Attorney General John Ashcroft and EU Commissioner for Trade Pascal Lamy respectively, Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky is seeking full transparency on the issue of the rights of foreign inventors in the United States. The background to Leif Pagrotsky's concern is the problems being experienced by Swedish inventor Håkan Lans in the United States.

I would like to call the attention of the EU Commission and the United States Government to the asymmetry being experienced by European citizens in the US legal system, compared with the treatment Americans receive in European courts, says Mr Pagrotsky, commenting on the letters. Intellectual property rights are regulated in an agreement the United States has fought for in the World Trade Organisation, WTO. It is, in other words, an area in which we have agreed to grant certain rights to each others citizens. It is important, therefore, that the United States lives up to this in practice, says Mr Pagrotsky.

In 1999, Håkan Lans lost a patent dispute against several American computer companies because his lawyers had sued the companies in Håkan Lans name, despite the patent rights having been transferred to a company wholly-owned by Mr Lans. The actual issue of patent violation was thus never subject to legal examination. Mr Lans subsequently initiated a number of legal processes against his former lawyers but, despite the fact that more than two and a half years have elapsed, the American court still has not taken up the case. The period of limitation expired in August for one of the processes in which Mr Lans is suing his former lawyers for perjury.

Without taking a position on the actual issue, Mr Pagrotsky expresses concern in his letter to the US Attorney General that the case remains undealt with, and states that it is highly unsatisfactory that the period of limitation for a case can expire without the court having taken any action.

In his letter to the EU Commissioner for Trade Pascal Lamy, Mr Pagrotsky wonders if the US legal systems handling of patent disputes is compatible with the international commitments made by the United States. The agreement in question is the TRIPS Agreement (trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights) within the WTO, which includes rules on costs and delays in legal processes concerning intellectual property rights.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds to visit the Palestinian territories

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will be visiting the Palestinian territories on 15 September. Minister Freivalds will meet with President Yassir Arafat, Prime Minister Ahmed Qurei, Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath, Minister for Womens Affairs Zuhaira Kamal and representatives of civil society. She will also make a brief visit to the Israeli separation barrier.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-10

Ministry of Defence
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

NATO Secretary-General to visit Stockholm

On Friday 10 September, NATO's new Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer is scheduled to make his first visit to Stockholm. He is to meet Prime Minister Göran Persson, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and

Minister for Defence Leni Björklund.

Jaap de Hoop Scheffer took up his post as NATO Secretary-General at the beginning of 2004. He is also responsible for cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) and the Partnership for Peace (PfP).

The focus of his visit is the Partnership and its future as well as the development of peace-promoting operations to which Sweden contributes, in Afghanistan, Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The follow-up of the NATO and EAPC summits in Istanbul in June will also be discussed.

The Secretary-General will also meet members of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and deliver a speech at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, which will be open to the public.

- - -

The Partnership is a cooperative venture between NATO and non-NATO countries, aimed at promoting the pan-European security order. It also prepares and trains forces prior to peace-promoting operations. Sweden has cooperated with NATO in the PfP since 1994 and in the EAPC since 1997.

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Key word: 29455 Defence, emergency management and safety Foreign policy and international cooperation Leni Björklund

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election experts to Afghanistan

The Government decided today to send two election experts to Afghanistan ahead of the presidential election on 9 October. This decision follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to its member states to make a smaller team of election experts available.

Even if the mission is small-scale in view of the security situation in Afghanistan, its important that we are present in the run-up to the election and on the day of the election itself. By sending election experts, Sweden can contribute to the development of a functioning electoral system in

Afghanistan, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Like the OSCE, the EU is also sending a team of election experts. This team will include two additional Swedish experts.

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Key word: 29458 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin to visit Tallinn on Wednesday, 8 September

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is scheduled to visit Tallinn on Wednesday, 8 September for talks with Foreign Minister Kristiina Ojuland and Minister of Social Affairs Marko Pomerants.

EU development cooperation will be among the subjects to be discussed with Foreign Minister Ojuland. Carin Jämtin will also meet representatives of Estonian NGOs and agencies to discuss how Sweden and Estonia can cooperate in development projects in other countries.

"It is interesting to see how we can work together with Estonia to promote development in other countries, such as in southern Caucasus. The Estonians have extensive knowledge of Eastern Europe and Caucasus and valuable experience of rapid democratic development and of being a recipient country for development assistance from Sweden and other countries," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Since the restoration of independence in 1991, Estonia has had close ties with Sweden, both economically and politically. Extensive bilateral support has helped to build up contacts and networks in many areas of society.

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Key word: 29302 Foreign policy and international cooperation EU Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Director-General for Political Affairs

The Government today appointed Ambassador Olof Skoog as Director-General for Political Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Olof Skoog has most recently served as Ambassador in Bogotá. He has also been stationed in Havana, Vienna and at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York.

Olof Skoog will take up his new post in September 2004.

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Key word: 29174 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Ukraine

The Government has decided to send four long-term observers and six short-term observers to the presidential election in Ukraine on 31 October.

Sweden wishes to support democratic development in Ukraine and we consider it important, therefore, to contribute election observers to the forthcoming presidential election on 31 October, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers to Ukraine follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

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Key word: 29158 Democracy and human rights Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Stockholm

On Thursday 2 September, four recently appointed Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to H.M. The King. The four Ambassadors come from Nigeria, Bulgaria, El Salvador and Israel.

Nigerias newly appointed Ambassador, Olufunmilayo A. Adebó-Kiencke, was born in 1942. She took her Bachelor of Laws degree in London in 1966 and for many years served as a lawyer in Singapore. She returned to Nigeria in 1978. In recent years, Ambassador Adebó-Kiencke has been a member of the Presidents advisory committee.

The newly appointed Ambassador of Bulgaria, Goran Yonov, was born in 1947. He graduated in economics in 1973, specialising in foreign trade issues. After working at the Ministry of Foreign Trade in 1973-1979, Ambassador Yonov entered his countrys foreign service in 1987 and was posted inter alia in the Hague. He has also been active in the business sector.

El Salvadors newly appointed Ambassador, Martin Rivera Gómez, was born in 1951. He is an economist, educated in El Salvador and London. The Ambassador worked on international economic issues before taking up service at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1986. As a diplomat, he has held senior posts in Honduras and Brazil. His most recent post was as Head of Protocol.

The newly appointed Ambassador of Israel, Eviatar Manor, was born in 1949. He embarked on his diplomatic career in 1973 and has subsequently served both at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Jerusalem and at missions abroad, including in Stockholm in 1977-1982. Eviatar Manor has worked as press spokesman at the Israeli Ministry for Foreign Affairs and has been Consul-General in Philadelphia, USA. His most recent service involved work on the peace process in the Middle East.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-09-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government appoints Marie Hessle to coordinate initiative for apathy-stricken child asylum-seekers

In recent months the Government has received several reports warning about children in the process of asylum who cut themselves off from the outside world who stop speaking and moving and ultimately lie completely motionless and tube-fed. In response to these reports, the Government is launching a targeted effort to address the issue and today announced the appointment of Marie Hessle as coordinator.

Ms Hessles assignment is to gauge and analyse the scope of the problem and to both gather and spread information. As coordinator, she will also be required to present proposals on an ongoing basis for measures that can be taken in the asylum process.

It is tremendously important that we are able to identify the children and families at risk at an early stage, so they can receive appropriate help and support. Their cases must be given top priority to keep the time they have to wait for a decision as short as possible, says Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg.

Today we know little about these acute stress reactions and general resignation syndromes. Only a handful of studies have been made involving relatively small samples of asylum-seeking children. We need to know more to be able to give these children the help they need, says Ms Holmberg.

Marie Hessle is a psychologist and is head of Stockholm County Councils child psychiatry refugee unit. She has 15 years of experience of refugee issues, including refugee health at Carlslund Refugee Reception Centre. She has had a number of international assignments and in Bosnia and Kosovo was involved in building up social and psychiatric services.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-08-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds to visit Sudan

On 31 August Minister for Foreign Affairs, Laila Freivalds, is scheduled to visit Sudan where she will meet Sudans Foreign Minister, Mustafa Osman Ismail, to discuss the peace process in Darfur and other parts of the country. She will also travel to Darfur for more extensive information about the situation in the region.

Ms Freivalds will make her visit to Sudan on the way home from South Africa, where she is travelling today, 27 August, among other things for talks with her colleague Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma.

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Key word: 28672 Foreign policy and international cooperation Democracy and human rights Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-08-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New measures to combat human trafficking

Today, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Laila Freivalds, submitted a report to the meeting of Nordic-Baltic foreign ministers about progress in the Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings.

The task force was established at the initiative of former Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, and Sweden has taken on a secretarial function for the group. The purpose of the task force is to serve as an umbrella organisation for coordination and facilitation of efforts to combat human trafficking in the Nordic and Baltic countries.

Laila Freivalds presented the task forces common website, which is aimed to facilitate an exchange of information about initiatives to combat human trafficking for governments, organisations and the public. She also reported from a pilot project designed to aid the safe return of victims of human trafficking.

"Our countries must be at the forefront in the fight against human trafficking and make vigorous efforts to stop this form of slave trade. Together we will play a more active role in the EUs efforts to combat trafficking in human beings. The Nordic Baltic initiative sets a good example for other regions," says Laila Freivalds.

Today, thousands of women and children are victims of human trafficking from and through the Nordic and Baltic countries. It is estimated that between 400 and 600 women and children will fall prey to this modern form of slavery this year in Sweden alone.

The Swedish delegation to the task force is led by State Secretary Annika Söder.

The meeting of the Nordic-Baltic foreign ministers took place in Palanga, Lithuania.

The address of the task forces website is: www.against-trafficking.org

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Key word: 28655 Foreign policy and international cooperation Democracy and human rights Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-08-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Initiative to promote design for disabled people at the Paralympic Games in Athens

The Government has decided to allocate SEK 125 000 to a promotional project in connection with the Paralympic Games - Olympic Games for disabled athletes - in Athens on 17-28 September. The aim of the initiative is to highlight Swedish design, technology and expertise in the field of assistive devices.

"Swedish organisations and companies are in the forefront as regards technically innovative solutions, products and services which make it possible for disabled people to be integrated into working life as well as into sports and leisure activities," says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

"It is important that Swedish companies are given the opportunity to market their products and their expertise at a major international sporting event," says the Minister for Industry and Trade. The funds will be placed at the disposal of the Swedish Embassy in Athens which, together with the Swedish Trade Council, the Swedish Handicap Institute, the Swedish Society of Crafts and Design, the Swedish Institute and participating companies, will arrange exhibitions of products and assistive devices, seminars, business meetings for companies, as well as marketing and information activities.

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Key word: 28634 Industry, trade, regional development Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-08-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish environmental technology arouses Canadian interest

A delegation comprising local government decision-makers from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) is to visit Sweden on 22-28 August. The aim of the delegations visit is to learn more about innovative solutions in the environment and energy areas.

In total, FCM represents over 1000 municipalities and 90 per cent of Canadas population, an interesting market for Swedish environmental companies. It has previously studied environmental issues in countries such as the Netherlands and Germany.

The Canadian delegations visit begins in Stockholm on 22 August and will continue to Linköping, Växjö, Karlskrona and Malmö/Helsingborg, where it will end on 28 August. The programme includes visits to a number of Swedish regional environmental and energy projects such as Hammarby Sjöstad in Stockholm, Tekniska Verken in Linköping, Växjö Energi, Blekinge Institute of Technology, Sysav in Malmö and Öresundskraft in Helsingborg.

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Key word: 28441 Foreign policy and international cooperation Sustainable development Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-08-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ambassador Sten Rylander to Abuja to mediate in the Darfur conflict

On Monday 23 August peace negotiations between the government of Sudan and the rebel groups in Darfur will be resumed. The negotiations will be held under the auspices of the African Union and will take place in Abuja, the capital of the presiding country Nigeria.

The EU supports African Union efforts in a number of ways and has asked its Member States to contribute personnel. The African Union has now invited Swedish Ambassador Sten Rylander to be part of the mediation team.

"With Swedens strong commitment to reaching a solution to the crisis in Darfur, it is very positive also to be able to contribute to the crucial mediation efforts in a concrete way," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

Ambassador Sten Rylander is planning to leave for Abuja this weekend to begin his work.

"It is extremely important to try and help find a solution to what is Africas most serious humanitarian catastrophe at the moment. I am looking forward to working with the leadership of the African Union in a dialogue characterised by trust, and would like to contribute with my many years of experience of Africa. A solution to the crisis in Darfur is of vital significance for the future of Sudan and is important for the whole of Africa," says Sten Rylander.

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Key word: 28438 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-08-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish initiative to increase trade with Hungary

The Government has decided to allocate SEK 390,000 for the promotion of trade and industry in Hungary during the autumn of 2004, as part of Swedens Hungary initiative Svédületes! - Swedish-Hungarian meetings in 2004. The aim of the initiative is to increase trade and promote contacts between the two countries.

EU enlargement stimulates and facilitates trade and the exchange of knowledge. It is important that Swedish companies make the most of new business opportunities that arise, says Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky.

Decentralised cooperation between regions and municipalities is becoming increasingly important in the EU, both in order to promote the exchange of knowledge and experience and to generate growth and business opportunities. Swedish and Hungarian regions and municipalities have a great deal to learn from each other.

The funds will be placed at the disposal of the Swedish Embassy in Budapest which, together with the Swedish Trade Council, will hold seminars and other activities relating to trade, energy technology, food and design as well as business meetings.

The Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, and Crown Princess Victoria will participate in the Swedish Trade and Know-how Days in Budapest on 18-19 October.

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Key word: 28417 Industry, trade, regional development Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-08-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to visit South Africa

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will be visiting South Africa on 28-31 August at the invitation of her South African colleague Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma.

The foreign ministers are scheduled to meet on Sunday 29 August. Their talks will centre on developments in Africa but other important international issues will also be discussed.

On Monday at Pretoria University, Laila Freivalds will be giving a speech entitled Sweden and South Africa: common regional and global challenges.

The programme also includes a visit to an AIDS clinic. In connection with the visit, Ms Freivalds will meet with health minister Madlala-Routledge to discuss South Africa's enormous HIV/AIDS problem.

Laila Freivalds will also be holding talks with the ANC secretary-general, Kgalema Motlanthe.

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Key word: 28406 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-08-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Special investigator appointed to reduce the time married couples have to wait for residence permits

The Government decided today to appoint a special investigator to make residence permit investigations more efficient for couples who are married or cohabiting.

The present system demands considerable resources and results in long processing times at Sweden's missions abroad and at the Swedish Migration Board.

"People who marry someone from another country should not need to wait too long for a decision," says Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg.

The investigator will present proposals for measures to reduce processing times without disregarding the protection of the individuals' statutory rights. If there is suspicion that a relationship is not serious, that it is a marriage or relationship of convenience, a residence permit will not be

granted, neither if there is suspicion that either of the parties in the relationship will be subjected to violence or other serious forms of abuse.

The investigator will carry out a review of procedures and authority routines and will submit proposals for any statutory amendments considered necessary.

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Key word: 28398 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-08-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Iraq's Minister of Water Resources to visit Sweden

Iraq's Minister of Water Resources, Dr Abdul Latif Jamal Rashid, is scheduled to visit Sweden on Friday 20 August in connection with the ongoing World Water Week. His agenda includes talks with Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

An opportunity to meet the ministers at a doorstep briefing will be given at 11.50 at the entrance to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1.

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Key word: 28392 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-08-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Margareta Wahlström appointed as Deputy Head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA)

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has announced that he has appointed a Swede, Margareta Wahlström, as Deputy Head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

OCHAs remit is to strengthen coordination of UN humanitarian activities, both centrally and in disaster areas. The appointment also means that Margareta Wahlström will acquire the title of Assistant Secretary-General of the UN Secretariat.

Margareta Wahlström has an extensive humanitarian background and has served in the UN system for many years. Her most recent post was as the Secretary-Generals Deputy Special Representative at the UN Mission in Afghanistan. She has also previously served at the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and has acquired broad experience of national and multilateral humanitarian work through her posts in the Swedish and international Red Cross movement.

The Swedish Government welcomes the decision to appoint Margareta Wahlström to such a prominent position in the UN Secretariat and is convinced that OCHA is gaining a person who has both the skills and the integrity required for this important job.

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Key word: 28297 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-08-13
Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Brazils Minister of Development, Industry and Trade Furlan to visit Sweden

Brazils Minister of Development, Industry and Trade, Luiz Fernando Furlan, is to visit Stockholm on 17-18 August at the invitation of Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

TIME AND PLACE

Minister for Industry and Trade Pagrotsky and Minister of Development, Industry and Trade Furlan will meet the media
on Wednesday, 18 August at 18.30
Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre, Fredsgatan 6.

Welcome!

The aim of the visit is to discuss the possibilities of extending and developing relations between the

two countries, primarily in industry and trade.

Brazil is Sweden's most important trade partner in South America. A large number of Swedish companies are represented on the Brazilian market. Among companies that have recently been established in Brazil are Smart Trust, BANQIT and Thule. Stora Enso is currently in the process of making large investments in Brazil.

In addition to discussions with the Minister for Industry and Trade, Furlan will also be holding talks with Gunnar Lund, Minister for International Economic Affairs and Financial Markets, and with representatives of Swedish companies, agencies and organisations.

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Key word: 28226 Foreign policy and international cooperation Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-08-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden strengthens diplomatic relations with Iraq

Today the Government appointed Karin Roxman as Ambassador in Iraq. Ms Roxman has been responsible for relations with Iraq, based in Stockholm. On 1 September, she will move to the Embassy in Amman, Jordan, which will enable closer contacts with Iraq.

Preparations are under way to restaff the Swedish Embassy in Baghdad. In the meantime, Karin Roxman will be based in Amman. The timing of the restaffing depends largely on how the security situation improves in Iraq.

Karin Roxman was previously Deputy Director of the Middle East and North Africa Department. She has previously served as Consul-General in Jerusalem and at the EU Council of Ministers. Ms Roxman has also been stationed in Mozambique, Lesotho and Belgium.

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Key word: 28203 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-08-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports new police unit in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Today the Swedish Government decided to contribute SEK 1.5 million via the EU to the establishment of a police unit in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The EU has decided, after a request from the UN and the DR Congos transitional government, that the Union will finance training of the new police force and supply it with police equipment. Swedens contribution is in addition to this joint support. MONUC, the UN peace-keeping force in the country, staffed inter alia by Swedish civilian police, is contributing to training the police unit. The Swedish support is intended for necessary police equipment. The aim of the police unit is to promote internal security in the Congo, which is essential for the ongoing peace process to succeed.

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Key word: 28202 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-08-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Royal Couple to pay state Visit to Iceland

King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will pay a state visit to Iceland on 7-9 September 2004, at the invitation of President Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson. The King and Queen will be accompanied by Crown Princess Victoria.

The Swedish Government will be represented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms Laila Freivalds.

The programme will include visits to Reykjavik, Thingvellir, Akureyri and northern Iceland.

To the editorial office:

Media representatives wishing to cover the state visit must be accredited.

For more information and accreditation see www.regeringen.se/press.

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Key word: 28083 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-07-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

EU maintains offensive stance in WTO negotiations

EU trade ministers met today to review progress in the WTO negotiations in Geneva. By Friday 30 July the World Trade Organisation (WTO) aims to achieve an agreement that will compensate for the failure in Cancun in September 2003.

At the meeting it was agreed not to change the Commissions negotiating mandate. This was a rejection of demands that the EU should adopt a more defensive stance in WTO trade negotiations, not least in the field of agriculture.

From a Swedish point of view it is gratifying that we reached consensus on maintaining the offensive stance that the EU has adopted in the WTO in recent months, says Lotta Fogde, State Secretary responsible for trade issues.

If the EU had brought completely new guidelines to the continued negotiations in Geneva this would have caused confusion and sent unfortunate signals to the rest of the world. Today's meeting clearly shows that the EU's approach remains unchanged, says Lotta Fogde.

At today's Council meeting Sweden stressed how important it is that EU actions in the WTO negotiations give weight to initiatives for growth and a developing country perspective.

At the end of the week EU trade ministers will meet in Geneva to reach agreement on the final EU position on the closing week of WTO negotiations before the summer break. Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky is planning to take part in that meeting.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-07-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

EU foreign ministers increase the pressure on Sudan

EU foreign ministers noted at their meeting in Brussels today that humanitarian access to Darfur has improved partially. At the same time there are no indications that the security situation for civilians has improved.

Obviously the humanitarian situation in Darfur is very grave, says Annika Söder, State Secretary at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

It is now important to maintain the pressure on the government of Sudan in the coming month and thereafter. This is why the EU is supporting the possible appointment by the UN of a commission of inquiry for Darfur.

EU foreign ministers are also appealing to the UN Security Council to pass a resolution with a view to taking further actions, including imposing sanctions, in case the government of Sudan does not immediately begin to work to improve the situation in Darfur.

It is important that the EU keeps up the pressure on the government of Sudan at the same time as it maintains contacts with the government, says Annika Söder.

The EU has considerably increased its humanitarian relief efforts in Darfur as part of its overall financial contribution, which at present amounts to EUR 213 million.

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Key word: 27925 Foreign policy and international cooperation EU Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-07-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds comments on UN resolution on the Israeli separation barrier:

I welcome the decision of the UN General Assembly, by an overwhelming majority, to adopt a resolution regarding the Israeli separation barrier.

The resolution requires Israel to fulfil its obligations as an occupying power, as set out in the advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice on 9 July. The resolution, which has the full support of the EU, entails a strengthening of respect for the International Court of Justice.

Israel has both a right and a duty to defend its citizens. However, it must do so in conformity with international law, including humanitarian law and protection for human rights.

I call upon Israel, in accordance with the opinion of the Court, to cease construction of the separation barrier, which is illegal on Palestinian territory, to dismantle the sections already built and to compensate those who have suffered damage as a result.

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Key word: 27821 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-07-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Barbro Holmberg discusses future EU migration and asylum policy

Today the EU Justice and Home Affairs Council is meeting in Brussels and Sweden is being represented by Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg. The agenda includes a new multi-annual programme for the area of justice and home affairs.

During the Dutch Presidency in the autumn of 2004 there will be an assessment and follow-up of the conclusions of the summit in Tampere in 1999. These conclusions have guided work on justice and home affairs issues over the past five years. The aim is to have a second action programme ready for the summit in November 2004. Discussion on the content of the second programme will begin at today's Council meeting.

"One of the most important tasks we are facing is to ensure that decisions taken by the EU are implemented at national level," says Barbro Holmberg.

"The meeting will open discussions on the shape of cooperation over the coming five years. That

work will be completed at the summit in November. The new agenda will, for example, include measures to strengthen protection of refugees where they are, something that is fully in line with Swedens holistic view of refugee policy," continues Barbro Holmberg.

For interviews, please contact Andreas Norman, press secretary, mobile 070-246 53 39.

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Key word: 27747 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-07-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden contributes a civilian police officer to a UN team in Sudan

The Government decided today to contribute a Swedish civilian police officer to an advance UN team in Sudan.

The United Nations is planning to send a peacekeeping mission to Sudan as a peace agreement has been concluded between the government in Khartoum and the SPLM/A rebel group. As part of the preparations for the upcoming mission the UN is now sending a team of about 150 people to Sudan to prepare the coming mission. The team will depart in groups during the summer and will stay for at least three months.

"By taking part in the UN team Sweden is making additional concrete contributions to the important peace efforts in the country. At the same time, we are strengthening the capacity of the UN to plan and carry out a future peacekeeping mission in Sudan. It is my hope that a final peace agreement can soon be concluded between the government in Khartoum and the SPLM/A," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The civil war in Sudan is one of the worlds longest lasting conflicts and has resulted in about two million deaths and more than four million internally displaced persons. At the same time as a peace process has been under way between the government in the north and the SPLM/A in the south, the conflict in Darfur has developed into one of the worlds greatest humanitarian disasters.

Sweden is one of the major donors of humanitarian assistance to Sudan and has contributed some SEK 150 million so far this year.

In addition, Sweden has assigned a military observer to the African Union (AU) monitoring mission in Darfur, western Sudan, and has contributed SEK 1 million to the AU for the same purpose.

Sweden is also contributing three military observers and two civilian police officers to a multinational monitoring mission, the International Joint Military Committee/Mission (JMC/JMM),

in the Nuba Mountains in Sudan.

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Key word: 27739 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-07-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden contributes observers to the parliamentary election in Kosovo

The Government decided today to contribute two long-term and four short-term observers to the Council of Europe Election Observation Mission in Kosovo. On 23 October a parliamentary election will be held in Kosovo, which has been administered by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) for the past five years.

The decision to send election observers to Kosovo was taken after a request from the Council of Europe, which is responsible for observing election preparations and the conduct of the parliamentary election. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and a recently formed local election organisation are responsible for organising the election.

"It is important that the parliamentary election is conducted in good democratic order and that the Kosovo Serbs take part. For this reason, and to underline international interest in democratic development in Kosovo, we have decided that Sweden will contribute observers," comments Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The aim of the policy that the international community is pursuing under UN leadership is that Kosovo must first have functioning social structures before a discussion can begin on the question of the future status of the area. Next year there will be a review what progress Kosovo has made in fulfilling the requirements that have been set up. Developments in the coming year will determine whether discussions on the status issue can begin then.

Up to now Sweden has invested substantial financial and human resources in Kosovo. Swedish development assistance amounts to approximately SEK 100 million a year, making Sweden one of the major donor countries in Kosovo. In addition to bilateral support, Sweden also gives

considerable multilateral support to Kosovo via the EU.

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Key word: 27734 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-07-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

EU Foreign Ministers discussed the continued development of Iraq with Foreign Minister Zebari

At today's Council meeting in Brussels EU Foreign Ministers met Iraq's new Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari for the first time. The purpose was to establish a dialogue with the interim government on how the Union best can support the reconstruction of Iraq.

At today's Council meeting in Brussels EU Foreign Ministers met Iraq's new Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari for the first time. The purpose was to establish a dialogue with the interim government on how the Union best can support the reconstruction of Iraq. Plans include contributing to preparations for parliamentary elections in January. At the meeting EU Foreign Ministers also stressed that a reintroduction of the death penalty in Iraq is unacceptable.

The situation in the Middle East was also on the agenda. The discussion was dominated by questions concerning the possibilities for the EU to influence the peace process and the importance of the Quartet as well as by the opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) last Friday on the Israeli separation barrier. In a statement the Dutch Presidency repeated the EU's standpoint that the construction of the barrier on occupied land is contrary to international law, in accordance with the finding of the Court.

I welcome the Court's opinion on the Israeli separation barrier. It is in line with the view of the Swedish Government. The only reasonable consequence of the opinion is for Israel to demolish the barrier on occupied land. Israel should respect the opinion of the Court, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

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Key word: 27750 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-07-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Michael Sahlin appointed EU Special Representative in Macedonia

The Council of the European Union has today, Monday, decided to appoint Ambassador Michael Sahlin as EU Special Representative (EUSR) in Macedonia.

Ambassador Sahlin replaces the Dane Sören Jessen-Petersen, who has recently been appointed as the UN Secretary-Generals Special Representative in Kosovo.

Sahlin, who is currently Director-General of the Folke Bernadotte Academy, has extensive experience of the Balkans. His previous posts have included serving as Swedens Ambassador in Belgrade and Skopje and he was also State Secretary at the Ministry of Defence in 1992 when Sweden helped set up a preventive military force in Macedonia (UNPREDEP).

The EUSR plays a central role in Macedonian politics, not least by the influence on the implementation of the peace agreement from the conflict in 2001, the Ohrid Agreement and the EU Police Mission Proxima. Ambassador Sahlin will work in close cooperation with the Macedonian president and government, EU Member States and EU High Representative Javier Solana in order to secure the peaceful political process and promote the implementation of the Ohrid Agreement. Through these efforts, the EUSR is assisting Macedonia on the road towards future membership in the EU.

The EU has extensive commitments in Macedonia, including an advisory police mission and development support. Macedonia applied for membership of the EU on 22 March 2004 and the Commission is currently examining if and when the country is ready to begin accession negotiations.

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Key word: 27649 Foreign policy and international cooperation EU

PRESS RELEASE

2004-07-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds welcomes opinion by International Court of Justice on Israeli separation barrier

Today, 9 July 2004, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued an advisory opinion on the question addressed to the Court by the General Assembly in December 2003 regarding the legal consequences of the construction of a barrier in Occupied Territory.

"I welcome the Courts opinion on the Israeli separation barrier. It is in line with what the Swedish Government conveyed earlier this year in its written statement to the Court as well as directly to Israel," states Laila Freivalds, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

"The International Court of Justice establishes that construction of the separation barrier on occupied Palestinian land is contrary to international law, particularly humanitarian law and human rights. This is a finding of fundamental importance, which Sweden supports."

"I encourage Israel to respect and give careful consideration to the recommendations of the Court."

The Courts advisory opinion is not legally binding.

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Key word: 27526 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-07-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Raoul Wallenberg to be honoured in Budapest

On 9 July 1944 Raoul Wallenberg arrived in Budapest and began his work to save the citys Jews from deportation to the German concentration camps. Today it is exactly 60 years since this event.

Earlier, Ivan Danielsson and Per Anger at the Swedish legation in Budapest, like representatives of the legations of other neutral countries in the Hungarian capital, had been working to save the Jews of Hungary. These endeavours were considerably reinforced by the arrival in Budapest of Raoul Wallenberg.

A memorial ceremony will be arranged in Budapest City Hall on 27 September 2004 to honour the memory of Raoul Wallenbergs rescue mission. The Swedish Government will be represented by State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren.

In conjunction with this ceremony, the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, in cooperation with Hungary's Holocaust Documentation Center, will be arranging a scientific symposium on 27-28 September 2004, also in Budapest City Hall. A number of researchers from Sweden, Hungary and other countries will take part. The topic of discussion at the symposium will be the rescue missions carried out by the Swedish legation in Budapest, Raoul Wallenberg and the Swedish Red Cross.

In autumn 2003, the City of Budapest declared Raoul Wallenberg an honorary citizen.

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Key word: 27369 Democracy and human rights Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-07-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish citizen at Guantanamo base released

The Swedish citizen who has been held at Guantanamo base in Cuba for more than two years has been released. He will now be flown home to Sweden.

The release of the Swedish citizen has been preceded by a series of contacts between the United States and Sweden, both between government agencies and at diplomatic level. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, for example, raised the issue with her American counterpart on her visit to Washington earlier this year. The Minister for Defence also discussed the matter when she visited Washington in the winter. Later, in April, the Prime Minister brought up the issue with President Bush. There have been intensive contacts between Sweden and the United States during the spring and summer in an attempt to reach a solution.

Sweden's basic position has been that the man must either be freed or be brought to court, in accordance with generally accepted legal principles.

In their contacts with representatives of the United States prior to the man's release, Swedish representatives have described the measures that Swedish law enforcement authorities may take when the man has returned to Sweden.

"It is highly gratifying that the Swedish citizen at Guantanamo has finally been released," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"Sweden is an active participant in the fight against international terrorism. To be conducted as effectively as possible, this fight is dependent on extensive international cooperation, not least in police matters. But it must not be conducted with means that lie outside the limits defined in the international legal system. That is why we in Sweden have been unable to accept individuals being held at Guantanamo with no legal basis. This has been the principle upon which we have acted," says Ms Freivalds.

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Key word: 27298 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-07-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to contribute SEK 10 million towards education of economists in Ukraine and Russia

Sweden is to make a contribution of SEK 10 million towards educating Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian and Moldovan economists in the period 2004-2006.

Sweden will continue to support education provided within the framework of the Economics Education and Research Consortium (EERC), an international initiative aimed at ensuring high quality education for economists in Russia and Ukraine. Swedens contribution also includes two Swedish-financed doctoral positions for economists returning home after completing doctorates abroad. In addition, there is direct support for five Belarusian and three Moldovan students each year, including a study visit to Stockholm for these students. The host institution is the Stockholm Institute of Transition Economics and East European Economies at the Stockholm School of Economics.

"Our eastern neighbours are greatly in need of well-educated economists. We in Sweden want to help ensure that a new generation of economists is educated, who can contribute to the development of their countries," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The Economics Education and Research Consortium (EERC) was established in 1996 for the purpose of building up domestic competence in economics education and research in Russia and Ukraine. The EERCs core activities consist of a two-year masters programme in economics at Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Ukraine, along with support to researchers in the field of economics in Russia, in the form of grant programmes and seminars. Sweden is one of the largest funders, having provided some SEK 25 million in support of these activities since 1998. Other major donors include the Eurasia Foundation, the Open Society Institute, the Global Development Network and the World Bank. The Norwegian and Finnish foreign ministries have also contributed.

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Key word: 27093 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-07-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to send election observers to Venezuela

The Government decided today to contribute one long-term and two short-term observers to the EU election monitoring mission in Venezuela. A referendum will be held in the country on 15 August to determine whether President Hugo Chávez presidential term will be curtailed and new elections called.

Hugo Chávez has been elected twice with a clear majority, in 1998 and 2000. The opposition has now made use of the option existing in the constitution to request a referendum to determine whether the president should remain in place.

At present, the country is deeply polarised. Sweden has therefore decided to send election observers to join the EU mission during the referendum and, if the President is removed from office, the subsequent presidential election.

"Sweden supports the election monitoring because a clear, and credible result in the referendum is important for democratic development in Venezuela and for stability in the region," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

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Key word: 27095 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to report on UN Millennium Development Goal 8

The annual meeting of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) opens today in New York. Sweden will present a report there on how our national policies live up to the commitments set out in the UNs eighth Millennium Development Goal.

Goal 8 frames a partnership between rich countries and developing countries in which the responsibility of the rich countries deals with increasing development assistance, improving trade regulations, reducing the burden of debt in poor countries, etc.

Through this report, Sweden will be one of the first of the rich countries to present a report in accordance with Goal 8.

It is important that even those of us in rich countries live up to our promises, states Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation. We have expected developing countries to present reports on their commitments for quite some time now, but rich countries should also be subject to a review of their policy choices. By means of this report, we wish to encourage other countries to present reports on their commitments regarding the Millennium Development Goals.

Among the points emphasised in the report are Swedens efforts within the WTO and the EU for fairer trade, and our contribution to the HIPC Initiative, which deals with debt relief for the least-developed countries.

Swedens report on the Millennium Development Goals is part of the global reporting system established by the UN to follow up on the Goals. Next year, the UN Secretary-General will present a more extensive report on results from around the world which will incorporate the Swedish report. A major meeting will be held under UN auspices during the autumn of 2005 that will serve as an important review of how efforts for achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 are proceeding.

The Millennium Development Goals are eight time-bound, measurable goals for worldwide development. The Goals include areas such as reducing by half the number of people living in extreme poverty, child mortality, maternal mortality, education, environmental damage, HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases as well as gender discrimination. If the goals are to be achieved by 2015, rich countries and poor countries alike must fulfil their commitments.

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Key word: 26696 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports Tanzania's national HIV/AIDS plan

The Government decided yesterday to contribute SEK 150 million over a three-year period as support to Tanzania's national plan to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Tanzania's government has, with the help of the Clinton Foundation, drawn up and adopted a national plan to improve access to anti-retrovirals and other treatment measures. Major initiatives will also be undertaken to prevent the spread of the epidemic.

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Key word: 26633 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-23

Ministry of Defence
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds and Leni Björklund to NATO summit

On 28-29 June, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and Minister for Defence Leni Björklund will participate in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) summit in Istanbul. The meeting will take place in conjunction with the NATO summit.

Partnership for Peace (PfP) celebrates its tenth anniversary this year. The summit in Istanbul provides an opportunity to discuss the Partnership and its future.

"Cooperation within EAPC and PfP is an important part of the pan-European security order. It is particularly important for Sweden that we can continue to develop our partnership with NATO regarding our participation in NATO-led crisis management operations," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

The security position in Afghanistan will also be discussed at the EAPC summit. Afghanistan's President Karzai has been invited to participate in that part of the meeting.

PfP is a practically-oriented cooperation programme between NATO and non-NATO countries in Europe, Central Asia and Southern Caucasus. PfP has become particularly important as an instrument for the participating countries when coordinating, preparing and training their forces for peace-keeping operations. EAPC was set up in 1997 as the political framework for PfP cooperation and represents a forum for consultation on various issues between NATO and its partner countries. Today forty-six countries participate in EAPC/PfP cooperation. Sweden has cooperated with NATO within the framework of PfP since 1994.

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Key word: 26535 Foreign policy and international cooperation Leni Björklund

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Barbro Holmberg takes part in BalticNordic ministerial meeting

Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg is taking part in a meeting of Nordic migration ministers that is being held in Bergen on 22-23 June. The purpose of the meeting is to exchange information and discuss developments in the migration and asylum policies of the different countries.

At this years ministerial meeting the Baltic governments are also represented. The topics discussed at the meeting will include arrangements for possible future cooperation on asylum and migration issues between the Nordic and Baltic States.

The Nordic countries have been cooperating on these issues since 1986 in the Nordic High-Level Advisory Group on Refugee Matters (NSHF). The work of the NSHF is conducted by regular meetings at state secretary level, an annual ministerial meeting and working groups.

Norway has chaired the Advisory Group since 1 July 2003.

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Key word: 26479 Foreign policy and international cooperation Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-22

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky to attend Global Compact meeting in New York

On Thursday 24 June, Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky will take part in a high-level meeting of the Global Compact at UN Headquarters in New York. The meeting will bring together 400 business leaders and politicians from around the world, under the leadership of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

TIME AND PLACE

A press conference is scheduled for 10.45 at UN Headquarters. Leif Pagrotsky will be among the participants, along with Kofi Annan, President Lula of Brazil, and others.

The Global Compact was launched by Kofi Annan five years ago to promote social and environmental responsibility on the part of companies engaging in international operations. In practical terms, the aim is to encourage companies in the private sector to incorporate nine ethical principles in their policy plans and to cooperate with the UN and with public and civil society actors. The purpose is to make it possible for more people to benefit from globalisation.

The most important point on the agenda for Thursdays meeting is the adoption of a tenth principle for the work of the Global Compact encouraging companies to combat all forms of corruption.

16 of the more than 1500 companies that have joined the Global Compact are Swedish. Apart from Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky, other Swedish participants at the meeting will be representatives from Folksam, ICA, Banco Fonder, Volvo Personvagnar, Ericsson and Skanska.

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Key word: 26448 Foreign policy and international cooperation Industry, trade, regional development Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to press conference on review of aliens legislation

On Tuesday 22 June the Review Committee on Aliens Legislation (the "Schäder Committee") will present its proposals to Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg.

TIME AND PLACE

Tuesday 22 June at 14.30

Press Centre, Rosenbad

A press conference will be held in Swedish in connection with this.

If you plan to attend, please notify Maj-Britt Nilsson, Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Service, tel. 08-405 52 85, 0708-27 98 33.

Please bring your press credentials. Welcome!

The assignment of the all-party Review Committee on Aliens Legislation has been to review the legislative provisions on visas, residence permits on humanitarian grounds and work permits, and to conduct a review of case processing and decision-making by the Swedish Migration Board.

The purpose has been to clarify the provisions and adapt case processing by the Swedish Migration Board to ensure that the examination of aliens cases will be legally secure, uniform and predictable in the event of modified arrangements for appeals and legal procedures. The committees proposals include the introduction of a new provision on the evaluation of humanitarian grounds for children.

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Key word: 26308 Foreign policy and international cooperation Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New strategy for cooperation with South Africa

Today the Government has taken a decision on a new strategy for Swedish development cooperation with South Africa for the period 1 July 2004 31 December 2008.

During this period, development cooperation will be broadened and based on reciprocity and co-financing. The new cooperation will be based on a careful selection and elaboration of cooperation areas between various stakeholders in Sweden and South Africa, such as government agencies, local authorities and NGOs.

"With this decision, we are entering a phase in which traditional development assistance will be gradually transformed into broader cooperation. Our objective is to extend and strengthen relations between Sweden and South Africa," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The Government has also decided to enter into a cooperation agreement with South Africa for the period 1 July 2004 30 June 2007, comprising a total of SEK 300 million. These funds will be used to complete projects to strengthen democracy and improve living conditions for poor people in South Africa, including preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS.

When apartheid was abolished and democracy introduced in connection with the 1994 elections in South Africa, the extensive Swedish support to victims and opponents of the apartheid system in South Africa was transformed into regular development cooperation with the new South Africa.

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Key word: 26285 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports African Union initiative in Darfur

The Government decided today to send a military observer to Darfur in western Sudan. The military observer will be included in the African Union observer mission that is monitoring the ceasefire in the region. The Government also decided to contribute support of SEK 1 million to the African Union initiative.

Today it is estimated that more than two million people are affected by the conflict in Darfur and they are in acute need of humanitarian assistance.

"The African Union has shown strong leadership in deciding to send military observers to Darfur to monitor the fragile ceasefire. The initiative will play an important role in increasing security so that the relief organisations can carry out their important work," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"Sudans government has a great responsibility to ensure the ceasefire is respected, to protect the civilian population, to disarm the militia groups and to safeguard humanitarian access," says Ms Freivalds.

Sweden is also providing substantial financial and political support through the EU to the African Union observer mission to Darfur. The EU is contributing some EUR 12 million from a newly established Peace Facility that has been set up to finance crisis management operations in Africa.

The situation in Darfur is one of the worlds worst ongoing humanitarian crises, with widespread attacks on the civilian population. More than one million internally displaced persons, 130 000 refugees who have fled across the border to Chad, and almost one million people in the communities receiving the refugees, are in need of humanitarian aid. It is estimated that 30 000 people have been killed or have died in the disturbances over the past year or so.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to host international meeting on our common future

On Monday, 21 June an international seminar will be held in Stockholm on the challenges facing the international community. The meeting will be hosted by Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin. The participants at the seminar are politicians, experts and members of the Swedish-French initiative, the International Task Force on Global Public Goods.

Underlying the Swedish-French initiative and the seminar is a range of unsolved problems facing the international community: climate change, recurring conflicts and poverty. The reasons for the international community's current failure fully to resolve these problems are numerous and complex. The problems are often too serious and resources too limited. Often there is a lack of political will.

How can politicians be encouraged to take greater international responsibility in their day-to-day work? What role can regional actors, such as the African Union, play at the global level? Can Europe become a progressive global force? How can network building between civil society and the business sector help to solve serious international problems? These are some of the themes to be dealt with at the meeting.

Participants at the seminar include

Ernesto Zedillo, former President of Mexico

Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, President of the Party of European Socialists and Member of the European Parliament

Jody Williams, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and Ambassador for the International Campaign to Ban Landmines

Ibrahim Gambari, the UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Africa

J.F. Rischard, Head of the World Bank in Europe

The seminar will take place at Rotundan, Rosenbad 4

Participants will be available to meet the media during the day. For more information, please contact John Zanchi (see contact information below)

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Havana

The Government appointed today Director Christer Elm as new Ambassador in Havana, Cuba.

Christer Elm is currently Head of the Nordic-Baltic group at the European Union Department. He has served in Beijing, Helsinki, Cairo, Rabat and Geneva.

Christer Elm will take up his post in Havana in the autumn of 2004.

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Key word: 26122 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to visit China

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is to visit China on 20-25 June. The visit will begin with four days in Beijing and will end with one day in Shanghai.

The purpose of the visit is to deepen the political dialogue between Sweden and China.

The programme will include discussions with Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing and a meeting with Prime Minister Wen Jiabao.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs will also visit universities and companies in Beijing and Shanghai, and will unveil two statues by Carl Milles in the Beijing International Sculpture Park.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Funen County Nature Management and Water Environment Division from Danmark wins the Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award

The Nature Management and Water Environment Division of Funen County Administration in Denmark has been named as the winner of the 2004 Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award. The Danish authoritys work for the environment has resulted in cleaner water not just in Denmark but also along the countrys Baltic coast.

The authoritys international cooperation has also helped to support new EU countries like Estonia and Poland in their water protection work.

The extensive environment management work done by the Nature Management and Water Environment Division of Funen County Administration over the past three decades has been characterised by high professional standards, visionary strategies and a strong commitment.

This years recipient of the Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award is being announced today by Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"As the EU expands the need for environmental cooperation across national borders is becoming more important than ever. Funen Countys Nature Management and Water Environment Division has displayed a fantastic ability to think and to act, both locally and regionally," says Carin Jämtin.

The Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award honours work to improve the marine environment in the Baltic Sea. The prize was established by the Swedish Government to draw attention to direct, practical initiatives that help improve water quality in the Baltic Sea.

The prize money of SEK 100 000 will be presented on 20 August 2004 during World Water Week in Stockholm. The Award has been made every year since 1999 and is administered by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI).

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Key word: 25778 Foreign policy and international cooperation Environment, energy and housing Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to support development in Laos

Today Sweden and Laos signed an agreement on continued development cooperation.

The agreement, which covers the period July 2004 December 2006, was signed on behalf of Sweden by Ambassador Jan Axel Nordlander.

The agreement is based on a Government decision of 15 April 2004 on a new Swedish country strategy for development cooperation with Laos PDR.

The overall objectives of Swedish development cooperation with Laos during the coming period are:

- * to strengthen Laos capacity to reduce poverty on a long-term and environmentally sustainable basis
- * to promote and strengthen conditions for democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights.

Total Swedish support for Laos during the three-year period 2004-2006 is expected to amount to SEK 450 million.

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Key word: 25714 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-14

Ministry of Justice
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Agreement between Sweden and Bosnia and Herzegovina on possibility of dual citizenship

Swedish citizenship legislation allows unrestricted dual citizenship, which means that a Swedish citizen can become a citizen of another country without losing Swedish citizenship.

Corresponding rules do not apply to citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina who become Swedish citizens, unless the countries have an agreement permitting this.

Negotiations on an agreement to this effect were concluded today in Stockholm. This means, among other things, that Bosnian citizens who acquire Swedish citizenship will not lose their old citizenship in the process. The agreement will come into force as soon as the Government of Sweden and the Bosnian Parliament have given their formal approval.

Minister for Democracy and Integration Issues Mona Sahlin and Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg welcome the agreement and say in a joint comment:

"This is a positive step for Bosnians who become Swedish citizens, it makes it easier for them to travel and strengthens ties with their country of origin."

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Key word: 27084 Foreign policy and international cooperation Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Mona Sahlin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky to Brazil and UNCTAD meeting

On 14-18 June, Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky will be in Brazil. The purpose of the visit is twofold: to participate in the UNCTAD Ministerial Conference and to promote trade between Sweden and Brazil.

The eleventh session of UNCTAD, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, will take place in the industrial city of São Paulo on 13-18 June and will be hosted by Brazils President Lula. The meeting has a broad agenda and the issues to which Sweden is giving priority and intends to highlight include the fight against corruption and how to make better use of trade as an instrument for development.

Mr Pagrotskys programme includes:

Monday 14 June

UNCTAD inaugural ceremony

Discussions with Brazils Trade and Industry Minister Mr Furlan

Tuesday 15 June

Participation in UNCTAD meeting

Morning: Plenary session on investments

Afternoon: Swedens general statement

Wednesday 16 June

UNCTAD meeting, Trade Session

Participation in a seminar on Swedish music exports, arranged by the Swedish Embassy, the Chamber of Commerce and the Brazilian music branch organisation Sucesso

Thursday 17 June

Morning: Round-table discussions and lunch with Deputy Minister Jaguaribe, representatives of the Brazilian Ministry of Development, Industry and Trade, Swedish and Brazilian companies

Afternoon: Visit to Sandvik in São Paulo

Evening: Dinner with members of the Swedish Chamber of Commerce

Friday 18 June

Participation in seminar on imports with the Swedish Federation of Trade/Import Council and the Brazilian Association of Exporters

In addition, Mr Pagrotsky will also be having bilateral meetings with a number of representatives of the 192 UNCTAD members who will be in Brazil this week.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Recipient of this years Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award

On Wednesday 16 June, Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will announce the name of this years winner of the Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award.

TIME AND PLACE

Time: Wednesday 16 June at 10.15.

Venue: Ministry for Foreign Affairs main lobby (Bankhall), Fredsgatan 6.

Please bring your press credentials.

Welcome!

The prize was established by the Swedish Government to honour direct, practical initiatives that help improve the quality of the water in the Baltic Sea. The prize has been awarded each year since 1999.

The prize money of SEK 100 000 will be presented in Stockholm on 20 August.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Francesc Vendrell, EU Special Representative in

Afghanistan, to visit Sweden

TIME AND PLACE

A press briefing with Francesc Vendrell will take place on Tuesday, 15 June at 14.45-15.15, at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre, Fredsgatan 6.

Please bring your press credentials!

Francesc Vendrell, EU Special Representative in Afghanistan, is scheduled to visit Sweden on 14-15 June.

During his visit to Stockholm, Francesc Vendrell will meet inter alia Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds, State Secretary Annika Söder and members of the Riksdags Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Defence.

Discussions will centre on recent developments, the forthcoming elections in September this year and the security situation in Afghanistan.

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Key word: 25518 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Marketing support for the Kingdom of Crystal

As part of efforts to take advantage of growth opportunities in the Kingdom of Crystal, the Government decided today to allocate SEK 2 million to an international marketing project to stimulate interest in and promote the export of Swedish glass. At the same time the Swedish Tourist Authority has announced that, in connection with the project, it is allocating SEK 1.5 million to marketing the Kingdom of Glass as a tourist attraction.

"The Kingdom of Crystal and the regions glassworks are examples of Swedens cutting-edge expertise in form and design which is of significance for exports as well as for Swedens image abroad," comments Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

"It is important to make good use of development opportunities for Swedens strong trademarks and

to increase export opportunities for our products."

"Tourism is important to the Kingdom of Crystal because it stimulates the development of local business and local service," says the minister responsible for tourism, Ulrica Messing.

"Conscious marketing strategies and the development of tourist attractions as well as products are necessary if tourism is to be developed in a positive way. The Swedish Tourist Authority's decision paves the way for such development."

The export project will be undertaken in 2004/2005 and will be part of Government efforts to focus attention on design as a growth factor before and during the Swedish Year of Design in 2005. The funds will be placed at the disposal of Glasriktet Turism AB which is a marketing company owned jointly by the glass industry and the municipalities of Nybro, Emmaboda, Lessebo and Uppvidinge.

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Key word: 25500 Industry, trade, regional development Culture, the media, leisure activities Ulrica Messing

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador to the UN in New York

Today the Government appointed Director-General Anders Lidén as Head of the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York.

At present Anders Lidén is Director-General for Political Affairs. Before this, he was Ambassador in Tel Aviv. Lidén has been stationed in Beirut and New York.

He will take up his post in the autumn of 2004.

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Key word: 25438 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Kiev and Bangkok

Today the Government appointed Ambassador John-Christer Åhlander as Sweden's envoy in Kiev. At the same time, Director Jonas Hafström was appointed as Ambassador in Bangkok, Thailand.

From 2000-2003, John-Christer Åhlander was Ambassador in Ljubljana. Before that, he was Deputy Head of the Department for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Åhlander has been stationed in Madrid, Santiago de Chile, New York, Moscow and Vienna.

Jonas Hafström is currently Head of the Department for Consular Affairs and Civil Law. He has served in Teheran and Washington.

John-Christer Åhlander will take up his post in Kiev in October 2004 and Jonas Hafström will take up his post in Bangkok in August 2004.

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Key word: 25437 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Dutch Minister for Immigration to visit Sweden

On Thursday 10 June the Dutch Minister of Immigration and Integration Rita Verdonk is visiting Sweden because the Netherlands will take over the Presidency of the EU Council of Ministers on 1 July. She is being received by Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg.

The two ministers are going to discuss current issues in EU migration and asylum policy. They will take up the question of how the EU can work to strengthen third country capacity to manage refugee situations. They will also discuss how to proceed with work in the area of migration and asylum in the future.

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Key word: 25356 Foreign policy and international cooperation EU Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds welcomes agreement on new Iraq resolution

On Tuesday evening the United Nations Security Council adopted a resolution on Iraq's immediate political future.

"It is gratifying that the resolution has been adopted unanimously and that there is international consensus on the future political process in Iraq," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"Thanks to intensive efforts by UN Special Envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, an interim government is ready to assume responsibility for Iraq's independence in a few weeks time. I welcome the fact that the UN will continue to play a central role in the democratic process.

At the same time, world commitment to a stable and independent Iraq must not be allowed to diminish. We have a common responsibility to support Iraq on the road towards democracy. We are still at the beginning of a process that is long and far from simple," says Ms Freivalds.

As from 30 June, a sovereign Iraqi interim government under the leadership of Prime Minister Iyad Allawi will take over, and occupational government of the country will end. The UN resolution establishes the timetable for democratic development as drawn up by the UN in cooperation with the Iraqis. The ultimate goal is for a constitutionally elected government to take over no later than 31 December 2005.

The UN will continue to have a central role in this democratic process. The resolution further establishes the relationship between the multi-national force and the interim government. The continued presence of the force is based on a government request to contribute to security and stability in Iraq. The forces mandate will expire no later than the end of the political process, but sooner if

the government so requests.

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"It is gratifying that the resolution has been adopted unanimously and that there is international consensus on the future political process in Iraq," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"Thanks to intensive efforts by UN Special Envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, an interim government is ready to assume responsibility for Iraqs independence in a few weeks time. I welcome the fact that the UN will continue to play a central role in the democratic process.

At the same time, world commitment to a stable and independent Iraq must not be allowed to diminish. We have a common responsibility to support Iraq on the road towards democracy. We are still at the beginning of a process that is long and far from simple," says Ms Freivalds.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Stockholm

Four ambassadors from Peru, Colombia, the Netherlands and the United States are presenting their Letters of Credence to HM The King on Wednesday 9 June.

Perus newly appointed ambassador, Max de la Fuente Prem, was born in 1946.

He took a Master of Law degree in 1971 and a Doctor of Law degree in 1974 in Madrid. Since he entered his countrys foreign service in 1969 Ambassador de la Fuente Prem has alternated service at Perus foreign missions abroad with service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Lima.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1995 Ambassador at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1996 Ambassador in Budapest

2001 Ambassador at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Head of the European Division with the title of State Secretary

Colombias newly appointed ambassador, Carlos Holmes Trujillo García, was born in 1951. He is a lawyer, political scientist and economist with degrees from universities in Colombia and Japan. The ambassador has been engaged in both politics and business. For instance, he has been the mayor of his native town of Cali, chair of the Colombian Federation of Local Authorities, Minister of Education and Minister of the Interior.

Ambassador Holmes Trujillo Garcia has represented his country as Chargé dAffaires in Tokyo, as Colombias permanent representative to the OAS in Washington and as Ambassador in Vienna, where he was permanent representative to the United Nations. His most recent appointment was as Colombias Ambassador in Moscow.

The newly appointed ambassador of the Netherlands, Antoine François van Dongen, was born in 1945. He is a lawyer who graduated from Utrecht University in 1970 and entered his countrys foreign service in 1973.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1992 Deputy Head, Dutch Embassy in Cairo

1995 Special assignment at the Human Resources Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1996 Head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs UN Office

2000 Ambassador, Brussels

The newly appointed ambassador of the United States, Miles Teel Bivins, was born in 1947 in Amarillo, Texas. He has university degrees from 1970 and 1974. Since 1975 he has been a businessman in the cattle, oil and gas industries. In 1989 Ambassador Bivins became a member of the State of Texas Senate.

Over the years Ambassador Bevins has received a number of awards for his work and commitment as a State Senator.

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Key word: 25334 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

European Refugee Fund to be renewed with EUR 114 million

At a meeting of the Council of Ministers for Justice and Home Affairs on 8 June, EU Ministers for Migration and Asylum Policy agreed to extend the European Refugee Fund for a new period 2005-2010. The Fund was established in 2000 and is used to develop and harmonise Member State activities in connection with the reception and integration of refugees and the processing of asylum applications.

The total allocation for 2005 and 2006 amounts to EUR 114 million. In Sweden, the finances of the European Refugee Fund are administered by the Swedish Migration Board which, together with the Swedish Integration Board, makes decisions on individual projects.

"This is one way of further improving our cooperation. It is of great importance now we are to implement the common asylum and migration policy in an enlarged EU," says Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg.

At the meeting, a recommendation to facilitate researchers entry into and residence in the EU was also adopted. The Commission estimates that Europe will need 700 000 new researchers by 2010. "We need more researchers to make Europe more competitive in the future," says Ms Holmberg. The recommendation is an expression of political will. Negotiations on a legally binding directive on researchers are under way.

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Key word: 25308 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to open Embassy in Nicosia

The Government has decided to open an Embassy in Nicosia, Cyprus.

The Embassy will be run jointly with Finland and its official inauguration will take place in December 2004.

Sweden's Ambassador to Cyprus, Ingemar Lindahl, will be transferred from Stockholm to Nicosia from 1 July 2004, when Sweden will take over its new premises.

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Key word: 25170 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Head of the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg

The Government has appointed Per Sjögren as Head of the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

From 1999 and until January 2004, Per Sjögren was Director-General for Migration and Asylum Policy. Sjögren has been posted in Washington, Kuwait and Geneva. He has also served at the Prime Ministers Office.

Per Sjögren will take up his new post in September 2004.

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Key word: 25168 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin comments on the attack on five NGO workers in Afghanistan

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin expressed deep regret about the attack in Afghanistan yesterday on five development assistance workers from the organisation Doctors without Borders (MSF). All five three foreigners and two Afghans were killed.

It is extremely important that protection for development assistance workers and UN staff can be guaranteed so that they are able to carry out their important work. The security situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated recently and several attacks have been aimed at both NGOs and the UN, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Sweden has promised long-term development assistance to Afghanistan and has taken a decision on at least SEK 750 million and up to SEK 1 billion for the period 2002-2004. So far about SEK 630

million of this allocation has been paid out.

Sida expects to be able to pay out more than SEK 300 million this year. Sweden channels its assistance through the UN system, NGOs (including the Swedish Afghanistan Committee), the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF).

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Key word: 24907 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to take part in World Expo

The Government has decided to allocate SEK 4 250 000 to Swedens participation in World Expo 2005 in Aichi, Japan. Sweden will be represented along with Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland in a joint Nordic pavilion.

"The Nordic countries share many common values. By joining forces, we have more resources at our disposal to show what we have in common as well as the valuable differences between us," says Minister for Industry, Employment and Communications Leif Pagrotsky.

The decision on a joint Nordic pavilion is the result of a Swedish initiative taken last year during the Swedish presidency of Nordic intergovernmental cooperation. The pavilion will be a journey through the modern day Nordic region and will profile, for example, Nordic social models, renewable energy, Nordic design and healthy and safe food products.

"I hope that many Swedish companies will take this opportunity to strengthen their position in the Japanese market and take active part in the pavilion," says Mr Pagrotsky.

The total cost of Sweden's participation in the expo is SEK 15 million, and will be shared equally between the state and the business sector. Expo 2005 Aichi will be held from 25 March until 25 September 2005.

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Key word: 24883 Industry, trade, regional development Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to give further humanitarian support to Sudan

A donor meeting took place in Geneva today on Thursday 3 June in connection with the humanitarian emergency in Darfur, Sudan. All the major donors, central countries in the region and Sudan's government took part.

Director-General Anders Lidén participated on behalf of Sweden.

"The situation in Darfur continues to be very serious. Sudan's government must honour its commitments to re-establish respect for human rights and allow the international community free and guaranteed access in order to help the people in need," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

Sweden has given considerable support to efforts in Darfur. Support has been focused on UN bodies and NGOs that are active in Sudan and to date amounts to just over SEK 150 million, including the sum pledged today.

The Government decided today on guidelines for Sweden's further commitment in Sudan, to support peace, reconstruction and human rights.

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Key word: 24872 Foreign policy and international cooperation Democracy and human rights Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-06-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds to visit Israel

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will be visiting Israel on 9-10 June at the invitation of her Israeli colleague, Silvan Shalom.

The programme for her visit includes a working lunch with Foreign Minister Shalom, talks with President Katzav and Prime Minister Sharon, and meetings with other government, opposition, and civil society representatives.

Laila Freivalds will also be giving an address at Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Remembrance Museum in Jerusalem, on 9 June.

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Key word: 24790 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to participate in international conference on renewable energy

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is to participate in the international conference entitled Renewables 2004 in Bonn, Germany, on 3 June.

The conference aims to promote renewable energy and is part of the follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development which was held in Johannesburg in 2002. Some fifty Ministers for Energy, Environment and International Development Cooperation are expected to take part in the conference.

"A large part of the world population still does not have access to energy. For many people, renewable energy could be a faster, more secure and better alternative than traditional forms of energy," says Ms Jämtin.

"One of the most important messages Sweden would like to convey at this conference is that it is often knowledge and institutions for promoting renewable energy that are lacking in developing countries, rather than direct investments," Ms Jämtin continues.

The Renewables 2004 conference will adopt a political declaration and an international action plan containing concrete initiatives. Sweden will contribute to the action plan with an initiative to support an authority for the electrification of rural areas in Uganda, and an initiative to support cooperation between authorities in Sweden and Eastern Europe.

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Key word: 24265 Foreign policy and international cooperation Environment, energy and housing Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds welcomes new steps towards a peace agreement in Sudan

"It is extremely gratifying to hear that Sudans government and the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement/Army in southern Sudan have last night signed the final sections of a forthcoming peace agreement after a very prolonged and cruel civil war," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"This very positive step has been taken, however, in the shadow of the continued crisis in Darfur in western Sudan. I appeal to the Sudan government to keep its promise to allow humanitarian access so that refugees can be reached by relief actions. Sudans government is also responsible for disarming the militia groups in the region. It is also important that the international community, including the UN, the African Union and the EU, take action in different ways by sending international observers and giving humanitarian assistance, for example."

"Sweden is contributing considerable humanitarian assistance to the whole of Sudan. We also intend to contribute to the reconstruction and to peace-keeping missions."

The civil war in Sudan is one of the worlds longest wars with two million dead and over four million people who are displaced in their own country. Alongside the peace process in southern Sudan, the conflict in Darfur has developed into the worlds worst humanitarian crisis, with almost one million people who are refugees.

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Key word: 24242 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to contribute to UN mission in East Timor

The Government decided today to contribute two Swedish civilian police officers and two military observers to the UN peace-keeping mission in East Timor (Timor-Leste).

The Swedish police officers will serve as advisers to the East Timor police force that the UN has helped build up since the country gained independence. The Swedish military observers will contribute to the maintenance of security and stability. This will involve monitoring the work on developing security and facilitating contacts in areas near the border with Indonesia.

Sweden has contributed both police officers and military observers to the United Nations Mission of Support to East Timor (UNMISET) since its establishment in connection with the country's independence on 20 May 2002. The UN Security Council decided recently to give a somewhat slimmed-down mission an extended mandate for an additional 12 months, with a view to supporting East Timor in the fragile situation that still continues in the country.

Largely thanks to the support the United Nations has been able to provide ahead of independence and in the two years since, admirable progress has been made. However, much remains to be done and Sweden is contributing in this way to the UN missions ability to support East Timor in its democratic development, which still has a short history.

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Key word: 24185 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-26
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to attend summit meeting in Mexico

On 27-28 May, a summit will be held between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

The meeting will begin with negotiations between the foreign ministers on 27 May and will continue with negotiations between heads of state and government on 28 May. Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will represent Sweden on both days as Prime Minister Göran Persson has been unable to participate as planned.

The meeting has two themes: multilateralism and social cohesion. Among the issues to be discussed during the summit are democracy, human rights and social development

The meeting will also discuss the issue of an Association Agreement between the EU and Central America and the Andean Community. It is hoped that the summit will give the go-ahead for negotiations on an agreement.

This is the third EU-LAC summit. The first was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1999 and the second in Madrid in 2002. This time, the summit is being held in Guadalajara in Mexico. Heads of state and government and foreign ministers from a total of 58 countries will be participating.

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Key word: 24014 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support for Albania as it seeks closer ties with the EU

A delegation from several ministries in Albania is in Sweden for a two-day training visit. The visit is part of Swedens support for Albania as it seeks to develop closer ties with the EU. The host for the visit is the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The purpose of the visit is to teach Albanian officials what closer ties with the EU entail. The programme will concentrate on technical rules and requirements for implementing legislation and EU coordination between the different ministries. The visit will include meetings with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of the Environment, as well as with the National Board of Trade and the Swedish Board for Accreditation and Conformity Assessment.

The Government will soon be adopting a new strategy for development cooperation with Albania, in which the main emphasis will be on supporting the country as it seeks closer ties with the EU. This will include providing support for the construction of a functional central government administration. Swedens development cooperation with Albania is currently worth about SEK 60 million a year.

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Key word: 23940 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky on Russias WTO negotiations: "A success for Sweden and an eagerly-awaited breakthrough for Swedish exports"

"Russias prospects for joining the WTO have taken a giant leap forward. This is an important step for Swedens exports," said Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky in a speech at the Swedish Trade Councils "Great Export Day", commenting on Fridays agreement between the EU and Russia on Russias future membership of the WTO.

"Swedish companies exporting to Russia today live with unstable regulations and uncertainty. This limits our opportunities."

"When Russia finally takes the step into the World Trade Organisation, the most important obstacles to increased trade will have disappeared and enormous opportunities will open up, particularly for Swedish companies," said Mr Pagrotsky.

"It feels like a major success for Sweden now that the negotiations between the EU and Russia have finally been brought to a successful conclusion. It was during the Swedish EU Presidency that we succeeded in breathing new life into the negotiations, despite a strong headwind," said Mr Pagrotsky.

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Key word: 23863 Industry, trade, regional development Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support for milk production in the Pskov Region, Russia

The Government has decided to allocate SEK 1.9 million to support for improved milk production in Pskov Region in western Russia.

This Swedish support is partial financing of a training and advice initiative to improve the quality and volume of milk production in Pskov Region.

The project is expected to lead to positive health impacts, better working environments and greater profitability at farms and dairies. The Government decision gives Swedish companies the opportunity of sharing their expertise and contributing to positive rural development in Pskov Region, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The initiative is the result of the work being carried out in the Projects Export Secretariat at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to develop a platform for cooperation between the state and the business sector on project development in the Baltic Sea region. The overall goal of the Baltic Billion Fund is to strengthen the position of Swedish industry in the Baltic Sea region. The Swedish support will be a gift to the Pskov Region Administration.

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Key word: 23823 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds on Egyptians removed from Sweden

Former Deputy Prime Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallén has just completed a visit to Cairo on my behalf to discuss the case of the two Egyptians who were removed from Sweden in December 2001. Lena Hjelm-Wallén was accompanied by the Director-General for Legal Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Carl-Henrik Ehrenkrona. They both had talks with leading representatives of the Egyptian Ministry of Justice and the countrys security service.

During the talks in Cairo the Swedish delegation raised two main issues: the reports of torture and other unacceptable treatment and the trial held at the end of April this year of one of the two people who had been removed from Sweden.

As regards the treatment of the two Egyptians Lena Hjelm-Wallén stated that several sources had reported that both men had been treated in a way that is not consistent with the guarantees that the Egyptian Government had given to the Swedish Government. The Egyptian representatives rejected these reports categorically. Lena Hjelm-Wallén requested that a thorough investigation be

carried out. The Egyptian side indicated that it was prepared to carry out an investigation. To ensure independent scrutiny the Swedish Government will suggest international participation.

As regards the recently concluded trial complaints have been made concerning procedural flaws that mean that it is questionable whether the guarantees requirement of a fair trial has been fulfilled. Lena Hjelm-Wallén stated that if the reports of flaws in the trial are correct a new trial must be held. The Egyptian representatives rejected the reports of flaws in the trial. However, they pointed to the possibility of drawing attention to procedural errors in a petition to the President. The Director-General for Legal Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has been instructed to contact the mans lawyers to notify them that they can consider the possibility of citing procedural errors to obtain a new trial.

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Key word: 23934 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden adopts strategy for development cooperation with Iraq

The Government took a decision today on the future orientation of Swedish development cooperation with Iraq.

"The purpose of our support to Iraq is to contribute to a peaceful development towards democracy and the rule of law, to support economic recovery and lay the foundation for broad cooperation between Sweden and Iraq", says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

"However, in order for all the intended actions to be implemented, it is essential that the security situation improves. Although developments are hard to predict, it is important that this preparedness exists to support the people of Iraq", Ms Jämtin says.

The proposed budget for Swedish development cooperation with Iraq in the period 2004-2006 has a maximum limit of SEK 400 million, including humanitarian support.

The need for reconstruction in Iraq is substantial. While the humanitarian needs remain, it is also important that work on reconstructing Iraqi society continues. Accordingly, apart from continued humanitarian efforts, the principal areas of cooperation proposed are infrastructure and democracy and human rights. Special measures are planned for civil society in support of women's rights.

To a considerable extent, Swedish development assistance will be channelled through multilateral organisations, primarily the UN and the World Bank's International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFF). The purpose of this facility is to promote good coordination between the international donors and the Iraqi government and to strengthen Iraqi ownership of the reconstruction process. Support of at least SEK 75 million has qualified Sweden for a place on the donor committee which gives Sweden an opportunity to influence the design of the facility's measures.

One possible sector for future bilateral cooperation is infrastructure, which is one of the areas given priority by the UN and the World Bank. Swedish companies have leading-edge expertise in this area and previous experience of working in the country, which should be put to good use. The Government also hopes that the knowledge of the many people of Iraqi origin now living in Sweden can be drawn on in the future reconstruction work in Iraq.

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Key word: 23722 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in London

The Government today appointed Ambassador Staffan Carlsson as new envoy in London.

Staffan Carlsson has been Ambassador in Budapest and Head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs European Security Policy Department. He has also served in Dhaka, Moscow and Washington.

Staffan Carlsson will take up his post as Ambassador in London in October 2004.

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Key word: 23691 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Consul-General in Hong Kong and Macau

The Government today appointed Director Boel Evander as Consul-General in Hong Kong and Macau.

At present, Boel Evander is Deputy Head of Protocol. Before this she was Press Counsellor at the Embassy of Sweden in Paris. She has also served in London, New Delhi, New York and Tel Aviv.

She will take up her post in September 2004.

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Key word: 23690 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden increases development assistance to Moldova

Today the Government has adopted a new country strategy for development cooperation with Moldova for the period 2004-2006. The strategy provides for a doubling of development assistance from the present level of SEK 40 million to an annual amount of SEK 70-100 million. Sweden is already the largest donor among EU countries.

According to the new strategy Swedish development assistance is intended to create conditions for reduced poverty and increased democratisation. It is also intended to promote the countrys cooperation with the EU.

Moldova is the poorest country in Europe. EU enlargement brings Moldova closer to us, and we have a responsibility to help Moldova to form closer ties with its European neighbours. It is important that cooperation is a based on shared values of democracy and human rights, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Swedish development cooperation with Moldova will focus on action against human trafficking, prevention of corruption, rural development, HIV/AIDS and cooperation with civil society.

Swedish support to Moldova started in 1996 and has increased significantly in recent years. The country has little inward investment and limited foreign trade. The problem of the breakaway republic of Transnistria in the eastern part of the country remains unsolved.

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Key word: 23688 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-19

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Communications Ulrica Messing to lead trade delegation to Angola, 1-3 June 2004

A Swedish trade delegation focusing on infrastructure led by Minister Ulrica Messing is scheduled to visit Angola on 1-3 June 2004. Included in the delegation of over 30 persons are representatives from Ericsson, ABB, Volvo and Scania, the Swedish Export Credits Guarantee Board, banks and consulting companies.

The aim of the trade delegation visit is to intensify trade between Angola and Sweden and create favourable conditions for new contacts for Swedish companies. Ulrica Messing will also be holding talks with several representatives of the Angolan government in connection with her visit.

Growing Angolan-Swedish cooperation in sectors like infrastructure is taking place because we are now seeing reconstruction and peaceful development in Angola after years of conflict, says Ulrica Messing.

In connection with the visit of the delegation, the Swedish Embassy in Luanda, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Swedish Trade Council are holding a wide range of activities to promote Swedish business and spread knowledge about trade with Sweden. A trade delegation from the telecommunications and energy sector visited Angola in January earlier this year.

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Key word: 23645 Foreign policy and international cooperation Ulrica Messing

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Joachim Bergström appointed new Press Counsellor in Tokyo

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has appointed Joachim Bergström as the new Press Counsellor at the Swedish Embassy in Tokyo. He will take up his duties in the autumn of 2004.

For the past ten years Joachim Bergström has been working as a journalist in Sweden, the Middle East, Japan and the United States. He is currently a doctoral student at the Institute of Press and Media Research at the University of Tokyo and has published several works on Japanese history and society.

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Key word: 23604 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Stockholm to host international meeting on the greatest challenges facing humanity

TIME AND PLACE

There will be an opportunity for the media to meet the participants on Tuesday 18 May at 12.00, at the Clarion Hotel (room C3) in Stockholm.

How has the human race succeeded in stopping such threats to our survival as the ozone hole and smallpox? And why have we failed to cope with global challenges such as the greenhouse effect, polio and world poverty?

This is the topic of a meeting in Stockholm on 18 May, with participants from about 30 countries and international organisations. The meeting has been organised by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the International Task Force on Global Public Goods, which was established at the initiative of France and Sweden. The purpose of the Task Force is to identify better ways in which governments, business, researchers, international organisations and NGOs can cooperate on crucial global issues. It is to complete its assignment in 2005.

At the meeting in Stockholm, Scott Barrett, environmental economist from the United States, will present a study on why we have managed to eradicate certain global problems, while others remain unsolved. This study is an important part of the action plan that the Task Force is in the process of drawing up.

The meeting will be chaired by Gun-Britt Andersson, Swedens ambassador to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). Other participants will include Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin, Jean-François Rischard, head of the World Bank in Europe, and Sven Sandström, Director of the Task Force Secretariat.

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Key word: 23362 Sustainable development Health care, health, social issues/insurance Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to assume chairmanship of international group for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons

Sweden will assume the chairmanship of the multilateral export control regime Nuclear Suppliers Group in connection with the Groups Annual General Meeting to be held on 24-28 May at the Swedish Exhibition and Congress Centre in Göteborg, Sweden.

The Group has its origins in the London Club that was founded in the mid-1970s in response to, among other things, the nuclear test by India in 1974.

At present its membership totals 40 countries including the US, Russia, France, the UK, Japan, South Africa and Brazil. Its primary mission is to harmonise the member countries national export control in order to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Its work covers three areas: continuous updating of product lists subject to the member countries export control, information exchange concerning proliferation risks and contact with third countries.

Representatives of the Swedish Chairmanship will be available to speak to the media following the closure of the meeting on Friday 28 May.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassadors in Guatemala and Amman

Today the government appointed Eivor Halkjaer, the Swedish representative in Havana, as new ambassador in Guatemala. At the same time ambassador Tommy Arwitz was appointed as Sweden's new representative in Amman, Jordan.

Eivor Halkjaer has also been ambassador in Managua, Nicaragua (1994-1997). She has previously worked as Sida. She will take up her duties in Guatemala in October 2004.

At present Tommy Arwitz is Deputy Head of the Middle East and North Africa Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has previously been ambassador in Kuwait (1992-1997) and in Damascus (1997-2002). Tommy Arwitz has also served in Moscow, Baghdad, Teheran, Jakarta and Rome. During 2002 he presented a Government Inquiry on asylum and migration policy Enforcement in the event of unclear identity and a departmental inquiry on trade and development assistance policy Open Trade Gate Sweden.

He will take up his new post in November 2004.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Barbro Holmberg to discuss refugee issues and trafficking in human beings in Geneva

On 13-14 May, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg is to visit Geneva to take part in meetings with international organisations working with refugee and migration issues.

Among those Barbro Holmberg will meet are the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Ruud Lubbers, and the Director-General of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Brunson McKinley.

The aim of the visit is to discuss with the UNHCR how the international protection of refugees is to be further developed. During the meeting with the IOM, Barbro Holmberg will be discussing the fight against trafficking in human beings.

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Key word: 23147 Foreign policy and international cooperation Democracy and human rights Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Bosnian tourist campaign in Sweden

Sweden has been selected by Bosnia and Herzegovina as one of five European countries for a targeted tourism promotion campaign. The campaign will be presented in Stockholm on Monday 17 May by Lord Paddy Ashdown, High Representative and the EU Special Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, together with the countrys Deputy Foreign Minister Lidija Topic and experts from the tourist industry.

TIME AND PLACE

A presentation and press briefing will take place at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre, Fredsgatan 6, at 09.00 on Monday 17 May.

A presentation and press briefing will take place at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre, Fredsgatan 6, at 09.00 on Monday 17 May.

There will be opportunities for individual interviews with Lord Paddy Ashdown, Deputy Foreign Minister Lidija Topic and the experts between 10.30 and 11.30. The three experts are Lorenc Konaj (adventure tourism), Dunja Pejic-Hadzic (religion/cultural tourism) and Sabina Smailbegovic (Alpine tourism). To pre-book an interview, please contact Ashdowns spokesman Kevin Sullivan, tel: 387 61 133 527.

In connection with their visit to Sweden, Lord Paddy Ashdown and Deputy Foreign Minister Lidija Topiæ will also meet Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin for talks.

At present, Sweden is the largest bilateral donor of development assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Swedish development assistance amounts to approximately SEK 270 million per year. Swedish projects include support to refugee return, institution-building, mine-clearing and the Cultural Heritage without Borders organisation, which is working with reconstruction of buildings of cultural-historical value which were destroyed during the war. This organisation will be given an opportunity to give a brief presentation of its activities in connection with the question time following the presentation. In addition to giving bilateral assistance, Sweden also contributes considerable multilateral assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina via the EU.

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Key word: 23142 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

NEW VERSION: Chief Secretary for Administration of Hong Kong to visit Sweden

On 13-15 May Chief Secretary Donald Tsang of Hong Kong special administrative region is visiting Sweden at the invitation of Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

As Chief secretary of Hong Kong special administrative region Mr Tsang is leading a review of Hong Kongs constitutional reform. His other responsibilities include coordination of infrastructure planning and development between Hong Kong and Southern China. Mr Tsang will also have talks with Minister for Communications and Regional Policy Ulrica Messing and will give a lecture at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs. His visit will conclude with an audience with HM the King.

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Key word: 23092 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

All-day seminar on international migration and economic development, 13 May, Stockholm

TIME AND PLACE

Venue: Stockholm Folkets Hus, Stockholmssalen, Barnhusgatan 12-14

Time: 9.00 16.30

Datum: 13 May 2004

Robert E.B. Lucas from Boston University has analysed the effects of international migration and receiving countries migration policies on the development of poor countries. The study was commissioned by the Expert Group on Development Issues (EGDI) at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The study will be presented and discussed by prominent researchers and decision-makers at the seminar. Among subjects to be discussed will be the causes of migration, the importance of the money migrants send to their countries of origin, the effects of the brain drain and migrant return. A panel discussion will conclude the seminar.

Annika Söder, State Secretary for International Development Cooperation and Chairman of EGDI, will open the seminar. Speakers include Dilip Ratha, World Bank, Ernesto Pernia, University of the Philippines, Devesh Kapur, Harvard University and Jean-Pierre Garson, OECD. Former Minister, Jan O. Karlsson, Co-Chair of the Global Commission on International Migration will give a brief presentation of the Commissions work during the lunch.

The seminar will be held in English.

Please apply as soon as possible to the EGDI Secretariat.

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Key word: 22831 Asylum, migration, integration, minorities Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Royal couple to pay state visit to Slovenia

King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will be making a state visit to Slovenia on 15-17 June 2004 at the invitation of President Janez Drnovsek

A business delegation under the leadership of Managing Director for the Swedish Trade Council Ulf Dinkelspiel will visit Slovenia at the same time.

The programme includes visits to Ljubljana, Kobarid and the Triglav National Park.

King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will be making a state visit to Slovenia on 15-17 June 2004 at the invitation of President Janez Drnovsek

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The programme includes visits to Ljubljana, Kobarid and the Triglav National Park.

To the editorial office

Media representatives wishing to cover the state visit must apply for accreditation.

Further information and an accreditation form will be available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website www.ud.se --> Press in the next few days.

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Key word: 22692 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden and Egypt to host Anna Lindh Foundation

At a meeting in Dublin today, EU foreign ministers, foreign ministers of eight Arab countries, and Israel and Turkey's foreign ministers decided to name a new foundation after Anna Lindh. The foundation's aim will be to promote dialogue for increased understanding between Europe and the countries around the Mediterranean and in the Middle East.

The foreign ministers also decided that the foundation will be headquartered in Alexandria, Egypt, and housed by the Swedish Institute and the Alexandria Library.

"I am very pleased that Sweden, in cooperation with Egypt, has been given the honour of housing this important foundation for dialogue. Sweden, through our institute in Alexandria, has excellent potential for hosting this foundation. The decision to name the foundation after Anna Lindh shows the important role she played in promoting dialogue and cooperation between cultures", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

The meeting in Dublin was held within the framework of the Euro- Mediterranean Partnership, also known as the Barcelona Process.

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Key word: 22672 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to meet the new Polish Prime Minister in Warsaw

On Friday 7 May, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is to visit Poland for talks with her colleague Foreign Minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz. Other meetings of the Minister for Foreign Affairs include talks with the Speaker of the Sejm (the Polish parliament) Józef Oleksy and the new Prime Minister Marek Belka. Issues on the agenda include the Intergovernmental Conference on the new EU Constitutional Treaty, the EU's long-term budget (Agenda 2007) and bilateral questions.

A short press briefing is planned in connection with the talks with Foreign Minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz at 13.30 at the guest villa of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, ul. Foksal (interpretation Polish-English).

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Key word: 22662 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

UNICEF Executive Director to visit Sweden

Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of the United Nations Childrens Fund (UNICEF), is visiting Sweden on Monday 10 May. During her visit to Stockholm Carol Bellamy will have talks with Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin and meet representatives of the Swedish Riksdag and non-governmental organisations.

The main agenda points will be UNICEFs action to combat HIV/AIDS and UNICEFs humanitarian work in conflict-affected countries. Carol Bellamy will present the report of the UNDG/ECHA Working Group on Transition Issues, which she chaired. This report deals with UN work during armed conflict and the transition from humanitarian assistance to long-term development cooperation.

Invitation to a press meeting with Carin Jämtin and Carol Bellamy

Date and time: Monday 10 May at 11.30

Place: The Press Centre at Rosenbad

Please bring your press credentials.

The UN Childrens Fund (UNICEF)

UNICEF works to strengthen the rights of children on the basis of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Millennium Development Goals. Swedish priorities in cooperation with UNICEF are the fight against HIV/AIDS and a focus on the conditions and rights of vulnerable children, especially the situation of girls. This year Swedish support is increasing by SEK 40 million to SEK 340 million, making Sweden one of UNICEFs major donors. In addition, Sida provides almost as much support again to UNICEF through contributions to various projects.

Key word: 22651 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to contribute SEK 80 million to Ethiopia for

poverty reduction

The Government decided today to contribute SEK 80 million in budget support to Ethiopia in 2004, for policies to reduce poverty in the country.

Despite very difficult circumstances, not least since the latest drought, Ethiopia has shown a great commitment to fighting poverty and has managed to continue to implement extensive economic reforms in cooperation with the donor community, says Minister for Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Budget support is one component of Swedens overall development cooperation with Ethiopia. Efforts to promote continued democratisation and respect for human rights are important dimensions of this cooperation, in accordance with Ethiopias own priorities.

We expect Ethiopia to work for peace, development and respect for human rights, says Ms Jämtin. A positive trend in these areas also increases Swedens chances to support development efforts in Ethiopia in the future.

Budget support is a form of direct assistance extended to poor countries that pursue sound, responsible economic policies with a clear poverty reduction orientation. Swedish support aims to strengthen the countries own political priorities for combating poverty.

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Key word: 22643 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to meet Tarja Halonen and Erkki Tuomioja in Helsinki

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will make her first official visit to Finland on 10 May. The programme for her visit includes a meeting with Finlands President Tarja Halonen and lunch and discussions with Minister for Foreign Affairs Erkki Tuomioja.

In the afternoon Laila Freivalds and Erkki Tuomioja will take part together in a seminar on foreign and security policy in an enlarged Europe at the Swedish-Finnish Cultural Centre in Hanasaari near Helsinki. Before the seminar, which starts at 15.00, the Ministers will be available to meet the media.

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Key word: 22572 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-05-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to Dublin for foreign minister meeting between the EU and Mediterranean countries

On 5-6 May, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will travel to Dublin to take part in a ministerial meeting in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the Barcelona Process.

The Process aims at creating an area of peace, stability, shared prosperity and strengthened cooperation around the Mediterranean, inter alia, by establishing a free trade zone in the region by 2010. Other important themes of the Partnership are democracy, human rights, security policy, EU development cooperation with the countries concerned and legal, social and cultural issues. In addition to the EU countries, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and the Palestinian National Authority are participating.

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Key word: 22542 Foreign policy and international cooperation EU Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Moscow

The Government has today appointed Ambassador Johan Molander as Swedens envoy in Moscow, Russia.

Ambassador Molander was head of the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the international organisations in Geneva from 1998 to 2003. Before that he served as head of the International Law

and Human Rights Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has previously been stationed in Moscow and Mexico and at Swedens Delegation to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

Ambassador Molander has had a number of international assignments, including serving on the United Nations Special Commission for Iraq (UNSCOM) and as chairman at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organisation for Migration. He has also served at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna. Ambassador Molander has also been elected to chair committees in several international organisations, including the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the International Red Cross.

Ambassador Molander will assume his duties in Moscow in October 2004.

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Key word: 22056 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government establishes an ombudsman for exporters from developing countries

Plenty of competitive entrepreneurs in developing countries cant enter our market because they face lots of regulations, many of which are complicated and difficult to grasp. This must change.

That is what Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin say in a joint comment in connection with the Governments decision today to establish a special contact point for exporters from developing countries. The contact point will assist entrepreneurs in developing countries who want to export to Sweden and the EU by providing advice and information.

In recent decades there has been a steady decline in the share of total world trade taken by the developing countries and by the very poorest countries in particular. One reason may be the complex systems of rules that are in place in rich countries.

This is an important part of the Governments policy for global development. A trade ombudsman is a concrete way of promoting economic growth in developing countries, thereby reducing poverty, says Carin Jämtin.

This is a way of making life easier for entrepreneurs in developing countries while, at the same time, not denying Swedish consumers broader and better choice, notes Leif Pagrotsky.

The contact point will be placed at the National Board of Trade and is planned to open in the

autumn as Open Trade Gate Sweden.

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Key word: 22052 Foreign policy and international cooperation Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden ranks third in international index on poverty reduction measures in the world

Sweden ranks third in an international index that measures all the action taken by the rich countries to reduce poverty in the world. Sweden has risen in rank from eighth place in 2003.

The Center for Global Development, an independent think-tank in Washington D.C., and the Foreign Policy magazine publish an index assessing the policies of the 21 richest countries in contributing to global development and reducing poverty in the world. The index was first published in 2003. This years issue was launched on 27 April 2004.

The index, the Commitment to Development Index, assesses the design of rich countries measures in seven different policy areas of crucial importance to the developing countries: foreign aid, trade, investment, migration, security, environment and technology.

This years rating ranked Sweden third, which is a marked improvement on its eighth place in the 2003 ranking. The Netherlands and Denmark head the list while Japan comes last. Sweden ranks top in the field quality of foreign aid and is far ahead in the fields of environment, trade and technology. Great progress has also been made in the field of security.

This years results show that we are on the right track with the new Swedish policy for global development, and this gives us an incentive to carry on our work. This autumn, the Government will also present a report to the Riksdag on what is needed to drive this policy even further, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

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Key word: 21657 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Colombias Foreign Minister Carolina Barco Isakson to visit Sweden

On 29 April Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will receive Colombias Foreign Minister Carolina Barco Isakson for talks and a working lunch. The agenda for their talks takes up the political situation in Colombia, including the ongoing peace process with the paramilitaries.

During her visit to Stockholm Minister for Foreign Affairs Mrs Barco Isakson will also meet State Secretary Lotta Fogde at the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, and she will, in addition, have meetings with Sida and the Swedish Trade Council, where she will meet representatives of Swedish companies.

The Colombian Embassy will hold a press meeting on Thursday 29 April, 15.45-16.15 at the Swedish Trade Council, Storgatan 19. Contact: Gustavo Molina, Colombian Embassy, tel. 08-21 43 20.

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Key word: 21656 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to participate in meeting of EU Ministers for International Development Cooperation

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is to participate in a meeting of the EU Ministers for International Development Cooperation in Luxembourg on 27 April. The agenda will include discussions on improved coordination in EU development cooperation and on the Unions activities towards achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals on halving world poverty by 2015. Discussions at the meeting will also cover a review of the Cotonou Agreement which regulates the cooperation between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific States, and to follow up the Monterrey conference on financing for development.

The EU and its Member States are responsible for more than half the worlds development assistance and, if used correctly, this could make the EU the leading power in sustainable and fair global development. But in order to achieve this, better coordination between Member States is necessary, as is greater harmony between the various EU policy areas, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin ahead of the meeting.

Furthermore, the EU is the primary trading partner for many developing countries. This means that EU trade-, agricultural- and environmental policies are of very great significance in combating poverty. Sweden is pressing for increased opportunities for developing countries to compete in the world market on equal terms. With the decision on raw materials and cotton, the EU now has the chance to send an important message prior to the WTO negotiations, says Ms Jämtin.

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Key word: 21654 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin receives award for Swedens development assistance

Last Saturday, the Minister for International Development Cooperation, Carin Jämtin, received a diploma from U2 singer Bonos organisation Debt Aids Trade Africa (DATA) in connection with the World Bank annual meeting in Washington D.C. The award is recognition of the fact that Sweden is one of the five countries to have achieved the UN development assistance goal of 0.7 per cent of GNI.

The other four countries receiving an award in Washington on Saturday are Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Norway.

I am pleased and proud to have received DATAs diploma, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin, who points out that one of the development assistance areas prioritised by Sweden is the fight against AIDS.

DATAs diploma to Sweden is an enjoiner to other countries in the industrialised world to follow our example and give more to international development assistance,says Jämtin.

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Key word: 21653 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin comments on railway accident in North Korea

North Korea has confirmed that a serious railway accident has taken place and has appealed for international assistance. Details of the number of dead and injured are still preliminary and there are fears that the number of casualties may rise, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin in connection with the serious railway accident that has been reported in North Korea.

Tomorrow morning the development cooperation organisations on the spot, together with Swedish Ambassador Paul Beijer, will make their way to the scene of the accident with the vehicles and relief equipment that is available in Pyongyang to try and determine the extent of the damage and what kind of help is most needed, says Ms Jämtin.

We are following the developments closely. Sweden is prepared to contribute economic assistance through the international organisations present in North Korea, this being the quickest possible way to facilitate the rescue operations that are now underway.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to participate in World Bank Spring Meeting

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will participate in the World Bank Spring Meeting in Washington D.C., USA, on 2325 April.

In connection with the meeting, Ms Jämtin will have discussions with ministers from Rwanda, Kenya, Zambia, Bolivia, Nigeria and Canada, and with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Andrew Natsios, the Deputy Head of the World Bank Shengman Zhang, and the Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) Peter Piot.

One of the main issues at the meeting will be how poor countries and rich countries, in cooperation with the World Bank and other international organisations, will be able to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, including the goal on halving world poverty.

If poverty is to be halved by 2015, there must be better coordination between policy areas. There must be a development perspective in areas such as international trade, security and environment policy, says Ms Jämtin.

One of Swedens main messages at the meeting will be that the resources we have must be used as effectively as possible and that different organisations must improve their coordination and support each others efforts. At the same time, we will emphasise that these resources also need to increase. The rich countries must fulfil the commitments they made in Monterrey. The fact that Swedish

development assistance continues to increase gives us credibility and puts power behind our words. Sweden will also press to increase the capacity of the poor countries to participate in and influence World Bank operations, says Ms Jämtin.

The World Bank has undergone major change in recent years and today poverty reduction is its overall objective. Sweden considers it vital that this reform process continues and its effect on the organisation increases. The World Bank is without comparison the largest single financier of development cooperation today.

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Key word: 19078 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Vilnius

The Government appointed today Deputy Director Malin Kärre as new Ambassador in Vilnius, Lithuania.

From 1998-2003, Malin Kärre was Head of Human Resources at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. She previously worked with development cooperation, inter alia as Head of Department for the then Global Cooperation Department. Kärre has also been posted in New Delhi, Nairobi and Maputo.

Malin Kärre will take up her post in Vilnius in the autumn of 2004.

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Key word: 18560 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin comments on the situation in Sudan

Carin Jämtin comments on the situation in Sudan

The situation in western Sudan is probably the worst ongoing humanitarian disaster in the world, says Carin Jämtin. Despite this, Sudan risks being overshadowed by other ongoing crises, which can worsen the situation even further. The Swedish Government will therefore actively seek to draw even more attention in organisations like the EU and the UN to the situation in Sudan.

In the ceasefire agreement of 8 April, the parties to the conflict promised access to the affected areas for humanitarian organisations. It is deeply disturbing that this commitment has not yet been fully implemented. We urge the parties to immediately guarantee humanitarian access to the area, and enable UN investigation missions to travel to Dafur as soon as possible, says Carin Jämtin.

Previous experience has shown that crises in Africa do not always get the international attention and support that is so needed to improve the situation. The Government is therefore determined to continue to pursue the issue in the international forums concerned. I am going to raise the matter myself with my development minister colleagues in the EU, concludes Carin Jämtin.

In 2003, Swedish support to Sudan amounted to some SEK 75 million. This year, Sweden has increased its support to the civil population and to date has already contributed over SEK 100 to Sudan. Swedish development assistance to Sudan has been used for programmes providing water/sanitation, food and education and projects to improve health and demobilise child soldiers.

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Key word: 19081 Foreign policy and international cooperation Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights to visit Sweden

Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Alvaro Gil-Robles will visit Sweden on 21-23 April.

Mr Gil-Robles will meet Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds, Minister for Migration and

Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg, Minister for Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs
Ann-Christin Nykvist and Minister for Democracy and Integration Issues Mona Sahlin.

Whilst in Stockholm, Mr Gil-Robles will also visit a remand prison and a refugee detention and transit centre, and will have meetings with Members of Parliament, the Ombudsmen, the Sami Parliament, and representatives of non-governmental organisations.

The visit will result in a public report on the human rights situation in Sweden.

Sweden welcomes the visits Mr Gil-Robles is making in order to strengthen respect for human rights in the Council of Europe member states. There is always scope for improvement, both on the home front and in the rest of Europe, as far as human rights are concerned. The fact that Council of Europe monitoring is not restricted to the newer members, but that countries like Sweden are also reviewed, sends an important message that all member states participate on equal terms, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

Invitation to a press meeting with Alvaro Gil-Robles

Alvaro Gil-Robles will conclude his visit with a press meeting at which he will speak about the work of the Council of Europe and about his impressions of Sweden.

Date and time: Friday 23 April, 13.45

Venue: Bankhallen, Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Fredsgatan 6, Stockholm)

Please bring your press credentials. Welcome!

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Key word: 18556 Foreign policy and international cooperation

PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Stockholm

On Friday 16 April, two newly appointed Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King. The Ambassadors are from Kenya and Mexico.

Kenya's newly appointed Ambassador Michael Denis Mukiri Kinyanjui was born in 1958. He holds a BA degree from Nairobi University and diplomas in international relations. The Ambassador entered Kenya's foreign service in 1982 and has served inter alia at the Permanent Mission of Kenya to UNEP in Nairobi and at the UN in Geneva. In recent years he has held the following posts:

1996-97 First Secretary at the Embassy of Kenya in Vienna

1997# Counsellor and chargé d'affaires in Vienna

Mexico's newly appointed Ambassador Fernando Estrada Sámano was born in 1941. He holds

degrees in the humanities and political science from New York University and Johannes Gutenberg University in Germany.

Since 1971, the Ambassador has been active in the PAN party where he has held several assignments and prominent posts. In 1973-76 and 1991-94, he was an MP in Mexico's parliament. He has also had an academic career in Mexico and Germany.

Before Estrada Sámano was appointed Ambassador in Sweden, he was Mexico's Ambassador to the Holy See.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Report on gender discrimination and poverty

How do power and privilege structures between the sexes affect our chances to combat poverty on a global level? How can knowledge of women's conditions be incorporated into development cooperation?

On Wednesday 21 April the report *Power and Privileges: Gender Discrimination and Poverty* will be presented.

Time: Wednesday 21 April, at 10:30 a.m.

Venue: Rosenbad Press Centre, Rosenbad, Stockholm

Please bring your press credentials!

The purpose of the report is to highlight how gender discrimination leads to an uneven division of resources and power within families and society. It also shows the costs of discrimination in the form of death, ill-health and violations. In addition, the report outlines a ten-point strategy over how gender analysis can help achieve more efficient development cooperation.

The report notes that discrimination of women is a basic cause of several of the major problems the world community is wrestling with: HIV/AIDS, trafficking in human beings, deficient reproductive rights and violence against women.

The report has been produced by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as part of the policy presented in the Government Bill *Shared responsibility: Sweden's policy for global development (2002/03:122)*.

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Key word: 16932 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassadors in Bogotá and Rabat

The Government has today appointed the head of the European Commission Representation in Sweden, Hans Alldén, as Ambassador in Bogotá D.C., Colombia. At the same time, Klas Gierow was appointed as new Ambassador in Rabat, Morocco. Klas Gierow is at present Ambassador in Amman.

Hans Alldén was previously Head of Unit at the Humanitarian Aid Office of the EU Commission's Directorate-General for Development. Mr Alldén's background is within the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and he has been stationed in Angola, Brazil, France and Belgium.

Before taking up his position as Ambassador in Amman, Klas Gierow was deputy head of the Middle East and North Africa Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Mr Gierow has also served in Brazil, France, Switzerland and Pakistan.

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Key word: 16931

PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Swedish troops to Afghanistan

The Government decided today to propose to the Riksdag that Sweden dispatch new military resources to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.

#The security situation in Afghanistan has unfortunately deteriorated markedly in the past year. Greater security is a precondition for progress in the democratic process and for improving conditions for Afghanistan's people,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

#The aim of our new mission is to help enhance security and make it easier for the influence of the interim government to reach the Afghani provinces. At the same time, we can support the first free elections in Afghanistan that are planned for September 2004.#

The Government's intention is to contribute to the expansion of the International Security Assistance Force led by NATO under a mandate from the UN Security Council. The force, established after the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001, has until recently only operated in Kabul, but is now being extended to rural areas of the country.

The almost 100 people to be dispatched by the Government this June include military observer teams and rapid deployment forces. Sweden is also prepared to supply a transport aircraft. Together with, inter alia, British and Danish units, the Swedish troops will form part of the ISAF expansion in the area around Mazar-e-Sharif in northern Afghanistan.

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Swedish forces have participated in ISAF in Kabul since the beginning of 2002. Some of these, mainly staff and liaison officers, will continue to serve there. In addition, the Government recently decided to contribute Swedish military rescue service staff to Kabul's international airport. The deployment of the new force would bring the number of Swedish personnel stationed there to around 110.

ISAF was established under Resolution 1386 (2001) in the UN Security Council. In October 2003, its geographical mandate was extended beyond Kabul under Resolution 1510 (2003). Today, ISAF comprises a total of 6 400 soldiers.

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Key word: 16930 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds comments on meeting between Sharon and Bush

#The statements after the meeting between the Israeli Prime Minister and USA#s President Bush are disturbing and give rise to a number of questions,# comments Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

#The points of departure for a peaceful solution to the conflict in the Middle East, both in the Oslo Process and the Quartet#s Road Map, have been the 1967 borders and the principle of land for peace. We must stick to this.#

#Nor should we forget that one of the parties is Palestinian, which must be allowed its say in a final status solution and the future of the Palestinian people#.

#In this connection, I would also like to refer to the explicit position of the EU which states that it will not accept any change in the 1967 borders, unless this has been agreed by the parties. I and my EU colleagues will naturally be discussing these new developments at the informal meeting of foreign ministers on Friday.#

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Key word: 16885 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

China#s Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing to visit Sweden

On 15 April Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will receive Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing of the People#s Republic of China for talks and a working lunch. After lunch Mr Li will pay a courtesy call on Prime Minister Göran Persson. On the same day Mr Li will visit Ericsson in Kista. On 16 April Foreign Minister Li will travel to Göteborg to visit Volvo and the East Indiaman Götheborg.

The agenda for the talks between the two foreign ministers will include bilateral relations, human rights, relations between the EU and China, and the situation in North Korea.

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Key word: 16878 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish police adviser to OSCE field mission in Belgrade

The Government has today decided to assign Detective Inspector Dan Göthberg to the newly established post of police adviser to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Belgrade, Serbia.

The position of police adviser to the OSCE field mission in Belgrade is the result of cooperation between the National Police Board, the OSCE and the Serbian Ministry of Internal Affairs. The three parties have developed a three-year project designed to further the use of criminal investigation technology by the Serbian police service. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency is providing approximately SEK 12 million to support the project.

As police adviser, Dan Göthberg will be supporting the implementation of the Swedish#Serbian development cooperation project. His assignment will include serving as adviser to the Serbian police service in the technical aspects of scene-of-crime investigations, technology use, methodology and related areas.

Police matters have become an important task for the OSCE. Four of the field missions in the Western Balkans (Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, Kosovo and Macedonia) are working on police matters, including the training of multi-ethnic police forces.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-04-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin comments suspension of food aid for Palestinian refugees

Yesterday the UN agency for assistance to Palestine refugees, UNRWA, broke off its humanitarian assistance in Gaza with immediate effect.

This means that, for the time being, UNRWA will not be distributing food aid to some 600 000 Palestinian refugees. This risks having significant humanitarian consequences and seriously worsening the living conditions of already extremely vulnerable Palestinian refugees.

#It is unacceptable that the UN is now being forced to end its food deliveries. If this persists there is a risk of starvation. Israel's legitimate concern for its security situation is no justification for preventing the UN from providing humanitarian assistance,# says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The reason for UNRWA's drastic decision is that the Israeli authorities have increased the already very complicated and time-consuming regulations for staff and materials entering and leaving the Gaza Strip. UNRWA now finds the situation unsustainable.

#Sweden therefore urges Israel to immediately lift the restrictions that are preventing the UN from distributing food aid to Palestinian refugees in Gaza,# says Carin Jämtin.

#Today Sweden has also reiterated the demands that the EU is making on Israel. These demands include the need for clear guidelines, extended opening hours at border crossings and access for vehicles of international organisations, as well as permission to also remove humanitarian materials, such as food containers, that have been transported into Gaza. I am also going to raise the matter with my EU colleagues at the next development ministers meeting,# concludes Carin Jämtin.

UNRWA is the UN agency for assistance to Palestinian refugees. In 2003 Sweden contributed almost SEK 300 million in support of UNRWA's activities.

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2004-04-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to take part in memorial ceremony in Rwanda

On 7 April, Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will lead a Swedish delegation to Rwanda to attend the ceremony taking place in the capital city of Kigali to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the 1994 genocide.

#The genocide in Rwanda was an atrocity. I am taking part in the memorial ceremony to show respect to those who fell victim to the murderers. Peace and reconciliation are a precondition for development and this is why Sweden is supporting efforts to achieve reconciliation in Rwanda,# says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Rwanda is one of the world's poorest countries. It is gradually recovering from the genocide, which shattered the community. Between April and July 1994, some 800 000 people were murdered in Rwanda.

Sweden and Rwanda have been engaged in development cooperation since 1997. In 2003, Swedish support amounted to some SEK 100 million. Among other things, Sweden is contributing to a memorial to the genocide, the Gisozi Memorial Centre, which is under construction in Kigali, and is also supporting the country's National Unity and Reconciliation Commission.

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Key word: 16823 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds and Carin Jämtin to take part in international conference on Afghanistan

On 31 March, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will take part in an international conference on Afghanistan, #Afghanistan and the International Community # a Partnership for the Future#. The conference, to be held in Berlin, will be hosted by President Hamid Karzai and Federal Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, as well as the UN and Japan.

#The presence and involvement of the international community in Afghanistan is very important. Afghanistan must not be forgotten in the wake of other conflicts and crises around the world,# states Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

Many positive things have happened since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001. More than three million refugees have returned from neighbouring countries to their homeland, four million children # 34 per cent of them girls # now attend school and women are no longer forbidden to work for a living.

#But there is still cause for concern about the situation in Afghanistan. The poor security situation, the lack of legal certainty, drug trafficking, human rights violations # where women and girls in particular are at risk # is worrying,# states Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The goal of the Berlin conference is to look to the future and support the ongoing democratisation process and reconstruction of Afghanistan.

In its development strategy for Afghanistan, Sweden has promised long-term assistance and support of up to SEK 1 billion over a 3-year period (2002-2004). So far about SEK 630 million of this allocation has been paid out.

This year Sweden plans to increase its contribution to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) from SEK 47 million to at least SEK 75 million.

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Key word: 16802

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds regrets postponement of Arab League summit

#I regret that the Arab leaders have felt compelled to postpone the summit that should have begun tomorrow,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds. #From my talks in Tunis yesterday, it was evident that there is a clear majority among the Arab countries supporting the peace process in the Middle East. At the same time, they warned that the events of the past few days have made it difficult to reach an immediate agreement.#

#I have interpreted this to mean that more time is needed to agree on a forceful statement for a peaceful solution. This increases the importance of developing cooperation between the EU and Arab countries.#

#I am convinced that we in Europe and the Arab world would all benefit from intensifying our cooperation. We share responsibility for bringing this about,# says Laila Freivalds.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds visited Tunis yesterday for talks with the foreign ministers of the Arab League.

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Key word: 16800 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to visit Tunis

On 26-27 March, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is scheduled to visit Tunis to attend the foreign minister meeting taking place in connection with the Arab League summit.

In Tunis, Laila Freivalds will be discussing the current situation in the Middle East with her Arab colleagues.

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Key word: 16786

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden gives budget support to Burkina Faso and Mali

The Government today approved the allocation of SEK 40 million in budget support for 2004 to Burkina Faso and SEK 50 million to Mali for their policies to reduce poverty in their countries.

#For the past ten years, Burkina Faso and Mali have consistently carried out extensive economic reforms while clearly demonstrating their efforts to fight poverty. Both countries have also taken significant steps in the ongoing democratisation processes,# says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Swedish budget support is a form of direct assistance extended to poor countries that pursue sound, responsible economic policies with a clear poverty-reduction orientation. The support is to help countries fight poverty.

#Through budget support to countries like Burkina Faso and Mali, we are helping to create the conditions for a broad dialogue that can include anything, from prioritising between different sectors such as education and health to fighting corruption.#

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Key word: 16785 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Malawi

The Government decided today to send three election observers to Malawi to monitor the presidential and parliamentary elections in the country, due to be held on 18 May. The Swedish observers will be members of the joint EU election observation team.

It's important that the elections in Malawi are conducted in a free and democratic manner. By sending election observers, Sweden can contribute to the development of a functioning electoral system in the country and thus strengthen Malawi's democracy, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Two of the Swedish observers will work for six weeks in April and May and one observer will be on duty for almost two weeks around the time of the election. The EU Commission will finance the mission, apart from wages and training, which will be paid for by the Member States involved.

The election on 18 May is the third democratic election to take place in the young democracy of Malawi. The country introduced a multi-party system as recently as 1994, and several reforms have been carried out aimed at consolidating democracy. The legacy of one-party rule still partially remains, however. The opposition has expressed concern that it will not be able to conduct its electoral campaign on the same terms as the government in power, with regard, for example, to access to the media.

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Key word: 16784 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-25
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Namibia

The Government today approved a strategy for development cooperation with Namibia in 2004#2008. In this connection, the Government has decided to enter into a cooperation agreement with Namibia for the period April 2004 to December 2006, providing aid amounting to SEK 160 million.

Under the new strategy, development cooperation with Namibia will move from the traditional

bilateral form to broader cooperation.

#This is an exciting change, which reflects the broad relations that have now grown up between Sweden and Namibia,# says Minister for Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The intention is to consolidate the progress that has been made while establishing new forms of cooperation in areas such as trade and investment, institutional cooperation, HIV/AIDS, regional cooperation and cooperation with civil society. An evaluation of this cooperation will take place in 2006.

During Namibia's struggle for liberation, Sweden gave extensive support to the liberation movement SWAPO in the 1970s and 1980s. When Namibia gained independence in 1990, Swedish support instead took the form of bilateral development cooperation. Since Namibia is a middle-income country, it was agreed from the outset that this cooperation would only be pursued for a ten-year period.

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Key word: 16783 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Support for export of environmental technology to Canada and China

The Government decided today to allocate SEK 150 000 each to two separate projects to promote exports of Swedish environmental technology to Canada and China respectively.

#Environmental technology is one of the most important industries of the future and it has an export potential that can be of great importance for employment and growth in Sweden,# says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

#There is great international interest in Swedish services and products in the field of environmental technology. Swedish environmental exports have increased strongly in recent years.#

The funds for the Canadian project are at the disposal of the Swedish embassy in Ottawa, which will work with cooperation partners to inform Swedish companies about the business opportunities

available and will present Swedish expertise in environmental technology to decision-makers in local government in Canada.

The initiative in China is regional project being administered by the Sustainable Business Hub, a regional network of environmental companies in Skåne. The idea of this project is to use Skåne and Guangdong Province as a base on which to build business relations between Sweden and China in the environmental field.

In February the Government appointed an Inquiry on the organisation of a national centre for environment-driven business development and export of environmental technology. Later this spring Claes Roxbergh, the Inquiry Chair, will be presenting proposals on how to achieve better coordination and concentration of national government resources and how to strengthen cooperation between the State and enterprises. An environmental technology centre will be set up after the summer.

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Key word: 16769 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish-Chinese cooperation in industrial design

The Government has taken the decision today to allocate SEK 150 000 to a project for increasing cooperation in industrial design between Sweden and China.

#Design is an important factor in competition, encouraging growth both for the business sector and Sweden,# says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

#Contacts and cooperation on new markets help strengthen Swedish design skills and our ability to compete,# says Leif Pagrotsky.

The funds will be placed at the disposal of the Swedish Industrial Design Foundation, to be used for business meetings, preparing projects and exploring the ground in China in order to learn more about the Chinese market.

Design as a factor promoting growth is an area being focused upon before and during the Swedish Year of Design 2005. The aim is to increase knowledge about the role of design in companies# competitiveness. This year, the Government has allocated SEK 20 million to ten national design projects run jointly by the Swedish Industrial Design Foundation and the business sector. A Design Year Group has also been set up for growth and innovation with representatives of the business sector, higher education institutions and other organisations.

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Key word: 16768 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Macedonia

Today the Government decided to send four election observers to the presidential election in Macedonia.

The presidential election takes place on 14 April. The election is being held following the death of President Trajkovski in an air accident in February this year.

#The tragic death of President Trajkovski came as a shock to the Macedonian people and the international community. It is now important that we show solidarity and give the country all the support needed to conduct the presidential election,# says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers to Macedonia follows a request from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

After the parliamentary election in Macedonia in autumn 2002 the OSCE concluded that the election had largely been conducted in accordance with international standards; at the same time, however the Organization noted some shortcomings in media coverage during the election campaign. The OSCE also directed criticism at pressures placed on the State Election Commission by the Ministry of Interior.

The internal situation in Macedonia has improved steadily since the conflict in 2001. Ethnic reconciliation and the implementation of the peace agreement from 2001 have high priority in addition to closer ties to the EU. On 22 March Prime Minister Crvenkovski submitted an application for membership of the EU.

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Key word: 16761 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press briefing on #forgotten# humanitarian disasters

Are some humanitarian crises forgotten? Why are there differences in the relief provided to different disaster areas?

There are a great number of ongoing humanitarian crises all over the world today. In some of the disaster areas, enormous efforts are being made, while other areas do not receive the same assistance despite the fact that humanitarian needs and the number of people in distress may be equally great. Do we forget some disasters?

On Monday 29 March, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sida will hold a press seminar with Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin and the Executive Director of the UN World Food Programme (WFP), James T. Morris.

Date and time: Monday 29 March, at 10.00-11.00

Venue: Sida, Sveavägen 20, Stockholm

Please bring your press credentials.

The WFP is the world's largest humanitarian organisation. Its main task is to provide food to people who have been affected by humanitarian crises. In 2003, the WFP gave food to 110 million people in 82 countries.

James T. Morris became the tenth Executive Director of the WFP in April 2002. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has also appointed him as the Secretary-General's Special Envoy on the humanitarian crisis in southern Africa, a region now affected by severe famine. Sweden contributes just over SEK 300 million a year to the WFP.

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Key word: 16749 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Support to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has taken a decision to contribute EUR 4.3 million to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA).

IDEA is an international organisation whose main aim is to promote democracy and democratisation processes. The Institute focuses its work on three main themes: electoral systems, parties and political participation, the development of democracy, and dialogue at the initial stages of development after conflicts. Among other things, IDEA produces databases with comparative material on election laws, the organisation of elections and election turnout.

IDEA's work provides a useful overview of possible working methods for the development of well-functioning political systems. The Institute is an important actor in efforts for democracy and democratisation, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

As the Institute's host country, Sweden has taken special responsibility for its financing from the start, contributing some 50 per cent of its budget. Other major contributors to IDEA's budget include the Netherlands, Switzerland, Norway, Germany and Canada.

As well as having four non-governmental organisations as associate members, the Institute now has 21 member states and one country with observer status from all continents.

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Key word: 16743 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Stockholm

On Friday 19 March, four newly appointed Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King. The Ambassadors are from Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Japan and Singapore.

Bangladesh's newly appointed Ambassador Sabihuddin Ahmed was born in 1946 and has a Master

of Economics degree from the University of Dhaka. In 1971 he began his career within the Government Offices by serving at the Ministry of Information until 1983.

In recent years Ambassador Ahmed has held the following posts:

1991-1996 Head of the Prime Ministers Office

1996-1998 Member of the Board of a state-owned company under the Ministry of Textiles

2001 State Secretary at the Ministry of Environment and Forests

Costa Ricas newly appointed Ambassador Xinnia Luisa Guevara Contreras (concurrently accredited from Oslo) was born in 1940. She gained a degree in economics at the University of Costa Rica in 1964. Ms Guevara Contreras has been active in party politics since 1990 and has worked particularly with gender equality issues.

In recent years Ambassador Guevara Contreras has held posts including:

1985-1996 Deputy Managing Director of the domestic airline Empresa Lineas Aéreas de Canas

1999-2002 Head of the National Institute for Women

2001-2004 Member of the National Assembly of the political party Unidad Social Cristiana

Japans newly appointed Ambassador Seiichiro Otsuka was born in 1942 and after gaining a university degree in trade- and business economics, he entered his countrys Foreign Service in 1966.

In recent years Ambassador Otsuka has held the following posts:

1991 Consul-General, Consulate-General of Japan in Edinburgh

1992 Minister, Embassy of Japan in Bangkok

1995 Director-General for Cultural Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

1997 Consul-General, Consulate-General of Japan in New York

1999 Minister, Embassy of Japan in Washington

2000 Ambassador to Sri Lanka, concurrently accredited to the Maldives

Singapores newly appointed Ambassador Quek Poh Huat (concurrently accredited from Singapore) was born in 1946. He gained a Bachelor of Science degree at the University of Leeds in the United Kingdom in 1964 and a Masters degree from the Naval Postgraduate School in California in 1974. Ambassador Quek worked at the Ministry of Defence 1974-1981. He was head of Singapore Aerospace Ltd 1981-1984, and chairman of the Singapore Institute of Standards & Industrial Research 1985-1994. From 1983 until 1995 the Ambassador was chairman of Singapore Aerospace Ltd and from 1993 to 1995 also of Singapore Technologies Holdings Pte Ltd. He has also held posts on the boards of a number of companies in Singapores business sector and is today chairman of the national holding company Temasek.

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Key word: 25705 Foreign policy and international cooperation Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Activities of the Council of Europe

Today the Government is presenting a Communication to the Riksdag on the activities of the Council of Europe in 2003. In the Communication the Government gives an overall picture of Council of Europe activities and provides information on Sweden's policy in the organisation. The task of the Council of Europe is to promote respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law. By promoting the rights of the individual the organisation contributes to peace, stability and security, comments Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds in the introduction to the Communication.

During the 1990s the challenge faced by the organisation was the rapid growth of its membership. That expansion is now largely over.

In the next few years the major task for the Council of Europe will be to define the organisation's role in a changed Europe, whose characteristics include the expansion of the European Union and of NATO. In addition, a necessary reform of the European Court of Human Rights is high on Sweden's agenda.

The Council of Europe was set up in 1949 and since 1989 it has become a pan-European organisation with its 45 members states. The aims of the organisation include working to contribute to increased security and stability in Europe by defending human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

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Key word: 16734

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden increases its support to the Special Court for Sierra Leone

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has decided to increase its support to the Special Court for Sierra Leone by a further SEK 1 million. This means that Sweden's total grant for 2004 will be SEK 5 million.

The Special Court plays an important role with regard to promoting respect for human rights and

dealing with the culture of lawlessness that characterises the region. The most serious crimes committed in Sierra Leone against international humanitarian law and certain domestic laws after November 1996 are referred to the Court. Up to now action has been filed against eleven of those who were most responsible during the conflict in the country.

The Special Court was set up in an agreement between the United Nations and the Sierra Leonean government in 2000. Its activities began in 2002 and will continue for three years. Sweden contributed SEK 3.5 million when the Court was established and gave SEK 4 million in 2003 to help finance its activities.

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Key word: 16722 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports defence environment cooperation with Central Asia, southern Caucasus and Ukraine

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has decided to allocate SEK 876 000 to the Swedish Armed Forces to carry out three cooperation projects in the defence environment field.

The projects are intended for Ukraine and the countries in Central Asia and southern Caucasus. The aim of this cooperation is to increase environmental awareness in the armed forces of these countries.

#Cooperation on security promotion with Ukraine, Central Asia and southern Caucasus is important. In these countries there is both a need and an interest in learning more about the defence environment field. It is particularly positive that Sweden is providing training programmes of this kind in cooperation with Lithuania, # says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

#In Sweden we have made good progress in work on defence environment issues. This is a field where it is very important to share knowledge and experience in order to also learn more ourselves, # says Minister for Defence Leni Björklund.

The projects include the translation and adaptation of the Swedish defence environment handbook to Ukrainian conditions, finance for a training conference on the restoration of the environment at former military bases and support for a defence environment training programme to be held at the training centre in Nemencine in Lithuania.

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Key word: 16721 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New cooperation between Sweden and Namibia

#Now we are taking another step in our relations with Namibia # from development cooperation to broader cooperation,# said State Secretary Annica Söder after the conclusion of first meeting of a newly formed Swedish-Namibian Working Group.

The Group, which has been set up on the initiative of both Governments, will work to broaden and deepen cooperation between Sweden and Namibia now that bilateral development cooperation is being phased out.

This broader cooperation will take a range of forms from business deals to increased contacts and cooperation between authorities, NGOs and individuals in both countries. Focal points will now be set up in Sweden and Namibia to identify proposals for future cooperation.

Action to spread information on HIV/Aids and alleviate the consequences for the people affected form a central part of this broader cooperation.

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Key word: 16720

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Barbro Holmberg to visit the Baltic countries and Russia

On 22#24 March Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg will visit Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia.

Two press meetings with the Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy will be arranged during the visit:

A press breakfast on Tuesday 23 March at 07.30 at Hotell Narutis, Vilnius, Lithuania, and a press meeting on Wednesday 24 March at 14.00 in Stormaktsrummet, Swedish Embassy, Tallinn, Estonia.

The programme includes:

Monday 22 March

Riga, Latvia

09.00 Visit to the Border Police Authority

10.15 Visit to the Migration Board

11.25 Meeting with Minister for the Interior Maris Gulbis

Vilnius, Lithuania

14.45 Meeting with Minister for the Interior Virgilijus Bulovas

15.15 Visit to the Migration Board

16.30 Visit to the Border Police Authority

17.30 Inauguration of the Anna Lindh Room at the Institute of International Affairs

Tuesday 23 March

Vilnius

07.30 Press breakfast

Venue: Hotell Narutis

St Petersburg, Russia

12.30 Visit to the Visa Section at the Consulate-General

15.00 Meeting with Vice Governor A. G. Tjernenko

16.30 Meeting with Head of the St Petersburg Migration Service A. N. Babikov

Wednesday 24 March

Tallinn, Estonia

10.30 Meeting with Minister for the Interior Margus Leivo and Head of the Migration Authority

Mari Pedak

14.00 Press meeting

Venue: Stormaktsrummet, Swedish Embassy

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to give budget support to Nicaragua

The Government decided today to grant SEK 60 million in budget support in 2004 for Nicaragua's policy to reduce poverty in the country.

Swedish budget support is a form of direct assistance extended to countries that pursue sound, responsible economic policies with a clear poverty reduction orientation. The purpose of this support is to assist countries implement their poverty reduction policies.

Nicaragua has shown determination and has taken steps to prioritise its poverty strategy. These steps include everything from measures to deal with macroeconomic imbalances to fighting corruption, says Carin Jämtin.

Sweden will support Nicaragua by assisting the country in its implementation of the World Bank reform programme which includes poverty reduction loans. The emphasis of the programme lies in institutional reforms within the public sector.

By providing budget support to Nicaragua, Sweden is helping in the fight to halve poverty by 2015 in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals, says Ms Jämtin.

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Key word: 16690 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Focus on Sweden's cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace

The Government today submitted a communication to the Riksdag on Sweden's cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) and the Partnership for Peace (PfP) (Govt. communication 2003/04:84).

The communication reports on the development of this cooperation and the new situation facing the

partner countries# cooperation with NATO. The communication also describes Sweden#s interests within the framework of this cooperation and how they can best be looked after in the future. In addition to collaboration in peace-support operations, cooperation takes place between partner countries# rescue services, civil defence and contingency planning. Sweden#s participation in the EAPC/PfP is based on Sweden#s non-participation in military alliances.

Forty-six countries are participating in EAPC/PfP cooperation. The EAPC and PfP are not independent institutions, but are linked to the NATO structure. The PfP has become particularly important as an instrument for the countries taking part when coordinating, preparing and training their forces prior to participation in peace-keeping operations. The EAPC was set up in 1997 as the political framework for PfP cooperation and represents a forum for consultation on various issues between NATO and the partner countries.

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Key word: 16675 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds and 25 women leaders condemn violence against women

At the UN Conference on Human Rights in Geneva, 25 women foreign ministers and leaders have agreed today to work towards violence against women being the main issue.

This morning the foreign ministers presented a joint declaration opposing violence against women. The ministers also agreed to use their speeches during the conference to campaign against such violence.

The message in the speeches is that women today are subjected to violence in many different forms. It is reported that

- female genital mutilation and similar violations affect 100 million women and girls every year
- sexual violence against women is widespread in armed conflicts

- trafficking in human beings is a growing threat to women and girls
- a large number of cases of violence against women in the home are not reported.

In her speech to the conference, Laila Freivalds said #Violence against women is not a women's issue. Everyone has a responsibility to act. The lack of interest in women's rights that exists in many quarters must be overcome and replaced by involvement. Declarations on women's rights must be followed up with action. We call on politicians and civil society all over the world to work together to ensure that women's rights are fully respected.#

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Key word: 16673 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to address the UN in Geneva

On 16 March the Minister for Foreign Affairs will address the annual session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, which is opening in Geneva today. In her address Laila Freivalds will highlight the discussion at the Stockholm International Forum in January on the importance of strengthening the capacity of the United Nations and other actors to take forceful action to prevent genocide and ethnic cleansing. The Minister for Foreign Affairs will also take up the question of violence against women and the need to work to prevent such violence in all its forms, not least female genital mutilation, which is still practised in a number of countries.

Laila Freivalds will also address the UN Conference on Disarmament on Tuesday 16 March. In her speech she will draw particular attention to the need for continued action to deal with weapons of mass destruction and urge members of the Conference on Disarmament to act to enable the Conference to resume its work.

During her visit to Geneva Laila Freivalds will also take part in a meeting of women ministers for foreign affairs.

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Key word: 16665 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden hosts international conference on corporate social responsibility

On 22-23 March, Sweden will host an international conference on corporate social responsibility entitled "Development Cooperation and Corporate Social Responsibility - Exploring the Role of Development Cooperation Agencies".

The Conference has been organised by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs together with Sida, the World Bank, the International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF), an international business organisation, and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), an international NGO working with development and environmental issues.

The aim of the conference is to draw attention to and discuss the effects of corporate social responsibility with regard to poverty reduction and respect for fundamental principles and norms such as human rights.

Representatives of governments, the UN, the business sector, trade unions and NGOs will take part in the conference. Among those taking part are Georg Kell, Head of the UN Global Compact initiative, Oded Grajew from Instituto Ethos in Brazil and initiative-taker of the World Social Forum, Halimah Yacob from the NTUC, a central trade union organisation in Singapore, Niel Kearney from the Federación Internacional de Trabajadores del Textil, Vestuario y Cuero, a global textile workers union, and representatives from the Global Witness and OXFAM organisations.

A press briefing will take place with Carin Jämtin, Georg Kell, Oded Grajew and Halimah Yacob.

Date and time: 22 March at 10:45

Venue: Polstjärnan konferens, Sveavägen 77

Two seminars will also take place in connection with the conference:

Monday 22 March, 15.00-17.00 with Georg Kell, Erik Belfrage (SEB), Axel Wenblad (Skanska) and Lisbeth Kohls (ICA). The seminar is directed at the business sector and will be held jointly with the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC).

Tuesday 23 March, 11.30-13.00 with Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin, Oded Grajew and Ingrid Schullström (H&M), Georg Kell and an international trade union representative. The seminar is open to all those who are interested.

The conference is part of preparations for the summit meeting on corporate social responsibility to be hosted by Kofi Annan on 24 June 2004.

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Key word: 16664 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to take part in demonstration in Madrid

Minister for Foreign Affairs Leila Freivalds is travelling to Madrid today to take part in the major demonstration this evening against terrorism and for solidarity with the victims of terrorism. Representatives of a number of European governments are expected to take part in the demonstration.

Almost 200 people died in yesterday's terrorist attacks in central Madrid, and 1500 were injured.

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Key word: 16639 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government presents communication on transition rules for workers from new EU countries

Today the Government is presenting a written communication to the Riksdag with proposals for special work permit rules for a transition period for workers from the new EU Member States. The Government's proposals will mean more transparency. Workers from all over the new EU are entitled to come to work here. But the job should be a proper one with pay meeting the terms of a collective agreement. Labour permits must be applied for from the country of origin. There must be a formal job offer. Housing should have been arranged prior to entry. If there is any doubt about the seriousness of an employer, it will be possible to control the payment of taxes and social contributions. These are rules that will enable us to prevent people from the new Member States from being exploited on the labour market.

The Government considers that labour market testing is unnecessary at present. However, should there be serious disturbances on the labour market, the Government intends to reintroduce labour market testing for new Member States.

The Government's ambition is that the transition period should be as short as possible. Within two years, the Government will report back to the Riksdag on this issue. This is why the communication also contains a programme of action to prepare for completely free movement.

The package of measures presented in the communication falls into three areas:

1. Scope for evading labour market rules will be limited

- The Swedish Tax Agency will be assigned the task of more effective control when issuing F-tax cards and of F-tax card holders. A report on this assignment is to be presented by 30 November 2004 at the latest.
- A group consisting of representatives of the social partners and the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications is working on the question of staffing agencies. The issue of authorisation of staffing agencies is among questions being discussed.
- At the Ministry of Finance, work is currently being undertaken to review the possibility of allowing principal contractors to be responsible for subcontractors' taxes and social security contributions.
- The Act on Codetermination at Work may also need to be amended so that trade unions have insight into and information on compliance with collective agreements even if an employer has no trade union members on the staff.
- The possibility of ratifying ILO Convention 94 aimed at preventing social dumping will be looked into.

2. Improvements will be made in the control and follow up of the labour market

- Today, controls made of employment certificates for workers in the EU are rather basic. The Swedish Migration Board will be assigned the task of reviewing ways of improving the control of employment certificates.
- The Swedish Migration Board and the Swedish Tax Agency will be commissioned to review what can be done to check more efficiently that self-employed people are genuinely engaged in business activities and to control their ability to support themselves.
- The National Labour Market Board together with the Swedish Migration Board and the social partners have been assigned the task of proposing how continuous monitoring of developments on the labour market could be organised. This would make it possible to discover disturbances threatening employment in a specific region or industry.
- The Swedish Unemployment Insurance Board (IAF) will report every three months on the number of EU certificates issued for unemployment benefit in Sweden. The IAF has also been assigned the task of proposing further measures to avoid abuse of the unemployment insurance system.
- The Swedish Working Environment Authority will analyse the problems that may arise in the working environment at companies or entrepreneurs registered abroad.

3. Welfare must function for everyone in this country and for those coming here

- EU citizens are entitled to go to any EU country they like and seek work. While there, the unemployment insurance of the country of origin applies, but if this compensation is very low, the

Swedish Social Services Act may come into play. We have to change this, and this is why an Inquiry is being appointed to review the concept of #stay# as used by the social services.

· To avoid a person obtaining benefits from several systems simultaneously, we shall examine the implementation of the EU#s coordination rules. This is also important in order to prevent people from losing their insurance coverage by falling between two countries# insurance systems.

· In the longer term, Sweden needs to review its national welfare systems in order to adapt them to a globalised world.

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Key word: 16638 Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to the African Union#s first peace-keeping mission in Burundi

The Government decided today to allocate a grant of SEK 3 million to the African Union#s peace-keeping force in Burundi.

In recent years, African countries and their cooperation organisations have shown a greater willingness and preparedness to deal with conflicts on the continent themselves. The relatively newly established African Union (AU) is in the process of building up a crisis management capacity of its own. The mission in Burundi is the organisation#s first independent peace-keeping operation. #The Swedish contribution is part of the Government#s efforts to strengthen African capacity to prevent and manage conflicts. A solution to the conflict in Burundi is vital for peaceful, stable development in the region,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

A civil war between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups broke out in Burundi in 1993. Despite the peace agreement of 2000, fighting by some rebel groups that are not party to the agreement has continued. Following new progress in the peace process, the AU decided at the beginning of 2003 to send a peace-keeping force to Burundi to monitor the peace agreement. The African force has been in place in Burundi since May last year and consists today of around 2 600 troops.

The UN Security Council has expressed its support for the AU force in Burundi and Secretary-General Kofi Annan has urged the member states to contribute to financing the mission. Sweden is already giving considerable support to peace and reconciliation in the

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Key word: 16637 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Grant for special promotion initiatives in Iran

The Government has today decided to allocate SEK 400 000 to special promotion initiatives to stimulate trade and economic exchange between Sweden and Iran in 2004.

#Iran is a very clear example of the opportunities that also more distant markets offer Swedish enterprises,# says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

#The rate of increase in trade between Sweden and Iran is exceptional. Swedish exports to Iran were as much as 52 per cent higher in 2003 than in 2002.#

Today#s decision is a result of the meeting of the Sweden-Iran Joint Commission that took place in Teheran in December 2003 in connection with a visit to Iran by a delegation from the Swedish business sector headed by Mr Pagrotsky#s State Secretary Sven-Eric Söder.

The funds will be placed at the disposal of the Swedish-Iranian Chamber of Commerce (SICC).

They will be used for seminars in Sweden and Iran, delegation visits and other cooperation promotion projects in various business areas including pharmaceuticals, information technology and environment.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Sri Lanka

The Government has today instructed the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency to recruit and train one long-term and three short-term observers to monitor the upcoming parliamentary election. The Swedish observers will be members of the joint EU election observation team.

The background of the mission is that the President of Sri Lanka dissolved the country's parliament on 7 February 2004 and called new elections, to be held on 2 April 2004. Sri Lanka's Elections Commissioner has invited the EU to send election monitors to observe the election.

It's important that the EU and its members heed Sri Lanka's request for election monitoring. An election result that everyone feels is fair and that cannot be called into question can establish the conditions needed for a resumption of the suspended peace talks, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The long-term observers are to serve for a period of five weeks in March-April and the short-term observers for about ten days, provisionally in early April. The EU Commission will finance the mission, apart from wages and training, which will be paid for by the Member States involved.

After close to 20 years of conflict, for the past two years a ceasefire has been in effect between the government and the Tamil Tigers (LTTE) in the northern and eastern parts of the country. However, at present the peace negotiations are at a standstill. The election was called as a result of differences between the President and the Prime Minister regarding the conduct of the peace talks.

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Key word: 16635 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Initiative for exports to dynamic markets

#We need to raise our profile on the dynamic markets around the world that are going to play an increasingly important role in the future.#

Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky made this comment following a Government decision today to allocate SEK 3 million for special export promotion initiatives in a number of dynamic markets during 2004. The aim is to enhance the ability of eleven embassies and consulates-general to promote exports in countries with interesting potential for Swedish companies and their products and services.

#In order to compete, more and more Swedish companies must invest in new markets, often markets that traditionally have not been very important,# says Leif Pagrotsky.

The embassies and consulates-general where the Government wants to stimulate export promotion work are Beijing, Brasilia, Canton, Hong Kong, Moscow, New Delhi, Pretoria, St Petersburg, Santiago de Chile, Shanghai and Teheran.

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Key word: 16633 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds condemns bomb attacks in Madrid

Early this morning, a series of bomb attacks took place in central Madrid, Spain. Sweden condemns these acts of terror.

#The terror attacks in Madrid are an attack not only against the Spanish people, but also against democracy and against all of us in Europe and the values that we stand for and defend. I would like to express my deep sympathy with the victims of these terrible attacks, with their families and with the Spanish Government,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press conference on transition rules for workers from the new EU member states

Tomorrow, Friday 12 March, the Government will present to the Riksdag the written communication Special rules for a transition period for workers from the new Member States under the Treaty of Accession (Skr 2003/04: 119). The Ministry for Foreign Affairs will be holding a press conference in conjunction with the presentation of this communication.

Date and time: Friday 12 March, 9 am

Venue: Bella Venezia, Rosenbad, Stockholm

Participants:

Barbro Holmberg, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy

Hans Karlsson, Minister for Working Life

Please bring your press credentials.

You can also see the press conference live and after the webcast on the Internet at www.regeringen.se and www.ud.se

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Key word: 16606 Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Yearbook on the EU 2003: Enlargement and work on a new

Treaty

Today the Government submitted the annual report on its work in the European Union to the Riksdag.

Activities during 2003 were characterised by the work of the Convention and the Intergovernmental Conference, and by the work on a new Treaty which aims to ensure more effective decision-making in the enlarged Union. During the year a strategic three-year working programme for the Council was adopted for the first time, as was a Security Strategy for the Union.

The Treaty of Accession was signed by the ten new Member States on 14 April. The day after the signing, the ten acceding states, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Hungary, participated in the EU Council meeting as active observers.

Work to promote sustainable development, work which links economic reforms, employment and social issues as well as environmental awareness, continued within the framework of the Lisbon strategy. Considerable progress was made through the adoption of new employment guidelines, the creation of a single energy market for households and companies, and agreements being reached on the Single European Sky, trade in the allocation of emission rights and common regulations for energy taxation.

The report also describes the work within all Union policy areas throughout the year.

The Government's report on its work in the EU during 2003 will serve as the basis for a parliamentary debate during the spring.

The report is available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website www.ud.se and will also be available in libraries. Later in the spring a short version of the Yearbook on the EU will be distributed to upper secondary schools, organisations and the mass media. The short version will also be available in English.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Election observers to Indonesia

The Government decided yesterday to send ten election observers to monitor the parliamentary and presidential elections in Indonesia, within the framework of the EU Commission's election

observation mission.

Indonesia is to hold its third free parliamentary elections on 5 April. The first round of the presidential election will take place on 5 July, with a second round, if needed, on 20 September. Just over 300 foreign observers will be monitoring the elections. Apart from the EU, whose mission is the largest, Australia, Japan, the United States and Canada will also be participating. In addition, observers will come from a large number of Indonesian and foreign NGOs.

It's important that both the parliamentary and the presidential election are conducted in a free and democratic manner. By sending election observers, Sweden can contribute to the development of a functioning electoral system in the country, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Indonesia has experienced major changes over the past five years. The first democratic elections were carried out in 1999, after the fall of General Suharto. Although a far-reaching process of reform has been under way since then, the heritage of the long period of authoritarian rule lives on and corruption is widespread. Domestic turbulence has also affected the pace of reforms.

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Key word: 16586 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Director-General for SWEDAC

The Government has today appointed former State Secretary Hans-Eric Holmqvist as the new Director-General of the Swedish Board for Accreditation and Conformity Assessment (SWEDAC) for the period 1 May 2004#30 April 2010.

Mr Holmqvist, who was born in 1954, was formerly State Secretary at the Ministry of Justice. At present he is engaged in a review of the organisation and financing of the Swedish market control system.

SWEDAC, the Swedish Board for Accreditation and Conformity Assessment, is a government agency answerable to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Apart from serving as the national accreditation body, its tasks are to coordinate, supervise, and provide advice and information about issues of control.

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Key word: 16561 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Activities of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in 2003

Today the Government is submitting a Communication to the Riksdag on the activities of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in 2003.

#Last year it was particularly important that the OSCE was able to adopt an action plan to combat trafficking in human beings. Sweden has been one of the driving forces behind the adoption of this plan and won support for the appointment of a senior official to monitor implementation,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

Other examples of important results achieved by the OSCE during 2003 are a new strategy to address threats to security and stability in the twenty-first century and an action plan to improve the situation of Roma and Sinti in the OSCE area.

In the Communication the Government gives an overall picture of OSCE activities and provides information on Sweden#s policy towards and involvement in the Organization.

#It is important to highlight the important work being done by the OSCE, not least in the field in the form of conflict prevention and support for democracy development and respect for human rights,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

The OSCE is operating field missions in a total of 16 countries. By its presence on the ground the OSCE can take practical action to promote democracy, human rights, rule of law, and tolerance between ethnic groups. The ultimate aim is to promote stability and development throughout the OSCE area. Sweden supports OSCE field activities in a number of ways, including the secondment/provision of personnel and election observers and funding for various types of projects in the area of conflict prevention.

During 2003 Sweden provided a total of 50 election observers for OSCE election monitoring missions to Albania, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro, Georgia and Azerbaijan.

Sweden also contributed a total of more than SEK 4 million to a range of conflict prevention projects, including police training in Kyrgyzstan, a mine clearance project in Tajikistan, projects to combat human trafficking in Uzbekistan and environmental projects in the Western Balkans.

The Government#s Communication is available in Swedish on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website: www.ud.se

With its broad membership the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is an important means of establishing long-term security in Europe. All European States participate in the OSCE, as do Canada, the United States and the Central Asian States # at present 55 countries in all. The OSCE#s approach to security is comprehensive, and its activities comprise three dimensions:

politico-military matters, democracy and human rights, and economy and environment.

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Key word: 16542

PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to honour Macedonia's President

Minister for Foreign Affairs Ms Leila Freivalds is to attend the funeral of the President of Macedonia, Mr Boris Trajkovski, on Friday 5 March. The ceremony will take place in Skopje. The Macedonian President died in an air accident on 26 February.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-03-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to a press seminar on transitional regulations

In preparation for the enlargement of the EU, the Government considers that Sweden needs to introduce transitional regulations concerning free movement of labour. But what are the regulations that apply to labour immigration today? What is the context for transitional regulations?

Director-General for Migration and Asylum Policy Ola Henrikson invites journalists to a seminar on transitional regulations and the context. The seminar will take place in cooperation with the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications and the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.

Date and time: Wednesday 3 March, 10.30#12.00

Venue: Bella Venezia, Rosenbad, Stockholm

Please bring your press credentials!

You can also see the seminar live and after the webcast on the Internet at <http://www.ud.se> and <http://www.regeringen.se>.

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Key word: 16523

PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to visit Russia

On 1-2 March, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is scheduled to visit Russia. During her visit, she will meet, inter alia, the Russian Acting Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov to discuss relations between the two countries and current international issues.

Sweden has close contact with Russia in many policy areas and a number of visits are made at higher political level every year.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to set up a Barents Secretariat

The Government has decided to strengthen Swedish work on issues concerning the Barents Region by setting up a Barents Secretariat.

The Secretariat will work in cooperation with the county administrative boards in Norrbotten and Västerbotten Counties. Representatives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the two county administrative boards will be members of the Secretariat and will work from Luleå, Umeå and Stockholm.

I welcome the Barents Secretariat as an important contribution to strengthening Swedish cooperation in the Barents Region. It is my hope that this focal point for Swedish Barents cooperation will help to promote the development of the region through coordination of Sweden's approach and actions in Barents cooperation, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds. Increased Swedish interest and participation in Barents cooperation can help to give Swedish Barents policy greater impact in cooperation with other international actors and in the EU, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

Barents cooperation at intergovernmental level was established in 1993 by representatives of the governments of the Nordic countries, the Russian government and the European Commission. At the same time, regional representatives formed a joint body for cooperation with the same aim to jointly promote the development of the region. In geographical terms the Barents region consists of 13 counties in Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. In Sweden, Norrbotten and Västerbotten are members.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in India

Today the Government appointed Inga Eriksson Fogh as Ambassador in New Dehli, India. At present, Inga Eriksson Fogh is Minister with the rank of Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York.

Inga Eriksson Fogh has served as Ambassador in Bangkok, Vientiane, Phnom Penh and Rangoon. She was Ambassador and Head of the Secretariat for the Swedish EU Presidency in 2001 and has also served at the Prime Minister's Office. Inga Eriksson Fogh has been stationed in Buenos Aires and Warsaw.

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Key word: 11395 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports UN initiative in Sudan

Internal disturbances in the Darfur province of Western Sudan have caused a large influx of refugees inside Sudan and over the border in Chad. Previously international relief organisations, including the United Nations, have been prevented from providing relief in the province. Now the United Nations has been given the opportunity to work in the province and will set up operations in three locations, El Fashir, Nyala and El Geneina.

#We are very pleased that the international community now has access to the province of Darfur, and Sweden will naturally assist the UN in this venture,# says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Sweden has received a request from the United Nations to support UN efforts in Western Sudan by setting up an office for all UN staff in the province of Darfur together with Norway, Denmark and Finland. This initiative will be carried out by the Swedish Rescue Services Agency and financed via Sida. Estimated costs are SEK 5 million and the initiative is expected to last one month. The Swedish Rescue Services Agency will send three staff members and be responsible for all equipment connected with the administration, the refugee centre, liaison and IT. In addition, the Swedish Rescue Services Agency will supply vehicles.

#Sweden is a small country, but that does not prevent us from being a major player. Our strong support for the United Nations, our commitment to international organisations and the lack of colonial ties gives us credibility. We take part in UN military missions and contribute to UN

civilian disaster missions and development assistance,# says Minister for Defence Leni Björklund.

The UN Special Representative for Sudan has requested the support of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA) for humanitarian initiatives in the province of Darfur in Western Sudan on the Chad border.

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Key word: 11376 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New strategy for the international fight against drugs

The fight against drugs is one of four priority areas for Swedish development assistance in 2004. As part of this work, the Government has adopted a new strategy, based on a Sida proposal, for cooperation with the UN body, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The aim of the strategy is to intensify and enhance the efficiency of the Swedish commitment to UN efforts to fight drugs.

The new strategy for cooperation with UNODC is based on Sweden's restrictive drug policy. Drug abuse and the production of drugs are serious threats to development in many of the world's poor countries. Through the UN, Sweden can contribute to the fight against drugs, primarily by working preventively, but also by impeding drug production and smuggling,# says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

One of the most important changes in the strategy is that Swedish financial support to the work of UNODC will now be directed at themes rather than at geographical areas, as it was previously. Two-thirds of Sweden's annual grant to UNODC will be used for projects to reduce the demand for drugs and for policy work. The remaining one-third is a basic general grant to UNODC dug-prevention work.

Sweden has long been an active partner of the UN in its work to combat drugs. Sweden is, for example, one of the largest donors to the UN drug control programme. In 2003, the grant was SEK 38.5 million, which will increase to SEK 50 million in 2004. The UNODC platform is the fight against drugs, terrorism, corruption and trafficking in human beings. Since 2002, it has been led by Antonio Maria Costa.

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Key word: 11375

PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador for Sweden's relations with Iraq

The Government has today appointed Director Karin Roxman as Ambassador with special responsibility for Sweden's relations with Iraq.

Preparations are under way to restaff the Swedish Embassy in Baghdad. In the meantime, Karin Roxman will be based in Stockholm. The timing of the restaffing depends largely on how the security situation improves in Iraq.

Karin Roxman is at present Deputy Head of the Middle East and North Africa Department. She has previously served as Consul-General in Jerusalem and at the EU Council of Ministers. Ms Roxman has also been stationed in Mozambique, Lesotho and Belgium.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden signs immunity agreement for the International Criminal Court (ICC)

Today Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds signed the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

The purpose of the Agreement is to give the Court and its actors the protection needed to enable the Court to function effectively.

The signing took place at the United Nations headquarters in New York, which Laila Freivalds is visiting for talks with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

#The International Criminal Court represents a significant advance towards strengthening international law and combating freedom from prosecution. Sweden will continue to give the Court strong support, both acting on our own and in cooperation with others, especially the European Union,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

Sweden participated very actively in the work that led up to the adoption of the Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court in July 1998 as well as in the work that enabled the Court to start its operations once its Statute had come into force on 1 July last year.

Work on drafting a Government Bill on the Privileges and Immunities Agreement is under way in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. When this work has been completed, which should be some time this spring, the Bill will be submitted to the Riksdag (the Swedish Parliament) for decision. Thereafter Sweden will be able to ratify the Agreement. So far five states have ratified the Agreement, which will enter into force after the tenth ratification.

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Key word: 11341

PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Reminder! Invitation to press meeting ahead of anti-poverty conference

On 19-20 February Sweden is hosting an international conference on the Millennium Goals and poverty reduction.

A press conference is being arranged in connection with the meeting. The participants will be Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin, the Director of the UNDP's Nordic Office, Poul Grosen, and UN Special Adviser Jeffrey Sachs.

Date and time: Thursday 19 February at 10.00.

Venue: Rosenbad Press Centre, Rosenbad 4, Stockholm

Please bring your press credentials!

You can also follow the press conference live on .

Opportunities for interviews with participants in the meeting can be arranged for Thursday and Friday, 19-20 February.

Contact: Andreas Norman, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Press, Information and Cultural Affairs Department, tel: 08-405 57 18, mobile 070-246 53 39.

An open seminar is also being held in connection with the conference.

If you wish to attend the seminar, please send notification no later than 18 February to: maria.jonten@undp.se

NB: New venue for the seminar!

Date and time: Thursday 19 April at 17.00.

Venue: Second Chamber, Riksdag, Stockholm

The conference, which is taking place in Stockholm, brings together a number of countries and UN bodies to discuss the needs of developing countries and different countries' anti-poverty policies.

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is the host for the conference and will lead discussions together with the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Mark Malloch Brown.

For more information about the conference, see .

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Global Commission on International Migration to hold its first meeting in Sweden

The Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) will hold its inaugural meeting in Sweden on 26-27 February. The Commission was initiated by United Nations Secretary-General, Mr Kofi Annan. The 15 commissioners are gathering at the invitation of the two co-chairpersons, Dr Mamphela Ramphele from South Africa and Mr Jan O. Karlsson, Sweden.

The Global Commission on International Migration is independent and comprised of 15

internationally renowned members, drawn from all regions and bringing together a wide range of migration perspectives and expertise. The Commission Secretariat is based in Geneva.

This will be the first in a series of meetings that are intended to result in a report to the UN Secretary-General and other stakeholders by the summer of 2005.

A press briefing and photo opportunity with the Commission will be arranged.

Date and time: Thursday 26 February at 08.30.

Location: the Radisson SAS Strand Hotel, Nybrokajen 9, Stockholm

In addition there will be opportunities for interviews on Thursday 19 February and Friday 20 February.

Please bring your press credentials!

If you wish to attend, please notify: Mr Andreas Norman, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, telephone +46 8-405 57 18, mobile +46 70-246 53 39

For information about the GCIM, please contact: Mr Jörgen Sandström, GCIM Secretariat, telephone +41 22-748 48 56/50, mobile +46 73-679 01 99.

Read more about GCIM and its members at .

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

State Secretary Annika Söder to visit Kenya and Uganda

State Secretary for International Development Cooperation Annika Söder is to visit Kenya and Uganda on 14-18 February.

During her visit, Annika Söder will be meeting representatives of the Kenyan and Ugandan governments for talks concerning Sweden's development cooperation with these countries.

Sweden will be increasing its development cooperation with Kenya in the coming years provided that the positive political developments in the country continue.

During her visit to Uganda, Annika Söder will sign an extension of the cooperation agreement between Sweden and Uganda. The State Secretary will also be visiting the conflict-affected areas in

the north of the country to meet for talks with humanitarian actors, among others.
Another purpose of the visit to these two countries is to hold talks with the parties concerned on the Somali peace process.

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Key word: 11282

PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to host international UN conference on poverty reduction

On 19#20 February, Sweden will host an international UN conference on poverty reduction. The purpose of the conference, which is to take place in Stockholm, is to discuss the needs of developing countries and different countries# policies for combating poverty. The conference will serve as a forum for an exchange of ideas and examples of good practice with the aim of halving poverty and fulfilling the so-called Millennium Development Goals.

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will host the conference and chair the discussions together with the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Mark Malloch Brown.

Other participants include ministers from Egypt, South Africa and Senegal, representatives of the US State Department and the EU Commission. In addition, the UN Special Adviser on the Millennium Development Goals Jeffrey Sachs, who is leading a broad-based research project within the UN, will also take part.

The Millennium Development Goals have a central role in Sweden#s new policy for global development. The #Shared responsibility# bill is a response to the international challenge to eradicate poverty. There is also a Swedish initiative # #Chance of a lifetime# # to increase understanding and willingness, nationally and internationally, to work towards fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals.

An open seminar is being organised in connection with the UN conference.

Date and time: Thursday 19 February, 17.00

Venue: Rosenbad Conference Centre, Rosenbad 1, Stockholm (subject to change)

If you wish to attend, please notify: maria.jonten@undp.se

Carin Jämtin#s address, as well as other items on the conference programme, will be webcast on

www.ud.se.

To the editorial office:

A press conference will be held in connection with the opening of the meeting. Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin, Head of the UNDP Nordic Office Poul Grosen, and UN Special Adviser Jeffrey Sachs will participate.

Date and time: Thursday 19 February, 10.00

Venue: Press Centre, Rosenbad 4, Stockholm

Please bring your press credentials!

There will be an opportunity for interviews on Thursday 19 February and Friday 20 February.

Contact: Andreas Norman, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Press, Information and Cultural Affairs Department, telephone 08-405 57 18, mobile 070-246 53 39.

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Key word: 11257 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds to visit the USA

On 17-19 February, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is scheduled to visit the USA. Her stay will begin in Washington and conclude with a visit to the UN in New York on 19 February. In Washington Laila Freivalds is to meet Secretary of State Colin Powell for talks on current political issues. Laila Freivalds will also have a meeting with the National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice.

During her visit to New York, Laila Freivalds will meet UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Their discussions will include the reform of the UN and follow-up of the Stockholm International Forum.

From Laila Freivald's programme:

Tuesday 17 February (Washington)

Meeting with Secretary of State Colin Powell

Lunch seminar at the Center for Strategic and International Studies

Meeting with former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright

Wednesday 18 February (Washington)

Meeting with National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice

Thursday 19 February (UN, New York)

Meeting with Secretary-General Kofi Annan

Meeting with Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Egeland

Meeting with Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Kieran Prendergast

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will be available to answer questions from the media in connection with the meetings with Colin Powell and Kofi Annan. The time and location for these press briefings will be announced later.

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Key word: 11256

PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to strengthen ties to motor city Detroit

The Swedish Honorary Consulate in Detroit is to be upgraded. Leif Pagrotsky, Minister for Industry and Trade, stated this when he met Michigan's Governor Jennifer Granholm in the state capital of Lansing on Tuesday morning, US time.

#This is proof of the growing importance that Michigan and Detroit have for Sweden and Swedish industry,# says Minister Leif Pagrotsky.

The industrial link between Sweden and Detroit has increased significantly in recent years. The headquarters for the owners of the Swedish car manufacturers Volvo and SAAB, Ford and General Motors, are situated here. ABB is one of the largest subcontractors to the car industry, and maintain important cooperation involving research and development. The exchange of personnel between Detroit and the region of Västra Götaland, where a large portion of the Swedish motor industry is located, is also increasing, both in the way of short-term residency and those who choose to move permanently.

Lennart Johansson has been the Swedish Consul in Detroit since 1997. As of 1 March, his title will be that of Consul-General.

#The Honorary Consul constitutes a valuable resource for promoting Swedish interests abroad and is an important complement to the regular activities of the Foreign Service,# states Leif Pagrotsky.

#I am convinced that Lennart Johansson, as Consul-General, will continue his commendable efforts in developing the important relationship between Sweden and Michigan.#

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs can open honorary consulates-general in major cities within areas of particular importance to Swedish interests. Detroit will be the fourth Consulate-General in the USA after Chicago, Minneapolis and San Francisco. In addition to these, there are also 24 Swedish honorary consulates in the country.

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Key word: 11255 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Music Export Prize to Esbjörn Svensson Trio

The 2003 prize for extraordinary services to Swedish music exports has been awarded to the Esbjörn Svensson Trio (with Esbjörn Svensson, Dan Berglund and Magnus Öström).

The prize, a glass sculpture by Bertil Vallien, was presented on Monday evening by State Secretary Sven-Eric Söder at the Swedish Grammy Awards (Grammisgalan) in Stockholm. Leif Pagrotsky, Minister for Industry and Trade, currently travelling in the USA, expressed his congratulations and read the jury's motivation from a large-screen TV.

#The Esbjörn Svensson Trio is an excellent example of the depth found in the Sweden musical landscape and have, within their genre, achieved an exceptional amount of international success,# says Leif Pagrotsky.

#Since we began awarding the Music Export Prize seven years ago, I have seen how the success for Swedish music and the industry's professionalism has served as a model for many other industries.#

The Music Export Prize was established by Leif Pagrotsky in 1998. The previous winners have been The Cardigans, Max Martin, Cheiron Productions, Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus, Roxette and The Hives. The jury consists of representatives from the business sector, the music industry and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, with the Chairman of the Board of Ericsson, Michael Treschow, serving as chair.

The jury gives the following reasons for choosing the Esbjörn Svensson Trio:

#World-class innovators and, with constantly new artistic advancements, always in cross-border motion on the musical map, this year's winner has spent ten years studiously rewriting the jazz rulebook. With exceptional talent and an unmistakable tone of Swedish blue and yellow, they excel in the role as ambassadors for Sweden on the international music arena.#

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Key word: 11254 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden promises support at donor conference for Liberia

State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren and State Secretary Annika Söder are participating in the international donor conference for Liberia that is being held today in New York. The donor conference is being led jointly by the United Nations, the United States and the World Bank.

Sweden will contribute to addressing Liberia's immediate security and humanitarian needs, so as to support the more long-term reconstruction of this war-torn country, says State Secretary Söder. Sweden's total contributions, which will amount to SEK 418 million in 2004-2005, will consist of support for reconstruction work, humanitarian measures and security-building activities. As part of the security-building efforts, the Government has proposed that Sweden should participate in the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), sending a mechanised rifle company made up of a maximum of 240 troops. This company will come under the Irish battalion that is already in place in Liberia.

State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren is taking part in the donor conference in his capacity as the EU Presidency's Special Representative in Liberia and the neighbouring countries. The EU has worked closely with the UN, the US and the West African cooperation organisation ECOWAS to bring about a credible peace process and strong UN action. The international support for the peace agreement and the reconstruction of Liberia bears witness to the strength of multilateral cooperation, says Mr Dahlgren.

Sweden is working actively to promote peace and security in Liberia in the long term. In 2003 Sweden contributed close to SEK 75 million for humanitarian and peace-support operations in the country.

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Key word: 11237

PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Russia and Georgia

The Government has decided today to send four election monitors and six election observers to Russia for the forthcoming presidential election on 14 March 2004. The Government has also decided to send two election monitors and four election observers to Georgia for the forthcoming parliamentary elections on 28 March 2004.

"By sending election observers, Sweden can contribute to the development of an efficient election system in the country," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The decision to send election observers follows a request from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in light of the elections to the Duma on 7 December last year, which failed to fulfil many of the OSCE and Council of Europe commitments.

The presidential election in Georgia on 4 January 2004 showed a significant improvement compared with the parliamentary elections in November 2003, which did not meet international norms. The conduct of the presidential election has brought Georgia closer to meeting international standards for democratic elections.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds on the explosion in Moscow

#I feel sorrow and dismay at what appears from all the evidence to have been a bomb attack in the Moscow underground today#, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds. #I also want to express my deep sympathy with the victims of this outrage.

#The place for the attack seems to have been chosen with a view to causing the maximum possible harm. This despicable act of terror must be unequivocally condemned.

#At this time, our thoughts are with the bereaved, the Russian people and all others who have suffered from this terrible deed#, says Ms Freivalds.

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Key word: 11235 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to support development in Vietnam

Today Sweden and Vietnam signed two agreements on development cooperation. These agreements are, firstly, a three-year cooperation agreement for the period March 2004 to December 2006, and secondly, an agreement on research cooperation which is to last four years. Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds, who is in Hanoi in connection with the Swedish state visit to Vietnam, signed the agreements on behalf of Sweden.

The backdrop is the decision taken by the Swedish Government on 18 December 2003 approving a new strategy for development cooperation between Sweden and Vietnam. The purpose of the research agreement is to support Vietnam's own research in biotechnology, health and rural development in different ways.

The broad objectives of Swedish development cooperation with Vietnam for the coming period are:

- to help put the country in a better position to take long-term and environmentally sustainable action to reduce poverty,

- to promote openness and development towards democracy and greater respect for human rights.

Total Swedish support to Vietnam for the three-year period (2004#2006) is estimated at approximately SEK 900 million, excluding possible budget support, credits, humanitarian projects and support for Swedish NGOs.

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Key word: 11200 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-02-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish proposal for simplifying developing country exports to EU becomes a reality

The EU Commission today launched a new function to make it easier for companies in developing countries to export their products to the EU. The idea of establishing a function of this kind was first raised by Sweden in 2002.

“Even though we have reduced customs duties in several areas, there are many competitive companies in developing countries that still do not get into the EU market. This is because EU regulations are often difficult to grasp and unnecessarily complicated,” says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

The new EU “on-line helpdesk” is intended to serve as a contact point to which exporters from developing countries can turn to obtain comprehensive information about customs duties and regulations for imports to the EU. It is meant both to help companies in developing countries with their export activities and to give EU countries a better picture of the difficulties that exist in our own market and where there is scope for simplification.

“This is an important first step towards simplifying procedures for entrepreneurs in developing countries and at the same time offering European consumers a broader and better range of products to choose from. I hope this function can be further developed in the future,” says Mr Pagrotsky. The Government is also considering establishing a national counterpart to the EU function. This could, firstly, provide support to the EU and, secondly, take up issues that are specific to the Swedish market.

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Key word: 11183 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

#Important step towards peace and stability in Somalia#

In Nairobi yesterday, the parties involved in the Somali peace process signed an agreement that paves the way for the final phase of the peace process to begin.

#It is very positive that the parties have now agreed on the charter that is designed to regulate the period of transition in Somalia. This is an important first step on the way towards a lasting peace and stability in the country. Sweden will continue to actively support the peace process#, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

The Somali peace process in Nairobi, Kenya, has been in progress for a year. Sweden has provided political and economic support to the process. Sweden is prepared to support an inclusive and balanced transitional government, for example by means of measures to promote reconstruction and reconciliation.

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Key word: 11177 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Head of United Nations Population Fund to visit Sweden

The head of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Thoraya Obaid is coming to Sweden on 4#5 February.

Thoraya Obaid will meet Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin for talks on sexual and reproductive health and associated rights. During her visit to Stockholm, Ms Obaid will also have meetings with the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and Sida. A press meeting with Ms Obaid and Ms Jämtin will be held in connection with the visit at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Date and time: Wednesday 4 February, 14.30

Venue: Assembly at the entrance to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs,
Gustav Adolfs Torg 1, Stockholm

Please bring your press credentials!

UNFPA provides support to countries to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS, to improve women#s reproductive and sexual health, and to strengthen the role of women and their influence in society. Particular attention has been paid to these issues in this year#s development cooperation budget. Sweden is making a basic contribution of SEK 270 million to UNFPA this year.

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Key word: 11176 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to give continued support to Nordic Environment Finance Corporation

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin today approved Swedish contributions of approximately SEK 20 million per year to the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO) over the period 2004-2007.

NEFCO is an effective tool for Nordic environmental policy. At the same time, it is an important source of funding, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises that are active in environmental cooperation in countries in our vicinity. It is therefore important that Sweden continues to support NEFCO's work, says Ms Jämtin.

NEFCO will be supporting new environmental projects in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The ambition is to increase the number of actions in Russia and also to extend to projects in Ukraine. The Nordic Environment Finance Corporation was founded in March 1990 as an element of Nordic cooperation on the environment. Its purpose is to participate in the funding of environmental investments in Central and Eastern Europe that have positive effects for the Nordic environment. NEFCO's contributions take the form of capital subscription, loans or guarantees. It has a capital stock currently amounting to EUR 93.3 million. Apart from Sweden, Finland, Iceland and Norway share in adding capital. NEFCO's headquarters is in Helsinki.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New WTO Ambassador at Swedish Mission in Geneva

The Government has today appointed Director Mia Horn af Rantzien as Sweden's Permanent Representative to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Geneva, Switzerland. In her new assignment she will have the title of Minister and rank of Ambassador.

Mia Horn af Rantzien will be moving to her new appointment from the International Trade Policy Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, where she has been Project Manager for the Swedish Partnership for Global Responsibility. She has previously held posts in Hanoi and Geneva and has also served in the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

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Key word: 11145 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Representatives of the Geneva Initiative visit Stockholm

Avraham Burg and Yasser Abed Rabbo are visiting Stockholm on 28-29 January. They belong to the circle that drafted the Geneva Initiative # a private initiative intended to show how it would be possible for the parties to achieve a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Avraham Burg and Yasser Abed Rabbo will meet Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds on Thursday 29 January to discuss the initiative. During their visit to Stockholm they will also meet Minister for Policy Coordination Pär Nuder, Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin and the Riksdag's Committee on Foreign Affairs.

A doorstep will be held with Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds, Avraham Burg and Yasser Abed Rabbo on Thursday 29 January. Assembly at 13.10 at the entrance to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1, Stockholm.

Please bring your press credentials!

Avraham Burg is a member of the Israeli Parliament (the Knesset) for the Labour Party and is a former speaker of the Knesset.

Yasser Abed Rabbo is a member of the Executive Committee of the PLO and former Culture and Information Minister of the Palestinian Authority.

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Key word: 11144

PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Serbia and Montenegro's Foreign Minister to visit Sweden

Serbia and Montenegro's Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic is scheduled to visit Sweden on Friday 30 January.

Svilanovic is to meet Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds, Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin, State Secretary Sven-Eric Söder and the Speaker of the Riksdag Björn von Sydow.

Svilanovic will also speak at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs at 16.00 on the theme: "Current developments and priorities in the foreign policy of Serbia and Montenegro".

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds to visit Oslo

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Laila Freivalds, is to make an official visit to Oslo on 28 January 2004.

Her programme will include an audience at the Palace and meetings with the Prime Minister, Kjell-Magne Bondevik, and Foreign Minister Jan Petersen. In addition, Ms Freivalds will meet the Speaker of the Storting, Jørgen Kosmo, and the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Thorbjørn Jagland.

The questions to be discussed will include Nordic and Nordic-Baltic cooperation, EU and EEA issues and current international issues.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Kosovo envoy to visit Sweden

The UN Secretary-General's Special Representative in Kosovo, Harri Holkeri, will be visiting Sweden on 25-26 January.

Mr Holkeri will be in Stockholm in connection with Stockholm International Forum 2004: Preventing Genocide.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will meet Mr Holkeri on Sunday afternoon for talks on Kosovo.

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Key word: 11106 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish troops to UN mission in Liberia

Unofficial translation

The Government has decided to propose to the Swedish Riksdag the dispatch of an armed unit to the UN mission in Liberia, UNMIL.

#The peace agreement reached during the autumn is an unique opportunity for bringing an end to the prolonged conflict in Liberia that has caused an enormous amount of suffering for the civilian population and has been an obstacle towards peaceful developments in the entire West African region. The UN mission has been given a clear and extensive mandate to support the peace process in the country. But in order for the UN to succeed in this, Member States must be prepared to offer dynamic assistance, # Laila Freivalds, Minister for Foreign Affairs, states.

The Government's intention is to contribute a mechanised rifle company of no more than 240 persons, which is to be incorporated in the Irish battalion already in place in Liberia. The Swedish force will therefore be part of UNMIL's reserve force, which means the Swedish contingent will participate in paving the way for the more stationary troops to be established around the country. The force will also be assigned the task of guarding and protecting UN and humanitarian organisations' activities and protecting civilians.

#Sweden can play an important role in contributing to the UN's efforts to promote peaceful developments in the country. It also sends a clear signal regarding Sweden's continued strong commitment for the prevention and management of conflicts in Africa, # Leni Björklund, Minister for Defence, states.

According to the UN's wishes, the Swedish unit should be in place before the end of February. When all 15 000 persons in the UN force are assembled during the spring, UNMIL will be the UN's largest current peacekeeping operation.

Since the autumn, Sweden has had four staff officers and six civilian police officers participating in UNMIL. In addition, Sweden is one of the largest individual humanitarian donors to Liberia, contributing SEK 26 million in 2003. Sweden is also helping with the efforts to mobilise resources for Liberia's reconstruction by actively participating in the preparations for the donor conference regarding Liberia to be held on 5-6 February 2004.

Hans Dahlgren, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, is the EU Presidency's Special Representative for the Mano River region, and in this capacity has played an active role in the efforts for peace in Liberia.

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Key word: 11105 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Human rights in the world's countries in 2003

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is today publishing reports on the human rights situation in countries around the world during 2003. These reports are available on the Government's human rights website: www.humanrights.gov.se

"Although the reports show that there are still countries where international agreements have had little or no impact, the majority of the world's countries are gradually moving towards greater respect for human rights. But it is important that we watch out for backlashes in the long-term positive trend," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"During the year, for example, the threat of terrorism has led to a deterioration in the respect for human rights and the rule of law in several countries. It is essential therefore that Sweden continues to emphasise that the fight against terrorism must be waged in accordance with international humanitarian law and human rights."

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has compiled annual reports on human rights in the countries of the world for the past several years. The reports are based on material from some hundred Swedish embassies around the world. To make the material available to everyone who is interested and involved in human rights issues # organisations and enterprises as well as private individuals # the

Ministry for Foreign Affairs decided for the first time last year to make these reports public. "The response to the publication has been predominantly positive. It has prompted exchanges between a number of different actors, both in Sweden and abroad. My hope is that these new reports will see the dialogue continue," says Laila Freivalds.

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PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission to begin its work

The Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission is to begin its work with a meeting in Stockholm on 28-30 January. The 14 Commissioners are gathering at the invitation of the Commission's Chairman Dr Hans Blix for introductory discussions on their two-year mission.

This will be the first in a series of meetings that are intended to result in a report to the UN Secretary-General at the end of 2005 or beginning of 2006. This report is expected to contain proposals for measures to minimise and eliminate the dangers of weapons of mass destruction. There will be a press briefing and photo opportunity with the Commission at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Lilla Nygatan 23, Stockholm, on Thursday 29 January at 9 a.m. If you wish to attend please notify maria.hakansson@foreign.ministry.se

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Key word: 11102

PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador to Kazakstan, Turkmenistan and Kirgizistan

The Government has today appointed Director Hans Olsson as Ambassador to Astana (Kazakhstan), Ashgabat (Turkmenistan) and Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), stationed in Stockholm. Hans Olsson's most recent appointment was as Head of the Eastern Europe Group in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has been Consul-General in St Petersburg and has also been stationed in Moscow, New York, Prague and Cairo.

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Key word: 11101 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Stockholm

On Thursday January 22, four newly appointed Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King. The Ambassadors are from Norway, Ecuador, Kyrgyzstan and Nepal. Norway's newly appointed Ambassador Odd Lauritz Fosseidbråten was born in 1946. He is a political scientist with a degree from the University of Oslo. He graduated in 1972 and began his traineeship at the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1973. The Ambassador has previously served at the Norwegian Embassy in Budapest, the Delegation to NATO in Brussels and at the Norwegian Embassy in Bonn from 1985 to 1988. Between 1979 and 1985, Ambassador Fosseidbråten was stationed at home. He worked primarily on trade issues during this period and held various positions including that of special adviser to the Minister for Trade.

In recent years the Ambassador has held the following posts:

1992#1996

Head of Division at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs responsible for bilateral trade policy/export

promotion

1996#1999

Director at the Ministry of Industry and Trade

1999#

Ambassador in Tokyo

Ecuador's newly appointed Ambassador Carlos Játiva Naranjo was born in 1959. He is a lawyer and earned a Doctor of Laws degree in 1983. The Ambassador entered his country's foreign service in 1978 and served as Second and First Secretary at the Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the United Nations between 1983 and 1989.

In recent years the Ambassador has held the following posts:

1991#1997

Counsellor and Minister at the Embassy of Ecuador and UNESCO delegation in Paris

1997#2000

Head of International Economic Affairs

2000#2002

Minister at the Embassy of Ecuador in Washington

Kyrgyzstan's newly appointed Ambassador Askar I. Sarygulov (concurrently accredited in Berlin) was born in 1956. He is an engineer with a degree in economics as well as a PhD from Leningrad earned in 1987. He was head of the Economics Faculty at the Institute of Higher Vocational Education between 1988 and 1990.

In recent years the Ambassador has held the following posts:

1990#1992

Administrative Director and Economic Adviser to the President

1992#1993

Chairman of Kyrgyzstan's Committee on Foreign Economic Affairs

1993-1996

Chairman of the Commission on Investment and Economic Assistance

1996#1997

Chairman of the State Property Fund

1998#2003 Adviser to the head of Daimler-Chrysler in Central Asia

2003

Ambassador in Berlin

Nepal's newly appointed Ambassador Prabal S.J.B. Rana (concurrently accredited in London) was born in 1939. He holds degrees from the University of New Delhi and London University, and entered his country's foreign service in 1964. The Ambassador has held postings in Rome, Islamabad, New York and London.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1992#1996

Director of SAARC Headquarters in Kathmandu

1996#1997

Head of the Foreign Ministry's Economic Affairs Division

1999

International observer at the presidential election in Sri Lanka

2002

Advisor to the Foreign Ministry for the 11th SAARC Summit in Kathmandu

2003

Ambassador in London

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Key word: 11100 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Proposal for legislative amendments to clarify the identity of asylum seekers

The Government has today proposed a number of measures to come to grips with the problem that the identity of many asylum seekers cannot be clarified. One of the proposed measures is that carriers will be required by law to check that aliens have passports and other documents that are required for entry into a country. Under this proposal the carrier will also be required to check that aliens have funds for their journey home. Carriers that do not fulfil their duty to make these checks will have to pay a charge of up to SEK 46 000.

The proposal also prescribes that it should be possible to reduce the daily and housing allowance paid to an asylum seeker who has reached the age of 18 years if he or she impedes the residence permit investigation by not helping to clarify his or her identity.

The Government also proposes that a refusal-of-entry or expulsion order shall specify the country to which the alien is to be sent.

The proposals are contained in the Government Bill "Measures to clarify the identity of asylum seekers, etc", which the Government submitted to the Riksdag today, 22 January.

The background to the bill is the dramatic increase in the lack of documents among asylum seekers. In 1996, 34 per cent of asylum seekers lacked a passport or other identity documents and by 2002 this figure had risen to 88 per cent.

Read the bill at www.ud.se

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Key word: 11099 Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to speak at the World Social Forum

On Monday 19 January, Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is to speak to an audience of about 8 000 people at the World Social Forum in Mumbai, India. Her speech will focus on the importance of global solidarity.

The World Social Forum (WSF) is the "alternative globalisation movement's" answer to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. The WSF primarily targets social movements, trade unions and NGOs with the aim of promoting dialogue and strengthening ties between actors in social development.

"Sweden is receptive to the discussions that take place at the World Social Forum and attaches importance to a constructive debate on globalisation in different arenas and with different actors," says Carin Jämtin.

The WSF has been held three years running in Porto Allegre, Brazil, and has been constantly expanding. The meeting in Mumbai is expected to be attended by about 75 000 people.

To the editorial office: If you would like to get in touch with the Minister for International Development Cooperation during her visit to India, please contact her press secretary, John Zanchi: tel. +46 70-260 26 64.

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Key word: 11055 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Gaborone

The Government has today appointed the Minister in Madrid, Annika Jaganda, as Ambassador in Gaborone, Botswana.

Annika Jagander has previously been stationed in Havana, Washington and New York. She has also served on the Riksdag's Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Download photo

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Key word: 11054 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to visit Bangladesh and India

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin is visiting Bangladesh and India on 16-23 January. The purpose of her trip is to visit development cooperation projects that Sweden is supporting and to meet representatives of the governments of the two countries for talks on development cooperation and other issues.

The trip will begin with a visit to Bangladesh, where Carin Jämtin will take part in a conference on the global economy held by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC). During her visit she will also meet the country's Foreign Minister and other representatives of the Government of Bangladesh. Carin Jämtin will also visit a number of projects that are receiving development assistance, including a women's clinic in Dhaka.

The Minister for International Development Cooperation will then travel on to India, where she will take part in the World Social Forum in Mumbai and meet representatives of trade unions and civil society. During her stay she will also visit some projects in Mumbai and the state of Rajasthan that are receiving development assistance, including a water purification project. Carin Jämtin will end her trip by meeting India's Ministers of Finance and of External Affairs in New Delhi.

Sweden places great emphasis on relations with India and Bangladesh and is keen to have a continued dialogue with both countries on global development issues. Sweden has extensive development cooperation with Bangladesh and India focussing on environment, health and education.

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Key word: 11053 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Palestinian National Authority's Foreign Minister to visit Sweden

The Palestinian National Authority's Foreign Minister Dr Nabil Shaath is visiting Sweden on 13 January at the invitation of Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds. The visit is part of a European tour which also includes visits to London, Dublin and Berlin.

In Stockholm Dr Shaath will meet Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and officials. Their talks will mainly deal with the possibilities of reversing the negative developments concerning the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

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Key word: 11017 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2004-01-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Crown Princess Victoria and Cabinet Minister Gunnar Lund to visit Saudi Arabia with Swedish business delegation

Minister for International Economic Affairs and Financial Markets Gunnar Lund is to head a large delegation representing the Swedish business community which is visiting Saudi Arabia on 17-19 January. The delegation will also include Crown Princess Victoria.

The delegation is to participate in the fifth Jeddah Economic Forum on 19 January, at which Gunnar Lund will speak on the Swedish welfare model. Other speakers will include former US President Bill Clinton, the Prime Minister of Turkey and Queen Rania of Jordan. In all, some 15 Swedish companies and business organisations have signed up for the trip.

Talks with Crown Prince Abdullah and representatives of the Saudi Government have been provisionally scheduled for 17-18 January in Riyadh.

#Saudi Arabia is Sweden's largest trading partner in the Middle East, with Swedish exports worth close to SEK 6 billion#, says Gunnar Lund. #Many Swedish companies have long been active in the country and this visit is intended to promote their and other activities. I see very good chances of further trade expansion and of extending trade to new areas such as IT and environmental protection.

#This trip also serves to confirm the good relations between our two countries, as demonstrated most recently by the visit of Crown Prince Abdullah to Stockholm in May 2001. The Crown Prince is one of the people behind our visit#, says Gunnar Lund.

Swedish imports from Saudi Arabia consist mainly of crude oil, to a value fluctuating between SEK 2 billion and SEK 300 million per year.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Director-General for Migration and Asylum Policy

Today the Government appointed Director Ola Henrikson as Director-General for Migration and Asylum Policy at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Ola Henrikson's most recent appointment was as Deputy Head of the Department for Migration and Asylum Policy.

He will take up his new post on 1 January 2004.

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Key word: 10968

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to support Iraqi police training

The Government decided today to contribute ten Swedish police instructors to a training programme for Iraqi policemen in Ammam, Jordan.

"The serious security situation in Iraq represents a decisive obstacle to normalisation of the country and is a contributory factor in preventing international aid efforts from being implemented effectively," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

"Priority must be given to measures to improve security and an efficient Iraqi police service is a step in the right direction."

It is considered that an Iraqi police force should consist of around 70 000 police officers. At present there are about 30 000 in the force. To meet this need, a programme for intensive training of Iraqi policemen has been organised at a police training college in Ammam, Jordan. Next year, up to 30 000 Iraqis will undergo intensive police training. To be able to carry out this training programme, a large number of international instructors will be required.

The training programme follows a model previously used successfully in, for example, Kosovo and Timor-Leste, where Swedish police officers also participated.

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Key word: 10967

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to support continued integration in Estonia

The Government decided today to contribute SEK 800 000 to the "Integrating Estonia 2002#2004" programme. The aim of the programme is to promote integration of the Russian-speaking minority in Estonia.

"Estonia has been working systematically to integrate the Russian-speaking population and these efforts have given good results. It is natural that Sweden should give its continued support in the final year of this valuable programme," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

One-third of Estonia's population is Russian-speaking and poor knowledge of the Estonian language is a great obstacle to citizenship. The programme, which is run by the Estonian government, includes courses in Estonian for Russian inhabitants, information on how to obtain Estonian citizenship and various labour market measures.

Sweden is one of the largest donors to the integration process in Estonia and since 1993 has contributed over SEK 10 million. Swedish support has gone, inter alia, to co-financing a Nordic UNDP project over the period 1998 # 2000, and a number of bilateral initiatives for adult education in Estonian for Russian inhabitants and support to the promotion of integration in the media.

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Key word: 10966 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Royal couple to pay state visit to Vietnam and Brunei

King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will be making a state visit to Vietnam on 2#7 February 2004 at the invitation of President Tran Duc Luong, and to Brunei on 7#9

February 2004 at the invitation of Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah. Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will be taking part on behalf of the Swedish government. The official delegation will include State Secretary Jonas Bjelfvenstam, Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, and State Secretary Krister Nilsson, Ministry of the Environment. The latter will also participate in Brunei.

At the same time, Swedish business delegations will also be visiting both countries. The programme in Vietnam will include visits to Hanoi, Hué and Ho Chi Minh City, and in Brunei the capital Bandar Seri Begawan and Belalong National Park in Temburong.

To the editorial office:

Media representatives wishing to cover the state visit must be accredited. Further information and an accreditation form will be available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website www.ud.se the next few days.

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Key word: 10965 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Brasilia

The Government has today appointed Ambassador Margareta Winberg as Sweden's envoy in Brasilia, Brazil.

At present, Margareta Winberg is serving in the Americas Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. She will be Sweden's first woman Ambassador to Brazil. Her former post was that of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister responsible for gender equality policy. She has previously served as Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Labour and Chairman of the Federation of Social Democratic Women in Sweden.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden invests in strengthened cooperation with Hungary

Unofficial translation

The Government decided today to allocate SEK 5.9 million to a special promotion in Hungary next year.

The project, entitled #Swedish-Hungarian meetings in 2004#, aims to increase political dialogue between Sweden and Hungary. Another objective is for the Swedish business sector to highlight Hungary as a potential market.

Of the SEK 5.9 million allocation, SEK 2 million will go to the Swedish Institute for the promotion of an exchange of knowledge between Sweden and Hungary.

The sum of SEK 2.9 million has been allocated to promote regional twinning cooperation between Sweden and Hungary. The funds will be divided between Stockholm and the Mälardalen region, and the counties of Värmland, Västernorrland and Örebro.

SEK 1 million will go to supporting networks between municipalities and regions, associations, organisations and other institutions in both countries.

Grants for activities may be sought through the Swedish Association of Local Authorities# development agency Sala Ida (www.salaida.com) as from 2004.

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Key word: 10963

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden first in the world with cohesive development policy

The Riksdag decided yesterday to adopt the Government Bill #Shared responsibility: Sweden's policy for global development# (2002/03:122). The Bill means that the objectives of development policy for equitable and sustainable development now apply to policies as a whole.

#Sweden will now be the first country in the world to have a development policy in which all policy areas share the same objectives. Development assistance is only one aspect of this policy. There should also be a development perspective in such areas as international trade, security and environment policy,# says Carin Jämtin, Minister for International Development Cooperation. The Government Bill also means that the policy will be based on two perspectives: the rights perspective and the perspectives of the poor.

#Individuals have the right to control their own lives. People are participants, with the will to develop, and our policy should focus on the reality of poor people and their needs,# says Carin Jämtin.

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Key word: 10897 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Hans Blix presented Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission

Unofficial translation

Today Dr Hans Blix, former executive chairman of UNMOVIC, presented the newly established Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, which he will head. The Commission is an initiative from the Swedish Government acting upon a UN proposal. It has been set up against a background of an increased risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to state and non-state actors, and where existing international agreements, although successful in some areas, have been unable to address this evolving threat effectively.

#My ambition for this commission is that we will be able to provide realistic and constructive ideas and proposals aimed at the greatest possible reduction of the dangers of weapons of mass destruction,# states Dr Blix.

#I am very pleased with the composition of the commission. Its members, both as a collective and individually, represent great knowledge and competence within this field and have extensive experience from, and insight into the politics concerning weapons of mass destruction,# says Dr Blix.

The Commission will work independently of governments and present its final report in late 2005. The Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission will consist of the following members:

Chairman of the Commission:

Dr Hans Blix, Sweden,
Commissioners:
Dr Dewi Fortuna Anwar, Indonesia
Dr Alexei G Arbatov, Russian Federation
Ambassador Marcos de Azambuja, Brazil
Director Alyson Bailes, United Kingdom
Dr Thérèse Delpech, France
Mr Jayantha Dhanapala, Sri Lanka
Director Gareth Evans, Australia
Director Patricia Lewis, Ireland
Professor William Perry, USA
General (ret.) Vasantha Raghavan, India
Ambassador Cheikh Sylla, Senegal
Prince El Hassan bin Talal, Jordan
General (ret.) Pan Zhenqiang, China

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Key word: 10895

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-15
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Reminder: Invitation to a press conference with Hans Blix

Following an initiative by the Swedish Government, an independent and free-standing international commission on weapons of mass destruction is to be set up under the leadership of Hans Blix. The commission is to provide new impetus to international disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

At a press conference on Tuesday 16 December, Hans Blix will announce the names of the 14 members of the commission. Mr Blix will then also present the plans for the commission's work.

Date and time: Tuesday 16 December at 11.30.

Venue: Rosenbad, Bella Venezia.

Please bring your press credentials!

The press conference will be interpreted into English and can also be followed on the Government's website: www.regeringen.se

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Key word: 10869

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-15
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Macedonia's Minister for Foreign Affairs to visit Sweden

Macedonia's Foreign Minister Ilinka Mitreva is scheduled to visit Sweden on 15-16 December on the invitation of Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

Ilinka Mitreva will meet Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds. Their talks will primarily deal with Macedonia's coming application for membership of the EU.

During her visit to Sweden, Ilinka Mitreva will also visit the Riksdag and meet the Speaker of the Riksdag, Björn von Sydow.

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Key word: 10868 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to visit Sweden

The Democratic Republic of the Congo's Foreign Minister, Antoine Ghonda, is scheduled to visit Sweden on 17-20 December on the invitation of Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds. The visit is a direct follow-up of Anna Lindh's visit to Kinshasa in May 2003.

Antoine Ghonda will meet, among others, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds. Their talks will primarily focus on Sweden's and the international community's commitment to peace and security in the DR Congo and the surrounding region. During the year, there has been progress in the peace process in the DR Congo and a transition government took office in the summer. Sweden is actively supporting the peace process in the DR Congo, inter alia, through its participation in the UN peace-keeping mission MONUC.

During his visit, Antoine Ghonda will also meet Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin and representatives of the business sector and Sida.

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Key word: 10867

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press briefing with Carin Jämtin on Development Bill

On Tuesday 16 December, Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will hold a press briefing in connection with the Riksdag debate on the Bill "Shared responsibility # Sweden's policy for global development".

Date and time: Tuesday 16 December, after the Riksdag debate.

Venue: Kammarfoajén, Riksdagshuset

Please bring your press credentials.

In the Bill, the Government proposes that the objective of Sweden's policy for global development should be to contribute to equitable and sustainable global development. This objective should apply to all policy areas. The Bill proposes closer collaboration with actors in all sectors of society.

Swedish development cooperation should help create conditions that will enable the poor to improve their lives, and development assistance should complement the developing countries' own efforts to achieve development and create conditions for them to do so.

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Key word: 10865 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-14
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds welcomes the arrest of Saddam Hussein

#It is with relief I have received the news that Saddam Hussein has been arrested. I assume he will be called to account in accordance with the norms of international law,# says the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

#Saddam Hussein built up a dictatorship that presented a threat to both his own people and to the surrounding world. I assume he will be called to account for his wrongdoings. I hope the arrest will also lead to the question marks surrounding Iraq's programme for weapons of mass destruction being resolved.

#The international community must now further strengthen its efforts to support the Iraqis in building up a democratic state. Sweden will take an active part in these efforts.#

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Key word: 10864 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-14
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish business delegation to visit Iran

On 17 December, a Swedish business delegation led by State Secretary Sven-Eric Söder from the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications will visit Iran. Iran is Sweden's fastest growing export market at the moment, and during the first nine months of the year Swedish exports to Iran increased by all of 88 per cent.

Iran has traditionally been an important trading partner for Sweden, but the rate of increase in Swedish-Iranian trade we are seeing at the moment is exceptional, says Mr Söder.

Last year Sweden's exports to Iran increased by 44 per cent and this year exports are expected to amount to over SEK 5 billion. Swedish imports from Iran have also increased considerably during 2003.

The 15 companies that make up the delegation include larger engineering companies such as ABB, Alfa Laval, Atlas Copco, Ericsson, Scania and Volvo, and a number of smaller companies such as IVL and AVL-MTC which provide consultancy services in the environment area.

It is particularly gratifying that such a wide range of Swedish companies believe in this market and are prepared to invest in the future, says Mr Söder.

During the visit, the fifth meeting of the joint Sweden-Iran commission will take place. State Secretary Söder will also meet his counterparts in the Iranian Ministries for Foreign Affairs, Trade, Industry and Communications.

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Key word: 10863 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

UN High Commissioner for Refugees to visit Sweden

The UNHCR High Commissioner, Ruud Lubbers, is scheduled to visit Stockholm on 16 December. Ruud Lubbers is to meet Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg for talks including current asylum and migration issues, Sweden's grant to the UNHCR and various UNHCR initiatives.

Ruud Lubbers will also meet State Secretaries Annika Söder and Charlotte Svensson.

Sweden is contributing SEK 435 million to UNHCR this year, which makes us one of the organisation's largest donors.

To the editorial office
Invitation to press briefing with Ruud Lubbers and Barbro Holmberg
Date and time: Tuesday 16 December at 13.30
Venue: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1.
Please bring your press credentials!

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Key word: 10847

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports integration of Macedonian Roma

The Government decided today to contribute to the Macedonian Government's efforts for developing a national strategy to better integrate the Roma into Macedonian society. Macedonia has the largest Roma population in the Western Balkans, but does not yet have a national action plan targeting this group.

The governments of the region bear the responsibility for improving the conditions for these minorities. However, Sweden can help in dialogue with the governments and provide support for local projects, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The Swedish contribution of SEK 300 000 goes to the NGO Project on Ethnic Relations (PER) that, together with the Macedonian Government and leaders for the country's Roma population, are developing the national strategy.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to contribute SEK 13 million to international commission on weapons of mass destruction

The Government decided today to finance an independent and free-standing international commission on weapons of mass destruction. Sweden will contribute SEK 13 million to the commission's activities for the period 2004 and 2005.

The commission is being set up following a Swedish initiative and is to provide new impetus to the international efforts involved in disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles. Hans Blix, the former head of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), will chair the commission.

#The existence of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons represent a serious threat to international peace and security and new initiatives are needed in the efforts for disarmament and non-proliferation,# states Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

#I am convinced that the commission, under the capable leadership of Hans Blix, can help inject new energy into the global efforts aimed against weapons of mass destruction and that the commission can provide new recommendations and proposals in the field,# Laila Freivalds says.

To the editorial office: Invitation to a press conference with Hans Blix

On Tuesday 16 December, Hans Blix will hold a press conference at which the names of the 14 members of the commission will be announced. Mr Blix will then also present the plans for the commission's work.

Time: Tuesday 16 December at 11.30 am.

Venue: Rosenbad, Bella Venezia.

Please bring your press credentials!

The press conference will be interpreted into English and can also be followed on the Government's website: www.regeringen.se

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Key word: 10845 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Support to independent research on Raoul Wallenberg

The Government decided today to give SEK 175 000 in project support to the Swedish Institute of International Affairs. The support will be used to establish a project group which will spread awareness, especially outside Sweden, of the Swedish funds allocated to independent research on Raoul Wallenberg. The project group will also look into the possibility of joint research projects with Russian and Hungarian researchers primarily, but also with researchers from other countries. The project group is expected to present its findings at the end of June next year.

On 4 December, the Government decided to allocate a total of SEK 172 500 to Wilhelm Agrell, Jan Lundvik and Arkadij Vaksberg for support to various research projects on Raoul Wallenberg. In addition, Max Grunberg received SEK 28 000 for his long-term commitment and for the significance of his work for the continued investigations into the fate of Raoul Wallenberg.

A grant to independent research on Raoul Wallenberg was proposed in the Swedish-Russian inquiry into the fate of Raoul Wallenberg which was presented in January 2001. The Government has decided to allocate project support after a statement from a reference group of researchers.

Read more: www.utrikes.regeringen.se/fragor/wallenberg

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Key word: 10843

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Barbro Holmberg attends launch of global commission on migration

Today on 9 December, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg attends the launch of the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) in Geneva.

Sweden is one of the initiators of the GCIM. The main task of the Commission is to place migration

on the international agenda, to identify and analyse present international migration policy and to give recommendations on migration issues.

The Commission will be co-chaired by Jan O. Karlsson from Sweden and Mamphela Ramphele from South Africa. The Executive Director for the Commission's Secretariat is Rolf K. Jenny from Switzerland.

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Key word: 10809 Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government support to school project in Kaliningrad

Today, on 4 December, the Government decided to allocate just over SEK 1.1 million for the establishment of a folk high school in Kaliningrad.

Region Blekinge and two folk high schools in Blekinge together with Russian educational authorities in Kaliningrad plan to establish a folk high school in Kaliningrad based on the Swedish model. The project will entail an intensive exchange of knowledge on educational issues and closer contacts between Swedes and their Russian counterparts.

The project has also resulted in a network with young people from Sweden and Kaliningrad who have attended courses at folk high schools in Sweden.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Proposal for measures to clarify the identity of asylum seekers

The Government has decided today, 5 December, to refer the legislative proposal #Measures to clarify the identity of asylum seekers, etc# to the Council on Legislation.

The background to the Government's proposal is the dramatic increase in the lack of documents among asylum seekers. In 1996, 34 per cent of asylum seekers lacked a passport or other identity documents and by 2002 this figure had risen to 88 per cent.

In the proposal referred to the Council on Legislation the Government proposes that the duty of carriers to check that aliens have passports and other permit documents needed to enter the country be laid down in an Act of the Riksdag (Swedish Parliament). The carrier will also be required by law to check that aliens have funds for their journey home. Under the proposal carriers that do not fulfil their duty to make these checks will have to pay a charge of up to SEK 46 000.

In addition, the Government proposes that it should be possible to reduce the daily and housing allowance paid to an alien who has reached the age of 18 years if he or she impedes the residence permit investigation by not helping to clarify his or her identity.

Finally the Government proposes that new provisions be introduced in the Aliens Act to the effect that a refusal-of-entry or expulsion order shall specify the country to which the alien is to be sent.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to back peace-support operations in Liberia

The Government has decided today, 4 December, to make a contribution of SEK 4 million to peace-support operations in Liberia.

The Swedish contribution will go towards a DDRR programme # a programme for disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation and reintegration of former soldiers in Liberia. A majority of the soldiers are thought to be child soldiers and the aim of the programme is to help them readapt to normal life. The contribution will be channelled via the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which is administering a donor fund for the programme.

#Disarmament is essential to enable the UN peace force to restore security in this war-ravaged country and to enable relief organisations to reach the suffering civilian population#, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The UN peacekeeping force in Liberia (UNMIL) will assist in disarming the approximately 50 000 former soldiers, a process that will begin during the month of December.

Sweden is committed to promoting peace and security in Liberia and the region in the long term. Sweden provides considerable humanitarian assistance to Liberia through the UN system and non-governmental organisations. During 2003 more than SEK 59 million has been granted for various actions in health and medical care, for education and for support to internally displaced persons. Swedish staff officers and civilian police are also participating in the UN peacekeeping force in Liberia (UNMIL). In August the Government contributed SEK 10 million to the West African peace force that was the precursor of the UN mission.

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Key word: 10759 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Pagrotsky relieved as US backs down on steel tariffs

Unofficial translation

The United States is giving in to pressure from the rest of the world and withdrawing the criticised 30 per cent protective steel tariffs that were introduced a year and a half ago, it was announced from Washington today.

#This is a highly positive development for the Swedish steel industry and a victory for law and order in world trade,# says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

#It is of major significance that, instead of an escalated trade conflict, the superpower USA is choosing to follow the rules that the WTO member countries have agreed upon,# says Mr Pagrotsky.

The United States introduced the tariffs in March 2002 to protect the domestic steel industry. The tariffs were condemned by the EU and a series of other countries which initiated a process against the US in the World Trade Organisation. Three weeks ago, the highest WTO body for dispute settlement stated that the tariffs were illegal and gave the EU, as retaliation, the right to impose import tariffs on American goods to the value of USD 2.2 billion per year.

#In a trade conflict, everyone is a loser. The EU#s retaliatory measures would also have affected Swedish importers to a value of more than SEK 400 million per year. Now we can relax and look forward instead to a normalisation of trade relations,# says Mr Pagrotsky.

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Key word: 10758 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden promises to examine how humanitarian law could be strengthened in arms export control

Today Sweden pledged to examine how criteria for respect for international humanitarian law could be applied practically to arms export control. The pledge was made by State Secretary Annika Söder at the 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent taking place in Geneva on 2-6 December.

Sweden also promised to increase Swedish commitment to international HIV/Aids efforts # both regarding prevention, treatment and vaccine research and combating discrimination and stigmatisation.

A further pledge was made on initiating procedures for reviewing whether and how international humanitarian law could be applied to tackle data network attacks.

All these pledges were made jointly with the Swedish Red Cross.

The Swedish address by State Secretary Annika Söder is available on the .

The International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, which meets every four years, is the supreme deliberative body of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The theme of this year's conference is Protecting Human Dignity. Sweden regards the conference as a major opportunity to advance humanitarian efforts and strengthen international humanitarian law.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Pagrotsky to take part in meeting of trade ministers in Brussels

On Tuesday 2 December, Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky will meet his EU colleagues at an informal meeting of trade ministers in Brussels. Among the subjects for discussion will be ways in which the EU can help to advance work on the WTO negotiations.

Leif Pagrotsky will be available for questions from the media after the meeting.

Time: 15.30

Venue: The foyer of the Amigo Hotel, Rue de l'Amigo 1-3

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Intensified Swedish-Chilean cooperation

State Secretary Sven-Eric Söder is to meet his Chilean counterpart Cristián Barros in Santiago de Chile today within the framework of a Swedish-Chilean working group to extend cooperation. The result of the Swedish side's work will be presented in connection with the negotiations.

"Today we have been able to go through interesting cooperation areas, such as IT and telecom, environmental technology and the transport sector # primarily high-tech issues of mutual

importance. This cooperation can pave the way for concrete business for the Swedish business sector in both directions," comments Sven-Eric Söder.

The working group was set up after Prime Minister Göran Persson's visit to Chile in early January. The Prime Minister then reached an agreement with Chile's President Ricardo Lagos on Swedish-Chilean contacts aimed at identifying possibilities for greater cooperation focused on both countries' business sectors.

Swedish-Chilean cooperation is being strengthened against the background of an association agreement concluded between the EU and Chile last year. The free-trade sections of the agreement entered into force on 1 February this year, and opened trade channels between the EU and Chile through the rapid removal of protective tariffs. A bilateral partnership fund has also existed for some time between Sweden and Chile. The purpose of the partnership fund is to create links between the Swedish and Chilean business sectors.

"With these two agreements as a platform, trade and investment cooperation between our two countries can gain real momentum," says Sven-Eric Söder.

For more information on Swedish-Chilean cooperation, see .

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds supports elections in Georgia at OSCE meeting

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds notified today Georgian Acting President Nino Burjanadze that Sweden will support the organisation of the election in Georgia.

The support amounts to SEK 2.5 million and will be administered via the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

During the day, Laila Freivalds held individual talks with Acting President Burjanadze in connection with the OSCE ministerial meeting taking place in Maastricht, the Netherlands, on 1-2 December.

"Free, fair elections are a precondition for continued democratic development in Georgia. It is important that the international community gives its support. The OSCE has an important role to play in this. Sweden will also become actively involved in Georgia, both bilaterally and through the

EU," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

In her address at the ministerial meeting, Laila Freivalds also welcomed the action plan for combating trafficking in human beings adopted by the ministerial meeting. Sweden has been an active force behind this. The action plan contains recommendations on preventive measures and protection of, and support to those affected. At the ministerial meeting, a decision was also taken to appoint a special representative responsible for implementing this plan.

In connection with the ministerial meeting, Freivalds also held bilateral talks with Russian Foreign Minister Ivanov.

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Key word: 10741 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds to participate in Conference of Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Ministers

Foreign Minister Laila Freivalds is going to Naples on 2-3 December for a Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the 25 EU member and accession states and their 10 Mediterranean partners. The Conference is taking place within the framework of the Barcelona process, i.e. the EU's partnership with countries in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean. This cooperation covers both political dialogue and economic, social and cultural issues. At the Naples Conference ministers are expected to discuss the proposal to set up a foundation for dialogue between Europe and the Mediterranean region.

The countries in the Mediterranean region that are taking part in the Barcelona process are Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Turkey and the Palestinian Authority.

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Key word: 10740 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-12-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to take part in the 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

The 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent will take place in Geneva on 2-6 December, and will address the theme Protecting Human Dignity. The International Conference, which meets every four years, is the supreme deliberative body of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Its purpose is to achieve agreement on important humanitarian issues. The present conference will focus on two issues: strengthening protection of civilians in armed conflicts, and humanitarian work to enhance protection for people affected by disasters and diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

Both states party to the Geneva Conventions on protection of war victims and national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies are participating in the Conference. The Swedish delegation is led by State Secretary Annika Söder.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds welcomes new agreement on disarmament

In Geneva today, an international agreement was adopted that commits states to removing explosive remnants of war (ERW) and providing assistance to the countries affected. The purpose of the agreement is to minimise the humanitarian consequences of unexploded ordnance.

#It is very pleasing that we have arrived at a new international agreement in the area of disarmament. This will strengthen the protection given to civilians affected by war. In some parts of the world, explosive remnants cause as much suffering as mines, or even more, # comments
Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

#Now we will continue our efforts to completely prevent the occurrence of unexploded ordnance from cluster bombs and other sources. #

The agreement that has been adopted is a new protocol to the UN Weapons Convention from 1980, which regulates certain conventional weapons.

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Key word: 10718 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador for Cyprus

The Government has today appointed Ambassador Ingemar Lindahl as Sweden's envoy in Nicosia, Cyprus. He will be the first Swedish Ambassador to only have Cyprus as his area of responsibility. Lindahl will be stationed in Stockholm until further notice.

Ingemar Lindahl has most recently served as Sweden's Special Representative on Cyprus issues and has assisted in negotiations for a solution to the Cyprus conflict within the framework of the UN.

He will continue to monitor this issue. Lindahl has previously been Sweden's permanent delegate at UNESCO and has also been stationed at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York and the embassies of Athens, Buenos Aires and Oslo.

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Key word: 10692

PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish civilian police officers to Macedonia

The Government decided today that Sweden will contribute ten civilian police officers to the EU police force in Macedonia, EUPOL Proxima. The Swedish police officers will assist with advice and guidance to further the reform of the Macedonian police service.

The police activities, taking place at the request of the Macedonian government, are part of the implementation of the 2001 peace agreement (the Ohrid Agreement) which will help enhance the rights of the Albanian minority in a number of areas. Reforms in the Macedonian police service have been identified as a key factor in stabilising and normalising conditions in the country.

Proxima is an expression of both the EU's and Sweden's considerable commitment to Macedonia and the other countries in the Western Balkans.

EUPOL Proxima will comprise some 200 people, 180 of whom are police and the remainder civilian staff. The EU police officers will serve alongside their Macedonian colleagues at local police stations in the former conflict areas as well as at regional and national level.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press meeting on Government Bill with Barbro Holmberg

On Wednesday 26 November, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is arranging a press meeting on the

Government Bill on smuggling of human beings and temporary residence permits.
Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg will take part in the meeting.
Date and time: Wednesday 26 November, 13:00-13:30
Venue: Press Centre, Rosenbad
Watch the press meeting live on Web TV via www.regeringen.se.

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Key word: 10690 Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-26
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government presents Bill on the smuggling of human beings and temporary residence permits

Today on 26 November, the Government presented a Bill to the Riksdag on the smuggling of human beings and temporary residence permits for injured parties and witnesses

The Government proposal means that a new provision will be included in the Aliens Act making it possible to grant temporary residence permits for foreign injured parties and witnesses. It will enable foreign persons to be granted temporary residence permits if this is considered necessary in connection with undertaking preliminary investigations or main hearings in criminal cases.

"The proposal means that, for example, victims of trafficking in human beings will be able to remain in Sweden to participate in criminal investigations, which will facilitate police work on such crimes as trafficking," says Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy, Barbro Holmberg.

"Those granted a temporary residence permit will have access to the same health and medical care services and social assistance as residents of Sweden. Children under the age of 18 will have the chance to go to school and take part in other activities in the same way as asylum-seeking children and young people."

"These people have ended up in an unbearably difficult situation. It is often a question of women under terrible pressure who may need care and support. They will also be able to seek permanent residence on other grounds during the duration of their temporary residence permits," says Barbro Holmberg.

The Government also proposes tougher penalties for the smuggling of human beings. Offenders may be sentenced to a maximum of two years imprisonment. Where offences are considered serious, it will be possible to sentence gross smuggling offenders to a minimum of six months, and a maximum of six years imprisonment. Tougher sentences will also be meted out to those who, in order to make a profit, plan or organise activities focusing on aliens travelling to Sweden without permits.

"We know that every day, people are being exploited by smugglers of human beings, and in recent

years the tragedies of Dover and the southern Mediterranean have made us painfully aware of how far smugglers of human beings are prepared to go. Many people are often cheated into investing everything they own and possess to embark on a journey that unfortunately often leads to tragedy," concludes Barbro Holmberg.

According to the proposal, the amendments should enter into force on 1 October 2004.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Nordic-Baltic action group against human trafficking meets in Stockholm

The first meeting of the new Nordic-Baltic action group against human trafficking will be held on Thursday 27 November. The meeting will take place in Stockholm, and will be led by State Secretary Annika Söder at the request of the Nordic and Baltic ministers for foreign affairs. The action group was originally created at the initiative of former Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

The action group is to have an umbrella function for cooperation against human trafficking in the Nordic-Baltic sphere. The group is to contribute to improving the coordination and effectiveness of efforts already underway in the Nordic-Baltic region. Another important goal is to support efforts to ensure that work against human trafficking continues to receive the highest political priority.

#The action group will not concern itself with matters that others already do better. But by looking at the problem from an overall perspective, we will try to help identify areas in which additional efforts are necessary,# says Annika Söder.

Human trafficking constitutes a growing problem in our immediate region. Today, thousands of women and children are victims of human trafficking, from and through the Nordic and Baltic countries. It is estimated that several hundred women and children will fall prey to this modern form of slavery this year in Sweden alone.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to speak at the seminar "Voices of the Poor" (De fattigas röst)

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin will speak at the seminar #Voices of the Poor# to be held in the Riksdag on 26 November. The seminar will call attention to the government bill #Shared responsibility: Sweden's policy for global development# from an international perspective.

Among the other participants is Deepa Narayan, Senior Advisor at the World Bank, who has been invited to comment on the bill from the perspective of the poor. Deepa Narayan has led the World Bank's efforts in interviewing 60 000 poor people in 60 different countries. The results have been published in the trilogy #Voices of the Poor#.

Also participating is Poul Grosen, Director of the Nordic Office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Poul has been invited to comment on the possibility of achieving the Millennium Goals.

The moderator will be Berndt Ekholm, member of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs. Time: Wednesday 26 November from 1 p.m.-3 p.m.

Place: The Riksdag, Members# Building (Ledamotshuset): L4-17

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministry of the Environment

Sommestad and Pagrotsky welcome increase in Swedish environmental exports

During 2002 Swedish environmental technology companies exported products and services to a value of almost SEK 15 billion. Growth in exports in the environmental technology sector has increased by 8.4 per cent during 2002 compared with the previous year.

This is shown in the Swedish Trade Council report on environmental technology exports for 2002 that was presented today. The report also shows that 60 per cent of environmental technology exports come from small and medium-sized enterprises.

#Swedish companies are in the forefront in environmental issues and there is great international interest in Swedish services and products connected with environmental technology,# say Minister for the Environment Lena Sommestad and Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

#The report indicates the export potential and the optimism that exists among environmental technology companies, not least among the smaller enterprises,# say the ministers.

Since 1999 the Swedish Trade Council has, at the request of the Government, been working on a special project to promote the export of Swedish environmental technology within air purification, water- and sewage treatment, waste management and recycling. Since 2002, also at the request of the Government, the Swedish Trade Council has been running a branch programme designed to strengthen Swedish companies in their export potential within the area of renewable energy.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Eritrea's Foreign Minister to visit Sweden

Eritrea's Foreign Minister, Ali Said Abdella, is scheduled to visit Sweden on 21#24 November. The visit is part of a European tour which will also take in Brussels, London and Paris.

Ali Said will be meeting, among others, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds. The talks are expected in particular to centre on the situation of detained Swedish journalist Dawit Isaak. The border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea will also be discussed.

Ali Said will also meet Annika Söder, State Secretary responsible for international development cooperation. In addition, a meeting is scheduled with members of the parliamentary committee on foreign affairs.

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Key word: 10642 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden gives Mozambique budget support

The Government has today decided to contribute budget support for a period of two years to Mozambique. A total of SEK 200 million will be paid, SEK 100 million for 2003 and 2004, respectively. The budget support is to be used to combat poverty in the country. The support will be paid over two-years if certain conditions are met. The Government of Mozambique has already taken measures and has promised to take additional measures to ensure increased transparency and the implementation of legal processes in the country.

#The basis of positive development in Mozambique, as well as in the world at large, is the ability and desire people have to create their own futures. Our support for combating poverty, for democracy and human rights can make a difference,# states Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

It has become all the more common for Swedish as well as international donors to provide funds aimed directly for one sector or to the budget in general. Swedish budget support is given within the framework of coordinated efforts from a number of donors. Part of the purpose of the coordinated effort is to simplify the routines and administration in cooperation with the Mozambican Government. Among the demands made by the group is more transparent accounting. Sweden has taken the lead in the group of donors, not least in the issue of making demands upon the

Mozambican Government to investigate previous irregularities within the banking sector, to introduce an independent bank inspection and for guilty parties to be brought to justice. #Making clear demands for the improvement of the banking system is a good way to support Mozambique. We have the duty of requiring that governments and those in power take responsibility for their country's development, even in difficult situations,# says Carin Jämtin. Swedish budget support is a form of direct assistance extended to poor countries that pursue sound, responsible economic policies with a clear poverty reduction orientation. In this way, the objective of the support is to directly strengthen the countries' own political priorities for combating poverty. #Sweden will continue to provide support for democratisation, respect for human rights, good governance and the fight against corruption. In this way, we contribute to the possibilities for people to create their own futures,# says Carin Jämtin. Budget support to Mozambique comprises a fifth of the total development cooperation with the country. In addition to the budget support, the largest Swedish efforts go to democratic governance and human rights, i.e. public administration support. Other important areas that Sweden supports are development and infrastructure, such as roads and electricity. The work against corruption is central to all Swedish efforts.

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Key word: 10641 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to contribute to reconstruction of Iraq's judicial system

The Government decided today to donate SEK 4.5 million to the International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC) for a project aimed at strengthening the independence of Iraq's judiciary system.

"It is very important now that the world gives its support to the people of Iraq in their efforts to reestablish its courts, prosecutors and the legal profession," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin. "A functioning judicial system is a precondition for recovery in a post-conflict situation."

For three decades Iraq has been isolated from judicial development in the rest of the world. The existing judicial system in Iraq is the platform for the new initiatives but there is an obvious and major need for further education and training of lawyers in numerous areas including human rights.

ILAC is now preparing an extensive operation, which with the help of its members and cooperation organisations aims to help rebuild the judicial system in Iraq. This project includes courses for Iraqi judges on their role in an independent judicial system, courses to strengthen legal education, courses for judges, prosecutors and lawyers in human rights and humanitarian law.

ILAC's plans for this project were prompted by an invitation from the Provisional Coalition Authority and the UN. The plans are also supported by the Governing Council of Iraq.

International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC) is a consortium of about 30 NGOs and bar associations from different parts of the world. The organisation is headquartered in Stockholm. ILAC's mission is to contribute to strengthening the restoration of the rule of law in post-conflict areas through missions in cooperation with and at the request of international and regional actors. The consortium has previously implemented projects in, e.g., Afghanistan, Timor-Leste and Sri Lanka.

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Key word: 10640 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to the energy sector in Latvia

The Government has decided to appropriate SEK 4.3 million for support to the energy sector in Latvia.

The support is intended for training in the operation and maintenance of modern thermal power stations. This decision enables Latvia to access the knowledge that exists in Sweden in this area. #It is positive that Latvia and Sweden can cooperate in broadening expertise in the operation and maintenance of thermal power stations in Riga. This training will be of use now that the city of Riga is being provided with new and more environmentally-friendly district heating at the same time as electricity production is increasing in Latvia,# says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin. #Increased electricity production is important for the region when the Ignalina nuclear power station in Lithuania is closed.#

The initiative is the result of the work being carried out by the Government Offices# Projects Export Secretariat within the framework of the Baltic Billion Fund II. The objective is to create a platform for cooperation between the state and the business sector for project development in the Baltic Sea region. The overall goal of the Baltic Billion Fund is to strengthen the position of Swedish industry in the Baltic Sea region.

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Key word: 10639 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden reaches debt conversion agreement with Tunisia

Sweden will sign a debt conversion agreement with Tunisia today.

Under the agreement, Sweden will cancel Tunisian debts amounting to SEK 71 million in exchange for an equivalent amount being transferred to a Tunisian fund which supports environmental efforts and projects aimed at strengthening the position of women in Tunisia.

The agreement will be signed in Stockholm by State Secretary Annika Söder and Tunisia's chargé d'affaires in Stockholm, Moncef Baati.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Francesc Vendrell to visit Sweden in connection with an international seminar on Afghanistan

Francesc Vendrell, EU Special Representative in Afghanistan, will visit Sweden in connection with

the international seminar held by the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan on 20-21 November. Mr Vendrell will hold a briefing on the situation in Afghanistan for journalists and interested officials in the Government Offices.

To the editorial office:

Date and time: 21 November at 14.45-15.45.

Venue: The Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre,
Fredsgatan 4#6.

Please bring your press credentials.

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Key word: 10601 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs Gül to visit Laila Freivalds

Unofficial translation

Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdullah Gül (also Deputy Prime Minister), is scheduled to visit Sweden on 18-20 November at the invitation of Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds. The subjects of their talks will include Turkey's adjustment to the EU, human rights, Iraq and the Israel-Palestine conflict.

After the foreign minister meeting, a joint press briefing will be held at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, on 19 November. Assembly at the entrance to Gustav Adolfs Torg 1, at 13.20. (Please bring your press credentials).

During his visit to Sweden, Minister of Foreign Affairs Gül will also meet the Speaker of the Riksdag and representatives of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on European Union Affairs. He will also have talks with Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

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Key word: 10582 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds to take part in OSCE foreign minister meeting on 1-2 December

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is due to hold its annual ministerial meeting in Maastricht, the Netherlands, on 1-2 December 2003. Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will take part as Sweden's representative.

The Netherlands which is chairing the OSCE in 2003 has particularly focused work this year on combating trafficking in human beings. The negotiations have led to an action plan to combat trafficking which will be adopted by the foreign ministers in Maastricht. The plan recommends national measures such as the criminalisation of trafficking, protection of its victims and establishment of special units for combating trafficking in humans, both in its countries of origin and in recipient countries.

The ministers will also adopt a strategy to meet old and new threats to common security and stability. They will also approve the publication of guidelines on light weapons. A further item on the agenda is the adoption of an action plan to combat the discrimination of Roma.

For more information, see the OSCE website, www.osce.org

To the editorial office:

Journalists wishing to obtain accreditation for the meeting should do so before 21 November by applying to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, OSCE Task Force, MC2003 team, P.O. Box 20061, 2500 EB The Hague, The Netherlands, tel +31-70-3485998, fax +31-70-3485807.

Osce-mc2003@minbuza.nl.

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Key word: 10581 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Carin Jämtin to take part in international seminar on Afghanistan in Stockholm

On 20-21 November, the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) will hold a two-day seminar at the Riksdag: "Afghanistan # two years after Bonn". An agreement was concluded in 2001 between different Afghan groups in Bonn. Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin and Chair of the SCA, Lena Hjelm-Wallén, will open the seminar.

"Afghanistan stands at a crossroads today and the situation is disturbing. There is every reason to continue to focus attention on this country and to support its reconstruction," comments Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

Other participants are Ahmed Rashid, journalist and writer, Sima Samar, Chair of the Afghanistan Human Rights Commission and former Minister of Women's Affairs, Francesc Vendrell, the EU Special Representative in Afghanistan, Barnett Rubin, US Professor and one of the world's leading authorities on Afghanistan, Carlotta Gall, New York Times correspondent in Kabul and Alexander Costy, from the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

To the editorial office:

For more information on the seminar, contact Erik Gustafsson, responsible for the press at the SCA, 08-545 818 45, 070-171 34 17 or erik.gustafsson@sak.se.

Venue: First Chamber of the Riksdag, entry Riksplan (Norrbro)

Date and time: Thursday 20 November, at 12.30-18.00 and Friday 21 November, at 8.30-13.00

Sweden has promised long-term development assistance to Afghanistan and has taken a decision on at least SEK 750 million and a maximum of SEK 1 billion for development cooperation over the period 2002-2004. This year Swedish development assistance will amount to some SEK 350 million.

The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) has received approximately SEK 45 million via Sida for its activities in Afghanistan in 2003. The Committee's work includes running 500 schools in Afghanistan where over 20 per cent of the pupils are girls. The SCA is also responsible for numerous outpatient clinics, many of which have facilities for child and maternity care.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds on today's bomb attacks in Istanbul

"I was greatly dismayed to hear the news of this morning's bomb attacks on two synagogues in Istanbul, causing many people to be killed and injured. I strongly condemn these attacks targeted at Jews. My thoughts go particularly to the families and to those who are injured. I would also like to offer my condolences to the Turkish government. I am confident that it will do its utmost to arrest those who are guilty," says Laila Freivalds.

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Key word: 10577 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Stockholm

On Thursday 13 November, four newly appointed Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King. The Ambassadors are from Belgium, Zambia, Bahrain and Luxembourg. Belgium's newly appointed Ambassador, Raoul Delcorde, was born in Teheran in 1955 and in 1984 entered the Belgian Foreign Service after graduating in political science, international relations and humanities. His posts have included service in Islamabad and at the Permanent Mission of Belgium to the United Nations in New York.

In recent years Ambassador Delcorde has held the following posts:

1996 # 2000 Minister Counsellor in Washington

2000 # 2003 The EU Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Zambia's newly appointed Ambassador, Newstead L. Zimba, was born in 1942. His previous posts have included working in Zambia's national trade union movement before becoming, in 1991, a member of President Chiluba's government where he has held the following posts:

1991 # 1994 Minister for Home Affairs

1994 # 1996 Minister of Labour and Social Insurance

1997 # 1998 Minister for Local Government and Social Affairs

1998 # 2001 Minister of Information and Media

Zimba served as Minister for Information and Media in President Mwanawasa's current government until May 2003. He is now Party Secretary for the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy.

Bahrain's newly appointed Ambassador, Khaled Ahmed Al-Khalifa,, (concurrently accredited in London) was born in 1960. He graduated in history and political science from St. Edwards University in Austin, Texas. Al- Khalifa has worked in his country's Foreign Service since 1985 and in the period 1985 # 1994 served at Bahrain's embassy in Washington. Between 1995 and 2000, Al-Khalifa worked in the office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs where his responsibilities included the legal aspects of the border dispute between Bahrain and Qatar. He was subsequently head of the Bahrain Crown Prince's Information Department. Since 2001, Al-Khalifa has been Bahrain's Ambassador in London.

Luxembourg's newly appointed Ambassador, Gaston Stronck, (concurrently accredited in London), was born in 1957. He is an historian specialising in defence issues and with a PhD from Montpelliers University. Between 1983 and 1986 Stronck served in Luxembourg's army and from 1986 to 1989 he was subsequently Professor at the Institut Européen d'Administration Publique in Maastricht, the Netherlands.

Stronck has served in his country's Foreign Service since 1989. In recent years, Ambassador Stronck has held the following posts:

1993 # 1995 Deputy Director at the Division for International Economic and Development Assistance Affairs

1995 # 2000 Deputy Head of the Luxembourg delegation at the Western European Union, Brussels

2000 # 2003 Head of the Western European Union delegation and Luxembourg's Permanent Representative in the Political and Security Committee, Brussels

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to open diplomatic representation in Belarus

Today, on 11 November, Sweden's Ambassador in Moscow, Mr Sven Hirdman, is to open a section office in Minsk. The office will be part of the Embassy in Moscow and will be led by Counsellor Jan Sadek.

It is hoped that this will make it easier for Sweden to follow the situation in Belarus and increase contacts and cooperation with Belarusian society as a whole.

Until further notice, the office will share the premises of the Swedish honorary consulate in Minsk.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Pagrotsky welcomes ruling against US steel tariffs

US protective tariffs for steel are illegal and contravene WTO regulations. This was established by the World Trade Organisation's highest body for dispute settlement (the Appellate Body) on Monday afternoon. The decision means that the EU can take retaliatory action if the USA does not remove the tariffs or offer the EU compensation.

"This is expected and welcome news for the EU and Sweden. At the same time, however, I regret that the USA resorts to protectionism to deal with the restructuring problems of its steel industry," comments Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky.

The US protective tariffs hit EU steel exports hard, but not all countries have been affected to the same extent. Sweden has even increased its steel exports to the USA by 6 per cent over the first seven months of this year, which can be compared with a reduction of 23 per cent for the EU as a whole.

"This says something about what a competitive steel industry we have in Sweden, so that despite the unjust protective tariffs, we have increased our exports to the USA. The Swedish steel industry has managed in time to make the rationalisations that other countries still need to undertake," says Leif Pagrotsky.

In March 2002, the USA introduced protective tariffs of 30 per cent to protect its domestic steel industry. Today's decision means that if the USA does not remove the prohibited tariffs in little more than a month, the EU is entitled, as retaliation, to introduce tariffs on US goods worth USD 2.2 billion.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds visits the Baltic countries

On Tuesday 11 November, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds will begin the first of her bilateral tours with a visit to Latvia. From here she will continue to Vilnius in Lithuania and to Tallin in Estonia.

"I want to make this tour as early as possible to mark the importance that I place on our relations with the Baltic countries," says Laila Freivalds.

"Our future cooperation will be particularly important in view of the membership of the Baltic countries in the EU on 1 May next year. We shall work together to make the Baltic Sea region a major motor in European economic development. This is something I am looking forward to and have high hopes of."

The programme for the visits is as follows:

Tuesday 11 November

Arrival in Riga in the evening.

Wednesday 12 November

Meeting with President Vira Vike-Freiberga and Speaker Ingrida Udre.

Lunch with Minister for Foreign Affairs Sandra Kalniete.

Departure for Vilnius.

Meeting with President Rolandas Pakas and Minister for Foreign Affairs Antanas Valionis.

Address at a gala concert in the Philharmonic Hall.

Thursday 13 November

Departure for Tallin.

Meeting with Minister for Foreign Affairs Kristiina Ojuland.

Meeting with Speaker Ene Ergma and Prime Minister Juhan Parts.

Return to Stockholm.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Seminar on business and investment exchange with Japan

On Monday 10 November, State Secretary Lotta Fogde of the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications is hosting a seminar at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on business and investment exchange with Japan. The seminar has been arranged jointly by Sweden and Japan and is the first of its kind included in a meeting of the Swedish-Japanese Commission on Trade and Economic Affairs. The Commission is meeting for the twenty-third time, under the leadership of Lars-Olof Lindgren, Director-General for Trade.

#Japan regards Sweden as a highly developed industrial nation#, says Lars-Olof Lindgren. #There is already active cooperation between Sweden and Japan, for example in the telecommunications sector, culture, forestry and eldercare, but many Swedish companies would be happy to see more extensive cooperation in future.#

A high-powered delegation is coming from Japan, comprising representatives of Japanese ministries, organisations and companies, including Noevir Corp and Fuji Xerox, JETRO and the Japan Development Bank. Swedish participants include the Swedish Trade Council, the Invest in Sweden Agency, the European Institute of Japanese Studies, the Sweden-Japan Foundation, the Swedish Care Institute, the Swedish Export Credit Corporation and a number of large and small companies. Representatives of the media are welcome.

Please bring press credentials or equivalent identification.

Date and time: Monday, 10 November, 14.00-17.00

Venue: Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre

Address: Fredsgatan 6

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish civilian police officers to Liberia

The Government today decided to send six civilian police officers to the UN mission in Liberia (UNMIL). The Swedish police officers will provide education, advice and recruitment assistance in connection with the reform of the national police force, which is to take over responsibility for security in Liberia.

"The UN's peace efforts in Liberia are very important for the development of the entire region," says State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren, the EU Presidency's Special Representative for Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire.

"By sending civilian police officers to UNMIL, Sweden is contributing to peaceful development in Liberia and demonstrating its support for one of the most extensive UN operations ever."

Sweden is already involved in UNMIL through the participation of three staff officers and has recently contributed SEK 10 million to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) peacekeeping force in Liberia.

UNMIL was established in September this year by United Nations Security Council resolution 1509. It has a broad mandate to support the peace agreement signed by the Liberian government and rebel groups LURD and MODEL in August this year. UNMIL began its mission on 1 October and will consist of 15 000 personnel including a large number of civilian police officers. When the total strength has been achieved, UNMIL will be the UN's largest current operation.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jonas Weiss Memorial Award goes to Mattias Lentz and Åsne Seierstad

The recipient of the first ever Jonas Weiss Memorial Award has been announced. The award is intended to honour a young Swedish diplomat who has shown a strong interest in conflict resolution and fieldwork in diplomacy.

The memorial award of SEK 30 000 is to go to Mattias Lentz, who, after serving in Jakarta and Beijing, is now working on the issue of Iraq at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm. An honorary award is also being made to Norwegian journalist Åsne Seierstad for courage and integrity in reporting from the war zone in Iraq.

The Jonas Weiss Memorial Award, which is to be presented annually, was established jointly by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the family of the deceased diplomat Jonas Weiss. Weiss died in a car accident at the age of just 33 in May last year, while travelling on official business between Baghdad and Amman.

Weiss belonged to a younger generation of diplomats with a strong focus on fieldwork. After his death, his family, his contemporaries at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry leadership decided to establish the memorial award to support colleagues who have already made important contributions in the area or to others who desire to gain more experience and expertise in field operations and conflict resolution. The Memorial Award Board was also authorised to present an honorary award to a person who has acted in the spirit of Johan Weiss.

The Memorial Award Board motivates its choices as follows:

In performing his professional responsibilities, Mattias Lentz has consistently displayed the combination of qualities that are the very essence of the Jonas Weiss Memorial Award: a strong presence in the field, sure and lucid reporting from situations ranging from occupied parliaments to the UN General Assembly, an analytical capacity and a deep commitment to conflict resolution and democracy promotion measures.

Åsne Seierstad becomes the first recipient of the Jonas Weiss Memorial Award's honorary distinction in recognition of the priority she has always given as a journalist to presence in the field. In Iraq in particular she has shown that courage and integrity are essential prerequisites for both journalism and diplomacy and that the consequences of war must never be concealed when victory is declared.

The awards will be presented by State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren. The media are invited to attend the ceremony at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs at 16.00 on 10 November.

Assembly at the main entrance to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1, at 15.45. For further information, please contact the chairman of the Memorial Award Board Lars Weiss, tel: 08-611 69 20 or 070-554 81 32.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Commission's monitoring reports presented today: Great progress towards EU membership

The EU's future member states are making great progress towards EU membership on 1 May 2004, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds in a comment on the Commission's monitoring reports that were made public today.

It is particularly gratifying to see that our neighbouring countries Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have already achieved a high level of adjustment to the EU acquis in most areas.

It is up to the accession countries to intensify their efforts to resolve outstanding problems so that the EU acquis is fully implemented by the entry date, 1 May 2004.

The Government welcomes the progress shown by Bulgaria and Romania. It is important that the

pace of reform remains high. The goal is to welcome them as members in 2007.

Turkey is also making progress in the area of reform. But more must be done to strengthen human rights and to ensure the effective implementation of adopted reforms. A resolution of the Cyprus issue is not a requirement for the opening of negotiations but it would obviously benefit Turkey in the continued EU process.

The reports show that the conditions for completing the biggest enlargement of the European Union to date are very good, concludes Laila Freivalds.

The EU Commission's reports show that great progress is being made in preparations for EU accession on 1 May 2004. The new member countries are very well prepared to live up to and take responsibility for the acquis and workings of the EU. However, there are still problems to be dealt with, primarily related to rules for the workings of the internal market and to the future administration of EU funds. In these areas the countries still have work to do. The Commission will continue to have an important role in monitoring and reinforcing action. Sweden is looking forward to the entry of these countries as full members on 1 May 2004.

Bulgaria has made great progress in the economic area but needs to continue to combat corruption and to reinforce its administrative and legal capacity to implement and apply the EU acquis. These are problems that Romania is also grappling with. Romania is showing solid progress and, with continued reforms, will soon be able to be recognised as a functioning market economy. It is important that the pace of reform remains high. EU pre-membership support will increase significantly in the coming three-year period. The aim is for the two negotiating candidate countries to be in a position to become EU members in 2007. This means that negotiations must be concluded in good time before this date.

The decision on the possible opening of membership negotiations with Turkey is not to be taken until next autumn. This country does not yet meet the political criteria set up by the EU.

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Key word: 10474 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Human rights a main priority in Swedish foreign policy

Today the Government has presented the written communication #Human Rights in Swedish Foreign Policy# (Skr. 2003/04:20) to the Riksdag.

Promoting and increasing respect for human rights is a prioritised issue in Swedish foreign policy. Efforts supporting human rights are to permeate all areas of foreign policy, including security

policy, development cooperation, migration policy and trade policy.

The Government's ambition is to further strengthen Sweden's international efforts for human rights through a result-oriented and integrated policy.

The written communication is a follow-up of the Government communication from 1998 of the same name, which was the first accumulated presentation of the role of human rights in Swedish foreign policy.

The Government's human rights website: www.humanrights.gov.se.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-11-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

International meeting on prevention of female genital mutilation

On 10-11 November, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and Minister for Children and Families Berit Andnor are due to host an international meeting in Stockholm on work to prevent female genital mutilation in Sweden and Africa.

An estimated 130 million girls and women around the world are genitally mutilated and around 2 million are subjected to the procedure each year. Female genital mutilation is a violation of the rights of women and children and often leads to great suffering. There is no support for female genital mutilation in any religion. However, it is not uncommon for the genital mutilation of girls to be justified for religious reasons. With greater immigration to Sweden from African countries, work to prevent female genital mutilation has also become a national concern.

The aim of the meeting is to link Swedish and international work to prevent female genital mutilation. Representatives of various UN bodies, international NGOs and some ten African countries will be taking part in the meeting. Among the Swedish delegates are representatives of the immigrant groups concerned, agencies and the Riksdag.

Journalists are welcome to attend the meeting, which will be opened by Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds at 09.30 on 10 November.

Venue: the Rosenbad Conference Centre (entrance from Drottninggatan 1).

For more information and a preliminary programme, see the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website .

To attend the meeting, please apply to maria.hakansson@foreign.ministry.se

Press conference invitation

In connection with the meeting, Laila Freivalds and Berit Andnor invite you to a press briefing.

Date and time: Thursday 6 November, at 13.30.

Venue: Press Centre at Rosenbad

Please bring your press credentials.

You can also see the press conference on the Internet (www.regeringen.se).

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Key word: 10470 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Algeria and Indonesia

The Government appointed today Minister Plenipotentiary in Moscow, Per Saland, as envoy in Algiers, Algeria and Director Lennart Linnér as envoy in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Per Saland has been Assistant Head of the Department for International Law, Human Rights and Treaty Law. Saland has also worked at the then Legal Department. He has previously served in Cairo, Warsaw, New York and Teheran.

Saland has taken part in a number of UN conferences and has led the Swedish delegation at several international negotiations, including those at the International Criminal Court in the Hague.

Lennart Linnér's most recent appointment was as Assistant Head of the Americas Department. He has also worked at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' European Security Policy Department and what was previously called the Policy Planning Section. At the Ministry of Defence he worked with security policy issues. Linnér has served in Ottawa, Pretoria and Beirut.

In 1997-98, Lennart Linnér acted as coordinator for foreign ministry participation in the Defence Commission's work on the development and renewal of total defence. During the Swedish Presidency of the EU, Linnér was project manager for the Göteborg summit meeting between the EU and the USA in July 2001.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Serbia's Minister for Finance Djelic to visit Sweden

Serbia and Montenegro's Minister for Finance Bozidar Djelic is scheduled to visit Sweden on Monday 3 November. He leads a Serbian business delegation of fifteen companies and trade organisations which will all take part that day in a Serbian-Swedish business day at the House of Trade and Industry.

Some 300 Swedish companies and organisations have been invited to take part in the event which will be inaugurated by the head of the Swedish Trade Council, Ulf Dinkenspiel. Minister for Finance Djelic will be speaking about the economic situation in Serbia and Ambassador Dejan Vasiljevic about Swedish-Serbian relations.

Magnus Lindahl from the Swedish Trade Council office in Belgrade will speak about Swedish experience in Serbia. Serbian trade organisations will also describe the business climate and opportunities in the country and Serbian companies will present their activities. In the afternoon, Serbian and Swedish companies will be matched for individual contacts.

Finance Minister Djelic will be holding talks with Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, and Minister for International Economic Affairs and Financial Markets, Gunnar Lund.

To the editorial office:

For an opportunity to take part in the seminar and/or meet Minister for Finance Djelic, please contact Helena Gustavsson.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government bill on approval of ten new EU member states

Today the Government is presenting a bill to the Riksdag (Swedish Parliament) proposing approval of the treaty on the accession of ten new member states to the EU.

Under the treaty the new members will join the EU on 1 May 2004. The countries concerned are Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. The treaty can only enter into force when all present and new member states have approved and ratified it.

When they enter the EU, the new members states accede to the EU acquis in the same way as Sweden did when it became a member. The bill #The enlargement of the European Union 2004# (2003/04:25) contains a detailed presentation of a number of temporary transitional arrangements in various policy areas that are laid down in the treaty of accession.

The bill is about 5 000 pages long and is published in nine volumes.

The bill is also available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website: www.ud.se

The entire treaty of accession is available at:

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/sv/search/treaties_accession.html

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ask questions about Sweden's role in the future EU

At a seminar in Lund on 7 November, members of the public will have the opportunity to put

questions concerning the future of the EU directly to Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds, Deputy President of the European Parliament Charlotte Cederschiöld and EU Commissioner Margot Wallström, among others.

The seminar will focus on the current Intergovernmental Conference, which is to take a stance on the draft constitution for the European Union. In addition to Freivalds, Cederschiöld and Wallström, Chief Editor of Danish newspaper Politiken Tøger Seidenfaden, and Professor of Political Science Magnus Jerneck will also take part. Two journalists will act as the moderators and discussion leaders: Pia Brandelius and Patrik Peter.

At the seminar on Sweden's role in the future EU, the public will be invited to put questions to the panel.

Venue: AF Borgen, Lund, in Stora salen (large hall)

Date and time: Friday 7 November, 8.45 # 12.30

Journalists are welcome to attend the seminar. Please register at info@europarl.se by 6 November at the latest.

The seminar is being organised by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Sweden Office of the European Parliament, the Representation of the European Commission in Sweden, the EU Information Centre of the Swedish Riksdag, the Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies, the Swedish EU 2004 Committee and Lund University.

The seminar will be webcast and interpreted into sign language. The webcast will be available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website as of 11 November.

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Key word: 10427 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Gunnar Lund to head trade delegation to Nigeria

At the invitation of Nigeria's President Olusegun Obasanjo one of the biggest ever visits by Swedish business to Africa will take place on 9-15 November. Minister for International Economic Affairs and Financial Markets Gunnar Lund will head the delegation to Nigeria. Some 30 Swedish companies and business organisations have already signed up.

Along with South Africa, Nigeria is the biggest export market in Africa for Swedish companies and the country's economy is continuing to grow strongly. Nigeria is also one of the countries in Africa that Sweden imports most from.

Trade between Sweden and Nigeria has grown explosively in recent years and I don't rule out the possibility that Nigeria will be our most important export market in Africa in a year or so from now, comments Gunnar Lund.

We must have a presence there and be participants now that trade is opening up, continues

Gunnar Lund and points to opportunities in the energy, transport, telecommunications, agriculture and finance sectors.

#With a population of 120 million and considerable natural resources Nigeria obviously offers enormous business opportunities for Swedish companies.#

In connection with the visit of the delegation, the Swedish Embassy in Abuja, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Swedish Trade Council are holding a wide range of activities to promote Swedish business and spread knowledge about trade with Sweden.

Gunnar Lund will have talks with President Olusegun Obasanjo and the Nigerian Government in connection with his visit.

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Key word: 10408

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Press Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs

Anders Hagquist, who is currently editor-in-chief and legally responsible publisher of the newspaper Sydöstran in Karlskrona, has been appointed Press Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Laila Freivalds.

Anders Hagquist previously served as Press Secretary at the Ministry of Justice and at the former Ministry of Public Administration. He will take up his duties on 17 November.

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Key word: 10407 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky to participate in Nordic meeting in Oslo

Unofficial translation

On Tuesday 28 October, Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky will participate in a meeting of Nordic Ministers for Foreign Trade in Oslo. Among the items the ministers will discuss is the situation of the WTO negotiations and how Nordic cooperation in the internal market can promote growth in the region.

During 2003, Sweden holds the presidency of the Nordic intergovernmental cooperation.

Leif Pagrotsky will be available to the media at a press conference after the meeting, Tuesday 28 October, 17.30 in the Lagting Chamber, the Storting, Karl Johans gate 22, third floor.

Please bring your press credentials!

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Key word: 10405 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Nordic countries unite behind millennium goals

Today, the 24 of October and United Nations Day, the Nordic ministers dealing with development issues adopted a declaration in support of the UN Millennium Development Goals.

The Millennium Development Goals involve common, time-bound initiatives for global development and the overall objective is to halve poverty and hunger by 2015.

"To achieve the Millennium Development Goals it is extremely important that we in the rich countries take our responsibility. The declaration is one way we - the Nordic countries - can show our support for and our involvement in working for the Millennium Development Goals," says Minister for Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The declaration states that the Nordic countries undertake to work for inter alia ensuring that the volume of assistance is increased in accordance with the UN's 0.7% target, that within the framework of the WTO the developing countries gain larger market access for their products in rich countries, and to contribute to a sustainable debt situation for the most heavily indebted countries. The Nordic countries also want to stimulate the participation of civil society in rich countries and developing countries alike in the work to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. In several of the Nordic countries, global millennium campaigns have already begun spreading knowledge about and working actively for the Millennium Development Goals. In Sweden one such campaign is being coordinated by representatives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the United Nations Association of Sweden and the United Nations Development Programme along with sixty or so organisations, institutes and companies participating in the "The chance of a lifetime" project. The Nordic declaration is available in full on (www.foreign.ministry.se).

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Key word: 10385 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Stockholm

Four newly appointed ambassadors are presenting their letters of credence to HM The King on Friday 24 October. The new ambassadors are from Canada, Germany, the Philippines and the United Kingdom.

Canada's newly appointed ambassador Lorenz Friedlaender was born in 1948 and received an MA from Dalhousie University in 1971. Friedlaender has worked in his country's foreign service since 1977. He has served at the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations in New York and at the Canadian missions in Prague and Brussels. Between 1993 and 1997, he held the post of Minister at the Canadian Embassy in Bonn. Ambassador Friedlaender has served most recently as Head of the Policy Planning Secretariat at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Germany's newly appointed ambassador Busso von Alvensleben was born in 1949. A lawyer by training, he entered his country's foreign service in 1980. Alvensleben has served at the German embassies in Nairobi and Tel Aviv and at the German Mission to the United Nations in Geneva.

In recent years the Ambassador has held the following posts:

1994 # 1998 Served in the Office of the Federal President

1998 # 2000 Deputy Head of Protocol

2000 # 2003 Head of Protocol

The newly appointed ambassador of the Philippines, Victoria Bataclan, is a political scientist and economist who earned degrees from the University of the Philippines in 1971 (Bachelor of Arts) and 1979 (Bachelor of Law). After working as an economist at the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), Bataclan entered her country's foreign service in 1982. From 1982 to 1990, she was stationed in Geneva at the Mission of the Philippines to the United Nations and the Philippines Consulate-General.

In recent years Ambassador Bataclan has held the following posts:

1992 # 1999 Minister and Consul-General at the Embassy of the

Philippines and the Philippines Mission to the United

Nations in Vienna

1999 # 2002 Head of the Administrative Department at the Foreign

Ministry in Manila

2002 # 2003 Consul-General, Hong Kong

The newly appointed British ambassador Anthony Cary was born in 1951 and entered the British Foreign Service in 1973. Cary's foreign postings include the British missions in Berlin and Kuala Lumpur. While stationed at home, Ambassador Cary has worked mainly on European issues. From 1989#1993 he was seconded to the European Commission in Brussels.

In recent years Ambassador Cary has held the following posts:

1997 # 1999 Counsellor in Washington

1999 # 2003 Chef de Cabinet for Commissioner Chris Patten

at the European Commission

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Key word: 10383

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Donor conference for Iraq in Madrid, 23-24 October

An international donor conference for the reconstruction of Iraq is being held in Madrid on 23-24 October.

The purpose of the donor conference is to collect and coordinate economic contributions to the reconstruction of Iraq. More than 90 countries and international organisations are expected to participate in Madrid. The Swedish delegation is being led by State Secretary Annika Söder. Sweden has been a major donor of humanitarian aid to Iraq for many years now, and has decided on humanitarian commitments worth about SEK 95 million so far this year. Sweden is now in the process of studying possible areas for further Swedish action.

More information and a comment by Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin are available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website (www.ud.se)

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Key word: 10382 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Support for trade promotion in Nigeria

Unofficial translation

The Government has decided to allocate SEK 165 000 to trade promotion initiatives in Nigeria.

"Markets that have traditionally not been very important for Swedish enterprises are becoming more and more important. Even though our trade with Africa is relatively limited, special projects will provide significant potential for the promotion of Swedish businesses," says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

"Nigeria is a fast-growing trade partner and many companies are interested in this promising but demanding market," says Leif Pagrotsky.

The funds will be placed at the disposal of the Swedish Embassy in Abuja to be used for seminars and marketing activities in connection with a visit by a Swedish trade delegation to Nigeria on 9#15 November. The seminars will be arranged in cooperation with the Swedish Trade Council, participating companies and organisations.

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Key word: 10379 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Nordic meetings in Oslo on 26-29 October

A large number of Nordic meetings are being held in Oslo on 26-29 October. Nordic governments and parliamentarians are meeting.

Prime Minister Göran Persson and fourteen other ministers, including Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds and Berit Andonor, the Minister for Nordic Cooperation, plan to participate in the meetings.

The Prime Minister will take part in a meeting of Nordic-Baltic Prime Ministers on 26 October and the meeting of Nordic Prime Ministers on 27 October.

On 26-29 October the Nordic Council will hold its annual session at the Storting (the Norwegian Parliament). Swedish ministers will take part in debates during the session. A number of other Nordic ministerial meetings will be held during the same days.

Important issues to be discussed at the meetings in Oslo include the development of Nordic-Baltic cooperation, Nordic cooperation on European issues and the removal of obstacles to individual freedom of movement across Nordic borders.

During 2003 Sweden has chaired cooperation between Nordic governments based on the programme for the Swedish Presidency #Integration in the Nordic Region#. At the meetings in Oslo the Swedish Government will report on the results achieved.

More information is available at www.ud.se and www.norden.org.

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Key word: 10378 Berit Andnor

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin to take part in informal meeting of EU ministers in Trieste

The ministers for international development cooperation will gather on 24 October to discuss how

to bring about better coordination of development assistance provided by the EU and by individual European countries. If the UN Millennium Goals, including the goal of halving poverty by 2015, are to be realised, Sweden and the EU must play a proactive role. Environmental damage, HIV/AIDS and violations of human rights are problems that do not respect national borders and therefore require joint action. By the same token, European development assistance needs a stronger element of cooperation.

The ministers for development cooperation will also discuss how the process of promoting fairer trade can be moved forward following the collapse of negotiations at the WTO meeting in Cancún in September. Breaking the deadlock is crucial to the fight against poverty.

"Sweden must play an assertive and proactive role. I want Europe to demonstrate leadership now and drive developments forward. If necessary, the EU must show it is able to lead the way," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin ahead of the meeting.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to contribute SEK 250 million for reconstruction of Iraq

An international donor conference for the reconstruction of Iraq is being held in Madrid on 23-24 October. The purpose is to collect and coordinate economic contributions to the reconstruction of Iraq. More than 90 countries and international organisations are expected to participate. The Swedish contribution will amount to SEK 250 million for 2004 and 2005.

Sweden has long been a major donor of humanitarian aid to Iraq, and has decided on humanitarian commitments worth approximately SEK 95 million so far this year. Accordingly, the total contribution during a three-year period amounts to approximately SEK 345 million.

The Swedish efforts for Iraq will mainly be channelled via various UN bodies, based primarily on humanitarian actions already carried out by Sweden. But the efforts will be designed bearing in mind that Iraq should soon be able to stand on its own two feet, both politically and economically. Therefore, the Swedish efforts # apart from continued humanitarian measures # will concentrate on getting the political and economic processes going so that Iraq can take over and carry on with reconstruction using its own resources as soon as possible.

#The Madrid conference gives the international community an excellent opportunity to show its solidarity with the people of Iraq and to emphasise the role of the UN in the reconstruction of Iraq#, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Carin Jämtin.

The Swedish delegation is being led by State Secretary Annika Söder.

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Key word: 10347 Carin Jämtin

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New press secretaries at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The new press secretary for Carin Jämtin, the Minister for International Development Cooperation, is John Zanchi. The new press secretary for Barbro Holmberg, the Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy, is Odd Guteland.

Odd Guteland is on parental leave until 19 December and in the meantime John Zanchi will also act as press secretary for Barbro Holmberg.

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Key word: 10346

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds to visit Mozambique and Uganda

On 20-21 October, Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds is scheduled, together with her Nordic colleagues, to visit Mozambique for an informal meeting in Pemba with the foreign ministers of nine African countries: Benin, Botswana, Ghana, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Tanzania.

The initiative for meetings in this group was taken by Anna Lindh and two previous meetings have taken place in Stockholm in 2000 and 2002.

At the Pemba meeting, the ministers will continue their discussions on measures for peace, security and conflict prevention in Africa and particularly on developments in West Africa and Zimbabwe.

They will also discuss the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), a programme drawn up by African leaders aimed at eradicating poverty in Africa and setting the continent on a path of sustainable growth and development. The programme emphasises the importance of democracy, human rights and good governance, and calls for a new partnership between Africa and the international community to put an end to Africa's marginalisation.

Following this, Minister for Foreign Affairs Freivalds will visit Kampala, Uganda on 21-22 October for talks on the situation in the Horn of Africa in connection with the high-level meeting of the sub-regional organisation, IGAD. * The peace processes in Somalia, Sudan and Congo are of special interest, as are disturbing developments between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

* IGAD # the Inter Governmental Authority on Development, whose members are Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda.

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Key word: 10291 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Laila Freivalds, press contacts

Unofficial translation

Until the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Laila Freivalds, has appointed a Press Secretary, Director

Lars Georgsson, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, will act in this capacity. He can be reached by telephone: 08-405 57 39 or by mobile: 070-677 36 86. E-mail: Lars.Georgsson@foreign.ministry.se

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Key word: 10270 Laila Freivalds

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Proposal for simplified procedures for imports from developing countries

Unofficial translation

A report was today presented to the Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, on making procedures for imports from developing countries easier. The chairman of the inquiry, Ambassador Tommy Arwitz, looked into the preconditions for establishing a Swedish liaison function that can help companies in developing countries who want to export to Sweden and the EU by providing information and contacts. The report proposes that a function of this type be established at the National Board of Trade.

#The proposal is very interesting. There are many competitive companies in developing countries which, despite the fact that we have reduced customs tariffs in several areas, still do not get into the EU market. The rules are often copious, difficult to grasp and unnecessarily complicated,# says the Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky.

#A liaison function of this type could make life easier for entrepreneurs in developing countries while, at the same time, Swedish consumers would not be denied broader and better choice,# Mr Pagrotsky states.

The Government is expected to take a decision on the committee proposals in the near future.

The report #Open Trade Gate Sweden#(Ds 2003:48)(only in Swedish) is available at www.ud.se

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

State Secretary for Foreign Affairs to visit Liberia in connection with the transitional government's assumption of office

On 13-16 October, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren is to visit Liberia, Ghana and Guinea in his capacity as the EU Presidency's special representative for the Mano River Union countries (Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone). His visit to Liberia's capital city, Monrovia, coincides with the day on which the transitional government, which under the Liberian peace agreement will govern the country for a two-year period, takes up office. During his visit, Mr Dahlgren will meet representatives of the transitional government and international organisations, in order to assess how the EU and the international community can best support the peace process.

After visiting Liberia, the State Secretary will continue to Accra in Ghana, where together with the Italian EU Presidency, he will take part in a ministerial meeting with the West African cooperation organisation ECOWAS. The visit to the region will be concluded in Guinea-Conakry, where he will hold talks with government representatives on domestic developments in Guinea.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Barbro Holmberg to meet Antonio Vitorino

EU Commissioner Antonio Vitorino is to meet Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg at 16.45 this afternoon.

Antonio Vitorino is the EU Commissioner responsible for justice and home affairs.

To the editorial office:

Photo opportunity and doorstep at 16.30.

Assembly at the main entrance to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1.

Please bring your press credentials.

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Key word: 10265 Barbro Holmberg

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Laila Freivalds welcomes choice of Shirin Ebadi as this year's Nobel Peace Prize laureate

The Nobel Peace Prize this year has been awarded to Shirin Ebadi from Iran.

"I am very pleased that someone who is working to strengthen human rights and democracy in Iran has received the prize. She is a strong career woman and lawyer. These issues are of special concern to me," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Laila Freivalds.

Ebadi's efforts are invaluable in improving the situation for women and children in Iranian society. Shirin Ebadi visited Sweden as recently as June 2002, at the invitation of Anna Lindh and the Olof Palme International Center.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden-South Africa meeting ends

The third meeting of the special Binational Commission between Sweden and South Africa ended on Friday. The meeting, which took place over three days, was led by the Deputy President of South Africa Mr Jacob Zuma and the Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden Ms Margareta Winberg. The meeting reviewed cooperation between Sweden and South Africa in all relevant areas. The main aim of the meeting was to deepen the close relations between the two countries. Decisions were taken on a number of matters, including new areas for cooperation and forms for dialogue on questions relating to conflict resolution and HIV/Aids.

On Saturday Deputy President Zuma is going on to Göteborg, where he will take part in the Global Forum with Deputy Prime Minister Winberg on Monday.

The meeting adopted a joint communiqué that can be read on www.ud.se.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish Style in Tokyo 2003

Today, 8 October, is the opening of Swedish Style in Tokyo 2003. Furniture, textiles, design, art, film, photography, music and food from Sweden will be displayed in up to 40 locations around Tokyo under the theme #The Art of Living#. One hundred or so Swedish designers and company representatives will be participating.

#The goal of Swedish Style is to both strengthen Sweden#s image as a modern and exciting country and to contribute to increased exports for Swedish companies,# states the Ambassador in Tokyo, Mikael Lindström.

The catalogue will be printed in 30 000 copies and this year it can be purchased in bookshops throughout the country. A major exhibition with furniture and interior decoration for offices and public environments, Swedish Creative Space, will be displayed in 500 square metres on the 38th floor of the new Roppongi Hills. This year#s theme exhibition with an outdoor feeling, Design Archipelago, will be shown in the Embassy#s exhibition hall, compiled by the young design group, Defyra. An Archipelago Café can also be found here. Furthermore, seminars and concerts will also

take place at the Embassy, as will meetings between Swedish and Japanese actors.

It's fantastic to have this opportunity to also display works of young designers who haven't found a Japanese partner yet! says Lena Thak Karlsson in Defyra.

Export Music Sweden is arranging music seminars and a live concert with Swedish bands # Soundtrack of our Lives, Melody Club, WhyteSeeds and Caesar's Palace. New Swedish films will be shown to the Japanese public for the first time # Lilja 4ever, Ondskan, Vingar av Glas, Elina and Tokyo Noise.

In Swedish Style, we coordinate individual companies and designers marketing. In this way, each individual participant receives increased visibility and has an easier time establishing contacts. This is the fourth time that we will be arranging Swedish Style. This year, we are focusing on capturing the increasing commercial interest in Japan for Swedish design and Swedish furniture and to provide Sweden with increased exposure on this large and important market, states Ambassador Mikael Lindström.

Sweden's Embassy in Tokyo is the hub of the event. The project will be coordinated and administered by the Swedish Trade Council in Tokyo in close cooperation with the participating companies and actors, the Swedish Institute, the Swedish Travel and Tourism Council, organisations and Japanese cooperating partners.

For more information, see

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Alfred Nobel and US Nobel laureates honoured in New York

On 14 October a monument will be inaugurated in New York to commemorate Alfred Nobel and honour all the US Nobel laureates. Behind the initiative is Sweden's Consulate-General in New York which, for five years, has been organising the project in consultation with the City of New York Parks and Recreation Agency.

The monument has been designed by the Swedish sculptor and artist Sivert Lindholm and lists all the US Nobel laureates over the years, currently 271 in number. The monument has space for engraving subsequent US Nobel laureates for a number of decades in the future.

Taking part in the inauguration programme are, inter alia, the Mayor of New York, Michael Bloomberg, Deputy Prime Minister Margareta Winberg and Consul-General Olle Wästberg.

Norway is represented by HRH the Crown Prince Haakon and the US Nobel laureates will be represented on the podium by Professor Eric Kandel.

The ceremony will take place in the Theodore Roosevelt Park outside the American Museum of Natural History, where the monument will stand.

The morning's inaugural ceremony will be followed by a panel discussion in which four US Nobel laureates from different disciplines will take part, at the American Museum of Natural History.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) meeting in Umeå concludes successful Swedish chairmanship

On 2-3 October 2003, the foreign ministers of the Nordic countries and Russia, the European Commission, and representatives of the 13 Barents counties met under Swedish chairmanship in Umeå. This was the ninth meeting of the BEAC since its establishment in 1993. Discussions during the meeting focused, inter alia, on health and social issues, economic development and the environment.

"The BEAC is a unique regional organisation for cooperation which in the last decade has contributed to détente, stability and broad exchange over borders in this northerly part of Europe. During the Swedish chairmanship we have seen great progress in areas of central importance for the Barents region. One could mention, for example, a new health programme adopted for 2004-2007, the signing of the MNEPR Agreement in Stockholm in May, which paves the way for major efforts to manage nuclear waste in the Barents region and the opening of the border station in Salla on the Russian-Finnish border. We have also initiated cooperation between rescue services and have begun cooperation to put an end to trafficking," says acting Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan O. Karlsson in his statement.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government presents its views on the future of the EU

Today the Government will submit a communication to the Riksdag in anticipation of the EU intergovernmental conference due to begin on 4 October, when the heads of state and government and foreign ministers will meet in Rome. In its communication, "The European Convention on the Future of the EU" (2003/2004:13), the Government presents its views on the Convention's proposal for the future of the EU.

"The Convention's proposal provide a good basis for the intergovernmental conference. It enhances clarity and makes the EU more efficient, democratic and open," says acting Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan O. Karlsson.

The Union's fundamental objectives and values are modernised in the Convention's proposal. It strengthens cooperation in the judicial sphere and enhances the Union's powers to act in relation to the world at large. It is the Government's view that the Convention's proposal for the distribution of power between the EU institutions is reasonable.

At the same time the Government communication points to possible improvements in the Convention's proposal. Decisions on taxation, defence policy and large sections of foreign policy should continue to be made unanimously. The proposal for a special council of ministers for all legislation is questioned as is the proposal that countries should be able to unanimously decide to go over to majority decisions in new policy areas under the Treaty. The Presidency's function in the Council and the proposed role of a "foreign minister" also need to be developed, says the Government.

The Government also attaches importance to the constitutional aspects of the proposal for a new Treaty. It discusses, in a special chapter of the communication, how the Convention's proposal relates to the provisions of the Swedish Constitution. The general assessment is that the Convention's proposals conform with the provisions of the Instrument of Government.

The Government communication is the second of three stages in the consultation process about a new EU Treaty begun after the Convention concluded its work. The first step was to broaden the referral procedure undertaken between the end of July and the beginning of September, when a ministerial memorandum accompanying the proposal from the EU Convention on the Future of the EU was sent to more than 130 referral bodies. Almost all of them submitted comments.

After private members' motions, discussions by committees and debate and resolutions in the Chamber, the Riksdag will present, in November, a report in response to the Government communication. This will be the third stage of the process.

"There is broad support among the referral bodies for the proposal on a new constitutional Treaty but we have also noted important viewpoints," says Jan O. Karlsson. During the negotiations, the Government will hold a close dialogue with the Riksdag's Advisory Committee on EU Affairs and will be an active and constructive partner at the intergovernmental conference, says Karlsson.

The Government communication "The European Convention on the Future of the EU (2003/2004:13) is available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website: www.ud.se under the heading "The Future of the EU" (only in Swedish). The ministerial memorandum on which the replies of the referral bodies were based is also available: Ds 2003:36, The European Convention on the Future of the EU.

During the autumn, a special summary of the referral bodies' comments will also be made.

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Key word: 10175 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson to lead UN meeting on migration

Jan O. Karlsson to lead UN meeting on migration

On 7-8 October, Jan O. Karlsson will participate in the Forum for Social Development at the UN headquarters in New York. The meeting will discuss the subject of international migrants and development, with a particular focus on the role of individual migrants in development issues.

Jan O. Karlsson will chair the seminar and will also serve as one of the four panelists. The other participants in the seminar include experts from Human Rights Watch, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the World Bank, as well as representatives of Colombia, Mexico, Switzerland and South Africa.

This year's International Forum for Social Development is the third meeting of its kind. The first took place in February 2002 and addressed the issue of financing global social development. The topic for discussion at a second forum, held in October last year, was the international dimension of cooperation for social development. This series of meetings is part of the follow-up to the UN World Summit for Social Development that was held in Copenhagen in 1995.

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Key word: 10173 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-10-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish month in Brazil focusing on design and the business sector

Boat propellers, dynamite, matches, zips, pacemakers.

The biggest promotion of Sweden ever in Brazil will take place in October. The aim is to strengthen Swedish trademarks, forge contacts for the future and new business connections.

The main attraction of the Swedish month will be the exhibition #Melhorando a vida # O design das inovações suecas# (#Improving life # the design behind Swedish inventions#), which will be shown at the Museu da Casa Brasileira in São Paulo throughout October. At the centre are Swedish innovations that have become world leaders through well developed design and which illustrate the importance of design for creating both competitive products and quality of life.

In connection with the exhibition, the Embassy of Sweden and the Swedish-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce (Swedish Trade Council) in São Paulo are organising many activities to promote the Swedish business sector and knowledge about Sweden. Evenings devoted to companies, Swedish music, a Swedish gastronomical week and special events for university students are a few examples. Two seminars on design and innovation are another important feature at which well known Swedish and Brazilian designers will give lectures. Swedish participants include, among others, Tor Bonnier, Eero Koivisto and Monica Förster. Brazil will be represented by, among others, the Campana design brothers, who will be in the news in Sweden in November when, through the agency of the magazine Sköna Hem, they will be in Stockholm with their expo CAMPANAS.

In the past year, Prime Minister Göran Persson has visited Brazil on two occasions and bilateral relations are being intensified. Swedish companies have a very strong position in Brazil. There are over 180 Swedish companies in the country today and several new establishments are added every year.

The Embassy of Sweden in Brasília, the Swedish Trade Council, the Swedish Institute and the Swedish Society of Crafts and Design are behind all the events during the Swedish month, in close cooperation with Swedish companies present in Brazil.

For further information please contact:

www.designsueco.com.br

www.svenskform.se

www.si.se

www.swedishtrade.se

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Barents Euro-Arctic Council to meet in Umeå on 2-3 October

The foreign ministers of the Nordic countries and Russia and a representative of the European Commission are meeting for the ninth time within the framework of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC).

The meeting is taking place in Umeå on 2-3 October. The opening ceremony, to be held on 3 October, is open to the media. There will also be a press conference after the Council meeting. Subjects for discussion during the meeting include increased exchange between countries in the areas of youth issues, education and research as well as cooperation between the rescue services in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region.

The Council will also discuss economic development and trade, investments, transport issues and customs cooperation. Environmental and life quality issues, ecotourism and a new health programme for the region will also be discussed.

Sweden has chaired the BEAC since March 2001 and will hand over the chair to Norway in connection with the meeting. The BEAC's observer countries - Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States - are also taking part in the meeting. The county governors of the thirteen member counties of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region and invited organisations are also participating.

Further information about Barents Euro-Arctic Region cooperation is available at www.beac.st

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Key word: 10149 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

China's Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Zhang Yesui to visit Stockholm

China's Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Zhang Yesui is visiting Sweden on 30 September # 1 October.

On Wednesday Mr Zhang will meet Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan O. Karlsson for talks. During his visit to Stockholm Mr Zhang will also meet State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Hans Dahlgren and Director-General for Political Affairs, Anders Lidén.

Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Yesui is responsible for European countries at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Peking. The visit to Sweden is part of Mr Zhang's tour of the Nordic countries.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Berit Andnor welcomes progress in efforts to facilitate commercial traffic in the Nordic countries

"It is with great satisfaction I can now note that several border barriers for commercial traffic in the Nordic countries are in the process of being removed."

This was said by Minister Berit Andnor, as Minister responsible for Nordic cooperation and this year, President of Nordic government cooperation, after a conference in Östersund on Monday.

Efforts to remove border barriers have been made in various forums. During the year, representatives of the agencies involved, organisations and entrepreneurs linked to the haulier and machine entrepreneur industry have been discussing possible solutions to different problems in order to make it easier for commercial traffic to function smoothly between the Nordic countries. The border barriers discussed include various customs procedures, costs at borders, standard measurements for vehicles, and the validity of driving licences for some machines in neighbouring Nordic countries.

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Key word: 10128 Berit Andnor

PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Seminar on the situation of Palestinian children

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan O. Karlsson is due to host a seminar, on 1#3 October, on the situation of Palestinian children in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Palestinian children are a particularly vulnerable group whose situation has drastically deteriorated since the second intifada began in September 2000. The aim of the seminar is to raise awareness of the everyday problems faced by Palestinian children, such as those relating to health, schooling, housing and detainment. Peace efforts must take into account the rights of these children and improvements in their conditions. To achieve this, the Palestinian community must be given the world's support. This seminar is one of Sweden's contributions to this cause.

In addition to experts from humanitarian organisations in the region, we have invited twelve young Palestinians aged 16#18, representing a broad spectrum of the Palestinian youth community. During their visit they will take part in the seminar and visit Swedish schools in Stockholm, Uppsala, Göteborg, Småland and Skåne.

To the editorial office:

Representatives of the media are welcome to attend the seminar, which will be opened on Wednesday 1 October at 09.30 by Jan O. Karlsson.

The seminar will take place at the Hilton Hotel, Stockholm Slussen, Guldgränd 8.

A preliminary programme is available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website ().

Applications to attend the seminar should be made to Anna Widestam:

anna.widestam@foreign.ministry.se or tel: 08-405 50 36.

Please bring your press credentials.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson welcomes acquittal of Amina Lawal

#It is very pleasing that the court of appeal has now acquitted Amina Lawal,# says acting Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan O. Karlsson, commenting on the decision of the court in Katsina in northern Nigeria to free Ms Lawal.

#The acquittal is a great legal victory both for Amina Lawal and for human rights. Stoning goes against the prohibition of cruel, inhuman or humiliating punishment laid down in international conventions, which Nigeria has undertaken to respect,# continues Jan O. Karlsson.

#While we welcome the outcome of this case, we must not relent in our criticism of courts in northern Nigeria that continue to sentence people to stoning. This ruling strengthens our determination to continue to fight for respect for human rights.#

The case of Amina Lawal has outraged people in Nigeria and the rest of the world. Sweden has joined in international criticism against the verdict that Amina Lawal should be stoned to death for alleged sexual relations outside of wedlock. As recently as 9 September 2003, the late Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh condemned the death sentence in the Riksdag.

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Key word: 10125 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to press briefing on removal of border barriers for commercial traffic in the Nordic countries

In her capacity as President of the Nordic ministers for cooperation in 2003, Minister Berit Andnor will be participating in a conference on commercial traffic due to take place in Östersund on 29 September.

It is important to enable commercial traffic to function smoothly between the Nordic countries. This applies to customs procedures, various costs at borders, standard measurements for vehicles, and the validity of driving licences for some machines in neighbouring Nordic countries.

Participants in the conference in Östersund include representatives of agencies and trade organisations from the Nordic countries.

A press briefing will be held on Monday 29 September at 12.30 at the Radisson SAS Hotel in Östersund.

Further information on border barrier issues is available at www.norden.org/grensehindringer/sk/index.asp

Welcome!

The conference has been organised jointly by the Swedish Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers and the inter-regional decision-making group for the Interreg IIIA Project.

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Key word: 10085 Berit Andnor

PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jordanian state visit to Sweden 7-9 October 2003

His Majesty King Abdullah II bin al Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan will pay a state visit to Sweden on 7-9 October 2003, at the invitation of His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf. King Abdullah will be accompanied by Her Majesty Queen Rania al Abdullah.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson to speak at the United Nations

On 21-26 September, Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan O. Karlsson will attend the UN General Assembly in New York in connection with Sweden's commitment in the declaration on supporting work to prevent HIV/AIDS.

Today, on Monday, Jan O. Karlsson will address the General Assembly at approximately 17.00 local time. Sweden is the 51st speaker. After the speech, a press briefing will be organised.

On Tuesday morning, 23 September, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs will take part in a meeting with the EU foreign ministers. In the afternoon, Jan O. Karlsson will meet representatives of Russia together with the EU foreign ministers, after which he will take part in a meeting with like-minded countries in connection with the EU intergovernmental conference.

On Wednesday morning, the Nordic foreign ministers will meet at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations.

On Thursday 15 September, Jan O. Karlsson will meet a representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). At 17.15 local time the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs will address the General Assembly in connection with the concluding debate. After his speech, a press briefing will be organised, which concludes Jan O. Karlsson's stay in New York.

For interviews with Jan O. Karlsson, please contact Lott Jansson, telephone +46 70 309 47 87.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Increased development assistance to go to concrete measures

Development assistance will increase by SEK 2.8 billion between 2003 and 2004. Its share of GNI will rise from 0.81 to 0.868 per cent. Increasing development assistance will continue to be one of the Government's main reform initiatives. The target of allocating one per cent of Sweden's GNI to international development cooperation and assistance remains firm.

"Development assistance has increased by 30 per cent over the past three years. Next year's increase means that we will be able to take forceful action in four major areas: HIV/AIDS; sexual and reproductive health and rights; narcotics; and peace support, conflict management and common security," says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

HIV/AIDS

Support to UNAIDS will increase from SEK 60 to SEK 100 million. More support will be given to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and other efforts to combat HIV/AIDS. Preventive work continues to be important but the Government will increase its support to, for example, care, treatment and the development of a vaccine. A special Ambassador, responsible for HIV/AIDS issues, will be appointed.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights

Support to the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) will increase from SEK 205 to SEK 270 million.

Conservative forces are trying to undermine progress made internationally. Sweden will increase its support to such organisations to enable vital work for women's reproductive and sexual health and rights to continue.

The fight against drugs

Support to the UN International Drug Control Programme will increase from SEK 38.5 to SEK 50 million. Narcotics problems are closely linked to poverty, lack of equality, exploitation, corruption and weak political control. Efforts will be directed both at production and consumption in developing countries.

Peace support, conflict management and common security

Resources allocated to civil missions, such as police and rescue services in connection with peace-keeping operations, will increase. The Government will strengthen confidence-building measures, such as dialogues and participatory processes. Greater emphasis will be given to the underlying causes of armed conflicts.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Continued export promotion initiatives in 2004

#Promotion of both Swedish exports and investments in Sweden will be high priority issues for the Government next year,# the Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, stated in connection with the presentation of the Government#s Budget Bill for 2004.

#We will ensure that the advantages of increased internationalisation benefit more companies, not least by continuing the battle against unnecessary red tape in trade at all levels,# Mr Pagrotsky said. Continued long-term, strategic and dynamic efforts in trade and investment promotion are proposed in the Budget Bill for 2004. The priorities set out in the programme #Active, Attractive Sweden# launched in the autumn of 2002, will be carried through.

The Government gives priority to increased activity in strategic markets. This applies to both established and new, interesting and fast growing markets such as, for example, India, China, Brazil and Russia. Business sector development and trade in the Baltic Sea region will be stimulated. The Government is also appropriating funds for export and investment promotion initiatives in high-tech industries and new areas where Sweden and Swedish companies have special expertise and are in a good position to compete, such as, for example, the IT, biotechnology and food areas.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New department heads at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government has appointed Catherine von Heidenstam as the new Head of the Protocol Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

For the past two years Catherine von Heidenstam has been the Principal Secretary of the Swedish EU 2004 Committee attached to the Prime Minister#s Office. The work of the Committee is concerned with the development and future of the EU ahead of the Intergovernmental Conference in 2004. Ms Von Heidenstam previously held the position of ambassador for human rights based at the

Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm and has also been ambassador in Tunis. She has also worked on press and information issues and been stationed in Helsinki, New York, Vienna and Hanoi.

The Protocol Department is the department in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that deals with rules for contacts between states. These include rules in international law on diplomatic relations or certain ceremonies in connection with visits, negotiations or similar activities.

Another three department heads have been appointed at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Anne Marie Dierauer has been made head of the Human Resources Department. Peter Tejler is the new head of the Middle East and North Africa Department and Anders Oljelund is the new head of the Department for Global Development.

Anne Marie Dierauer has headed the Human Resources Department at the Ministry of Justice for the past six years. She will take up her new post on 1 October 2003.

Ambassador Peter Tejler's most recent appointment was as ambassador in Islamabad, Pakistan, also with accreditation in Afghanistan. He had previously been stationed in Washington, Bonn, Damascus and Prague and had also worked on Central and East Europe issues. Peter Tejler has also headed the Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Until recently ambassador Anders Oljelund held the position of ambassador in Brussels and was Sweden's representative to NATO and the Western European Union (WEU). Previously he worked as Deputy Director-General for Political Affairs and as Deputy Head of the then Policy Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Mr Oljelund has also been secretary to the Riksdag's Committee on Foreign Affairs and ambassador in Dar es Salaam. He has also been stationed in Rome and Kinshasa.

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Key word: 9998

PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Threat to Swedish timber exports to Japan removed

Following pressure, Japan has agreed to change the rules for building materials that had threatened to shut the door on some parts of the substantial Swedish timber exports to Japan. This would have excluded a number of Swedish producers, primarily of laminated wood and laminated wood products.

#This is a major success for the Swedish wood industry, particularly for small and medium sized companies and sawmills in Norrbotten and Västerbotten#, comments Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

On 1 July 2003, Japan introduced new rules for formaldehyde emissions in living environments. The rules entailed more complicated procedures for foreign companies than for Japanese companies, as approval by Japanese authorities was required for all products. In total an export sector worth SEK 1.9 billion was directly or indirectly at risk, which corresponds to over 10 per

cent of Sweden's total exports to Japan.

After intense pressure from Sweden, the EU and others, Japan has now agreed to let Swedish exporters apply for Japanese approval on the basis of results of tests carried out in Sweden.

This will mean a simpler, faster, and hopefully cheaper process for Swedish wood exporters. This will benefit both Swedish manufacturers and Japanese consumers, who have a particularly high opinion of Swedish wooden houses, says Leif Pagrotsky.

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Key word: 9996 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Pagrotsky regrets setback in WTO negotiations

The WTO negotiations in Cancún collapsed on Sunday. The chairman, Mexico's foreign minister Derbez, stated that there were no chances of reaching an agreement.

There was a real possibility of now taking an important step forward in the negotiations for more open and fairer trade, above all in the agricultural area, the Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, says in a comment.

The crucial problem that finally caused the collapse of the talks concerned an extension of the WTO system to include new issues. Among other things, the African group rejected a compromise text about initiating negotiations on agreements on simplified trade and greater transparency in public procurement. The most controversial issue concerning an agreement on investments, previously pursued by the EU, had already been removed from the agenda.

This will scarcely benefit poor people in developing countries who more than others need rules against corruption and unnecessary red tape in trade, Mr Pagrotsky says.

Furthermore, we will now lose the restriction of rich countries' subsidies to agriculture that was on the negotiating table.

The negotiations in Cancún were a mid-term review of the so-called development round which commenced in Doha, Qatar, 2001. According to the timetable the round is to be completed on 1 January 2005 at the latest.

Several important deadlines in the Doha round have already been broken and this will make even greater demands on all the WTO member countries if we are to succeed in reforming the rules of international trade in the time agreed, says Leif Pagrotsky.

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Key word: 9977 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson appeals to Israel not to expel Arafat

"Israel's decision in principle to expel the Palestinians' elected President Yassir Arafat is totally unacceptable," says Jan O Karlsson.

"It risks further escalation of the conflict and seriously obstructs efforts to bring about a peaceful solution."

"I appeal to the Israeli Government not to implement this decision and instead to do all in its power to enable a de-escalation of violence and implementation of the road map for peace."

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Stockholm

Four newly appointed Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on 4 September. The Ambassadors are from France, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Sudan and the Republic of Korea.

The Ambassador of France, Denis Delbourg, was born in 1952 and entered the French foreign service in 1978 after his graduation from the ENA. At the Ministry for Foreign Affairs he has primarily worked with press and cultural issues. Delbourg has also served at the Offices of the Prime Minister and the Office of Ministers of Culture under socialist governments.

In recent years Ambassador Delbourg has held the following posts:

1992 # 1993 Head of the Prime Minister's Press and Information Department

1993 # 1996 Counsellor, responsible for cultural issues at the Consulate- General in New York

1996 # 2000 Consul-General in Rio de Janeiro

2000 # 2002 Diplomatic adviser to the Prime Minister

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's Ambassador, Jeon In Chan, was born in 1951. He studied at the University of International Relations in Pyongyang and has worked in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's foreign service since 1979. In 1991-94, Ambassador Jeon In Chan served as Permanent Representative of the DPRK to the UN Secretariat in Vienna. Since then he has served at the International Organisation Department, Ministry for Foreign Affairs and from 1997, has held the following posts:

Deputy Director at the International Organisation Department

Acting Director of the Flood Damage Relief Committee (FDRC)

Secretary-General of UNICEF's national coordination committee

Sudan's Ambassador, Zeinab Mohamed Mahmoud, was born in 1948 and in 1970 graduated from Khartoum University with a B.Sc. in economics and political science. She entered her country's foreign service in 1977, and has served, inter alia, in Paris, Doha and Cairo.

In recent years Ambassador Mahmoud has held the following posts:

1996 # 1999 Minister, Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Khartoum

1999 # 2000 Ambassador, Deputy Director of the Asian Affairs Department, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

2000 # 2002 Director of the European Affairs Department

2002 # Director of the Planning Department

Ambassador Mahmoud is the first woman Ambassador in Sudan.

The Republic of Korea's Ambassador, Jung Young-jo, was born in 1944 and graduated from Seoul University with a degree in humanities. He entered the Republic of Korea's foreign service in 1973 and has alternated between service at missions abroad and at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Seoul.

In recent years Ambassador Jung has held the following posts:

1994 # 1997 Minister Counsellor at the Embassy in Ottawa

1997 # 1999 Foreign policy adviser, with the position of Ambassador, to the Mayor of Dae-jeon

1999 (Jan) Director-General of the Cultural Affairs Bureau, Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade

1999 (Sept) Ambassador in Bangladesh

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Consensus on WTO Agreement after long negotiations: Better access to medicine in poor countries

On Saturday morning, all the member countries of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) finally succeeded in reaching unanimity on an agreement of major importance for many of the world's poorest countries. It involves enabling countries without domestic pharmaceutical production to import cheap copies of medicines for diseases such as AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis in the event of national public health risks.

"I'm relieved. This will be a useful injection for the WTO meeting in Cancùn in a couple of weeks. The agreement increases the chances of achieving results in other important areas," comments Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky.

"The issue of an agreement on access to vital medicines in poor countries has been on the WTO agenda for two years. Sweden and the EU have been proactive in trying to bring about an agreement.

This is a clear example of how the EU can make use of its strength as a trade policy actor to create a better, fairer world. Without the EU, we would never have got the ball rolling," says Leif Pagrotsky.

Follow the news from the WTO meeting in Cancùn directly on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website!

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is making great efforts to provide information on Sweden's work in the WTO on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website # www.ud.se. The site has theme pages in Swedish on Sweden and the WTO that describe the status of negotiations on the various issues and supplement this information with news, interviews, speeches, articles, facts about the WTO, etc. During the Ministerial Conference in Cancùn, these pages will be updated continually with reports on what is happening on the spot.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press conference in Helsingborg

On Wednesday 3 September, Swedish Minister for Nordic Cooperation Berit Andnor will be visiting Helsingborg.

In 2003 Sweden holds the Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers. The issue to which Sweden has given top priority in its Presidency is the elimination of border barriers between the Nordic countries.

Berit Andnor will meet the press to talk about the progress being made on removing border barriers in the Nordic region.

Date and time: Wednesday 3 September at 11.00.

Venue: Entry to the ferries at Knutpunkten traffic terminal in Helsingborg.
Welcome!

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Key word: 9915 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-09-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh to participate in informal meeting of EU Ministers for Foreign Affairs in Italy

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh will participate in the informal meeting of EU Ministers for Foreign Affairs on 5#6 September 2003. The meeting will take place in Riva del Garda in northern Italy.

The topics the foreign ministers will discuss include continued work on the EU#s security strategy, preparations for the intergovernmental conference this autumn, the EU#s relations with southern Mediterranean countries and the peace process in the Middle East.

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Key word: 9914 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-08-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Honorary consuls from Asia to visit Sweden

Swedish honorary consuls in India, Japan, Nepal, Maldives, Pakistan and South Korea will be attending a week-long consular conference in Sweden, starting on Sunday, 31 August.

An important aim of this visit is to strengthen the role of consuls as promoters of Sweden and the Swedish business sector.

In Stockholm, the eleven consuls will visit, inter alia, Ericsson and the Kista Science Park. They will also meet representatives of the Swedish Trade Council, the Swedish Institute, the Swedish Travel and Tourism Council and the Invest in Sweden Agency. During their stay in Göteborg, visits will include the Business Region Göteborg, SKF, Volvo, Göteborg's harbour and the East Indiaman.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-08-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador for new embassy in Bratislava

The Government has today appointed Cecilia Julin, currently Minister at the Swedish Embassy in Washington, to be the new ambassador in Bratislava, Slovakia.

Cecilia Julin will be Sweden's first ever ambassador in Bratislava. A former member of the Americas Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm, she has also been stationed in Pretoria, Tel Aviv and Lima.

The new embassy is being established as a pilot project involving cooperation between Sweden and Finland. Each country is setting up its own embassy in separate premises, but sharing support facilities and space as far as possible.

The pilot project is being carried out to demonstrate opportunities for cooperation between two or more Nordic countries in opening embassies and running them more efficiently.

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Key word: 9886

PRESS RELEASE

2003-08-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Berit Andnor to visit Åland

On Friday 29 August, the minister responsible for Nordic cooperation, Berit Andnor, is scheduled to visit Åland. There she will meet vice-chairman of the Government and Administrative Board of Åland, Olof Erland, who is hosting the visit.

During the day, the two will discuss Nordic cooperation issues. The most important issue will be how to eliminate border barriers between the Nordic countries. Sweden is presiding over Nordic ministerial cooperation this year, and the priority issue is precisely that: elimination of border barriers.

During her visit, Berit Andnor will also meet representatives of the Nordic Council, the Nordic Institute on Åland, and the Norden Association.

The media is invited to a press briefing.

Date and time: Friday 29 August at 12.00

Venue: Room 308, Självstyrelsegården, Mariehamn.

The press briefing will conclude with a photo opportunity in the centre of Mariehamn, where Berit Andnor will shop using euros.

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Key word: 9862 Berit Andnor

PRESS RELEASE

2003-08-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Meeting of Nordic-Baltic foreign ministers in Riga

On Friday 29 August the Nordic and Baltic ministers for foreign affairs will gather in Riga. Latvia will be the host for the meeting, where current international issues, EU affairs and matters of mutual Nordic-Baltic interest are scheduled for discussion.

In conjunction with the meeting there will also be a meeting of Nordic foreign ministers chaired by Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

To the editorial office:

The meeting will conclude with a press conference.
Date and time: Friday 29 August at 17.20
Venue: White Hall, Riga Latvian Society
Please bring your press credentials!

CONTACT

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Maria Hagberg
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Key word: 9861 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-08-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to a press breakfast with Leif Pagrotsky ahead of the WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancùn, Friday 29 August at 9.30

The member countries of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) are meeting in Cancùn in Mexico on 10-14 September. Minister of Trade and Industry Leif Pagrotsky invites you to a press breakfast ahead of the WTO Conference to inform you about the status of negotiations and about Swedish positions.

Date and time: Friday 29 August 9.30 a.m.

Venue: Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, Jakobsgatan 26

If you wish to attend, please notify Press Assistant Anette Vahlne, tel 405 3576, 070-605 00 31, anette.vahlne@industry.ministry.se, no later than 2.00 p.m. on Thursday 28 August.

Please bring your press credentials.

Welcome.

Follow the news from Cancùn directly on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is making great efforts to provide information on Sweden's work in the WTO on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website # www.ud.se. The site has theme pages in Swedish on Sweden and the WTO that describe the status of negotiations on the various issues and supplement this information with news, interviews, speeches, articles, facts about the WTO, etc. During the Ministerial Conference in Cancùn these pages will be updated continually with reports on what is happening at the Conference scene.

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Key word: 9859

PRESS RELEASE

2003-08-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Rwanda

The Government decided today to send three observers to monitor the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections in Rwanda. The Swedish election observers will be part of the joint EU election observation mission.

The presidential election will take place on 25 August while the parliamentary elections will be held between 29 September and 1 October. These will be the first national elections since the 1994 genocide and will mark the end of the period of transition Rwanda has been in since then.

The Swedish observers will be on the ground in Rwanda for both sets of elections, from 20 to 28 August and from 27 September to 4 October.

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Gufran Al-nadaf
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Key word: 9836 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-08-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports Red Cross Nordic United World College

The Government decided today to grant SEK 5.8 million this year to the Red Cross Nordic United World College.

The College was established in 1995 and accepts students from 80 different countries. A third of these students come from developing countries. Through education and training, experience exchange and social service, the college aims to enable young people to become politically and

environmentally aware citizens.

Sweden has contributed to the support of the Nordic UWC since it opened in 1995.

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Key word: 9832 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-08-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to the energy sector in Lithuania

The Government decided today to grant SEK 8.95 million in support to the energy sector in Lithuania.

This support is intended as part-financing for a new transformer station with demonstration character, whose purpose will be to supply electricity to a new sewage treatment plant in the city of Siauliai. The decision will make it possible for the client to access a secure electricity supply for the sewage treatment plant and modern technology in preparation for the future modernisation of the Lithuanian electricity network.

It is important for the sewage treatment plant in Siauliai to acquire a secure electricity supply. A more modern, more environmentally friendly and more efficient electricity network for Lithuania, moreover, will be a welcome development. The Government's decision will open the way for Swedish companies to share their considerable expertise, says Minister Jan O. Karlsson.

The initiative is one outcome of the work being carried out, within the framework of the Second Baltic Billion Fund, by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Projects Export Secretariat, aimed at establishing a platform for cooperation between the state sector and private industry in the Baltic Sea region. The overall goal of the Baltic Billion Fund is to strengthen the position of Swedish industry in the Baltic Sea region.

The Swedish support will be administered by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

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Key word: 9831

PRESS RELEASE

2003-08-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

35 years since Sweden signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Today it is 35 years to the day since Sweden signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The treaty forms the cornerstone of global efforts towards disarmament and the prevention of nuclear weapon proliferation.

"The work of preserving and strengthening the NPT must continue," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh. "This is essential today when we can see a number of threats to the treaty, including the decision by North Korea to withdraw from it."

She goes on to point out "In this treaty the nuclear weapon states have pledged to disarm their nuclear weapons, but their lack of will to show concrete progress risks undermining the NPT in the long run. Disarmament commitments must be taken seriously."

"The discussions initiated by the USA on a new type of small nuclear weapon are therefore disturbing," stresses the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

"We must continue our efforts to get all countries to sign the treaty. India, Israel and Pakistan must accede as nuclear weapon-free states. North Korea must also be persuaded to remain a party to the treaty as a state without nuclear weapons."

The NPT means that the five recognised nuclear weapon states # the USA, Russia, the UK, France and China # are not permitted to spread nuclear weapons, related know-how or technology to third countries except for peaceful purposes, such as building nuclear power stations or use in medical care. The other parties to the treaty have pledged not to develop or acquire nuclear weapons. At present, 188 states are party to the treaty, which entered into force in 1970.

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Elisabeth Hellström
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Key word: 9818 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-08-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Nordic ministers to meet in Östersund

On Tuesday 19 August # Wednesday 20 August the Nordic ministers for cooperation will gather in Östersund. A total of eight ministers will be taking part in the meeting of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The former Prime Minister of Denmark, Poul Schlüter, and the Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers, Per Unckel, will also be in attendance. The Council of Ministers is chaired this year by Sweden. It is the Swedish minister responsible for Nordic cooperation, Berit Andnor, who has put Poul Schlüter in charge of efforts to eliminate border barriers between the Nordic countries. At the meeting in Östersund he will describe his progress in tackling this task. The meeting, which will be held at the Radisson SAS Hotel in Östersund, will also discuss the budget of the Council of Ministers.

On Tuesday afternoon the ministers will visit Moose Garden in Orrviken (15.00-17.00).

The meeting will conclude with a press conference.

Date and time: Wednesday 20 August at 12.00.

Venue: Fredssalen, SAS Radisson, Prästgatan 16, Östersund

Welcome!

CONTACT

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Press Secretary

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Press Counsellor

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Key word: 9798 Berit Andnor

PRESS RELEASE

2003-08-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Accreditation of foreign media ahead of the Swedish referendum on 14 September

Applications are now being accepted for accreditation of foreign media representatives ahead of the Swedish referendum for or against the euro on 14 September. The deadline for applications is 9 September. An application form for accreditation may be found along with information for the media on our homepage:

www.foreign.ministry.se (click on EMU Referendum in the right-hand column).

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Key word: 9797

PRESS RELEASE

2003-08-14
Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

US-EU compromises improve prospects for WTO meeting in Mexico

The EU and the United States presented a compromise proposal on Wednesday for carrying through the negotiations on agriculture in the current world trade round. Earlier in the week, the EU and US agreed, with Canadian support, on a proposed approach for lowering tariffs on industrial products. #The fact that the EU and the United States have begun to compromise in two major areas in this WTO round is very positive and a necessary prerequisite for the success of the WTO negotiations#, says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

#However, much remains to be done before we can be sure the trade negotiations reach an ambitious result, safeguarding the interests of developing countries. A result along these lines is also in the interests of Swedish consumers and businesses.#

The framework proposals from the EU and the US will be discussed prior to the ministerial meeting in Cancún, Mexico on 10-14 September, where a decision is to be taken on the future conduct of the negotiations. After that WTO negotiations will continue, the aim being to bring them to a conclusion by January 2005 at the latest.

The framework proposal for the negotiations on industrial products paves the way for cuts in tariffs and takes special account of the least developed countries.

#It#s very good that the proposal makes it possible to do away with bothersome, low-level tariffs as well as all tariffs on cloth, clothing and environmental products,# says Leif Pagrotsky. #These are ideas Sweden has long supported.#

The agriculture negotiations have long been a stumbling block in the WTO round. The framework proposal from the EU and the US encompasses tariff reductions, restrictions on export subsidies and cuts in domestic subsidies.

#The compromise on agriculture will provide an important basis for further negotiations,# emphasises Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Ann-Christin Nykvist. #The proposal clears up the conflict of interests between the United States and the EU. We will now analyse the proposal carefully in terms of Swedish interests and work to ensure that the final result reflects Sweden#s ambitious objectives, particularly where the conditions of competition for developing countries are concerned.#

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Key word: 9795

PRESS RELEASE

2003-08-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award for 2003 goes to Polish company

Environmental Ambassador Viveka Bohn will today present the Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award. This year the award has been won by the Polish company FRANTSCHACH SWIECIE SA, one of the largest producers of pulp and paper in Poland. The award consists of SEK 100 000, a handmade diploma and a glass sculpture.

The award was established by the Swedish Government to honour direct, practical initiatives that help improve the quality of water in the Baltic Sea. This year marks the fifth year of the award. The award is administered by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), which provides further information on its website: <http://www.siwi.org>

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Key word: 9793 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-08-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassadors in Sofia and Manila

The Government has today appointed Director Bertil Roth the new Swedish Ambassador in Sofia, Bulgaria and Deputy Director Annika Markovic the new Ambassador in Manila, Philippines. Bertil Roth has served most recently in the International Law and Human Rights Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has also been stationed in Geneva, Bangkok and elsewhere. Annika Markovic has worked at the Global Security Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Her other positions have included a posting in New York.

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Key word: 9792

PRESS RELEASE

2003-08-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports West African peace force in Liberia

The Government took a decision today to contribute SEK 10 million to the Economic Community of West African States ECOWAS# peace-keeping force in Liberia. The decision on the mandate of the force was taken by the UN Security Council on 1 August. The force, led by Nigeria, is being deployed in Liberia at present.

#The arrival of the West African force is a decisive step towards peace in Liberia and an important signal from the international community that the violence in Liberia must cease,# says State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren, who holds the position of the EU Presidency#s Special Representative for the MRU region, including Liberia.

#The force is to ensure that the conflicting parties respect the cease-fire agreed on 17 June and to do everything possible to enable relief organisations to reach the suffering civilian population with food, water and medicines,# Hans Dahlgren continues.

#President Charles Taylor has no role to play in the transitional government that is to lead war-torn Liberia towards free and fair elections. The fact that an international peace force is now in place in Liberia means that Charles Taylor must live up to his promise and leave the post of President as soon as possible,# says State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren.

Sweden and the EU have actively supported ECOWAS# mediation efforts, partly by providing financial support for the peace negotiations that have been under way in Ghana since the beginning of June. The Swedish contribution to the ECOWAS peace-keeping action is also guided by the

Government's aim to strengthen Africa's peace-keeping capacity and to prevent and manage conflicts.

Sweden provides considerable humanitarian assistance to Liberia through the UN system and non-governmental organisations. During 2003 more than SEK 40 million has been granted for various initiatives in health and medical care, education and for support to internally displaced persons.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-08-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Teheran

The Government has today appointed Ambassador Christofer Gyllenstierna to be the new Swedish Ambassador in Tehran, Iran.

At present Christofer Gyllenstierna holds the position of Inspector with the status of ambassador at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has previously been ambassador in Manila. He has also been stationed in Tokyo, Ankara, Brussels, Copenhagen and Paris.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-07-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to African countries in the WTO

Sweden is to help four African countries defend their interests in the World Trade Organisation, WTO. This was decided by the Government today. In a unique joint initiative, Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali and Chad have proposed that support to cotton production be banned. The Swedish contribution of about SEK 450 000 is to help these countries independently pursue the issue at the WTO summit in Cancún in September.

#That some of the poorest countries join forces in this way in a challenging initiative for free and fair trade is a very rare occurrence and something Sweden warmly welcomes,# the Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, and the Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O Karlsson, said in a joint comment.

#To actively pursue an issue in international negotiations requires resources. We have therefore chosen to give these countries economic assistance,# Mr Karlsson continued.

The four countries behind the initiative are strongly dependent on income from cotton. It is their most important export and production employs millions of people in the region. The countries oppose the support given by the EU, China and the US to their own cotton producing farmers, which leads to overproduction and low world market prices.

#The focus must be on areas where developing countries have competitive advantages when world trade is opened up. Trade affords opportunities to fight poverty and the countries behind the cotton initiative have taken note of that,# Mr Pagrotsky states.

Sweden is appropriating over SEK 160 million this year to promote trade-related development cooperation and the participation of the developing countries in world trade. SEK 16 million of this will go to the WTO's fund for trade-related technical assistance, which makes Sweden the single largest donor.

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Key word: 9743 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-07-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Islamabad

The Government has today appointed Ambassador Ann Wilkens to be the new Swedish Ambassador in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Ann Wilkens has served most recently as Ambassador in Luxembourg. Her previous positions include Head of the Africa Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Ambassador in Addis Abeba.

Image for download available at http://www.utrikes.regeringen.se/foton/wilkens_ann/UD.SE

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Key word: 9742

PRESS RELEASE

2003-07-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Process of referral to precede EU Intergovernmental Conference

Dialogue in preparation for the EU intergovernmental conference (IGC) this autumn will begin with a process of referral. More than 130 bodies around the country will be given an opportunity to comment on the proposal from the Convention on the Future of Europe for a constitutional treaty for the European Union. The starting point for the process will be a ministerial memorandum (Ds 2003:36), which will be distributed along with a Swedish language version of the results of the Convention.

This is the beginning of a process of consultation, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh. This will put us in a very strong position when we come to present our views at EU level. The referral process will be followed early in the autumn by a written communication from the Government to the Riksdag in which the Government will give its evaluation of the proposals presented by the Convention. In November the Riksdag will respond with a report, following private members' motions, discussion by committees and a debate and resolution in the Chamber. In combination, this process will provide a foundation for the Government's negotiators at the IGC. The ministerial memorandum describes the Convention's proposals area by area. It then goes on to indicate the principles on which a Swedish position could be based.

At the Thessaloniki Summit in June, EU heads of state and government concluded that the Convention's proposal was a good basis for the IGC that is scheduled to begin in the first half of October and reach completion in time for the elections to the European Parliament in June 2004. I hope as many referral bodies as possible will take this chance and get involved, says Anna Lindh.

The ministerial memorandum #Europeiska konventet om EU:s framtid # Resultat och utgångspunkter inför nästa regeringskonferens# (The European Convention on the Future of the EU # results and points of departure in preparation for the next IGC) is available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website - www.ud.se - under the heading #Ds, SOU, propositioner m.m.# (in

Swedish only).

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Key word: 9735

PRESS RELEASE

2003-07-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Kinshasa

The Government today appointed Director Magnus Wernstedt as Sweden#s new Ambassador in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Magnus Wernstedt has served most recently at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Protocol Department. He has previously worked, inter alia, with EU issues and with cultural and promotional issues. He has also formerly held posts at the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the European Union in Brussels and the Embassy of Sweden in Paris

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Key word: 9733

PRESS RELEASE

2003-07-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden first to ratify the MNEPR Agreement

Today, Sweden was the first state to deposit its instrument of ratification of the MNEPR Agreement with the OECD Secretary-General in Paris.

The MNEPR Agreement, which means the Multilateral Nuclear Environment Programme for the Russian Federation, was signed in Stockholm on 21 May by, inter alia, Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh, the Russian Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov, and the French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin.

"Nuclear waste is one of the greatest environmental threats of our times. The fact that Sweden, as the first state to do so, is ratifying the MNEPR Agreement reflects the political importance that we attach to this problem and the prominent role played by Sweden in negotiating this Agreement", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

The MNEPR Agreement has three main areas of application: safe management of radioactive waste, security regarding spent nuclear fuel and reactor safety.

The MNEPR Agreement has been signed by Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Sweden, the UK and the USA, and by the European Community and Euroatom.

The Agreement will enter into force thirty days after one of the Agreement's depositories has received instruments of ratification or approval from Russia and one other signatory. However, the Agreement applies provisionally from the date of signature.

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Key word: 9717

PRESS RELEASE

2003-07-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Director General for the Aliens Appeals Board

The Government has appointed Håkan Sandesjö to be the new Director General of the Aliens Appeals Board where he currently serves as Deputy Director General.

He succeeds Göran Håkansson who was today appointed as the new Ambassador in Riga, Latvia.

CONTACT

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Key word: 9716

PRESS RELEASE

2003-07-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden gives budget support to Timor-Leste

The Government decided today to contribute SEK 10 million in budget support to Timor-Leste. Sweden has given support to Timor-Leste since 1997, primarily for the reconstruction of the administration and as humanitarian support via the UN. The overall objective of Swedish development cooperation with Timor-Leste is to help the country's own efforts to fight poverty by securing peace and stability, supporting democracy and respect for human rights and strengthening economic development.

Budget support is an effective way of supporting Timor-Leste's development process. This is based on two sound principles # an expressed targeting of poverty and a sound system for budgeting and financial control.

Timor-Leste is the world's youngest state. The country became independent from Indonesia on 20 May 2002 and is one of the world's poorest countries.

Sweden's extensive relations with Timor-Leste partly originate from the fact that Indonesia's occupation of the former Portuguese colony from 1975 was never recognised by Sweden. In Sweden, there has been a strong commitment among politicians and advocacy groups in support of Timor-Leste's freedom and development. After Indonesia declared that the future of Timor-Leste would be decided in a referendum in 1999, Sweden became rapidly involved and sent both civil police and election observers.

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Acting Desk Officer
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Key word: 9715

PRESS RELEASE

2003-07-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Riga

The Government appointed today Göran Håkansson as new Ambassador in Riga, Latvia. Göran Håkansson is currently Director-General of the Aliens Appeals Board. His previous posts have included that of Director-General for Administrative Affairs at the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, where he represented Sweden in various international organisations dealing with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

He has also had several official assignments including that as Chairman of the Council of the Baltic Sea States Committee of Experts on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.

CONTACT

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Key word: 9710

PRESS RELEASE

2003-07-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The EU facilitates trade round the Mediterranean

The countries in the Middle East and North Africa will have greater access to the European market. A meeting of trade ministers in Palermo, Italy, between the EU, the candidate countries and neighbouring countries around the Mediterranean decided on Monday to remove one of the greatest barriers to economic integration in the region. In concrete terms, this entails changing the so-called rules on origin for goods, an issue that was brought up by the Swedish Presidency of the EU in the spring of 2001.

"This reform means that our neighbours in the south will be able to cooperate on production and sell processed goods to us without extra duties", comments Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

"The decision is an important step in facilitating economic development and stability in our neighbouring region. I would like to see more of this type of leadership", continues Pagrotsky. The Mediterranean countries involved are: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and the Palestinian National Authority.

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Director

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Key word: 9694

PRESS RELEASE

2003-07-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors to Managua, Suva, Brussels, Budapest and new Consul-General in Shanghai

The Government has today appointed Eva Zetterberg as new Ambassador in Managua (Nicaragua), Greger Widgren as Ambassador in Suva (Fiji), Herman af Trolle as Ambassador and Head of Sweden's embassy in Brussels (Belgium), Bengt Lundborg as Ambassador in Budapest (Hungary) and Lars Andreasson as Consul-General in Shanghai (The People's Republic of China).

Eva Zetterberg has previously been the second Deputy Speaker of the Riksdag and has also been a Member of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs. She has also been a member of the board for Sida.

Greger Widgren will be stationed in Stockholm. He will also have responsibility for issues dealing with the Antarctic. He has previously held various executive positions within the Ministry for Foreign Affairs administration.

Herman af Trolle has previously been the Ambassador in Reykjavik. He has also worked extensively with UN issues.

Bengt Lundborg's most recent position was that of coordinator for issues dealing with defence materials at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has also served in Bonn and Abu Dhabi.

Lars Andreasson's most recent posting was at Sweden's embassy in Manila where he served as Minister. He has also served at the Consulate-General in New York and at the Mekong Committee in Bangkok.

CONTACT

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Key word: 9686

PRESS RELEASE

2003-07-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support for Sierra Leone

The Government decided today to contribute two more Swedish civilian police officers to the UN peace-keeping mission in Sierra Leone. The Swedish police officers will help the national police force with recruitment, training and advice.

Two Swedish civilian police officers have been serving in the UN mission since January 2003. The support of two more police officers is a means for Sweden to help strengthen security in Sierra Leone and thus safeguard the extensive efforts of the UN to promote peace in the country.

The Government has also decided to allocate a grant of SEK 4 million to the special court for Sierra Leone. The special court was established under an agreement between the UN and the Sierra Leone government to prosecute those primarily responsible for war crimes committed in the country since 30 November 1996. The court started its work in 2002, and the Government grant is intended for its second year of operations.

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Key word: 9683

PRESS RELEASE

2003-07-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden and France presented today an international task force on global public goods

Today, Sweden and France have presented an international task force on global public goods. The long-term aim of the task force is to create financing arrangements for things that everyone needs but far too few are prepared to pay for, such as clean air and combating infectious diseases.

The presentation took place at a meeting in Paris today led by the French and Swedish Ministers responsible for development assistance, Jan O. Karlsson and Pierre-André Wiltzer.

"The international community must be able to cooperate better on the various global public goods, in such widely divergent areas as clean air, health and financial stability. We spend a lot of time at conferences talking about what we want to achieve. But how can we do this? At national level, we have our public sectors. Internationally, we have to find other ways to jointly identify and tackle global problems", says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

This is why Sweden and France have initiated an international working group for global public goods, the "International Task Force on Global Public Goods". This has been assigned the task of examining how the most essential global public goods are provided today. It will also present proposals on how these crucial issues could be handled more

efficiently and better ways of financing this. The objective is to combat poverty and promote sustainable development.

The task force consists of some 15 experts from governments, international organisations, civil society, the business sector and the academic world. Work is expected to last until the end of 2005. Ernesto Zedillo, former president of Mexico and Tidjane Thiam, previously a minister from Côte d'Ivoire will lead the organisation.

A secretariat, under the leadership of Sven Sandström, a Swede and former Managing Director of the World Bank, has been established in Stockholm.

At today's meeting, a reference group, "Friends of the Task Force", was linked to the task force, led by Sweden's OECD Ambassador and former State Secretary Gun-Britt Andersson.

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Key word: 9682 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-07-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish contribution to the ECOWAS operation in the Côte d'Ivoire

The Government took a decision today to contribute SEK 2 million to the Economic Community of West African States ECOWAS# monitoring force in the Côte d'Ivoire.

Ever since the crisis in the Côte d'Ivoire began, Sweden and the EU have expressed their strong support for ECOWAS# efforts to stabilise the situation in the country. ECOWAS# military presence is an important precondition for the implementation of the peace agreement of January this year. The contribution to the ECOWAS force is also in line with Sweden#s objective of strengthening African capability to prevent and manage crises.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-07-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Hans Blix to be chairman of international commission on weapons of mass destruction

Unofficial translation

The Government will take the initiative for establishing an independent international commission on weapons of mass destruction, in which Hans Blix will be Chairman. This was announced by Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh after the cabinet meeting on Thursday.

"We must do everything we can to avert the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction," Anna Lindh stated. "It is very gratifying that Hans Blix is willing to accept the chairmanship. The experience and knowledge he possesses is unique."

"The purpose of the commission is to provide new impetus to the international efforts involved in disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles. The commission will be formed during the autumn of 2003 under the leadership of Hans Blix and plans call for their recommendations to be submitted in 2005."

On Thursday, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs opens a new section dealing with disarmament on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' website (in Swedish). The address is [www.ud.se](http://www.ud.se/fragor/nedrustning/). Information dealing with disarmament, non-proliferation, export controls of weapons of mass destruction, missiles and conventional weapons is available there. Weapon types are described, as are international agreements and the Government's policies in these matters. Current information, speeches and articles will also be published.

"This is one more way to express the Government's commitment in this area. I hope we succeed in spreading knowledge of and arousing further interest in issues concerning disarmament," says Anna Lindh.

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Key word: 9680 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-07-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden and France present an international task force on global public goods

Tomorrow, Sweden and France will present an international task force for global public goods. The aim in the long-term is to find financing for things that everyone needs, but far too few are prepared to pay for, such as clean air and combating infectious diseases.

This will take place at a meeting in Paris led by the French and Swedish Ministers responsible for development assistance, Jan O. Karlsson och Pierre#André Wiltzer.

Joint press briefing

Date: 3 July 2003

Time: 11.00

Venue: Centre de Conférences Internationales, Avenue Kléber.

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Key word: 9654 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-07-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Hans Dahlgren to travel to Ghana for talks on Liberia

The State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Hans Dahlgren, will travel on Tuesday to Ghana in his capacity as the EU Presidency's Special Representative to the Mano River region. The visit will take place in connection with the UN Security Council's tour of West Africa and the efforts now again being made to find a peaceful solution to the serious conflict in Liberia.

With Ghana's foreign minister, Nana Akufo-Addo, Mr Dahlgren is chairman of the International Contact Group on Liberia which was established to give international support to a peaceful development in the country. In addition to discussions with Akufo-Addo and with the special Liberia mediator, the former Nigerian Head of State Abubakar, Hans Dahlgren will meet the delegation from the UN Security Council visiting the region. The delegation is led by the British Ambassador to the UN, Jeremy Greenstock. Mr Dahlgren will also contact representatives of the parties to the conflict still residing in the capital Accra.

Hans Dahlgren has been the EU Presidency's Special Representative for Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea (the Mano River countries) for two years and as such has a mandate to try to contribute to peaceful solutions to the conflicts in Liberia and the region. Sweden and the EU actively contributed to the realisation of the peace talks in Ghana.

To the editorial office:

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh to visit Lithuania and Latvia

On 26 June the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, will visit Lithuania. During her stay in Vilnius Ms Lindh will meet Lithuania's President Rolandas Paksas and Foreign Minister Antanas Valionis for discussions. Anna Lindh will also meet the chairmen of the parliamentary Committees on Foreign Affairs and European Affairs.

On 27 June Ms Lindh will continue to Riga for discussions with her Latvian colleague, Foreign Minister Sandra Kalniete. In Latvia, Anna Lindh and Sandra Kalniete will also participate in roundtable discussions with local representatives of the business sector, the public administration, the education system, the media, etc. prior to Latvia's referendum on membership of the EU which is to take place in September.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden signs Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture

Sweden will today sign the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Sweden will thus be among the first countries to demonstrate its intention to implement the provisions of the Protocol on international and national preventive visiting and inspection systems. Sweden was also one of the initiative-takers when negotiations on the Optional Protocol began in the early 1990s.

"No form of torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment can ever be accepted. The Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on Torture is one more step in our efforts to eradicate the occurrence of torture in the world," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh. Sweden's Ambassador to the UN, Pierre Schori, will sign the Protocol in New York on the UN

International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. It is hoped that more countries will now join those that have already signed the Protocol.

The nations that sign the Optional Protocol agree to allow a subcommittee of the UN Committee against Torture to visit places where people are held in detention and subsequently present recommendations to the receiving state. National institutions that can conduct similar visits and inspections and submit recommendations will also be established.

Sweden and the EU are actively involved in efforts to eradicate all forms of torture and other inhuman treatment. The EU guidelines to combat torture were adopted during the Swedish Presidency of the EU in the first half of 2001. The guidelines primarily form the basis for a démarche in third countries on the use of torture.

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Key word: 9636 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Tightened sanctions against Burma

The Government decided today to approve the EU decision to tighten sanctions against Burma. This means that the ban on military cooperation with Burma has been strengthened. The list of persons subject to the EU visa ban and of those whose assets are frozen in the Union has also been extended.

The EU decision is a reaction to recent negative political developments in Burma # particularly the arrest of the Nobel laureate and leader of the democratic opposition Aung San Suu Kyi and her party leadership on 31 May.

"By tightening sanctions, there will be greater international pressure on the military junta to release Aung San Suu Kyi and initiate a dialogue aimed at restoring democracy in Burma", comments Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

Both bilaterally and via the EU, Sweden has demanded the release of Suu Kyi and has urged several Asian countries to become even more active in efforts to promote positive development in Burma.

"It is most positive that the members of the South East Asian cooperation organisation ASEAN demanded the release of Aung San Suu Kyi last week. These countries are playing a key role in achieving positive development in Burma, which in turn would mean an upswing throughout the region", says Anna Lindh.

EU sanctions against Burma were introduced in 1996, and include an embargo on the transfer of weapons and military equipment, a visa ban for senior members of the regime and freezing of these persons' assets in the EU. There is also a moratorium on high-level visits to Burma, a prohibition against all development cooperation (apart from humanitarian assistance and support towards the promotion of human rights through organisations such as NGOs) and deliveries of equipment that can be used for internal repression.

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Key word: 9635 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors in Seoul, Canberra, Dar es Salaam and Asmara, new Consul General in Los Angeles

The Government has today appointed Ambassador Harald Sandberg as Ambassador in Seoul, Ambassador Karin Ehnбом-Palmquist as Ambassador in Canberra, Administrative Director Torvald Åkesson as Ambassador in Dar es Salaam, Ambassador Folke Löfgren as Ambassador in Asmara (Eritrea) based in Stockholm and Minister Tomas Rosander as Consul General in Los Angeles.

Harald Sandberg is currently Ambassador in Jakarta. He has previously served in Seoul, Geneva and Washington.

Karin Ehnбом-Palmquist is presently Chief of Protocol at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. She has previously been Ambassador in Mexico and has served in Chicago, Bonn, New York and Caracas. Torvald Åkesson's most recent position was that of Administrative Director at the International Institute for Democratic and Electoral Assistance (IDEA).

Folke Löfgren is currently working at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Department for Central and Eastern Europe. He has previously been Ambassador in Gaborone and Bern and has served in New Delhi, New York and Helsinki.

Tomas Rosander is currently Minister in London. He has previously served in Teheran and Washington.

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Key word: 9634 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Investment in export of foods to North America

The Government decided today to contribute SEK 475 000 to a project to promote exports of Swedish foods to North America under the slogan #Food for Thought # Selling Swedish Food to the North American Consumer#.

The aim is to increase knowledge of the North American market at Swedish enterprises and to encourage initiatives for export of Swedish foods to North America.

#Swedish food exports have developed favourably in recent years. However, much remains to be done. The Swedish food industry has good chances of increasing its exports. So it is essential that enterprises seek new markets#, the Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, says.

The office of the Swedish Trade Council in North America, the Federation of Swedish Farmers (LRF) and the Swedish companies participating are responsible for this initiative. Activities will include, inter alia, seminars in Sweden, USA and Canada, participation in trade fairs and meetings with potential customers.

And today, Thursday, the Swedish Hotels and Restaurants Association, SHR, and the Chef of the Year Association are presenting a pilot study on exchange and trainee programmes for chefs, focusing on the international marketing of Swedish cuisine.

#We have every reason to confidently export our Swedish tastes, experiences and products,# Mr Pagrotsky says in a comment #Swedish cuisine has achieved major international successes in recent years.#

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Key word: 9633 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Information and marketing initiatives in the Öresund region

The Government decided today to allocate a grant of a maximum of SEK 6.5 million to the administration of the information centre "Öresund direkt" at Stortorget in Malmö and for future information on and marketing of the Öresund region in 2004.

"It is extremely important that citizens have access to correct, relevant information before their decisions to move or commute over Öresund. The development of Öresund's integration is a high-priority policy concern," says Berit Andnor, Minister for Nordic Cooperation, commenting on the decision.

By making the Öresund region known to a broad group of investors, companies, scientists, tourists, etc., knowledge is built up about the region as a place worth moving to and visiting, and in which to invest.

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Key word: 9627 Berit Andnor

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Foreign ambassadors on study trip to the county of Örebro

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is arranging a study trip to the county of Örebro on 24-25 June for heads of foreign missions in Stockholm. The Ministry regularly invites ambassadors to take part in this type of journey to different parts of Sweden to give them an opportunity to get to know this country better and to make new contacts at the regional level.

Host in Örebro will be the County Governor, Gerd Engman. The study trip will include, among other things, a visit to Örebro University, the Traffic Centre outside Kumla, a classic industrial environment at Pershyttan and the House of Culinary Art (Måltidens hus) in Grythyttan.

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Key word: 9581 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden in the foreign media 2002

The Swedish news item that was given the greatest space in foreign media in 2002 was a suspected hijacker at the airport in Västerås. When word got around, Västerås was invaded by the international media and for a few hectic days in August it was the world's news centre.

The second biggest news item from Sweden was the death of Astrid Lindgren. Other contributions on Sweden featured Swedish design and music, Sweden as an exotic holiday destination, the Swedish parliamentary elections and the report about acrylamide in, among other things, potato crisps.

Swedes who gained most international attention during 2002 included the UN weapons inspector Hans Blix and football coach Sven-Göran Eriksson.

The annual survey #Sweden in the foreign media# is compiled by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and is based on reports from Swedish embassies and consulates. The full report is available at www.ud.se.

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Key word: 9580

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Press Counsellor in Berlin

Gösta Grassman will be the new Press Counsellor and Minister in Berlin. Mr Grassman has served most recently as head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre for foreign correspondents. He previously held posts as Press Counsellor in Brussels, Paris and London.

Before Gösta Grassman joined the foreign service he was employed as a journalist for, among others, Kvällsposten, TT and Veckans affärer.

Gösta Grassman will take up his new duties in early September.

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Key word: 9562

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors

The Government has today appointed Ambassador Stig Elvemar the new Swedish Ambassador in Cairo and Deputy Director Anna Lindstedt the new Swedish Ambassador in Hanoi.

Stig Elvemar will be moving from his present position at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York.

Anna Lindstedt has served most recently at the Department for Asia and the Pacific Region at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

At the same time, Per Anderman, who is currently Minister at the Swedish Embassy in Brussels, has been appointed as Sweden's Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Per Anderman's new title will be Ambassador.

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Key word: 9560

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Tougher sentences for human smuggling

Today the Minister for Migration Policy, Jan O.Karlsson, will present a proposal to the Council on Legislation on amendments to the Aliens Act.

The Government's proposal means anyone who intentionally helps an alien to unlawfully enter or pass through Sweden or any other Schengen state will be sentenced for human smuggling to imprisonment for at most two years. The crime shall be considered grave if the act entails, for example, systematic exploitation of the vulnerable situation of aliens, mortal danger or other ruthlessness in relation to aliens. Tougher sentences will also be meted out to those who, in order to make a profit, plan or organise activities focusing on aliens travelling to Sweden without the

prescribed permits.

#Events in recent years have made us painfully aware of the abuse some people are prepared to inflict on other people. Dover in the summer of 2000 is perhaps the worst and best known example where 58 people were found dead in a container. We know that people are exploited by human smugglers every day. These people in their vulnerability and desperation are persuaded to invest all they possess in a lie and in a journey that in the worst cases ends in tragedy,# says the Minister for Migration Policy, Jan O. Karlsson.

It is further proposed that a new provision be introduced into the Aliens Act which will make it possible, on application by the leader of a preliminary investigation, to grant time-limited residence permits to foreign injured parties and witnesses where this is considered justified in order to carry out a preliminary investigation or main hearing in a criminal case.

#The proposal means victims of human smuggling are granted the legal right to remain in Sweden to assist criminal investigation staff in prosecuting crimes by giving testimony and providing other evidence,# Mr Karlsson continues.

#Those granted a time-limited residence permit are furthermore entitled to the same health and medical services and social assistance as residents of Sweden. In this way we can provide for the extra support many of these people may need,# Jan O. Karlsson says.

According to the proposal, the amendments should enter into force on 1 October 2004.

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Key word: 9500 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Slovenia#s Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel visits Stockholm

Slovenia#s Foreign Minister, Dr Dimitrij Rupel, is visiting Stockholm on 16-17 June.

Dr Rupel will meet Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh on Tuesday for talks, inter alia, on EU issues and the Western Balkans.

During his visit to Stockholm Dr Rupel will also meet Deputy Speaker of Parliament Per Westerberg and Lena Hjelm-Wallén, Government representative on the EU Convention on the Future of Europe.

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Key word: 9498 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Polish pulp and paper producer wins 2003 Swedish Baltic Sea Award

Frantschach Swiecie SA, a former pollution hot spot in the Baltic Sea area and one of the largest pulp and paper producers in Poland, has been named as the winner of the 2003 Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award.

The award was established by the Swedish Government to honour direct, practical initiatives that help improve the quality of water in the Baltic Sea. This year marks the fifth year of the award. The prize money of SEK 100 000 will be presented on 14 August during World Water Week in Stockholm.

This year's winner was announced today by Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

Frantschach Swiecie SA is being rewarded for its outstanding efforts over the past ten years to reduce both its pollution discharge to the Vistula River, which drains directly into the Baltic Sea, and its overall water consumption, says Jan O. Karlsson.

The company is employing a variety of innovative technologies to produce pulp and paper as finished products. For instance, the company has introduced closed production processes to capture and recycle material and it also conducts stringent environmental monitoring. It has succeeded in doubling total output at the same time.

The Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award can be awarded to a private individual, a company, an organisation or a government authority in any of the Baltic Sea countries. The winner is selected by a jury appointed by the Swedish Government. The previous recipients are PURAC of Poland (1999), the city of Gdansk (2000), Mr. Leonid Korovin, a private individual, from St. Petersburg (2001) and Lithuania's Housing and Urban Development Foundation (2002).

For more information about the award, see <http://www.siwi.org>

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Key word: 9468 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Joint Nordic presence at World Expo in 2005

Following a Swedish initiative, the five Nordic countries have agreed to jointly participate in a world exposition. Sweden (which this year is President of the intergovernmental Nordic cooperation), Denmark, Finland, Norway and Iceland have agreed on a joint presentation of the Nordic countries at a special pavilion in Aichi, Japan, in 2005.

"This is a new and exciting step in Nordic cooperation. The Nordic countries share many fundamental values, not least when it comes to the theme of the Expo, which is "Nature's Wisdom," says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

The world exposition in Aichi, which will open on 25 March 2005, will run for 185 days and is expected to attract around 15 million visitors. The estimated cost of Sweden's participation in the expo is SEK 15 million, which will be shared equally between the state and the business sector.

"Our presence in Aichi is a way to build on the strong Japanese interest in Sweden that we have seen in recent years and, in the long term, to promote Swedish exports and tourism," says Mr Pagrotsky.

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Key word: 9467 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassadors in Ljubljana, Tallinn and Geneva

The Government has today appointed Director John Hagard as the new ambassador in Ljubljana, Slovenia, and Director Dag Hartelius as the new ambassador in Tallinn, Estonia.

John Hagard's most recent post was as head of the Middle East and North Africa Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Dag Hartelius has most recently held the position of Deputy Director of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Department for Central and Eastern Europe.

Elisabet Borsiin Bonnier, the outgoing ambassador to Tallinn, has been appointed as the new Head of the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the international organisations in Geneva.

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Key word: 9465

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to the press: Winner of the Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award 2003

Minister for Development Cooperation Jan O Karlsson will announce the name of this year's winner of the Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award on Friday 13 June.

The prize was established by the Swedish Government to honour direct, practical initiatives that help improve the quality of water in the Baltic Sea. This year marks the fifth year of the award. The prize money of SEK 100 000 will be presented in Stockholm on 14 August.

Date and time: 13 June at 9.30 am

Place: Ministry for Foreign Affairs main lobby (Bankhall), Fredsgatan 4#6

Please bring your press credentials.

Welcome!

More information about the prize is available at <http://www.siwi.org>

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Key word: 9429 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Twenty largest donor countries meet in Stockholm to coordinate humanitarian assistance

On 16#17 June, the Swedish Government will be hosting the International Meeting on Good Humanitarian Donorship, an international conference on humanitarian assistance. The conference will be held at Frösundavik in Stockholm.

Representatives of the world's twenty largest donor countries, which account for nearly 98 percent of global humanitarian assistance, will be attending the conference in Stockholm along with representatives of the UN, NGOs and a number of international experts to agree on a set of guidelines to improve global humanitarian assistance.

This is the first large-scale international initiative of its kind to be taken with the aim of improving the coordination of global humanitarian assistance. The conference is being organised by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in cooperation with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

"The scope of humanitarian assistance has increased enormously over the last ten years. In spite of this, resources are still insufficient to meet humanitarian needs. Increased resources are needed, as well as greater efficiency. Improved coordination of initiatives is vital," says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

To the editorial office:

Jan O. Karlsson is pleased to invite you to attend a press briefing in connection with the conference.

Date and time: Monday 16 June at 10 am

Place: Radison SAS Royal Park Hotel at Frösundavik (Room: Sadelmakaren)

Please bring your press credentials.

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Key word: 9428 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh to visit the USA

On 11-13 June, Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh is scheduled to visit Washington and New York.

On 12 June, Anna Lindh will meet US Secretary of State Colin Powell for talks in Washington. Their agenda includes the rebuilding of Iraq, the peace process in the Middle East, transatlantic relations and disarmament and non-proliferation. In addition to this, Anna Lindh will reiterate the Swedish Government's demand for the immediate release of the Swedish citizen imprisoned at the Guantanamo base.

On Friday 13 June, Anna Lindh will speak on conflict prevention at a conference at the International Peace Academy in New York. During her visit to New York, Anna Lindh will also meet UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

After this, Anna Lindh will attend a luncheon reception for the Astrid Lindgren award winner Maurice Sendak.

To the editorial office:

In connection with Anna Lindh's meeting with Colin Powell on Thursday 12 June, a press briefing will take place outside the entrance to the State Department, Washington, at 12.00 (local time).

On Friday 13 June, there will be an informal press briefing at the residence of the Consulate-General, 600 Park Avenue, New York, at 13.00 (local time).

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Key word: 9427 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Anna Lindh after Polish referendum on EU membership

I am pleased about the outcome of the weekend's referendum. The people of Poland have said a clear #yes# to the EU and to a strong community with the countries of Europe. Their positive vote for the EU is also a vote for the single currency. I look forward to deeper and more intense cooperation with Poland within the EU framework#, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh in a comment.

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Key word: 9425

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-10
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish rapid deployment force to the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Government decided on Tuesday to propose to the Swedish Riksdag the dispatch of an armed unit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo), to be part of an EU-led multinational military rapid deployment force in Bunia, in the province of Ituri, in the north-eastern region of the country.

The region has long been characterised by violence between ethnic groups. The situation has deteriorated after Uganda's retreat from Ituri in May as part of the peace agreement for the DR Congo. The UN peace-keeping mission MONUC is in Bunia and is to be strengthened. The Security Council has called for assistance from the international community in helping to stabilise Bunia until 1 September.

On 5 June, the EU decided to respond to this request by sending a rapid deployment force. The EU is expected to take the decision on initiating this operation on 12 June. It will be carried out in accordance with Security Council Resolution 1484.

Political control of this operation will be exercised by the EU, while France will be responsible for its military leadership. Authorisation for the rapid deployment force is temporary and according to

the UN decision will apply until 1 September 2003.

The aim of this temporary operation is to work closely with MONUC in stabilising the security and humanitarian situation in Bunia, protecting the airport and internally displaced refugees who have pitched camp in the town and where necessary, helping to ensure the security of the population, UN personnel, and humanitarian efforts underway in the area.

"The overall aim of the EU operation is to prevent violations of the civilian population, to improve the humanitarian situation and to give support to UN efforts and to the peace process in the DR Congo", comments Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

Minister for Defence Leni Björklund also comments "It is important that the international community gives support to preventing genocide and protecting international law and human rights. Our soldiers will be engaged in a mission involving risks. Alongside the security risk and that of infectious diseases will be the problem of the troops' exposure to continual mental strain through meeting, for example, forcibly recruited child soldiers. However, the forces we plan to send are well-trained".

"There are limitations and risks that are to be weighed against the positive effects of an operation in the DR Congo. What is important is to save lives, and promote peaceful development", says Leni Björklund.

The Swedish contribution will consist of a task force unit of around 70 persons, including tactical leadership.

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Key word: 9424 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish human trafficking initiative at meeting of foreign ministers of the Council of the Baltic Sea States

On 10-11 June, the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) will hold its annual foreign ministers meeting in Björneborg, Finland. Sweden will be represented by State Secretary Annika Söder. The fight against human trafficking must be approached along a broad front and afforded political priority. Forceful national measures and intensive regional cooperation are required. During the

meeting, Annika Söder will therefore initiate a discussion about human trafficking, in particular in women and children.

On Sweden's initiative, the foreign ministers meeting will urge for intensified cooperation between municipalities in countries along the EU's future external borders. This is necessary to promote positive development in these parts of the EU and its neighbouring states, Russia, Belarus and Ukraine.

A press conference will be held after the foreign ministers meeting at 12.15 on 11 June in the Björneborg Museum of Art, Eteläranta.

The CBSS is an intergovernmental organisation for cooperation between the governments of the Baltic Sea states.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to the press: International seminar on dialogue in development cooperation

Is it possible to pursue a genuine dialogue between donors and recipients? If so, what are the prerequisites for such a dialogue? What are the constraints?

On 11 June, the Expert Group on Development Issues (EGDI) together with the Swedish Development Association (FUF) are organising a seminar on a recently published study on these issues in Stockholm. The name of the study is Dialogue in Pursuit of Development. The editors and some of the 24 contributors to the study from North and South will be presenting their conclusions at the seminar.

Ruth Jacoby, Director-General for Development Cooperation at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will chair the meeting. Representatives of Swedish and international research environments, development assistance authorities and NGOs will also be participating in the seminar.

The programme for the seminar is available on the website of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs:

<http://www.ud.se/pdf/egdipro.pdf>

Date and time: 11 June, at 13.30 # 16.30

Place: Press Centre, Fredsgatan 6

Applications for participation in the seminar to be made to

Birgitta Gavrilovic, Tel: 08-405 50 98

Please bring your press credentials!

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Anna Lindh in connection with the mass action in Zimbabwe

"I would urge Zimbabwe's government to show clear respect for people's rights to express their views freely and by peaceful means", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh in connection with the mass protests currently being staged in the country.

"I am extremely concerned that the opposition, including Members of Parliament, are being arrested and deprived of their liberty. Their statutory rights must be guaranteed.

At this critical stage, it is very important for the Zimbabwean government to seek a dialogue with the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) to resolve the deep crisis existing in Zimbabwe. All parties bear responsibility for ensuring that the way forward is a peaceful one", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

The leader of the opposition in Zimbabwe, Morgan Tsvangirai has called for peaceful mass action on 2-6 June to show dissatisfaction with the government in office.

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Key word: 9373 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

State to acquire ABB's shares in Swedish Export Credit Corporation# Bill to the Riksdag

The State is to take over the shares in the Swedish Export Credit Corporation (SEK) held by ABB Structured Finance Investment AB. This will make the State the sole owner of this company. The acquisition will come about through a direct dividend to ABB from the company's total capital. To restore the capital base, the State will aim for a period of time to be restrictive with regard to shareholder dividends. The acquisition is conditional on approval by the Riksdag.

This is the essence of a Bill to the Riksdag that the Government decided on today. The Riksdag's decision is expected before the summer recess.

"The Government has complied with ABB's wishes to relinquish its ownership of shares in the Swedish Export Credit Corporation. We have reached an agreement that I am satisfied with and that the Government believes is good for both the Swedish Export Credit Corporation and for the State," says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky in a comment.

"SEK is an important actor for the financing of Swedish exports and plays a vital role on Swedish capital markets. The State's ownership of the company is long-term and stable. The change in ownership does not alter the State's view on the strategy, which remains firm," adds Mr Pagrotsky. Since 2000, the Swedish Export Credit Corporation has been 65% owned by the State and 35% owned by ABB. The company's activities mainly involve offering its clients # among them Sweden's largest export companies # medium- and long-term export financing. This includes fixed interest-rate credits within the framework of the OECD Arrangement on Guidelines for Officially Supported Export Credits.

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Key word: 9371 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Swedish Trade Council to arrange a seminar for Swedish business on the reconstruction of Iraq

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Swedish Trade Council are calling together corporate

Sweden for a seminar in Stockholm on 5 June, 9.30-12.00, to discuss questions relating to the reconstruction of Iraq. The purpose of the meeting is to exchange information and knowledge about the present situation in the country and to make it easier for Swedish businesses to take opportunities in Iraq. The seminar will be introduced by Ambassador Kjell Anneling.

To the editorial office:

There are limited openings for anyone interested to take part in the seminar. If you would like to attend, please notify Marina Berg, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, by telephone: 08-405 56 82.

Swedish businesses have been present in Iraq for decades. Before the introduction of sanctions in 1990, Swedish exports to Iraq accounted for approximately one per cent of all Swedish exports (SEK 18 billion during the years 1970-1990). For a number of companies, Iraq has been an important market. Swedish companies have played a prominent part under the UN's oil-for-food programme, not least in the medical area.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-06-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to the press: Seminar on decentralisation and democracy in developing countries

At a seminar on Wednesday 4 June, Professor Axel Hadenius, Uppsala University, will present the study Decentralisation and Democratic Governance. Experiences from India, Bolivia and South Africa. The seminar has been organised by the Expert Group on Development Issues, EGDI, at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in cooperation with the Department for Democracy and Social Development (DESA) at the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida. The study discusses what is required if decentralisation is to be capable of contributing to increased democracy and efficiency at the local level.

Chairman: Lennart Nordström, Sida.

Date and time: 09.00-12.00.

Place: Kungsgatan 36, Stockholm, 2nd floor, room #Asien#

NB: prior application to: ingrid.widlund@foreign.ministry.se

The programme is available at www.egdi.gov.se.

The study can be downloaded from www.egdi.gov.se or ordered from egdi.secretariat@foreign.ministry.se.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh on Suu Kyi's imprisonment

"I am dismayed and shocked to hear that Nobel Peace Prize laureate and leader of the democratic opposition in Burma, Aung San Suu Kyi has been arrested by the military today. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is closely following developments through our embassy in Bangkok. This afternoon, we have received confirmation that several prominent members of her party, the NDL, have been arrested", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

"A year has passed since Suu Kyi was released from nineteen months' house arrest. The military junta promised her then total freedom of movement. A dialogue was to be initiated with the NLD. But the promise of dialogue was never kept. It is regrettable that hopes for a democratisation process in Burma have come to nothing.

The junta should immediately release Suu Kyi and the other leaders of the NLD and initiate talks with her party. This dialogue should aim at re-establishing democracy in Burma".

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Key word: 9318 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Registration of partnership abroad

The Government decided today to allow registration of partnership at Swedish Embassies in Paris, Madrid and Lisbon.

Registration is only permitted between Swedish citizens and will have legal effect under Swedish law in Sweden.

"It is natural for Sweden to be able to offer registration of partnership at embassies where the host country does not oppose it. France, Spain and Portugal have informed us that they have no objection to Sweden's request for registration of partnership", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

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Key word: 9309

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh to visit the USA

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh is scheduled to visit Washington and New York on 11-13 June. The main purpose of her visit is to hold talks with the US Secretary of State Colin Powell on 12 June. A press briefing will be arranged in connection with this meeting.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs' programme in New York includes speaking at a conference on conflict prevention at the International Peace Academy.

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Key word: 9272

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Anna Lindh on Israel's approval of the road map

The decision by the Israeli government to approve the road map means that Israel says yes to an independent Palestinian state in 2005. This is very positive. It creates the conditions for a resumption of the peace process, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh in a comment. What is needed now is for both parties to carry out the undertakings specified in the road map without reserve. The first step the Israelis must take is to freeze settlement activity and withdraw to positions held before September 2000. The Palestinians must ensure there is an end to terrorist actions and must persevere with internal reforms, continues the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Sweden, the EU and the other members of the Quartet will actively support both parties on the arduous path towards peace, says Anna Lindh.

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Key word: 9270 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New development bill submitted to the Riksdag

Today the Government presented to the Riksdag its bill, "Our common responsibility # Sweden's policy for global development". Sweden is thus the first country in the world to present a coherent policy for global development.

The bill proposes new goals for all aspects of Government operations with the aim of contributing to fair and sustainable global development. Trade, agricultural, security, migration, environmental and economic policies are to promote global development. A poverty and human rights perspective

shall permeate the entire policy.

With this bill, the Government has reformulated its policy in order to contribute more forcefully to the fulfilment of the UN objectives. The overriding goal is to abolish world poverty. An intermediate goal is to halve world poverty by the year 2015.

The bill proposes that the Government report each year to the elected representatives in the Riksdag on the implementation of the policy. Each ministry shall present how its political decisions have contributed to fair and sustainable global development.

Sweden's policy for global development can be summarised in ten points:

1. One cannot develop countries from outside

Our initiatives are to be based on the experiences and priorities of the poor. Since the late 1990s, most poor countries have formulated their own strategies to fight poverty. These strategies should serve as the point of departure for our cooperation.

2. All policies should move in the same direction

As a result of the bill, conflicting goals in Swedish policy will be made visible and will be carefully weighed up. This means, among other things, that endeavours to reform the EU's agricultural and fishery policies will be intensified.

3. An open economy and free trade form the basis of development

If poor countries are to reap the benefits of increased world trade, it is crucial that rich countries open up their markets. At the same time, the export capacity of poor countries must be improved. Development assistance should also be used to strengthen the position of poor countries at the negotiating table.

4. Democracy is a prerequisite

Measures to promote democracy and good governance will be afforded greater priority in Sweden's policy for global development.

5. Women are the key to development

Measures targeted at women and women's rights also mean increased welfare for the whole family. Gender equality is highlighted as a central aspect of the human rights perspective and shall permeate not just development assistance but every facet of Swedish global development policy.

6. Consideration for the environment puts limits on our lifestyle

Efforts to change the production and consumption patterns of rich countries must continue. Poverty can also put a strain on the environment. Further efforts will therefore be made to contribute to sustainable ecological development in poor countries.

7. Increased mobility for people contributes to development

We therefore intend to create organised forms for freer migration. The sums of money that immigrants send to their native countries are almost twice as high as the world's total development assistance, but much of this money disappears along the way on account of high transaction charges. Sweden shall help to reduce these costs in order to increase the overall development effects.

8. Swedish society at all levels shall be involved

Organisations and popular movements have always played a central role in Swedish development cooperation. The Government bill serves to consolidate their role. A citizens' forum shall be set up.

9. Development assistance will be increased but must also be made more efficient

Instead of limiting the number of partner countries, the number will probably be increased. We will work in all countries where our contribution is meaningful. Development assistance will be concentrated to less subject areas and sectors in each country. The goal of one per cent of GDP remains unchanged. A new independent evaluation function will be introduced to monitor the fulfilment of objectives and the efficiency of development cooperation.

10. Sweden will continue to promote difficult and controversial issues

There are deep differences of opinion as regards issues relating to democracy and human rights, in particular in the matter of women's rights. Matters relating to sexual and reproductive rights are especially controversial, including the right to abortion, contraceptives and sex education, as well as the rights of homosexuals, bisexuals and transsexuals. Sweden will continue to speak out for these issues.

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Key word: 9245 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New head of the Swedish Migration Board

The Government has today announced the appointment of Barbro Holmberg as new Director-General of the Swedish Migration Board.

Barbro Holmberg presently holds the post of State Secretary at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs with responsibility for migration issues. Barbro Holmberg has a background in sociology and has been editor of *PsykologTidningen* and the magazine *Socialpolitik*. She has worked as a research officer on the parliamentary Committee on the Rights of the Child and on the committee of inquiry appointed to review the activities of the Office of the Children's Ombudsman. Since October 1999, Ms Holmberg has worked at the Office of the Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy.

She will take up her new post on 1 June.

Ms Holmberg will be available to answer questions from the media from 13.15 at the Swedish Migration Board in Norrköping.

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Key word: 9244 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press conference on Development Bill

On Friday the Government will present a Government Bill to the Riksdag entitled "Common responsibility # Sweden's policy for global development". It proposes a cohesive policy for all aspects of Government operations with the aim of contributing to fair and sustainable global development.

In connection with this, the Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson invites you to a press conference where he will present the contents of the bill.

Date and time: Friday 23 May at 10.00

Venue: Press Centre at Rosenbad

Please bring press credentials!

The press conference can also be seen live and subsequently on the Internet at <http://www.regeringen.se>

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Key word: 9243 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Europe's relations with Islam after 11 September - seminar at the Re:Orient festival

In cooperation with the Re:Orient festival, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will organise a seminar in Stockholm on 10 June, entitled: Europe's relations with Islam after 11 September. The aim of the seminar is to emphasise the importance of dialogue # both nationally and globally. It is important that we learn from each other.

The EU countries are home to some fifteen million people from Muslim backgrounds. Has their situation changed since 11 September? What can the EU do to improve the situation?

"These questions concern many people in Sweden, Europe and other parts of the world. There is good reason to discuss them", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

From 7-15 June 2003, the Re:Orient festival will celebrate its tenth anniversary. Mosebacke Terrace will be transformed. Stories, classical Arabic music and global club music will resound from the heights of Södermalm. Kägelbanan lies below the terrace, beside the stairway that climbs the rock face. Oud music and bhangra will compose an echoing background for the panel debate arranged by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in cooperation with the Re:Orient festival.

To the editorial office:

The seminar is open to the general public and to the press.

Date: Tuesday 10 June 2003

Time: 14.00 # 16.00

Venue: Kägelbanan, at Södra teatern, Mosebacke torg

Participants:

Anna Lindh, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Cem Özdemir (Germany), former Green Member of Parliament

Nalin Peggul (Sweden), Social Democrat politician

Nazmiye Aytekin (Denmark), town councillor

Pierre Durrani (Sweden), Swedish Young Muslims

Salim Hasham (UK), served at the UN in Iraq in 1996
Moderator: Mattias Gardell, Historian of Religion

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Key word: 9241 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Une nouvelle directrice nommée à l'Office national des migrations

Le gouvernement a nommé ce jour Barbro Holmberg à la direction de l'Office national des migrations.

Barbro Holmberg est actuellement secrétaire d'État chargée des migrations au Ministère des affaires étrangères. Diplômée en sciences sociales, elle a notamment travaillé comme rédactrice pour les revues *PsykologTidningen* et *Socialpolitik*. Elle a été secrétaire de la Commission d'enquête parlementaire sur les enfants et de celle chargée de la révision des fonctions de l'Ombudsman des enfants. Depuis octobre 1999, elle travaille au cabinet du Ministre de la coopération, des migrations et de la politique d'asile.

Barbro Holmberg prendra ses fonctions le 1er juin

Barbro Holmberg sera à la disposition des médias à l'Office national des migrations de Norrköping à partir de 13h15.

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Key word: 9240 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Reminder! Russian and French Foreign Ministers to Stockholm to sign the MNEPR agreement

On Wednesday 21 May the MNEPR agreement will be signed in Stockholm by, among others, Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh, Russia's Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov, and the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dominique de Villepin. The Agreement will create the conditions for international support in Russia in the field of nuclear technology.

The MNEPR agreement (Multilateral Nuclear Environmental Programme in the Russian Federation), has three main application areas: safe management of radioactive waste, spent nuclear fuel and reactor safety.

More information on the MNEPR is available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website: www.foreign.ministry.se.

To the editorial office:

A press conference with the Foreign Ministers will take place on Wednesday 21 May, at 12.15, Bella Venezia, Rosenbad.

Representatives of the media who wish to be present at the signing of the Agreement should assemble at the entrance to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1 at 10.45. If you wish to attend please notify maria.hakansson@foreign.ministry.se.

Please bring your press credentials!

You can also watch the press conference on a live broadcast and afterwards on the Internet at <http://www.regeringen.se>

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Key word: 9183 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Pagrotsky: #Sweden needs foreign ownership#

#Sweden must get even better at attracting foreign investment and better at looking after people who want to get into our market. I don#t think enough people have realised how important international investment is for growth in our country.#

Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky let his views be known when he met leaders of American, Canadian and French subsidiaries on Thursday and Friday to discuss conditions for foreign companies operating in Sweden. The agenda for the meetings included developments in IT and telecommunications.

#One vital factor promoting dynamism in any sector is that the top companies are on the spot, helping to spur one another on in terms of development and employment,# underlined Leif Pagrotsky.

The meetings with the heads of foreign subsidiaries were arranged in cooperation with the Invest in Sweden Agency (ISA), which is the central authority for investment promotion in Sweden. Higher appropriations and special commissions this year have given ISA increased opportunities to attract foreign companies to Sweden, thereby encouraging a valuable influx of competence, ideas and resources.

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Key word: 9181 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors

The following five Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 15 May:

Madagascar#s newly appointed Ambassador Denis Andriamandroso

(concurrently accredited from Berlin) was born in 1945. He has studied in the United States, France and Germany and has a PhD in management and development issues from the University of East Anglia, UK.

Denis Andriamandroso was active in the private business sector in 2000-2002 as a Director of Bertelsmann. In June 2002 he took up his appointment as Madagascar#s Ambassador to Germany.

Mauritania#s newly appointed Ambassador Melainine Ould Moctar Neche (concurrently accredited from Berlin) was born in 1954. He entered his country#s foreign service in 1973 and has served at a

number of missions abroad.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1988-1993 Head of the International Organisations Department
at the Ministry of Economic Cooperation

1993-2000 Ambassador in Rome

Permanent Representative of Mauritania to the FAO, WFP
and IFAD

2000- Ambassador in Berlin

Kazakhstan's newly appointed Ambassador Erlan Idrissov (concurrently accredited from London) was born in 1959. After Soviet diplomatic training, he entered the foreign service of Kazakhstan, which was then a Soviet Republic, in 1985. From 1992 until 1995 he served as a member of Kazakhstan's Mission to the United Nations.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1996-1997 Foreign policy adviser to President Nazerbajev

1997-1999 First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs

1999-2002 Minister for Foreign Affairs

2002 First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs

2002 Ambassador in London

Jamaica's newly appointed Ambassador Maxine Eleanor Roberts (concurrently accredited from London) was born in 1947. She holds a BA Degree from the University of the West Indies and entered her country's foreign service in 1971. She has served at Jamaica's embassies in Washington, Paris and Bonn, as well as at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kingston.

In recent years she has held the following posts:

1987 Deputy Head of Jamaica's Mission to the United Nations,
New York

1992 High Commissioner in Ottawa

1996 Non-resident High Commissioner, New Delhi

1998 State Secretary for Trade, Economic and
Maritime Affairs

2002 High Commissioner in London

Brunei Darussalam's newly appointed Ambassador Datin Tan Bee Yong (accredited from Bandar Seri Begawan) was born in 1958. She holds a BSc Degree with a major in statistics and a Masters Degree in mathematics from London University. She entered her country's foreign service in 1984 and has worked mainly at the Multilateral Economics Department. Her most recent position was as Director at the International Organisations Department.

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Key word: 9138

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Agreement on nuclear safety in Russia to be signed in Stockholm on 21 May

On Wednesday 21 May the MNEPR agreement will be signed in Stockholm by, among others, Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh and Russia's Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov. This will establish a legal framework for support measures in Russia in the area of nuclear safety.

The MNEPR agreement (Multilateral Nuclear Environmental Programme in the Russian Federation) has three main application areas: safe management of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel and reactor safety.

The absence of a legal framework regulating issues of liability in the event of nuclear damage has severely limited the possibility of international support measures. Sweden therefore, along with a number of other countries, has been the driving force in negotiating an agreement.

The MNEPR agreement will enable, for example, the NDEP fund (Northern Dimension Environment Partnership) to implement nuclear safety projects in Russia, such as at Andreeva Bay. Sweden has contributed 10 million euro to the fund.

More information on MNEPR will be available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website: <http://www.ministry.foreign.se>

To the editorial office:

A press conference will take place at 12.15, Bella Venezia, Rosenbad .

Representatives of the media who wish to be present at the signing of the agreement should assemble at the entrance to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1 at 10.45 am. If you wish to attend please notify maria.hakansson@foreign.ministry.se.

Please bring your press credentials.

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Key word: 9137

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government to back import promotion

The Government has today decided to give SEK 2.5 million to the Swedish Federation of Trade for import promotion activities in 2003. The purpose is to promote imports in a variety of sectors and to encourage the forging of new business contacts between purchasers in Sweden and suppliers in other countries.

#Swedish consumers are dependent on imports being effective. Imports help ensure there is healthy competition and lead to an enhanced supply # and ultimately to lower prices for consumers,# says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

The activities take the form of projects in different sectors, such as engineering products, foodstuffs, textiles, furniture, electronics and building materials. Projects are taking place both in local markets in the Baltic Sea region and in countries such as India, Vietnam and China.

The operation is being managed by the Swedish Federation of Trade, with the active participation of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the Swedish Trade Council, chambers of commerce and other relevant trade promotion organisations, import firms in trade and industry, and Swedish embassies and consulates-general in the countries concerned. The total cost of the operation will amount to SEK 7.6 million.

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Key word: 9136 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh to meet French Minister for Foreign Affairs in Paris

On Friday, Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh is scheduled to meet her French colleague Dominique de Villepin at a working lunch in Paris.

Discussions between the two foreign ministers will cover such topics as the situation in the Middle East and the EU Convention on the Future of Europe.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden contributes to continued publication of Sarajevo Notebook

The Government took a decision today to grant SEK 150 000 to support the publication of Sarajevo Notebook, a literary journal first published in 2002 with financial support from a number of countries including Sweden.

The journal is an example of an initiative that can contribute in a concrete manner to the process of reconciliation in the Western Balkans. By providing a platform for writers from the countries of the former Yugoslavia, the Sarajevo Notebook contributes to re-establishing a cultural dialogue between these countries. This initiative is one of many ways in which the Swedish Government can contribute to the reconciliation process, peace and stability in the region.

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Key word: 9134 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Head of Stability Pact to visit Stockholm

The Special Coordinator for the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, Dr Erhard Busek is scheduled to visit Stockholm on Tuesday 13 May.

During his visit, he will meet, inter alia, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and

Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

Erhard Busek will also take part in a seminar " The peaceful alternative # does it exist?" organised by the Olof Palme International Center.

The Stability Pact was set up in 1999 on the initiative of the EU to promote regional cooperation in South Eastern Europe. Members of the Partnership, apart from the countries in South Eastern Europe, are the EU, Russia and the USA. Also participating are international organisations such as the Council of Europe, NATO, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the World Bank.

By building up and strengthening regional networks, the Stability Pact contributes to greater security in Europe. Director-General Per Sjögren of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is leading this work in the field of justice and home affairs, including migration, trafficking in human beings, police cooperation and organised crime.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Royal couple and the Crown Princess to pay state visit to Finland

King Carl XVI Gustaf, Queen Silvia and Crown Princess Victoria will pay a state visit to Finland on 26-28 August 2003, at the invitation of the Republic's President Tarja Halonen.

The Swedish Government will be represented on this occasion.

To the editorial office: Information about the programme and accreditation for accompanying media representatives will be available later on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website (www.ud.se).

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Key word: 9094

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Estonia's Minister for Foreign Affairs Kristiina Ojuland to visit Sweden

The Estonian Minister for Foreign Affairs Kristiina Ojuland is scheduled to visit Stockholm on Monday 12 May for talks with Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh. Topics for discussion will include Estonia's forthcoming EU and NATO membership and cooperation in the fight against human trafficking.

During her visit, Foreign Minister Ojuland will also meet members of the Riksdag's Advisory Committee on EU Affairs and the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs. Ojuland last visited Sweden as newly appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs in January 2002.

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Key word: 9093 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Grant to market Swedish adventure industry in Japan

The Government took the decision today to allocate SEK 400 000 to the export promotion project

"Swedish Style 4" in Tokyo in October 2004. The aim is to help Swedish companies and other actors to reap the benefits of the enormous interest in the Swedish adventure industry created by the "Swedish Style in Tokyo" projects of previous years.

"We must nurture and build on this interest for Sweden, Swedish lifestyle and Swedish products that has arisen in Japan in recent years", says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

"The Japanese market represents an enormous potential for the Swedish adventure industry, but I am convinced that this campaign will also promote all kinds of Swedish exports in the future, even those in more traditional areas".

"Swedish Style 4" consists of a number of marketing campaigns, seminars and exhibitions of Swedish products, both in public spaces and commercial environments. The project is being led by Sweden's embassy in Tokyo and is being undertaken in close cooperation with the Swedish Trade Council, the companies participating and a number of other Swedish and Japanese cooperation partners. The total cost is estimated to amount to SEK 4.5 million and financing is being shared among the participants.

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Key word: 9090 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Eva Zetterberg new Ambassador

The Government has today appointed Eva Zetterberg as Ambassador at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Her most recent appointment was at the Riksdag where she was Deputy Speaker and member of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs. She has also been a member of the board of Sida.

The intention is for Eva Zetterberg to be posted abroad later in the year.

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Key word: 9089

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Head of UN agency for Palestine refugees to visit Sweden

Peter Hansen, Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), will be visiting Stockholm on 8-9 May. His appointments include a meeting with Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson to discuss the humanitarian situation of the Palestine refugees.

The work UNRWA performs on behalf of the Palestine refugees is vitally important. A large number of refugees, especially on the West Bank and in Gaza, are currently dependent on aid. In recent years the organisation's efforts have been hampered by the prevailing situation.

To the editorial office:

There will be a press conference with Peter Hansen on Friday 9 May at 13.45, Gustaf Adolfs torg 1. Assembly at 13.30.

Please bring your press credentials!

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) helps 3.9 million Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and Gaza. Its programmes include education, health care and other social services.

Sweden is one of UNRWA's largest donors, contributing some SEK 175 million per year. We provide an additional SEK 30 million each year to UNRWA emergency relief programmes on the West Bank and in Gaza.

With nearly 25 000 employees (99 % of them Palestinians), UNRWA is the largest humanitarian organisation in the region.

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Key word: 9059 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-05-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh to visit South Africa and the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh is scheduled to visit South Africa and the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 5#8 May 2003.

The purpose of the visit to South Africa is to meet with government representatives to discuss developments in Africa, in particular the problem of HIV/Aids. The mutual interest in broadening and deepening cooperation between South Africa and Sweden will also be addressed.

The visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is part of Sweden's efforts to contribute to a solution to the prolonged and serious conflict in the country through, among other things, making available Swedish personnel to MONUC, the UN's peacekeeping mission in the DRC.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Commission of Inquiry on Data pertaining to Aliens

New act on the treatment of personal data in activities under the legislation on aliens and citizenship

The Commission of Inquiry on Data pertaining to Aliens today presented its final report An Aliens# Data Act (Swedish Government Official Reports 2003:40) to Minister for Migration Jan O. Karlsson.

In its report, the Commission proposes a new act to regulate the way in which the Government Offices, the Swedish Migration Board, the Aliens Appeals Board, the Swedish Integration Board, the National Police Board and the police authorities treat personal data in activities that come under the legislation on aliens and citizenship. This new act will supplement the provisions of the Personal Data Act (1998:204) and is adapted to the requirements of the European Community Data Protection Directive.

One effect of the Commission#s proposal is to allow the authorities concerned to make rational and

effective use of modern information technology in their contacts with other Sweden and foreign authorities and with private individuals.

In order to enable the authorities to work together, certain provisions are proposed that will allow them to release personal data to one another, even when such data is secret.

At the same time the Act will give the individual a strong degree of protection against undue intrusions into his or her personal integrity. The measures proposed include restrictions on the seeking and compiling of sensitive data about individuals. Stringent limitations are also proposed on access by outsiders to electronically stored information.

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Key word: 9030 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson to visit South Africa and Tanzania

The Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, will be visiting Tanzania and South Africa between 2-6 May 2003.

The main purpose of the visit to Tanzania is to discuss, together with the Tanzanian Government, Sweden's extensive and long-term development cooperation with the country. Jan O. Karlsson will also participate in a conference dealing, among other things, with development cooperation with Zanzibar.

In South Africa the Minister will discuss continued broader and deeper cooperation with South Africa together with a representative of the South African Government. HIV/Aids is another important issue on the agenda, and Mr Karlsson will be paying a visit to an Aids hospital during his trip.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to participate in peace operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Government decided on Wednesday that Sweden would contribute an armed force to the UN peacekeeping mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

The force consists of an airfield unit with staff officers, of a total of 90 personnel. An advance force of 17 persons will arrive in the area on 26 May. The main body will set off on Sweden's national day, 6 June, with the task of operating and maintaining the airport in Kindu for 12 months. Sweden will thus be the first country in the West to contribute troops to MONUC.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish strategy against trafficking in human beings

The Government is to take a decision on 30 April 2003 on a strategy in Sweden's international development cooperation for fighting human trafficking. The Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, will present the strategy at a press conference on Wednesday 30 April.

Fighting human trafficking is already a priority issue for Sweden in international contexts. In order that Sweden's efforts be given a more long-term focus the Government has drawn up a strategy in its international development cooperation for fighting human trafficking.

The strategy chiefly concentrates on trafficking in women and children. The focus is on the commonest and worst forms of exploitation such as sexual exploitation, exploitation of labour and harmful child labour.

To the editorial office:

A press conference with Jan O. Karlsson will take place on Wednesday 30 April 2003, at 12.30, Press Centre, Rosenbad 1.

Please bring your press credentials!

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Key word: 9003 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh to take part in an informal meeting of EU foreign ministers

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh is scheduled to take part in an informal meeting of EU foreign ministers (Gymnich) on 2-3 May 2003. The meeting will take place on the Greek islands of Rhodes and Kostellorizo.

The foreign ministers of the ten acceding member states will also take part in this meeting. The foreign ministers' discussions will include the situation of Iraq after the war, transatlantic relations and the fight against weapons of mass destruction.

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Key word: 9001

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky to OECD ministerial meeting in Paris

On 29-30 April, Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky will participate in a ministerial council meeting of the OECD in Paris. The agenda includes discussions on the situation at the ongoing WTO negotiations in preparation for the trade policy summit in Cancun in Mexico in September. The issue of the reform of OECD working methods will also come under discussion. Leif Pagrotsky will be available for comments to the media on Wednesday 30 April at 13.00 in the library at the Swedish delegation to the OECD, 2 Rue André Pascal, Paris.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Support for a trade fair for contacts with small- and medium-sized enterprises in St Petersburg

The Government has approved support for an international trade fair (Partenariat) for contacts between small- and medium-sized enterprises in St Petersburg. This will be announced by Jan O. Karlsson in connection with today's inauguration of the Swedish week in St Petersburg.

The Mälardal Council will be given a grant of a maximum of SEK 1 425 000 for this purpose. The grant will be used primarily for promoting the participation of Swedish companies in the trade fair. The fair is planned for the spring of 2004.

"The grant is one of the Swedish initiatives in connection with St Petersburg's 300th anniversary celebrations. At the same time, it emphasises our strong support for the desire of this city to play an increasingly important role for trade and investment in the Baltic Sea region", says Minister Jan O. Karlsson.

" A trade fair for contacts between small- and medium-sized enterprises in St Petersburg is an excellent way of contributing to greater internationalisation of entrepreneurship in north-western Russia, in which Sweden and the Swedish business sector have every interest", says Jan O. Karlsson.

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Key word: 8989 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

German state visit to Sweden, 20-22 May 2003

The President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Johannes Rau, will pay a state visit to Sweden on 20-22 May 2003 at the invitation of His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf. The President will be accompanied by his wife Mrs Christina Rau.

Visits will be made to Stockholm and Uppsala.

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Key word: 8987

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Parliamentary review committee on aliens legislation set to start

On 6 March 2003 the Government decided on the terms of reference for a parliamentary committee to review the material provisions of the Aliens Act and adapt these for a transition from the current

system in which it is the responsibility of administrative authorities and the Government to process appeals to a system in which appeals will be dealt with by a court of law.(Committee Terms of Reference 2003:28 # Review of Aliens Legislation). The committee is to submit its report no later than 15 December 2003.

"Now that all of the members have been appointed, the committee can begin to carry out its work. I am convinced that the committee, headed by Göran Schäder, has all the best prerequisites to enable it to fulfil its assignment and so contribute to the changeover enabling aliens cases to be handled by the courts," says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

Mr Karlsson has decided to appoint, effective 1 May 2003, Supreme Administrative Court Justice Göran Schäder to chair the committee. The following representatives of the parliamentary parties have been appointed as members of the committee:

Göte Wahlström (Social Democratic Party)

Mariam Osman Sherifay (Social Democratic Party)

Helena Zakariasén (Social Democratic Party)

Kalle Larsson (Left Party)

Bodil Ceballos (Green Party)

Sten Tolgfors (Moderate Party)

Hillevi Engström (Moderate Party)

Erik Ullenhag (Liberal Party)

Sven Brus (Christian Democrats)

Birgitta Carlsson (Centre Party)

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Key word: 8986 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Support to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has decided to contribute USD 4.7 million to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). IDEA is an international organisation whose main aim is to promote democracy and democratisation processes. The Institute has 21 member states from all continents as well as four non-governmental organisations as associate

members.

As the Institute's host country, Sweden has taken special responsibility for its financing from the start. As previously, Sweden covers about 50% of the budget. Other major contributors to IDEA's basic budget include Holland, Switzerland, Norway, Belgium, Germany and Canada.

Among other things, IDEA produces databases with comparative material on the organisation of elections, election laws and election turnout which provide an overview of possible working methods without advocating a specific solution.

IDEA has also carried out a number of studies concerning participation in democratic systems: for example, women in parliament, the participation of young people, political parties and democratic dialogue.

Sweden considers IDEA to be an important actor in efforts for democracy and democratisation.

IDEA has developed into a highly appreciated player and contributor in international development cooperation in this field, the Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, says.

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Key word: 8953 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Crown Princess Victoria and Jan O. Karlsson to inaugurate Swedish week in St Petersburg

Tomorrow, HRH Crown Princess Victoria and the Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Mr Jan O. Karlsson, will jointly inaugurate the Swedish week in St Petersburg. The inauguration will take place at 12.00 at the photo exhibition #Swedish St Petersburg# at the Peter-Paul Fortress.

Sweden is strengthening its ties to St Petersburg by a special Swedish initiative during the city's 300th anniversary which it is celebrating this year. A variety of events are taking place within such areas as culture, education, research, tourism, IT, trade promotion and the environment. The Swedish initiative is chiefly concentrated to a #Swedish week# on 25#30 April. Swedish-Russian events will be taking place at other times too (read more about these events in the publication #Sweden in St Petersburg 2003# at www.ud.se).

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Key word: 8952 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh welcomes agreement on building a Palestinian government

"I welcome the agreement that makes it possible to build a Palestinian government under the leadership of Abu Mazen".

This was said by Ministry for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh, commenting on the agreement.

"It is now essential that the peace process is resumed between the Palestinians and Israelis, based on the road map which must be put before the parties in the EU and the other members of the so-called Quartet".

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Key word: 8949 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to a press conference on Nordic driver and vehicle barriers

During the Swedish presidency of Nordic Intergovernmental Cooperation, a seminar on border barriers between Nordic countries will be held in Karlstad, Sweden, on 29 April 2003. It will deal

with issues concerning cross-border mobility for drivers and vehicles between Nordic countries including customs duties and VAT procedures, deposit requirements, length and width of vehicles, inspection rules and driver identification.

In connection with the seminar, a press conference will be held at 1pm on 29 April in the Lambergsfrau room at the Carlstad Conference Centre, Tage Erlandergatan 10, Karlstad, Sweden. Amongst the attendees will be Denmark's former prime minister Poul Schlüter, who is the special representative for border barrier issues during the Swedish presidency.

Journalists wishing to participate in the entire seminar are welcome to contact Agneta Sturesson on +46 8 405 54 24.

Further information on border barrier issues is available at www.norden.org/grensehindringer/sk/index.asp

Welcome!

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Key word: 8948

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors

The following four Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Wednesday 23 April:

Venezuela's newly appointed Ambassador Horacio Arteaga Acosta was born in 1948. He studied international affairs at Venezuela's Central University and graduated with an M.A. from Columbia University in New York. He entered the foreign service in 1971 and has alternated between service abroad and at the Foreign Ministry in Caracas.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1990-1993 Ambassador at the UN in Geneva

1993-1997 Ambassador in Lima

1997-2000 Ambassador in Rabat with dual accreditation in Dakar, Senegal

2000- Head of the Foreign Ministry's Division for Analysis and Strategic Planning

Malaysia's recently appointed Ambassador Jasmi bin Mohd Yusoff was born in 1949 and is a graduate from Malaysia. He entered his country's foreign service in 1973. He has alternated between service at the Foreign Ministry in Kuala Lumpur and at Malaysia's foreign missions abroad.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1995-1997 Deputy Head of Mission at Malaysia's High Commission in London

1997-2000 Ambassador in Senegal

2000 Head of the Foreign Ministry's UN Office

Namibia's newly appointed Ambassador Panduleni-K. Shingenge was born in 1957. She studied

Spanish in Cuba where she also graduated with an M.A. in economics. From 1986-1990, she represented SWAPO in former East Germany, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland. She entered her country's foreign service in 1990 and during the period 1990-1994 served at its missions in Brussels, London and Paris.

In recent years she has held the following posts:

1994-1997 Head of the Foreign Ministry's Africa and Middle East Department

1997-2002 Minister Counsellor at Namibia's High Commission in South Africa, with dual accreditation in Lesotho, Mozambique and Swaziland.

Ukraine's newly appointed Ambassador Leonid Oleksandrovytj Kozhara was born in 1963. He graduated in international law at the State University of Kiev. His posts have included Head of the Institution for Public Building and Law at the higher party school of Kiev, advisor to the Ukrainian parliament and at the international department of the presidential administration.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1994-1997 First Secretary at the Ukrainian Embassy in Washington

1997- Deputy Head of Department and Deputy Head of the Foreign Affairs Department of the presidential administration.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Evaluation of the Baltic Billion Funds

The Government decided today to commission the Swedish Agency for Administrative Development to evaluate operations relating to the Baltic Billion Funds. The results will be presented on 30 January 2004.

#The Baltic Billion Funds have meant that it has been possible to take a wide range of initiatives in the Baltic Sea region. The aim has been to strengthen the presence of the Swedish business sector, to encourage cooperation between countries and to stimulate growth in the entire region. Now that we are approaching the end of the second programme period it is essential that the progress reports undertaken regularly in each Baltic Billion Fund be extended with an evaluation of these operations,# says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson.

Background to the Baltic Billion Funds:

The Baltic Billion Fund I

In order to stimulate growth and employment, the Swedish Riksdag decided in July 1996 to appropriate SEK 1 billion for support to cooperation and development in the Baltic Sea region. These funds were intended to support measures and projects in the following five areas, the Swedish export industry, energy systems, reciprocal exchange of know-how, reinforced infrastructure and cooperation in protecting the Baltic Sea environment. The objective was also to

increase trade and investment and to strengthen cooperation between states and the business sector in the Baltic Sea region. A total of 78 projects received support from the First Baltic Billion Fund. The appropriation was concluded at the end of 2002.

The Baltic Billion Fund II

In the spring of 1998, the Riksdag took a decision to appropriate a further SEK 1 billion for the development of the business sector in the Baltic Sea region over a five-year period. The overall objective of the programme is to stimulate business sector development and trade with the countries of the region based on Swedish interests. Proposals from the Committee on Economic Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region contained detailed objectives for strengthening the position of Swedish enterprises in the Baltic Sea region and improving the participation of Swedish companies in the development of this region's business sector. The funds are being used for several different support measures designed in close cooperation with the business sector and including support to market establishment, project exports and information campaigns. There is considerable interest on the part of the Swedish business sector, municipalities, county administrative boards and the cooperating countries. At present, 37 programmes and projects have been decided upon within the framework of the second Baltic Billion Fund.

For further information on the Baltic Billion Funds# programmes and projects, see www.ud.se

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Key word: 8915 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky promotes Swedish furniture in Milan

On Friday 11 April, Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky will be in Milan to take part in "Svezia Light", a Swedish export initiative to be held in connection with the annual furniture fair in Milan. The purpose of the exhibition is to present Swedish design in an international setting and to promote the Swedish export industry.

The programme includes round-table discussions with Swedish furniture manufacturers. Mr Pagrotsky will also be meeting representatives of the Italian business and industrial community, authorities and educational institutions.

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Key word: 8881 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New embassy in Bratislava

Unofficial translation

Today the Government took a decision to open an embassy in Bratislava, Slovakia, at the beginning of 2004.

Slovakia is the only acceding state in the region of Central and Eastern Europe in which Sweden still does not have an embassy. The embassy project will be pursued in cooperation with the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Slovakia is expected to become a member of the EU in May 2004.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish-French agreement on study of global public goods

Unofficial translation

Today Sweden and France will sign an agreement on the establishment of an international task force that will study issues related to global public goods. The agreement will be signed in Paris by Sweden's Ambassador Frank Belfrage and the Minister for Development Cooperation for France,

Pierre-André Wiltzer.

The group # "the International Task Force on Global Public Goods" # will have an international secretariat, based in Stockholm. The secretariat will support the work of the task force with background material and analyses.

The task force will be commissioned to investigate how the most important global public goods are provided today and to propose better methods of handling and financing them in order to reduce poverty in the world and contribute to sustainable development. An important part of its task will be to disseminate knowledge and information on the conclusions and recommendations of the task force. Its assignment should be completed in 2005.

"There is a growing number of global issues that concern us all and that require new forms of solution. By commissioning these studies, Sweden and France wish to improve, in a concrete manner, the way in which we handle global public goods. We expect the task force to present proposals on how this should be implemented", says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

The international task force will consist of 15-20 leading experts from governments, the business sector, international organisations, civil society and the academic world. The work will be lead by Ernesto Zedillio (former President in Mexico, and currently head of the Yale Center for the Study of Globalization) and Tidjane Thiam (former Minister of Planning in Côte d'Ivoire and now active within the private sector in London).

The international secretariat in Stockholm will be lead by Sven Sandström, former Managing Director of the World Bank.

Global public goods are goods that we all use or are affected by, but that no one owns or holds responsibility for, such as air, water, biological diversity, the fight against infectious diseases, etc.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh concerned about developments in Cuba

#I view the developments in Cuba with great concern. The mass arrests of dissidents that have taken place lately are one more example of the human rights violations being committed in Cuba,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

#According to the reports that have recently reached the Swedish Government, those who are

arrested risk long prison sentences, in some cases even life imprisonment. The trials that have begun are supposed to be open to the public but so far neither Swedish Embassy personnel nor representatives of other EU countries have received permission to attend. This is unacceptable. The Swedish Government condemns the actions of the Cuban authorities and takes the view that all political prisoners should be released immediately.

#The absence of respect for human rights in Cuba will continue to affect the country's relations with Sweden and the prospects of increased cooperation between the EU and Cuba,# says Anna Lindh.

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Key word: 8843

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to a press conference with Anna Lindh

On Thursday, Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh will present a Swedish initiative in efforts to prevent weapons of mass destruction.

Time: Thursday, 10 April 2003, at 11.00.

Place: Press Centre at Rosenbad

NB: Press credentials required!

Welcome!

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Key word: 8842

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh to visit Prague

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh is to visit Prague on 11 April for talks with her Czech colleague, Cyril Svoboda. She will also meet Prime Minister Vladimir #pidla.

The two foreign ministers will hold a joint press briefing at 13.45 # 14.00 at the Cernín Palace.

The main objective of the visit is to foster closer bilateral relations prior to the Czech Republic's forthcoming membership of the EU and to promote cooperation in the Union's work.

Also included in the programme are a lecture at the Charles University in Prague on Sweden's experiences of EU membership and a press briefing in connection with a presentation of the film Lilja 4-ever.

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Key word: 8841 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O Karlsson to speak on EU enlargement and development cooperation

Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O Karlsson will be one of the main speakers at an international conference, The Enlarged European Union # Partner of the Developing World, which will take place in Berlin on 7#8 April.

Other participants will include Germany's Economic Cooperation and Development Minister, Heidmarie Wieczoreck-Zeul, the EU Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Poul Nielson, and Slovenia's Foreign Minister, Dimitrij Rupel. Discussions will centre on the various implications of EU enlargement for development cooperation policies.

The conference is being organised by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and Development Forum.

Swedish journalists are invited to meet Jan O Karlsson on Monday 7 April at 5 pm in the Board Room on the first floor of the Grand Hyatt Hotel at Potsdamer Platz, Berlin.

Journalists wishing to take part in the conference should phone Klaus Krüger,

Entwicklungspolitisches Forum In Went Internationale Weiterbildung und Entwicklung, on +49
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Key word: 8820 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-04
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh to meet Dominique de Villepin in Gothenburg

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh is scheduled to meet her French colleague Dominique de Villepin at Säve Airport (the civilian part) on Monday 7 April.

There will be a photo opportunity in connection with their meeting.

Time: 11.30 a.m. on Monday 7 April 2003.

Place: Säve Airport, Restaurant, arrival hall

./.

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Key word: 8818

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-04
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Serbia and Montenegro joins the Council of Europe

Today, Thursday, the state union of Serbia and Montenegro becomes a member of the Council of Europe.

#I welcome the accession of Serbia and Montenegro as the 45th member of the Council of Europe. Its membership is very important for the further integration of the newly established state union into European cooperation. Serbia and Montenegro are still shaken at present by the aftershocks of the assassination of Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic. The government has made great efforts to clear up the circumstances surrounding this tragic event as promptly as possible. Serbia and Montenegro needs our support in its continued movement towards democracy and a society where the rule of law prevails. In this process, membership of the Council of Europe is an important step along the way,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

The then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia applied for membership of the Council of Europe in November 2000. In March this year, the Committee of Ministers decided to invite Serbia and Montenegro to join as a new member. In order to help the state union meet its commitments as a member, a special programme for cooperation and special monitoring procedures have been determined by the Council of Europe where respect for human rights and the rule of law are concerned.

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Key word: 8816

PRESS RELEASE

2003-04-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Swedish judge at the European Court of Human Rights

Attorney Elisabet Fura-Sandström was elected today as new judge at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. She is to replace Elisabeth Palm, who has been a judge at the European Court of Human Rights since 1988.

Elisabet Fura-Sandström has been an active lawyer since 1985 and her duties have included the presidency of the Swedish Bar Association.

In addition to having taken part in several government commissions of inquiry in Sweden, Elisabet Fura-Sandström has also held a number of international posts. These have included chairmanship of

an international association of lawyers and participation in different development assistance projects in the field of judicial cooperation in, for example, Russia, Laos and Vietnam.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, on the latest wave of violence against the opposition in Zimbabwe

#Sweden condemns the violations Zimbabwe#s government is committing,# the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, says commenting on the latest wave of violence against the opposition party MDC (Movement for Democratic Change) in Zimbabwe.

#Sweden urges Zimbabwe#s government to immediately cease these serious violations of human rights, to bring the perpetrators to justice and to respect people#s right to freely express their opinion,# Ms Lindh continues.

The latest violations include arbitrary arrests, torture and beatings. These took place following mass action arranged by the opposition last week to demonstrate its dissatisfaction with the government in office. There was wide support for the mass action.

The government responded with a brutal crackdown on demonstrators and representatives of the opposition. In the last few days, several hundred supporters of the MDC and their families have been subjected to arrests, abuse and torture.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Pagrotsky leading Swedish-Indian promotion campaign

Pagrotsky leading Swedish-Indian promotion campaign

On 1-3 April, Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky will visit India with a delegation from the Swedish business sector. The visit follows up the special campaign on India, initiated at the "Forum Asia" event in Stockholm on 12 February. The aim is to awaken interest in India as a market and to launch Sweden as an investment country.

"There is an enormous potential to be tapped in India. Just think that little Sweden, with nine million inhabitants has more trade with the international community than India, the world's second largest country, where one billion people live", says Leif Pagrotsky.

"This will not last for long of course. India is now gradually opening up its borders to the surrounding world. I would like to draw the attention of Swedish companies to this. We need to assert ourselves here, to improve economic growth and boost employment in Sweden".

During the visit, a Swedish-Indian meeting of the joint commission will be held for the first time since 1997. The meeting will include discussions on economic, scientific and technical issues and questions of relevance to the WTO negotiations, such as, for example, simpler rules and less bureaucracy in trade.

"Many Swedish companies are reluctant to invest in India because of complicated rules for customs and charges. This hampers a development that would benefit both India and Sweden. And it is something that I shall be taking up with my Indian colleague, Arun Jaitley", says Pagrotsky.

During the visit Leif Pagrotsky will also inaugurate "Swedish Days", organised for 2-4 April in the South Indian town of Bangalore, which is the centre of India's growing IT and biotechnology industry.

Read more about the visit, and Sweden's initiatives on India, at www.ud.se.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh to visit the United Kingdom

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms Anna Lindh, will visit the United Kingdom on 27-28 March. Anna Lindh is to meet the British Foreign Minister Jack Straw for talks on Friday morning. On Thursday evening, Anna Lindh will take part in a presentation of the film Lilja 4-ever in London. The film presentation will be followed by a panel debate on trafficking in human beings.

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Key word: 8733 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-24
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Meeting of the Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs

There will be a meeting of the Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs on Tuesday 25 March at 10.00 at the Royal Palace.

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Key word: 8714

PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-24
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish initiative in St Petersburg

Sweden is strengthening its ties to St Petersburg by a special initiative during the city's 300th anniversary which is being celebrated this year. With its initiative Sweden wants to develop the good contacts that already exist between Sweden and St Petersburg and create new points of contact and opportunities. A variety of events are taking place within such areas as culture, education, research, tourism, IT, trade promotion and the environment.

The initiative is chiefly concentrated to a #Swedish week#

on 25#30 April. Swedish#Russian events will be taking place at other times during the year also.

Read more about these events in the publication #Sweden in St Petersburg 2003# which is available in both Swedish and Russian at www.ud.se.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky rejects criticism of GATS Agreement

"Sweden is one of the countries that promoted the most ambitious undertakings in the GATS agreement when it was last negotiated. Yet we have a large public sector and a highly regulated services sector. This, if nothing else, shows that GATS is not a global instrument for privatisation or deregulation."

This comment was made by Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky in the Riksdag today in a debate on GATS, the General Agreement on Trade in Services, which regulates the conditions for trade in private services. Negotiations are now taking place within the WTO with a view to further developing the GATS Agreement, which entered into force in 1995.

"In Sweden, we do not distinguish between Swedes and foreigners when we decide who will be given permission to sell a service. Therefore, we would like Swedish companies to be permitted to enter other countries' services markets in the same way. I refuse to believe that poor people in developing countries benefit from private services companies having no competitors," said Pagrotsky.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Prime Minister Göran Persson's first comments on the outbreak of war in Iraq

Unofficial translation

"I regret that this war has now broken out. The attack on Iraq is in contravention of international law and threatens the lives of thousands of people. The disarming of the terrorist regime in Iraq must take place within the framework of international law and must therefore be returned to the United Nations Security Council.

"As long as the war continues, every conceivable effort must be made to avoid any impact on the civilian population. The rules of humanitarian law must be observed. This is the responsibility of both sides in the war. The attack on Iraq does not absolve that country of its obligation to comply with the resolutions previously adopted by the Security Council.

"We in Sweden have taken measures to raise our level of preparedness. A special group of state secretaries has been formed. It will be led by State Secretary Lars Danielsson, with the primary task of coordinating between the Government Offices and the authorities involved".

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson receives commission report on aliens without documents

Commissioner Tommy Arwitz today delivered the report of the Commission on Enforcement of Refusal-of-Entry and Expulsion Orders to Minister Jan O. Karlsson. The Commission has looked in particular at cases in which the identity of the alien is unclear.

#The absence of documents is a major problem in the asylum process today and is a significant cause of the long waiting times. It is essential to come to grips with these problems to improve the asylum process, so as to shorten waiting times and enable enforced decisions to be implemented more efficiently. This is quite simply a matter of safeguarding the right of asylum,# says Minister for Migration Jan O. Karlsson.

#In his report, Tommy Arwitz provides a toolbox for tackling these problems. He makes an interesting analysis of the current situation as regards the problems associated with the enforcement of refusal-of-entry and expulsion orders, and the difficulties that arise in the absence of documents.

#Before we take a position on any of the proposals we will now refer the report to various bodies for comments and scrutinise the proposals thoroughly. Only after this discussion will we be ready to make decisions on any changes in procedures and proposals for legislation.#

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Key word: 8692 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

UN Deputy Secretary-General Michael W. Doyle

Michael W. Doyle, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and special adviser to the Secretary-General on migration issues, is in Stockholm today to meet the Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson.

The topics they will discuss include:

1. The increased need for international cooperation and how the UN system should handle migration issues in future.
2. Institutional reforms and increased cooperation between the UN and the organisations currently responsible for migration issues.
3. Proposals for handling migration issues at global level.
4. Special migration issues that require more in-depth analysis and where the UN can play a role.

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Key word: 8632 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Two Iraqi diplomats ordered to leave Sweden

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs confirms that two Iraqi diplomats have been ordered to leave the country as a result of conducting activities that are incompatible with the status of a diplomat. According to an investigation that the Swedish Police has been carrying out for some time, the diplomats have been involved in refugee-related espionage activities. A year ago two other Iraqi diplomats were ordered to leave Sweden for the same reason.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Näringsdepartementet

New International Press Secretary to Leif Pagrotsky

Svante Hådell has been appointed International Press Secretary to the Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky. He comes from a post as executive officer at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Svante Hådell will be responsible for press issues relating to the Minister's spheres of responsibility at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (trade policy, export promotion, investment promotion, EU matters).

Monica Björklund will continue to be Press Secretary to Leif Pagrotsky within his spheres of responsibility at the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications (state ownership, energy, industrial issues) and regarding other matters.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh to meet Rolf Ekéus, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities

#The High Commissioner on National Minorities plays an important role in preventing conflicts in OSCE participating States. He has the undivided support of Sweden in his work,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

Rold Ekéus will today meet Anna Lindh and Jan O. Karlsson, the Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, as well as members of the Riksdag.

The OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) has had a High Commissioner on National Minorities since 1993. Ambassador Rolf Ekéus took office as High Commissioner in July 2001, succeeding Max van der Stoel. Sweden has actively supported the work of the High Commissioner. In December 2002 Sweden decided to make a contribution of SEK 1.2 million to the work in Latvia.

Rolf Ekéus can be contacted through his Personal Adviser, Anna Jardfelt, telephone 0031-6-53178712.

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Key word: 8585 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports infrastructure development in Africa

The Government has today authorised the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to make an interest-free loan equivalent to USD 20 million for subscription for shares in the Emerging Africa Infrastructure Fund. The share capital received by the Emerging Africa Infrastructure Fund is to serve as security for loans from private financiers that can then be lent on for use in infrastructure projects in Africa.

#The lack of infrastructure is a serious obstacle to development in sub-Saharan Africa and infrastructure development is absolutely crucial for achieving the objective of halving poverty by 2015. In sub-Saharan Africa there has been a limited supply of private foreign capital for infrastructure projects. A public-private partnership is therefore essential to promote infrastructure development,# says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

The Swedish loan will be made to the Public Private Infrastructure Development Trust, a trust established by the development assistance authorities in the UK, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Sweden, which will use the resources to subscribe for shares in the Emerging Africa Infrastructure Fund. Using this share capital as security, the Fund can borrow from private banks and use the money it raises to provide loans for infrastructure projects in countries south of the Sahara. The sectors eligible for support include electricity, telecommunications, transport, waste management, water and sanitation. Decisions on loans are to be based on an assessment of the project's impact on poverty and the environment.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-13
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Tel Aviv

The Government today appointed Robert Rydberg as Sweden's new Ambassador in Tel Aviv. Robert Rydberg most recently served as Ambassador in Kinshasa.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish airfield unit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Government decided today to submit a bill to the Riksdag with a request to send an airfield unit of 90 personnel to the UN peacekeeping mission, MONUC, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

If the Riksdag approves the proposal, Sweden will be the first country in the West to deploy troops to MONUC. Among other things, the unit will be responsible for the operation and maintenance of an airport, presumably in Kindu in the eastern part of the country. This kind of specialised initiative has been especially requested by the UN, and the Swedish unit is considered highly qualified for the task. According to the UN's wishes, the Swedish unit should arrive by late May/early June.

Sweden's only previous contribution of troops to Africa was in a UN operation in Congo in the 1960s, when a total of 6000 Swedes took part. Since the mission in Macedonia, which ended in February 1999, Sweden has not contributed any larger troops to a UN-led peacekeeping operation. The last time Sweden contributed military troops outside the EU was to a UN-led peacekeeping operation in Lebanon in 1986-1994 and in a mine-clearance platoon during the autumn of 2000, also in Lebanon.

"The peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has made considerable progress during the past year, and the mission is an important contribution to the international community's efforts to promote peace in the country. It also gives a clear signal of Sweden's strong commitment to the prevention and resolution of conflicts in Africa, something that we have also taken active steps to promote within the framework of EU cooperation", say Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, and Minister for Defence, Leni Björklund.

"The international commitment to the peace process must continue. MONUC has a key role to play at this decisive stage."

Sweden's relations with the Democratic Republic of the Congo go back a long way and Swedish missionary organisations have operated in the country for over one hundred years. During the current conflict, Sweden has given extensive humanitarian aid and support to the peace efforts, including support to the national political dialogue which is intended to lead to a transitional government and, eventually, to democratisation.

A number of Swedes are involved in the peace process. Ambassador Lena Sundh is the Assistant Representative of the UN Secretary-General for MONUC, and Ambassador Bo Heinebäck has made valuable contributions as a mediator between the parties to the national political dialogue. At present, Sweden has five military observers and three civilian police officers in the UN mission. Background information is available on the <http://www.ud.se/inenglish> target=_blank>Ministry for Foreign Affairs' website.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Yearbook on the EU 2002: Historic decision on ten new member states

Today the Government submitted to the Riksdag its annual communication about its work in the European Union.

The Union's activities during 2002 were characterised by the enlargement process. Negotiations with ten applicant countries were completed at the meeting of the European Council in Copenhagen in December when agreement was reached on the financial conditions for their accession to the Union. Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia will become members on 1 May 2004.

During the year preparations began, within the framework of the Convention, for the next intergovernmental conference which, among other things, is to draw up the EU's decision-making processes in an enlarged Union. Concrete progress was also made in work within the framework of the Lisbon strategy for promoting sustainable development, that is to say an integrated approach to economic, social/employment and environmental issues.

The communication gives a detailed report of the work carried out within all Union policy areas throughout the year.

The Government communication on its work in the EU during 2002 will serve as the basis for a parliamentary debate during the spring. The document will be available at libraries and on the Government website www.ud.se. The Yearbook on the EU is also available in an abbreviated version which is being distributed to upper secondary schools, organisations and the mass media. An English version is being compiled.

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Key word: 8581 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government communication on the UN to be presented to the Riksdag

The Government will today present the written communication #Sweden in the United Nations# to the Riksdag. This communication describes the activities of the United Nations and Sweden#s policy on the UN in the period 2000 to 2002, and covers a large number of areas of UN activity in which the Government has taken an energetic part.

The introduction summarises the Government#s view of the UN and Sweden#s membership of the organisation. This section also describes the action the Government wants to take to strengthen the UN, reinforce global security and enhance the cooperation between nations. The UN has a unique role in endeavours for peace, development and security in the world, and this is the basis for Sweden#s strong support of the UN.

There follows an account of Sweden#s actions on several of the most important issues for the UN: peace and security, conflict prevention, disarmament, humanitarian, economic and social issues, the environment, human rights and the fight against terrorism. The ongoing process of reform is also discussed, as well as the UN#s finances.

The final section highlights a number of questions that the Government considers to be particularly significant for the UN#s continued efforts to safeguard international peace, security and development. The follow-up to the Millennium declaration will be one focus of Sweden#s continued engagement in the UN, human rights issues another.

The Government will also continue to be proactive on such matters as sanctions, stronger and more effective peace-keeping operations, conflict prevention and humanitarian issues, as well as disarmament. In addition, special emphasis will be given to augmented cooperation with the EU and the World Bank. The reforming of the UN is another high-priority issue for the future.

The last time the Ministry for Foreign Affairs compiled a communication on the UN was in 2000, when the account covered the years 1998-1999.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Icelandic names to get the go-ahead in Sweden

Sweden is to make it easier for Icelandic citizens who live in Sweden but want to keep up their Icelandic naming tradition.

This message was conveyed by Berit Andnor, Minister for Nordic Cooperation, during her visit to Reykjavik on Monday.

The proposed measure will mean that Icelandic parents will be able to apply quickly for Icelandic surnames for their children. The Swedish Patent and Registration Office will then process these applications promptly and free of charge.

The Government will take a decision on the ordinance in the course of the spring.

#I am pleased that Icelanders living in Sweden will at last have a simple way to give their children Icelandic surnames,# says Berit Andnor. #This is an obvious example of our ability, given a little good will, to tear down old barriers between our Nordic countries.#

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh and Jan O Karlsson to visit the Western

Balkans

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh and Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O Karlsson will visit the Western Balkans on 10-12 March. The two-day visit will take Anna Lindh to Croatia and Macedonia while Jan O Karlsson will travel to Bosnia and Herzegovina and to Kosovo. The trip will end on 12 March with a joint visit to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

A central theme of this joint visit is the Balkans in the light of the EU's approaching enlargement and the question of how Sweden can contribute to other countries in the Western Balkans also being given opportunities to forge closer links with the EU. If this is to be possible, genuine political and economic reform is required in these countries.

Other important issues during the visit include migration issues, regional cooperation, economic development, human rights, improved conditions for minorities, the regional return of refugees, enhanced cooperation with the International War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague as well as bilateral issues such as trade and development assistance. The common theme for Sweden in all of these issues is how Sweden can make the most effective contribution in these areas.

A significant share of asylum-seekers in Sweden comes from the Western Balkans, in particular from Bosnia and Herzegovina and from Kosovo. An important part of the ministers' visit, therefore, will be their discussions on asylum and refugee return issues with the relevant governments in the region.

During the visit, Ms Lindh and Mr Karlsson will meet heads of state and government, foreign ministers, and other ministers and political party representatives in each country. In addition, a number of visits will be made to NGOs including Kvinna till Kvinna, a Swedish organisation, and to other organisations working to strengthen the rule of law.

* * *

The following press briefings have been scheduled:

Anna Lindh: Zagreb 10 March at 1 pm, Belgrade 12 March at 1.20 pm.

Jan O. Karlsson: Sarajevo 10 March at 5.30 pm, Pristina 11 March at 10.45 am, Belgrade 12 March at 1.20 pm.

Further information is available from the respective Press Secretaries.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Contribution to the fight against human trafficking

In connection with the visit to Stockholm today of Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the UN Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, the Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, announced that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs intends soon to make an annual contribution of three million SEK to the activities carried on by the UN Centre for International Crime Prevention (CICP) in Vienna. The Swedish contribution is to focus on human trafficking, particularly in women and children. Fighting human trafficking is already a priority issue for Sweden in international contexts.

This is the first annual contribution Sweden has made to CICP. The contribution now decided should be seen as the start of closer and more permanent cooperation. The support to CICP is an important part of Sweden's long-term efforts to fight human trafficking at the international level. Human trafficking is the slavery of our time and must be fought by all means, at national, regional and global levels. CICP's work is essential for preventing human trafficking and punishing the perpetrators, Mr Karlsson says in a comment.

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Key word: 8533 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Luxembourg

The Government has today appointed Director Agneta Söderman as the new Swedish Ambassador in Luxembourg.

Since 1999, Agneta Söderman has been Deputy Head of the Department for European Union Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Among her previous posts, she has been a minister at Sweden's Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New PSC ambassador

The Government today announced the appointment of Björn Lyrvall, the minister at the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the EU in Brussels, as Sweden's representative to the EU's committee on foreign and security policy (PSC) with the rank and status of ambassador.

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Key word: 8528

PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to give a further SEK 20 million to the United Nations Population Fund

The Government decided today to grant a further SEK 20 million to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Sweden's contribution for 2003 will therefore increase from SEK 185 million to SEK 205 million.

"We cannot accept the UNFPA's important efforts to improve women's rights and reproductive health being undermined by certain countries that find it hard to accept UNFPA activities," says Jan O Karlsson, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy.

"Efforts to prevent unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, deaths in childbirth, venereal diseases and increased child mortality will be impeded if the UNFPA lacks the resources needed to implement its country programmes," says Mr Karlsson.

"Sweden has actively contributed to the increased focus on issues relating to gender equality, sexuality and HIV/Aids in the UN and other forums. We must do what we can to safeguard the progress that has been made," says Mr Karlsson. Today this progress is being threatened by extreme groups in, amongst other countries, the US.

The UNFPA deals with issues concerning sexuality, reproductive health and rights, gender equality and HIV/Aids. Sweden is one of the UNFPA's largest donors.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-03-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Wallenberg inquiry: "A failure of diplomacy"

Today the Commission of inquiry into the actions of the Swedish foreign policy leadership in the Raoul Wallenberg case has presented its report "A failure of diplomacy" (UD 2001:03) to the Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

The Commission's assignment was to investigate and evaluate the actions of the Swedish foreign policy leadership in the Wallenberg case. Its purpose was to clarify whether the leadership of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs had taken advantage of all the opportunities that had emerged over the course of the years to shed light on the fate of Raoul Wallenberg.

Raoul Wallenberg was a Swedish diplomat with a US assignment. He received several detailed instructions for his operations from the US State Department.

There were no equivalent instructions from its Swedish counterpart.

When in January 1945 the Soviet Union informed Sweden that Wallenberg had been found, the British and US Embassies in Stockholm were informed by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Instructions on action in this issue were not issued to the Swedish envoy in Moscow, Staffan Söderblom, until March 1945.

The inquiry has found a previously unknown dossier in the archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that shows that, at an early stage, the Swedish Foreign Service was disoriented by rumours indicating that Wallenberg had disappeared by car and subsequently been murdered.

This version of Wallenberg's fate came to guide the Ministry's work for several years.

However, two officials of the Swedish foreign service, Staffan Söderblom and Ulf Barck-Holst, reported as early as 1946 on the possibility, despite

everything, of Wallenberg being in Soviet captivity and that some kind of compensation for his release was being demanded by the Soviet side.

The Commission has evidence that the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Undén, read these reports. Despite this, he took no initiative to try to find out the truth behind these Soviet moves for negotiations.

Without the documents, the Commission cannot draw completely clear conclusions on the underlying reasons for Undén's unwillingness to take action on the Wallenberg case. Given the information to which he had access, his passivity appears incomprehensible and remarkable.

Critical comments have also been made on Undén's predecessor Christian Günther and several other leading diplomats in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The Chairman of the Commission is former County Governor Ingemar Eliasson. Other members of the Commission are Professor Kristian Gerner, Dr Birgit Karlsson, Professor Christer Jönsson och Dr Gudrun Persson. Experts are Professor Hans Fredrik Dahl (Norway) and Professor Klaus Törnudd (Finland). The Secretary is Dr Johan Matz.

The report has been published on the internet www.ud.se.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Nordic foreign ministers meet in Torshälla

The year's first meeting of Nordic foreign ministers will be held on 5 March. It will be headed by Sweden's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh. The meeting will take place in Torshälla at Contemporary Glass, Klockberget. Attending the meeting will be Denmark's Foreign Minister, Per Stig Møller, Finland's Foreign Minister, Erkki Tuomioja, Iceland's Secretary of State, Gunnar Snorri Gunnarsson, and Norway's Foreign Minister, Jan Petersen.

The foreign ministers will be holding a joint press briefing at the meeting venue at 14.45 # 15.00. Please have your press credentials with you.

Welcome!

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Key word: 8458 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden responds to the 2003 UN appeal for Angola

The Government decided today to commission the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to contribute a total of SEK 80 million to the 2003 UN appeal for Angola. The UN appeal includes support for food safety measures, health care, protection and education for people in need, as well as security measures and coordination of humanitarian operations.

Sweden is also participating in acute reconstruction efforts in Angola. A grant of SEK 19 million will therefore be allocated to the World Food Programme (WFP) for the reparation of bridges and roads. This project will be carried out by the Swedish Rescue Services Agency.

The Swedish contributions, which are intended for both reconstruction projects and acute humanitarian needs, will be distributed as follows:

- SEK 20 million to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- SEK 11 million to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA)
- SEK 20 million to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)
- SEK 10 million to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- SEK 4 million to the Lutheran Association
- SEK 4 million to the Norwegian Refugee Council and
- SEK 2 million to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

"The scale of humanitarian needs in Angola is considerable. Since the war ended in April 2002, some 3 million people are in need of acute humanitarian aid. Some 850,000 internal refugees have now returned to their native districts # districts which often lack basic services. Urgent measures are needed to help these people", says Minister for Development Cooperation, Jan O. Karlsson.

"However, the Angolan Government has the ultimate responsibility for the humanitarian situation and long-term developments in Angola. One condition for continued Swedish development cooperation is that the Angolan Government pursues development policies that benefit the entire Angolan population", says the Minister for Development Cooperation.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Inquiry into the actions of the Swedish foreign policy leadership in the case of Raoul Wallenberg

Invitation to press conference: Handling of the Wallenberg case

Inquiry into the actions of the Swedish foreign policy leadership in the case of Raoul Wallenberg

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Key word: 8445 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Nigeria

The Government decided today to send eight observers to monitor the upcoming elections in Nigeria. The observers will join the European Commission's election observer mission. Presidential, parliamentary and state elections will be held between

12 April and 3 May. These elections are very important both for Nigeria's development and for the region as a whole.

Sweden enjoys good bilateral relations with Nigeria and demonstrates its support for the country's development by proposing eight Swedish election observers.

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Key word: 8444 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Good news from Moscow on Kallax airport

A step forward on the issue of Kallax airport in Luleå was taken today when Sweden and Russia met in Moscow to discuss economic cooperation.

"The Russians are now prepared to negotiate on opening their air space for air freight from Kallax", says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

"This is good news, and something that we have been working towards for many years".

Both countries welcomed the rapid increase in trade and investment between Sweden and Russia that has occurred in the last few years.

"Unfortunately unnecessary complications and red tape present serious barriers for many Swedish companies on the Russian market. This applies particularly to visa and customs procedures. I have today taken up these problems with the Russian government, which has proved to be sensitive to our opinions. There are now fewer problems, despite an expansion in trade".

"It is positive that more and more Swedish companies are making use of the growing opportunities offered by the Russian market. IKEA, Volvo, Electrolux, Sandvik and Oriflame are examples of successful firms that are leading the way".

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Swedish director at the European Commission

Anders Henriksson has just been appointed director of the Directorate-General for Development at the European Commission.

Anders Henriksson will primarily be responsible for relations with countries in East and Southern Africa and the African Union.

Anders Henriksson, who is 45, has most recently held the position of Head of Unit at the Directorate-General for Enlargement. His previous posts have included service at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Nordic Office of the World Bank.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Funds to promote Chinese investment in Sweden

The Government announced today that the Invest in Sweden Agency (ISA) will receive SEK 1.5 million in 2003 for investment promotion activities in southern China and in Canton, Shenzhen and Hong Kong in particular.

ISA is a government agency for the promotion of foreign investment in Sweden. Its operations focus on information campaigns, marketing projects in such areas as IT, electronics and biosciences as well as regional cooperation and education and training.

To date ISA's China project has focused on Beijing and Shanghai and primarily on high-tech industries in which Sweden enjoys a strong international position. These include the IT industry, microelectronics, systems technology within telecommunications, vehicle technology and telematics. About eighty per cent of the companies in these industries are located in southern China and in Beijing and Shanghai.

"Now that ISA has the opportunity to strengthen its presence in southern China, I hope that more Chinese companies will be interested in investing in Sweden," says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

"Foreign direct investment plays an important role in employment in Sweden and in keeping Sweden amongst the world leaders in key technology fields," says Pagrotsky.

In conjunction with today's meeting with the Swedish-Chinese government commission for the

promotion of trade and investments, ISA will be meeting the Chinese delegation for talks on direct investment.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-20
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky visits Moscow

The Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, is visiting Moscow on 20-22 February for a meeting of the Swedish-Russian steering committee on economic cooperation and trade. The steering committee is headed by Leif Pagrotsky and the Russian Minister of Transport, Sergei Frank.

In the course of his visit, Leif Pagrotsky will also meet the Russian Minister of Economic Development and Trade, German Gref, and representatives of Swedish companies operating in Russia.

There will be an opportunity for representatives of the press to meet Leif Pagrotsky on Friday 21 February at 17.00, local time, at the Hotel National in Moscow.

Press conference venue: Moscow, Hotel National, Vladimirsky Room

Time: Friday 21 February, 17.00.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-20
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Project for Swedish security know-how in New York

The Government has decided to contribute SEK 175 000 to a seminar on Swedish know-how in the security field, to be held in New York on 3 April. The theme of the seminar is #Security in the New Millennium#.

The seminar is part of a long-term project intended to stimulate interest in and market Swedish security know-how, targeting business leaders, investors, industry analysts, the media, and others. The interest in security-related matters is very strong in the United States.

#Sweden has many technologically advanced security companies. Our know-how in the security field enhances Sweden's image as a nation at the cutting-edge of technology#, says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

The project is being carried out in cooperation between the Swedish Consulate-General in New York, the Invest in Sweden Agency (ISA) in New York, government agencies and a large number of companies, including Assa Abloy, Ericsson Security, Gunnebo, Precise Biometrics and Securitas. One of the main speakers at the seminar will be General Ken Minihan, Director of the Homeland Security Fund.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Chinese trade delegation on visit to Sweden

A Chinese trade delegation headed by the Vice Minister for Foreign Trade, Zhou Keren, is visiting Sweden on 19-23 February. The delegation includes representatives from the Ministry of Railways and the telecom companies Huawei and ZTE. The host for the visit is State Secretary Sven-Eric Söder, Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications.

Söder and Zhou today led a meeting of the bilateral government commission for promotion of trade and investment. The topics discussed at the meeting ranged over both concrete measures to further develop Swedish-Chinese trade relations and multilateral cooperation within the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

The discussion covered environmental cooperation (on the basis of the Swedish conception of sustainable urban development), cooperation between Swedish and Chinese customs authorities aimed at simplifying customs procedures, and other issues.

#China is one of Sweden's most important markets#, says Sven-Eric Söder. #It's important that we take the opportunities that are now opening up as a result of China's strong economic growth.# The Invest in Sweden Agency (ISA) is hosting a special meeting with the Chinese delegation on the promotion of direct investments. The Government decided today to make a grant of SEK 1.5 million to ISA in 2003, for use in investment promotion activities in southern China, over and above the resources previously allocated to ISA operations in China. During its visit, the Chinese delegation will meet representatives of Ericsson, KF, Atlas Copco, LKAB and others.

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Key word: 8394

PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors

The following four Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 20 February:

Syria's newly appointed Ambassador Samir Al-Kassir was born in 1957. After graduating with a B.A. in French literature from the University of Damascus, he entered the foreign service. His previous posts have included service at Syria's embassies in Rome and London.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1999-2001 Head of the Office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs

2001 Chargé d'affaires a.i. in Stockholm

Australia's newly appointed Ambassador Richard Anthony Rowe was born in 1946. He is a lawyer with a degree from the University of Tasmania and worked as a barrister and solicitor at the Supreme Court of Tasmania. Since entering the foreign service he has alternated between service at Australian embassies and at the Department of External Affairs in Canberra.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1990-1992 Consul-General in Noumea, New Caledonia

1992-1997 Minister and Permanent Representative to the Australian Permanent Mission to the United Nations, New

York

1997-2001 Legal adviser at the Department of External Affairs Legal Department

2001 Legal adviser in international law, the law of the sea, treaty law and administrative law. Azerbaijan's newly appointed Ambassador Rafael Ibrahimov (concurrently accredited in London) was born in 1965. He has a degree in oriental studies from the State University of Azerbaijan and has studied business administration in London, specialising in financial services and banking. His previous posts have included service at the Azerbaijan Ministry of Defence, with temporary service in Algeria in 1987-1990. After working in the private sector, he entered his country's foreign service in 1993. From

1994-2001, he was head of the Consular Department at the Embassy of Azerbaijan in London.

Since 2001, he has been Azerbaijan's Ambassador in London.

Vanuatu's newly appointed Ambassador Michel Rittie (concurrently accredited in Rabat) was born in 1950, and is a technician with a three-year university college education, specialising in aviation.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1992 Advisor to the Prime Minister

1999 Official representative for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade

2000 Advisor to the Foreign Minister

2002 Ambassador in Rabat

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Music export prize to The Hives

The 2002 prize for extraordinary services to Swedish music exports has been awarded to The Hives (with Vigilante Carlström, Dr Matt Destruction, Howlin' Pelle Almqvist, Chris Dangerous and Nicholas Arson).

The prize, a glass sculpture by Bertil Vallien, was presented on Tuesday by the Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky at the Swedish Grammy Awards (Grammisgalan) in Stockholm. #When we established the prize in 1998 our intention was to recognise an industry that stood out # where Swedish achievements abroad aroused admiration and astonishment # and to let the successes of others be an inspiration to the rest of the country. And since then the success story has simply continued.

#Sweden today holds a special position as a musical nation, with an impressive breadth. I think The Hives are an excellent example of the dynamism that exists in this country and that it's possible to open other people's eyes to it#, says Leif Pagrotsky.

The music export prize was established by Leif Pagrotsky in 1998 and is awarded this year for the sixth time. The previous winners have been The Cardigans, Max Martin, Cheiron Productions, Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus, and Roxette. The jury has consisted of representatives of the business sector, the music business and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, with the Chairman of the

Board of Ericsson, Michael Treschow, serving as chair.

The jury gives the following reasons for its choice:

#Now and then a comet appears in the musical firmament. With the directness of their music, tremendous stylistic feeling and rock #n# roll attitude, this year#s winner#s have amazed the world and brought new lustre to Sweden as a musical country. They have prepared the way for other performers and created great expectations about what#s coming up next. Today#s winners have not just successfully managed the rock and roll heritage, they have put a modern stamp on the music; they not only light up the musical firmament, they are an explosive phenomenon on stage.#

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Key word: 8369 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh to visit Iceland

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, is to visit Reykjavik on 20 February for talks with her Icelandic colleague Halldór Ásgrímsson. She will also meet Prime Minister Davið Oddsson, the Minister for the Environment and Nordic Cooperation Siv Friðleifsdóttir, the President of the Althingi Halldór Blöndal and members of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs will also give a lecture at the University of Iceland on Sweden#s experience of EU membership.

The two foreign ministers will hold a joint press conference at 10.00 at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Director of the Department of Information, Cultural Affairs and Consular Liaison, Hannes Heimisson, tel:
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Key word: 8367 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden preparing to take part in peace support

On 13 February 2003, the Government decided to present a bill to the Riksdag in preparation for Swedish participation in the planned EU-led peace support force in Macedonia. In the bill, the Government describes developments in Macedonia (the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, FYROM), the conditions for stationing an international force led by the European Union (EU), previous Swedish missions in the country and preparations for Swedish participation in the planned EU force.

In its bill, the Government proposes that the Riksdag approve the Government's placing an armed force of a maximum of twenty persons at the disposal of an EU-led military peace support operation for twelve months. This initiative has been taken after an invitation by Macedonia's government and in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1371, in which support is expressed for an international security-related presence in the country. The Macedonian mission will be the EU's first military crisis-management operation and will be undertaken with the support of NATO and in close cooperation with other international actors in the country.

After the final decision on the initiative has been made by the EU foreign ministers, and given the approval of the Riksdag, the Government intends to take a decision on the size and composition of the Swedish troop contribution. According to the planning schedule agreed on by the EU countries, the mission could go ahead as early as March this year.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Development assistance to Burmese refugees in Thailand

The Government decided today to commission the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency to enter into an agreement with Diakonia, a Swedish development assistance agency, on humanitarian assistance to the Burmese refugees in Thailand. The two-year assignment will include the supply of food, shelter, medicines and education to the value of SEK 57.1 million.

Burmese refugees in Thailand have been subjected to forced migration, physical assault and other threats to their safety and dignity by the Burmese regime. "Helping people who have been forced to flee their country is a humanitarian obligation of the international community," says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

The ultimate responsibility for the refugee situation lies with Burma's military regime. "We will never accept a regime not taking responsibility for its people's safety and human rights and forcing tens of thousands of people to flee their country," says Mr Karlsson.

Today over 130 000 people are living in refugees camps along the Thai-Burmese border. The humanitarian efforts in the area are mainly coordinated by the Burmese Border Consortium (BBC), a consortium of five relief organisations operating locally, one of which is Diakonia.

In addition to the people who have fled the country, several hundred thousand others are living in Burma as internal refugees often under very difficult conditions.

"We will continue to demand that the Burmese regime give the humanitarian aid organisations in Burma free and unhindered access to people in the country that are displaced or otherwise in need," says Mr Karlsson.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish contribution to the Global Environment Facility

The Government decided today to contribute a total of SEK 764 million to the Global Environment

Facility (GEF) for the period 1 July 2002 # 30 June 2006.

"Investments in the Global Environment Facility's activities in developing countries are also investments in our own environment. It is positive that 32 countries have been able to agree, in a spirit of solidarity, to contribute resources which will enable the GEF to continue its important efforts to improve the global environment", says Swedish Minister for Development Cooperation, Jan O. Karlsson.

The phasing out of persistent organic pollutants (such as DDT) and projects to combat desertification are two important new areas with which the GEF is working.

In Sweden's opinion, a considerable increase in the Facility's resources is needed, and it is therefore making a further contribution of SEK 100 million in addition to the SEK 664 million that were agreed during negotiations. This makes a total of SEK 764 million. A number of other countries have similarly chosen to make voluntary donations in addition to their negotiated shares.

The Global Environment Facility was established in 1991 to finance investments of value to the global environment in developing and former Eastern bloc countries. Since the start, the GEF has allocated some SEK 40 billion in contributions and has received a further SEK 100 billion from other sources for over 1000 environmental projects in 160 countries.

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Key word: 8345 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to a press briefing on the "Stockholm Process"

Since January 2002, Uppsala University has been leading the "Stockholm Process" project, commissioned by the Government, on implementation of targeted sanctions and monitoring compliance with them. The project has now resulted in a manual, which will be presented to the UN in New York on 25 February and to the US State Department in Washington on 26 February by State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren and Professor Peter Wallensteen.

The aim of the Stockholm Process has been to bring together a broad circle of countries, NGOs, academics and UN actors in the work of making sanctions more humane and efficient. The emphasis has been on making use of practical experience both from past and present UN sanctions.

The Stockholm process will be presented by Director Hans Lundborg, Head of the Global Security Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and Professor Peter Wallensteen, Uppsala University, at a press briefing on Thursday 20 February, at 09.00-11.00 at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (bankhall), Fredsgatan 6.

From Monday 17 February, the report will be available on www.smartsanctions.se. It will also be distributed at the press briefing.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New international airport at Ängelholm-Helsingborg

The Government decided today that Ängelholm-Helsingborg airport is to be granted status as a border control area as of 1 April 2003. This will allow for regular air traffic between non-Schengen countries and Ängelholm-Helsingborg airport.

This decision can be regarded as an important step in efforts to develop the business sector in the north-western part of Skåne.

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Key word: 8339 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Royal couple to pay state visit to Romania

Their Majesties King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will be paying a state visit to Romania on 8-10 April 2003 at the invitation of President Ion Iliescu.

The Swedish Government will be represented on this occasion.

A business delegation will be visiting Romania at the same time.

To the editorial office: Information about accreditation for accompanying media representatives will be available later on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website. (in Swedish only)

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh to inaugurate Polen.nu

The year 2003 has been proclaimed the Swedish Year in Polish Foreign Policy by the Polish government. On Friday 14 February, Poland's Minister for Foreign Affairs Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz is to visit Sweden to inaugurate this campaign, entitled Polen.nu # www. polen. nu jointly with the Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

The aim of the 2003 Polish promotion campaign in Sweden is to generate new impulses and find new forms and approaches for cooperation, to establish concrete cooperation between regions and municipalities and to extend the exchange within the business sector and tourism. Polen.nu is also a follow-up of the Swedish Government campaign, Poland in focus, of 1999.

The media are welcome to attend the inauguration, which will take place at the Riksdag on 14 February, at 11.00#13.00. In addition to the two foreign ministers, the first Deputy Speaker of the Riksdag Per Westerberg, Deputy Minister for Finance Gunnar Lund, Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs Urban Ahlin, Professor Rutger Lindahl and Polish colleagues will also be participating in the inauguration. The theme of the discussion is "How can results be achieved in the EU?"

A short press briefing with Ministers for Foreign Affairs Lindh and Cimoszewicz will take place at 12.10 in the Committee Room of the Committee on Housing, Sweden's Riksdag

The entrance to the Riksdag is from Riksplån. Please bring your press credentials!
It is also possible for the media to attend the seminars organised in the Riksdag during the afternoon (at 14.00#16.00):

* Business sector seminar # Poland as a market of the future

* Regional development in the Europe of the future

* Cultural and educational cooperation after EU enlargement

Applications to attend the inauguration and seminars are to be sent by e-mail by 13 February at the latest, to maria.hakansson@foreign.ministry.se.

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Key word: 8306 Anna Lindh

PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Neighbourhood cooperation on unaccompanied children

Unaccompanied children with no known guardians crossing the borders between the countries of the Baltic Sea region are in an extremely vulnerable situation. In order to discuss joint action in this area, some 80 representatives of ministries and government authorities from all the Baltic Sea countries, Russia, Ukraine and Moldova have met in Stockholm at the invitation of the Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson and the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

#It is extraordinarily satisfying to have achieved agreement on fundamental principles for good reception of unaccompanied children and on continued cooperation#, says Jan O. Karlsson, who opened the meeting on Monday.

#This conference represents a pioneering effort on Sweden#s part in addressing an issue that all the Baltic Sea countries are grappling with individually, but where there is an obvious need for international cooperation. Sweden will continue to provide support for joint endeavours by our neighbours#, continues Jan O. Karlsson.

The meeting was brought to a close on Tuesday by the Minister for Children and Families, Berit Andnor. By then, agreement had been reached on a range of matters, including

- that the countries shall work together, both to improve the general situation for unaccompanied children, by joint measures, and to solve individual cases,
- that an action plan shall be drawn up for continued cooperation between the countries on unaccompanied children,

- that the action plan shall include networks linking responsible parties, expert meetings, support measures and the role of NGOs,
- that unaccompanied children shall only be returned to their home countries if there is someone to receive them and look after them there.

The conclusions, opening and closing speeches and more information on the conference may be found on .

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Key word: 8304 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to a press briefing with Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson and Evelin

The Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Club is arranging a seminar and exhibition on efforts to achieve the UN millennium development goals in connection with the Riksdag's foreign policy debate on 12 February.

Because of this, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson and the UN Secretary-General's Executive Coordinator for the Millennium Development Goals Campaign (UN/UNDP) Eveline Herfkens will be talking about their work in achieving the UN millennium development goals, from both a Swedish and an international perspective, at a press briefing in the Riksdag.

Date: Wednesday, 12 February 2003

Place: Committee room of the Parliamentary Committee on the Labour Market, Riksdagshuset
Östra RÖ 5:38

Time: 14.00

The press briefing will be held in English. The press is also invited to attend the exhibition in the Main Gallery from 15.00 and to take part in a seminar on the millennium goals in the First Chamber of the Riksdag at

18.00 # 19.30.

Please have your press credentials with you.

More information on the millennium goals is available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website.

Welcome!

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Grant for marketing of Swedish foodstuffs in Poland

The Government has decided to contribute SEK 240 000 to a project that will promote Swedish food exports in Warsaw on 23#24 May 2003. The theme of the project is "Swedish food # low-fat and delicious".

This marketing initiative also aims to create an interest in Swedish food and Swedish culinary art in Poland. The timing is appropriate given that free food trade between Sweden and Poland will result from the EU enlargement in 2004.

"The food industry and the restaurant trade employ thousands of people throughout Sweden," says Minister for Industry, Employment and Communications Leif Pagrotsky. "It is important to market Sweden as a "good food" nation. This will increase our food exports and benefit our tourism industry at the same time."

"With first-class primary ingredients and foodstuffs, and with Sweden as a world leader in culinary art, we have a lot to offer," says Mr Pagrotsky.

This marketing initiative is supported by the Swedish Embassy in Warsaw, the Swedish Trade Council in Warsaw, the Federation of Swedish Farmers (LRF), the Swedish Institute, agencies and participating Swedish companies.

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Key word: 8283 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sustainable cities in China # new Swedish export venture

The Government has decided to contribute SEK 320 000 to a special venture to market Swedish experience for a sustainable urban development in China.

The project #The Sustainable City# displays environmentally sound solutions, inter alia, in the areas of water supply and sewage, traffic planning, energy and waste disposal.

China faces rapid urbanisation in which, according to UN calculations, 200 million people are expected to move to cities within ten years.

#Managing a sustainable development of cities is a major global challenge#, says the Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky. #Sweden has a great deal to contribute in this area, in many cases we have world leading solutions for a good urban environment.#

The Swedish venture focuses in particular on environmental solutions for the Swedish model city Luodian Town in China. Our ambition is that this town, which is estimated to have approximately 60 000 inhabitants, will be characterised by Swedish town planning and the use of, among other things, Swedish technical solutions.

The aim is to get a foothold on the Chinese market before the Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008 and the World Exposition in #eco city# Shanghai in 2010, both of which will be preceded by very considerable investments in the environment and infrastructure.

#This will hopefully provide good opportunities for Swedish export successes on the Chinese market,# Mr Pagrotsky says.

The project includes, among other things, the setting up of an advisory group of Swedish experts to support Chinese decision-makers, study visits to Sweden for key Chinese officials as well as a website for communication and marketing of Swedish environmental solutions.

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Key word: 8272 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Board for Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

The Government today appointed the following persons to the governing board of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), for the period from 6 February 2003 until 31 January 2004:

Director Hilda Lind

Leif Håkansson, Third Vice Chairman of the Swedish Trade Union Confederation

Professor Ari Kokko

Professor Joakim Palme

Director Börje Risinggård

Berndt Ekholm, Member of the Riksdag, Social Democratic Party

Mariann Ytterberg, Member of the Riksdag, Social Democratic Party

Ewa Björling, Member of the Riksdag, Moderate Party

Birgitta Ohlsson, Member of the Riksdag, Liberal Party

Holger Gustafsson, Member of the Riksdag, Swedish Christian Democrats

The governing board also includes, as chair, Sida's acting Director-General Staffan Herrström, for the period from 6 February until 31 March 2003, and Director-General Maria Norrfalk, for the period 1 April 2003 until 31 January 2004.

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Key word: 8271 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Grant for marketing Swedish biotech in California

The Government has decided to make a grant of SEK 250 000 to a project aimed at marketing Swedish biotechnology in California, #California + Sweden: Partners in Biotech#.

The aim is to establish a platform for business and other forms of cooperation between Sweden and California. This initiative is an extension of a project that the Swedish Consulate-General launched in 2002 in cooperation with the State of California and Swedish and Californian partners.

#Swedish biotech is competitive internationally in many areas. So it#s pleasing that two of the world#s leading biotech regions are now enhancing their cooperation#, says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

The funds will be placed at the disposal of the Swedish Consulate-General in Los Angeles. Notable activities in 2003 will include a series of symposiums and seminars in Los Angeles, San Diego and elsewhere, focusing on areas in which Sweden has cutting-edge expertise, e.g. DNA and genetic research.

#Being home to numerous research institutions and over half the biotech companies in the US, California is a region of strategic importance for Swedish interests#, says Leif Pagrotsky.

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Key word: 8270 Leif Pagrotsky

PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to a press briefing: International conference on unaccompanied children

Unaccompanied children crossing the borders between the countries of the Baltic Sea region with no known guardians are in an extremely vulnerable situation. It is often a question of children who have fallen victim to trafficking in human beings or of those who cross borders for other reasons. The authorities of the countries in this region have difficulty in taking care of these children, identifying them and enabling them to return to their home countries safely. This is why cooperation between neighbouring countries is necessary.

To organise such cooperation, Minister for Migration, Jan O Karlsson, and the Council of the Baltic Sea States have convened an international meeting in Sweden to take place on 10-11 February. Participating in the conference will be a large number of representatives of ministries and agencies in all the states of the Baltic Sea region and from Belarus, Ukraine and Moldavia. The conference will be opened by Minister for Migration Jan O Karlsson and concluded by Minister for Children and Families Berit Andnor.

Before the conference, Jan O. Karlsson and Berit Andnor invite you to a press briefing.

Time: Monday 10 February 2003 at 11.30.

Place: Press Centre at Rosenbad

Please bring your press credentials!

Representatives of the media will be able to attend the opening of the conference and the rest of the programme in the afternoon. The programme and more information on the conference may be obtained on the . In the intervals, it will also be possible for the media to meet conference participants from other countries. The conclusion of the conference on Tuesday afternoon will also be open to representatives of the media. Contact person for the media during the conference is Thomas Palme, tel: +46 733 # 109055. The conference will take place at the SAS Royal Park Hotel, Frösundavik, Stockholm.

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Key word: 8242 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-02-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson to visit Kenya

Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson is to visit Kenya on 6-9 February 2003.

The aim of the visit is to establish the first connections with representatives of the new Kenyan government and to discuss development cooperation with Kenya. Jan O. Karlsson will also visit Kisumu on Lake Victoria to study projects financed by Sweden.

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Key word: 8238 Jan O Karlsson

PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-31

Sweden supports installation of maritime surveillance system in Russia

The Government decided today to contribute a maximum of SEK 3.7 million to the installation of a marine surveillance system (AIS, Automatic Identification System) in Russia. The installation will take place through the auspices of the Swedish Maritime Administration, in collaboration with the port authorities of St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad.

AIS is a new technical system which makes it possible to monitor and follow the movements of a vessel from other vessels and stations on land. AIS can be used, inter alia, for coordination in connection with rescue operations at sea, monitoring of oil transports, facilitating oil destruction operations, estimating arrival times at ports and coordination of ice-breaking activities.

"The growing traffic in the Baltic Sea and Gulf of Finland will also lead to greater risks, such as accidents with serious environmental consequences", says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

"AIS means major opportunities for greater cooperation and more extensive exchange of information between the Baltic Sea countries in a number of fields. It is important that all countries are able to take part in this cooperation", adds Jan O. Karlsson.

At a ministerial conference in Copenhagen on 10 September 2001, the states of the Baltic Sea region agreed to establish national land-based maritime surveillance systems by 1 July 2005 at the latest. These systems will be based on signals from AIS. The countries in the Baltic Sea region will also set up a joint, compatible surveillance system, which in turn will be based on national systems.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors

The following four Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Friday 31 January:

Zimbabwe's newly appointed Ambassador, Mary Sibusisiwe Mubi, was born in 1952. A teacher by training, she holds degrees from the University of Nottingham and Boston University. Between 1982 and 1992 she worked in the area of gender equality at the Ministry for Political Affairs.

In recent years she has held the following posts:

1992#1995 Head of information and communications at UNICEF's Harare office

1995#2001 High Commissioner in Namibia

Spain's newly appointed Ambassador, Javier Garrigues Florez, was born in 1949. He is a lawyer and joined the foreign service in 1977. He has held positions at the Spanish embassies in London and New Delhi as well as at the Mission to the UN in New York.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1993 Consul-General in Sydney

1996 Head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs UN Office

1998 Head of the Policy Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sri Lanka's newly appointed Ambassador, Vethody Kumaran Valsan, was born in 1953. A business economist, he is a graduate of Calicut University in Kerala, India, and earned an MBA in Manila, the Philippines. He worked in the business sector between 1979 and 1990.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1990#1994 Deputy High Commissioner to Madras, India

1994 Chargé d'Affaires in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates

1995 Consultant in Colombo for the Nippon Group

1995#2001 Special adviser to the leader of the opposition

2001 Special adviser to the prime minister

Turkey's newly appointed Ambassador, Ramazan Tomur Bayer, was born in 1949. He has a degree in political science from Ankara University and entered the foreign service in 1975. He has served at the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the UN in Geneva and Nato.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1995#1996 Head of Maritime Affairs at the Foreign Ministry

1996#2000 Minister and deputy head of NATO and WEU issues

2000-

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Key word: 8201

PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh to visit Turkey

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms Anna Lindh, will visit Turkey on 3# 5 February. The visit will begin in Ankara, where Ms Lindh is scheduled to have discussions with her Turkish colleague Yasar Yakis. Ms Lindh will also meet the Prime Minister, Mr Abdullah Gül, and the leader of the Justice and Development Party (AKP), Mr Recep Tayyip Erdogan. During this visit, talks will centre on Turkey's pre-accession process, human rights reforms, Cyprus and Iraq. Ms Lindh will also meet representatives of a number of Turkish human rights organisations.

Her programme also includes a visit to Diyarbakir in south east Turkey, where she will meet both the governor and the mayor. Local visits to human rights organisations will also take place.

The visit will end in Istanbul, where Ms Lindh has planned a visit to the Ericsson Mobility World

Centre. In addition, Ms Lindh will take part in a seminar entitled Women in Turkey and Sweden and attend the press showing of Ulla Lemberg's photo exhibition Women of the World.

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Key word: 8189

PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to Afghanistan

The Government has decided today to make a contribution of USD 5 million to a fund to solve the problem of Afghanistan's overdue debts to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (IDA).

The overdue payments are for loans taken out in the 1970s and 1980s by the regime then in power in the country. The Swedish contribution to solving Afghanistan's debt problems is part of a coordinated action by donors that will open the way to broader, deeper and more long-term cooperation between Afghanistan, the IMF and the IDA.

Prompt and effective measures to get reconstruction under way and the economy going as soon as possible are needed to lay the foundation for a lasting peace in the country and in the region more generally. This in turn will enable the government of Afghanistan to take serious steps to tackle poverty in the country, says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson in a comment.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Royal couple to pay State visit to Thailand

Their Majesties King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will be paying a State visit to Thailand from 25 February until 1 March 2003 at the invitation of Their Majesties King Bhumibol Adulyadej and Queen Sirikit.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh will be taking part on behalf of the Swedish Government. Also included in the official delegation are State Secretary Mikael Sjöberg from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and State Secretary Krister Nilsson, Ministry of the Environment.

A delegation from the business sector, under the leadership of the President of the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, Sören Gyll, will visit Thailand at the same time.

The programme includes visits to Bangkok, Phitsanulok, Sukhothai and Chiang Rai.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anders Bjurner new Head of Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ambassador Anders Bjurner was today appointed as Head of the European Security Policy Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Mr Bjurner has most recently served at Sweden's Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels where he was the Swedish representative to the Political and Security Committee (PSC) and to the Western European Union (WEU).

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Key word: 8129

PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Contribution to small and medium-sized businesses in Kaliningrad

The Government decided today to contribute SEK 1.8 million to the opening of a Business Advisory Service office (BAS) in Kaliningrad. BAS is an independent programme under the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, EBRD, to support the development of small businesses in Central and Eastern Europe through consulting services. BAS also contributes to raising the quality of local consultancy services through training.

#Sweden#s support is an expression of our desire to give the countries of Central and Eastern Europe an opportunity to develop their skill and knowledge in business matters,# says Minister Jan O. Karlsson.

#The project is a good example of how, with relatively small means, one can boost the ability of developing countries to influence their economic outlook themselves,# says Mr Karlsson.

Sweden carries on extensive development cooperation with the Kaliningrad region in several areas. Other examples of Swedish efforts are land surveying, economic education, measures against TBC and HIV as well as environmental projects. The majority of these projects are implemented through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida.

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Key word: 8128

PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Guatemala's Foreign Minister to visit Stockholm

The Guatemalan Minister for Foreign Affairs Edgar Gutiérrez is to visit Stockholm on 22-23 January.

His programme will include bilateral talks with Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh, a visit to the Riksdag Committee on Foreign Affairs and a lecture at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs.

Questions from the media may be addressed to Sara Haglund, 0709-32 68 16.

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Key word: 8118

PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh to Bucharest

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh is to visit Bucharest for talks with her Romanian colleague Mircea Dan Geoana on Wednesday 22 January. She is also scheduled to meet President Ion Iliescu. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs will hold a joint press conference at 12.00 at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 31 Aleea Alexandru.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Report on labour immigration circulated for comment

Berit Rollén today submitted her report on EU enlargement and movement of labour (SOU series 2002:116) to Jan O Karlsson.

The task of the special expert was to look into how employees in the candidate countries can be given access to the Swedish labour market from the day of accession on the same terms as citizens of present EU and EEA countries. She was also to assess whether this could involve serious disruption of the Swedish labour market or major costs for the social security systems, and, if so, also propose preventive measures.

#Berit Rollén assesses that there will be no disruption of the Swedish labour market in connection with the enlargement. This tallies with an assessment made previously by the Government,# Jan O Karlsson says.

Berit Rollén says in her report that abuse of the social security systems may occur and points out that Sweden could avail itself of the possibility the transitional rules afford to apply Swedish law for two to seven years after the enlargement to counter this.

#Abuse of the welfare system must naturally be checked,# Mr Karlsson says. #But this can be done in many different ways. The special expert has indicated a method that involves introducing rules that apply in the labour market.#

#I will circulate the report for comment in order to obtain views on the special expert#s proposals. This procedure will show whether the method proposed is possible and appropriate for countering the abuse feared,# Mr Karlsson concludes.

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Key word: 8093

PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Environmental Ambassador

Today the Government has appointed Senior Advisor Viveka Bohn as Environmental Ambassador. Viveka Bohn has been working with environmental issues for many years, both at the Ministry of the Environment and at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Her most recent post was as head of the project secretariat for the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg.

The tasks of the Environmental Ambassador involve a number of negotiation missions, particularly with regard to several global environmental conventions, such as:

- #h The Convention on Biological Diversity and its sub-protocol on bio-security, and

- #h The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)

Her assignment also includes a number of other tasks not related to conventions. These are decided on the basis of political priorities at the time, and currently include responsibility for, inter alia:

- #h The board of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

- #h The UN Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD)

- #h Various ministerial meetings within the EU

The Environmental Ambassador is based at the Ministry of the Environment but reports to both the Minister for the Environment and to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Consul-General in Kaliningrad

The Government has today appointed Director Erik Hammarskjöld to the position of Consul-General in Kaliningrad.

Erik Hammarskjöld, who is 49, has previously served in Mexico, Geneva and New York, and as head of the Baltic Billion Secretariat at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He now becomes the first

head of the newly established Consulate-General.

The opening of a new Swedish foreign mission in Kaliningrad is an indication of the priority given by the Government to cooperation with Russia and the Baltic Sea region. Important tasks for the mission will be to strive for a more far-reaching involvement of the Kaliningrad area in Baltic Sea cooperation, to promote links in particular between southern Sweden and Kaliningrad and to support Swedish development cooperation with the area.

Sweden will be the first EU country to open a Consulate-General in Kaliningrad. As a result, one activity for which Sweden will be responsible will be the issuing of visas for the European countries included in Schengen cooperation.

With the exception of the United Kingdom and Ireland, all countries in the EU participate in Schengen cooperation.

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Key word: 8073

PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Human rights in the world's countries in 2002

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is today publishing reports on the human rights situation in the countries of the world during 2002. These reports are available on the Government's human rights website: www.manskligarattigheter.gov.se.

Even though many countries have made progress on human rights, major problems still remain, not least in the Middle East. In today's troubled world, human rights risk becoming a peripheral issue, both in the international debate and in individual countries. This is why we want to encourage increased debate by supplying more open information, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has compiled annual reports on human rights in the countries of the world for the past several years. These reports are an important working tool and are one of several sources of information on human rights used by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and other government authorities. This year, for the first time, they are being made available to everyone by their publication on the Government's human rights website.

In publishing the country reports we are taking a significant step towards an enhanced exchange of information about the situation for human rights around the world. My hope is that this will help to increase knowledge, stimulate public debate and point to ways of improving the human rights situation, says Anna Lindh.

Human rights are a core concern in Swedish foreign policy. Protection for the rights of the individual has an evident value in its own right. But the safeguarding of human rights also serves as a catalyst for other positive developments.

The Government's human rights website opened in May 2002. It is an important tool in the Government's efforts to disseminate knowledge about human rights and to inform the public of Swedish undertakings in this area.

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Key word: 8050

PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh to visit Oslo

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh is to visit Oslo for talks with her Norwegian colleague Jan Petersen on Wednesday 15 January. She will also have a meeting with the Storting Foreign Affairs Committee.

The foreign ministers will hold a joint meeting with the press at 14.30 at the Onstad Centre, Hövik.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden's ambassadors to meet in Stockholm

The Heads of Sweden's c. 100 foreign missions are to convene in Stockholm on 13-17 January for the annual Meeting of Swedish Ambassadors. Participants in the programme will include Prime Minister Göran Persson, Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh, Minister for Finance Bosse Ringholm, the Speaker of the Riksdag Björn von Sydow, the party leaders and representatives of the Swedish business community.

A special item about leadership will feature Sven-Göran Eriksson, Coach of the England Football Team, and his closest associate Tord Grip.

A list of participants is attached.

To the editorial office:

Group photo on Monday 13 January at Garnisonen Konferens, Karlavägen 100. Assembly at 12.00. Please bring your press credentials!

A special meeting secretariat will be open on Monday # Thursday between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. and on Friday between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. and can assist in contacts with the ambassadors. Tel: +46-8-782 15 25 Fax: +46-8-783 15 26.

Heads of Foreign Missions for 2003

Abidjan Inga Björk-Klevby

Abu Dhabi Lars-Erik Grundell

Abuja Birgitta Holst Alani

Addis Ababa Håkan Åkesson

Alexandria (SI) Jan Henningsson

Algiers Andreas Ådahl

Amman Klas Gierow

Ankara Anne Dismorr

Athens Mårten Grunditz

Bangkok Jan Nordlander

Beijing Börje Ljunggren

Belgrade Lars-Göran Engfeldt

Berlin Carl Tham

Bern Lars Magnuson

Bogotá D.C. Olof Skoog

Brasilia Staffan Åberg

Brussels, emb Anders Oljelund

Bryssel, repr (EU) Sven-Olof Petersson

Bryssel, PSC Anders Bjurner

Budapest Staffan Carlsson

Buenos Aires Madeleine Ströje-Wilkens

Bucharest Svante Kilander

Cairo Sven G Linder (not participating) Canberra Lars-Erik Wingren

Canton Ulf Sörmark

Colombo Ann Marie Fallenius

Copenhagen Carl-Magnus Hyltenius

Dakar Annika Magnusson (incoming)

Damascus Viola Furubjelke

Dar es Salaam Sten Rylander
Dhaka Börje Mattsson
Dublin Nils Daag
Gaborone Birgitta Karlström Dorph
Gdansk Lars-Owe Persson
Geneva, repr (UN) Johan Molander
Guatemala Maria Leissner
Hague Björn Skala
Hamburg Bo Emthén
Hanoi Marie Sjölander
Harare Kristina Svensson
Havanna Eivor Halkjaer
Helsinki Ulf Hjertonsson
Hong Kong Peter Ekelund
Islamabad Peter Tejler
Istanbul Ingmar Karlsson
Jakarta Harald Sandberg
Jerusalem Göran Berg
Kaliningrad Erik Hammarskjöld (incoming)
Kampala Erik Åberg
Kiev Åke Peterson
Kinshasa Robert Rydberg
Kuala Lumpur Bruno Beijer
La Paz Martin Wilkens (not participating)
Lisbon Gunilla Olofsson
Ljubljana John-Christer Åhlander
London Mats Bergquist
Los Angeles Andreas Ekman
Luanda Roger Gartoft
Lusaka Christina Rehlen
Luxembourg Ann Wilkens
Luxembourg Agneta Söderman (incoming)
Madrid Lars Grundberg
Managua Klas Markensten
Manila Ulf Håkansson (not participating)
Maputo Maj-Inger Klingvall
Mariehamn Sören Thunell
Mexico Ewa Polano
Moscow Sven Hirdman
Nairobi Bo Göransson
New Delhi Johan Nordenfelt
New York, del. (UN) Pierre Schori
New York, gc Olle Wästberg
Oslo Mats Ringborg
Ottawa Lennart Alvin
Paris, emb Frank Belfrage
Paris, del (OECD) Gun-Britt Andersson (incoming)
Prague Harald Fälth
Pretoria Helena Nilsson
Pyongyang Paul Beijer
Rabat Peter Bruce
Reykjavik Bertil Jobeus
Riga Tomas Bertelman
Riyadh Åke Karlsson
Rome Staffan Wrigstad

St Petersburg May Andersson
Santiago de Chile Arne Rodin
Sarajevo Anders Möllander
Seoul Bo Lundberg
Shanghai Eskil Lundberg
Singapore Teppo Tauriainen
Sofia Sten Ask
Strasbourg Mats Åberg
Tallinn Elisabet Borsiin Bonnier
Taipei Henrik Byström (Trade Council)
Teheran Steen Hohwü-Christensen
Tel Aviv Vacant
Tokyo Mikael Lindström
Tripoli Bengt Sparre
Vienna, emb Gabriella Lindholm
Vienna, del (OSCE) Krister Bringéus
Vientiane Christer Holtsberg
Vilnius Jan Palmstierna
Warsaw Mats Staffansson
Washington Jan Eliasson
Windhoek Göran Hedebro
Zagreb Sture Theolin
STOCKHOLM-BASED AMBASSADORS
Caribbean Hans Linton
Holy See Fredrik Vahlquist
Paris (UNESCO) Örjan Berner
Tunis Krister Isaksson

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Key word: 8039

PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-10
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh concerned about North Korea's decision to abandon the Non-Proliferation Treaty

"North Korea's decision to withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty will worsen the already serious situation on the Korean peninsula. The North Korean action is counterproductive", comments Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

"Several countries in the region have been working for many years to achieve peaceful development

on the Korean peninsula. The decision is also surprising in the light of the fact that there seemed to be prospects for a diplomatic dialogue.

This action challenges the entire international community and threatens to undermine international efforts for disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Ultimately, it may represent a threat to international peace and security.

North Korea must be persuaded to withdraw its decision and to resume cooperation with the IAEA. The crisis must be resolved by diplomatic means as soon as possible, via a dialogue with all the parties involved", says Anna Lindh.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to a press briefing: Human rights 2002

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs# annual reports on the human rights situation in the countries of the world are an essential work tool for the Ministry and other government authorities.

This year, for the first time, these reports will be available to a broader public in that they will be published on the government#s human rights website (www.humanrights.gov.se).

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, will present the 2002 country reports at a press briefing in which Sweden#s Ambassadors to China, Turkey, Zimbabwe and Colombia will also participate.

Venue: Garnisonen Konferens (Humlegården), Karlavägen 100.

Time: Monday 13 January 2003 at 14.30

If you wish to attend please notify maria.hakansson@foreign.ministry.se.

Please bring your press credentials!

The Government#s human rights website opened in May 2002. It is an important tool in the Government's efforts to disseminate knowledge about human rights and to inform the public of Swedish undertakings in this area. The 2002 reports on the human rights situation in the countries of the world will be available at the website after Monday#s press briefing.

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Press Officer
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0708-66 84 91

PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Abidjan

The Government has today appointed Inga Björk-Klevby as new Ambassador in Abidjan. Inga Björk-Klevby, who is 58, is currently Ambassador in Nairobi. Prior to this, she was Executive Director at the African Development Bank in Abidjan. She has also worked for many years with international development cooperation, primarily at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Department of International Development Cooperation and Human Rights, where her posts included that of head of department. She has also served at the Riksbank and at the Asian Development Bank in Manila.

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PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Financial support to the Folke Bernadotte Academy

The Government decided today to allocate SEK 2 million to the Folke Bernadotte Academy for coordination of the project "#Challenges of Peace Operations: Into the 21st Century".

The project was launched in 1997 and at that time was coordinated by the Swedish National Defence College with the aim of contributing to the resolution of regional conflicts. It has now entered its second phase, covering the period 1 January 2003 # 31 December 2005, and coordination will be taken over by the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA). The project is supported by the Armed Forces, the National Police Board and the National Defence College. FBA's task will now be to consolidate and intensify international cooperation in the handling of regional conflicts as well as to promote increased coordination between different institutions in a broad list of countries prominent in the area of peace support operations, including, among others, Russia, the USA and Canada.

#The decision means Sweden will have a chance to influence the international debate on peace support operations, particularly bearing in mind that the project will open an opportunity for increased cooperation with the UN Special Committee on peace-keeping operations,# says the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh.

The Folke Bernadotte Academy is located in Kramfors and is led by Director-General Michael Sahlin.

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Key word: 8021

PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Latvia obliged to pay SwemBalt AB for scrapping

In 1994 a Swedish ship, owned by SwemBalt AB, was removed and scrapped by Latvian harbour authorities. Since then a protracted legal process has taken place between the Latvian state and SwemBalt, which has demanded compensation.

A judgment was passed in 2000, when an arbitration court in Copenhagen reached the conclusion that Latvia had violated its liabilities under the intergovernmental agreement on the mutual promotion and protection of investment and international law. At Latvia's request, a Danish court has reviewed this verdict and a new judgment was passed today in Copenhagen. According to the new judgment, the original arbitral award from 2000 stands firm and Latvia is obliged to pay just over USD 2.5 million plus interest and compensation for legal expenses to SwemBalt AB.

"All along we have asserted that the bilateral agreement on the mutual promotion and protection of investment is crystal clear as regards Latvia's obligations. I now expect Latvia to show that it respects its international commitments and to pay compensation immediately to SwemBalt so that the matter can be put aside", says Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky.

An appeal against the Danish judgment can be lodged with the Danish "Högste Rett" which is the court of final instance.

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Key word: 8011

PRESS RELEASE

2003-01-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

OSCE presence in Chechnya

"I am deeply disappointed that Russia has opposed the continued presence of the OSCE in Chechnya, according to its mandate for political dialogue and the promotion of human rights that has applied since 1995", says Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh.

"It is my hope that the international community will continue to demand the OSCE's presence in the region and that Russia will accept these demands. This is in Russia's own interests. Like the other EU countries, Sweden will continue to monitor the situation in Chechnya closely.

The OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya was established by a decision of the OSCE Permanent Council in April 1995. The group has consisted of a team of six people. The Assistance Group's mandate expired on 31 December 2002. Its tasks have included promoting human rights, supporting the development of democratic institutions, assisting the delivery of humanitarian aid and promoting a peaceful resolution of the crisis. The EU has made active efforts to ensure the extension of the OSCE's mandate so that the organisation can continue to carry out its important work in Chechnya.

Decisions in the OSCE are made by consensus, including decisions regarding the mandates of its field missions. Further information about the mandate of the Assistance Group can be found on the OSCE's homepage at: www.osce.org

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Peace and Security: the report of the Commission of Inquiry on Security Policy

The Commission of Inquiry on Security Policy will today present its report, #Peace and Security#, to Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh. The assignment given to the special expert in charge of the inquiry, Rolf Ekéus, has been to analyse Swedish security policy actions # political and military # in the period 1969#1989.

Swedish security policy in the later stages of the Cold War was played out against a backdrop of shifting moods in world politics. The détente that marked much of the 1970s gave way to deeper opposition between the superpowers during the Second Cold War in the early 1980s.

During this period Sweden was required to define its security policy in a field of tension between the threat from the Soviet Union and the possibility of support from the West. The Soviet Union was the great # indeed, the only # threat. The dilemma facing Sweden as a western democratic country was that in order to preserve the credibility of its policy of neutrality it had to maintain a certain military distance to the West.

Support from the West found expression in close cooperation regarding military equipment, military technology and intelligence. The inquiry has found an American guideline document elaborating the foundations of the US security policy relationship with Sweden. This document, which was not known to Swedish officials, contained an undertaking to assist Sweden in response to a Soviet attack.

The credibility of the Swedish policy of neutrality required that no preparations were made in peacetime for military cooperation in war. This was emphasised in statements by the Government, defence inquiries and defence programmes throughout the period covered by the inquiry. The special expert has examined military plans drawn up in the period and has found no evidence that this principle was not fully respected.

The policy of neutrality also required a strong defence with a credible capacity to defend the country#s territory in the event of a war between the superpower blocs. An isolated attack on Sweden, unconnected with a major conflict in Europe, was considered to be wholly improbable. The Swedish policy of neutrality served a broader security policy purpose in peacetime. It formed part of a Nordic security policy pattern that was an important factor in keeping the tension between the blocs at a low level in the Nordic region. On the basis of its policy of neutrality, Sweden was also able to conduct an active policy aimed at strengthening peace and security in Europe and other parts of the world.

CONTACT

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Key word: 7980

PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-20
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Support for integration of developing countries into world trade

Sweden is making a contribution of SEK 9 million to help the poorest developing countries elaborate their trade policy priorities and needs.

The Government has decided to give SEK 4.5 million to the multilateral development cooperation programme Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is contributing an additional SEK 4.5 million to the programme.

The international community has a responsibility to jointly support developing countries so that they can build the capacity to push their trade policy issues in the international arena and have a chance to develop their trade, says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

It is in their interest and ours alike that their integration into the global economy proceeds from their own priorities.

The Integrated Framework is a cooperative programme involving six international organisations: the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). A number of donor countries and the least-developed countries (LDCs) that are the recipients of the measures provided by the programme. The purpose of the Integrated Framework is to make trade issues an integral part of LDC development strategies and to adapt trade-related development assistance to needs and make it more effective.

CONTACT

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Key word: 7979

PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Security Policy Inquiry SOU 2002:108

Invitation to press conference: Peace and Security

On Friday 20 December 2002, the Commission of Inquiry on Security Policy will present its report Peace and Security (Swedish Government Official Reports 2002:108) to Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh. After the report has been delivered, there will be a press conference at 11.00 at Bella Venezia, Rosenbad, at which the special expert in charge of the inquiry, Ambassador Rolf Ekéus, will present and comment on the report.

Ambassador Ekéus's assignment has been to describe and analyse Sweden's security policy action political and military during the period 1969-1989, and the security policy environment in which the country was required to act during that period.

Venue: Bella Venezia, Rosenbad

Time: Friday 20 December 2002 at 11.00

The press conference can be viewed at www.regeringen.se
Please bring your press credentials!

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Key word: 7973

PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports studies on cooperation between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries

The Government decided today to make a contribution to the European Centre for Development Policy Management as part of a three-year cooperation agreement. The Swedish contribution amounts to SEK 2 million for the year 2003. In total, a sum of SEK 6 million will be granted for the period 2003-2005.

The Swedish appropriation will mainly serve to finance studies and seminars in four areas: political cooperation, political dialogue, the participation of non-governmental actors in the reform of development cooperation, and measures to prepare and strengthen the ACP countries' (77 countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific) negotiating capacity in connection with negotiations on a new trade order between the EU and the ACP region.

The European Centre for Development Policy Management was established in 1986 with the aim of increasing knowledge about and encouraging cooperation between the EU and the ACP countries. This is done by means of studies, seminars and by various activities to promote dialogue between the EU and the ACP countries.

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Key word: 7972

PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support for integration promotion in Latvia

The Government decided today to contribute a total of SEK 5.2 million in support of efforts to promote integration in Latvia in 2003#2004.

By supporting education in the Latvian language, Latvian history and Latvian administration, Sweden hopes to encourage applications for Latvian citizenship by Russian speakers in the country. SEK 3 million will go to support the State language programme and SEK 1 million to the Latvian Naturalisation Office. The funds will be placed at the disposal of the United Nations Development Programme in Riga.

In addition, the High Commission for National Minorities in the Hague will receive SEK 1.2 million for the production of a manual for instructors at the State Language Centre in Latvia. The responsibilities of the Language Centre include implementation of language legislation and protection of the Latvian language. The purpose of the Swedish support is to help ensure greater observation of statutory rights in connection with the implementation of the relevant legislation.

#The integration of Russian speakers in Latvia is important for the country#s economic, political and social development as it prepares for EU membership. This is why it is important that Sweden continues to support the positive developments,# says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

A substantial proportion of the Latvian population # 40 per cent # consists of Russian speakers, and most of these people are non-citizens. An inadequate knowledge of the Latvian language has so far been a significant obstacle to citizenship. Over the last few years, however, Latvia has made progress in the process of integration and has adopted a broad programme for the integration of the country#s national minorities. In addition, a minister specially responsible for integration affairs has recently been appointed. Sweden attaches great importance to the process of integration in Latvia and has been one of the largest donors to the different programmes to date, contributing some SEK 20 million since 1996.

CONTACT

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Helena Gustavsson

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Anna Ekberg

Desk Officer

Central and Eastern Europe Department

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Nairobi

The Government has today appointed Bo Göransson as the new Swedish Ambassador in Nairobi, Kenya. He will assume his duties at the beginning of February 2003.

Bo Göransson has been Director-General of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency since 1994. His earlier positions include serving as head of the development cooperation office in Tanzania and as adviser on forestry and marketing issues to the Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture. From 1988 to 1991 he was State Secretary for Immigrant and Refugee Affairs at the Ministry of Labour and he subsequently worked on welfare issues as a member of the Social Democratic parliamentary party group and National Board of the Social Democratic Party.

CONTACT

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Quicker administration of cases relating to lone child refugees

Asylum cases relating to lone child refugees should be processed more swiftly. This is made clear in the new appropriation directions to the Swedish Migration Board and the Aliens Appeals Board, that were approved by the Government today. Decisions in asylum cases relating to lone child refugees are to be made within three months by the Swedish Migration Board and within three months by the Aliens Appeals Board.

In the same document, the Government puts considerable emphasis on the need to highlight the issue of women's need for protection in the asylum process. Among other things, women who apply for asylum should be able to have access to female investigators and interpreters. Today, the Government has commissioned the Swedish Migration Board to provide an account of what measures it has taken to better highlight the issue of women's need for protection.

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Martin Sandgren
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Key word: 7969

PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to support skills enhancement in Africa

The Government decided today to give SEK 60 million to the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) over the period 2002 to 2006.

The Foundation, which was established in 1991, supports action to enhance skills in a range of different areas linked to public administration, such as macroeconomic analysis, national statistics and consultation with the private sector and civil society.

Sweden has previously contributed a total of SEK 87 million over the period 1991#2002.

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Key word: 7968

PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Maria Norrfalk new head of Sida

The Government today appointed Maria Norrfalk to succeed Bo Göransson as Director-General of Sida. She will take up her duties on 1 April 2003.

Since 1994 Maria Norrfalk has been Director-General of the National Board of Forestry in

Jönköping. At present she is a member of the board of the Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research, the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications' Delegation for Northern Sweden and the Swedish Association for Hunting and Wildlife Management, and is also a member of the Environmental Objectives Council and the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry.

Maria Norrfalk has previously held a number of assignments pertaining to forestry, including as head of research at the Forestry Research Foundation in Uppsala, as county forest officer on the Stockholm and Uppsala County Forestry Boards, and as a Principle Administrative Officer at the National Forest Enterprise.

Ms Norrfalk worked in Ethiopia from 1979-80 as a teacher at the Wondo Genet Research Institute in a Sida development cooperation project and has also carried out several assignments as an international consultant in various development cooperation projects in, for example, Bangladesh 1977, India 1978, Ethiopia 1982, and in Tanzania 1986. She was chairman of the FAO Committee on Forestry in Rome in 1995, 1997, and 2001, and of the UN Forum on Forests, UNFF, in New York in 2002.

The Government also decided today that Staffan Herrström, Deputy Director-General at Sida, will be acting Director-General until 1 April 2003.

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Key word: 7913

PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New country strategy for Sri Lanka

Today the Government has decided on a new country strategy for development cooperation with Sri Lanka for the period 2003-2007.

The negotiations in progress between the government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have been successful so far and inspire hope that peace will finally be reached after the deadly civil war that has plagued the country since 1983.

The Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, congratulates the parties to the conflict on the progress made so far in the peace negotiations and hopes that they will succeed in their joint intention to give the country a lasting peace.

#The conflict has meant enormous losses of lives and property and the country has no chance of reconstructing what has been destroyed on its own. The international community must give political and economic support to the peace process and reconstruction efforts. The new country strategy comes therefore at a very opportune moment, # Mr Karlsson says.

Since the spring Sweden has been participating with eight observers in the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission, SLMM, which is supervising the peace process. Sweden is also participating in the support measures for the peace process that were initiated in Oslo a month ago and which will be followed up by a conference for long-term support in Tokyo during the spring of 2003.

Development cooperation in the next five years will take the form of efforts to promote peace, democracy, human rights and economic development measures to combat poverty. The volume of cooperation will amount to at most SEK 350 million over the next three years in addition to

development country credits, humanitarian assistance and support to Swedish non-governmental organisations.

Sweden's cooperation with Sri Lanka started in 1958.

Read the full text of the strategy at www.ud.se

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Key word: 7912

PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish Institute's governing board appointed

The Government appoints the following persons as new members of the Governing Board of the Swedish Institute for the period 1 January 2003 #

31 December 2005.

Bengt Westerberg, Former Minister, Chairman, Stockholm

Christina Björk, Director of the Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company, Stockholm

Eva Kumlin, Cultural Producer, Stockholm

Ozan Sunar, Theatre Manager, Södra teatern, Stockholm

Inge-Bert Täljedahl, Vice-Chancellor, Umeå University, Umeå

Ingegerd Palmér, Vice-Chancellor, Luleå University of Technology, Luleå

Sara Arrhenius, Director, IAPIS (International Artists Studio Program in Sweden), Stockholm

Martin Martinsson, Director, Musik i Skåne, Kristianstad

Bengt Säve-Söderbergh, Ambassador, Stockholm

Britta Lejon, Member of the Riksdag, Stockholm

Lars Engman, Design Manager, IKEA, Älmhult

Bengt Westerberg will continue as Chairman of the Board.

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Key word: 7911

PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden launches website for the Barents Euro-Arctic Council

Sweden will today launch an official website for the Barents Euro-Arctic Council: . The website will give information about the Council, its background and operations, and provide an opportunity to follow ongoing work and to get to know the Barents region through pictures and articles. Available on the website are facts and descriptions of different activities such as customs cooperation, youth exchanges and environmental efforts as well as maps and links to different actors. The aim, inter alia, is to increase knowledge about the Barents region and the availability of comprehensive information.

#I welcome the website, it is an important contribution to strengthening cooperation in the Barents region,# the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms Anna Lindh, says. #I hope that more people will get to know the Barents region and that the many cross-border contacts that already exist will increase further as a result of this information centre and point of contact.#

The Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) was established in 1993 by the Nordic countries, Russia and the EU Commission. The Presidency of the BEAC rotates between Norway, Finland, Russia and Sweden. The Minister for Foreign Affairs is president of the Council during the period March 2001 # October 2003.

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of Barents cooperation, the countries# prime ministers will meet in Kirkenäs, Norway, on 10-11 January 2003.

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Key word: 7899

PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government takes decision on new strategy for South America

The Government took a decision today on a new strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with South America. In particular, the new strategy for the period 2003-2007 focuses on the Andean

region. The basis for development cooperation is the fight against poverty.

The regional strategy identifies Bolivia as the poorest country on the continent, the armed conflict in Columbia as the most destabilising factor, and the Andean region as the most vulnerable. Bolivia and Columbia are therefore afforded priority in Sweden's development cooperation with South America, and have their own strategies as part of the broader framework of the regional strategy. The overall objective of Sweden's development cooperation is to raise the living standards of the poor, something that requires economic growth, greater social equality and peaceful coexistence. Of the development cooperation policy objectives, greater economic and social equality, combined with democratic development are particularly important.

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Key word: 7898

PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Investments in marketing of Swedish biotechnology in the USA

The Government has decided to grant SEK 1,150,000 for a project to market Swedish biotechnology in the USA in connection with the technology exhibition "BIO2003 Exhibition and Convention" in Washington on 22-26 June 2003. The purpose of the project is to present Swedish know-how and to create a platform from which Swedish companies can do business.

"Our Swedish biotechnology industry is at the forefront of international developments", says Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky. "In the next few years it is important that we make ourselves even more visible in order to create more jobs in Sweden."

The funds will be placed at the disposal of the Swedish Trade Council for the preparation of a Swedish pavilion at the exhibition, at which some 15 companies will be represented.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has also decided to allocate SEK 250,000 for special activities to market Swedish biotechnology in the USA in connection with Sweden's participation in BIO2003. These funds will be placed at the disposal of the Swedish Embassy in Washington.

The initiatives are part of the Government's long-term strategy to promote Swedish biotechnology abroad.

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Key word: 7897

PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh welcomes peace agreement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

#I welcome the peace agreement announced today, which brings to an end four years of war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC),# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh. #This is a crucial step for stability in the region. Now all parties must follow the agreement. In the short term in particular it is important that the parties cooperate to disarm the various militias that are still operating in eastern Congo.#

The Congolese government, armed rebel groups and the political opposition today signed an agreement on a new political order in the country and on the form to be taken by the transitional government that is to lead the country to free and democratic elections within two years. Among the provisions of the agreement, President Kabila will be assisted during the transitional period by four vice presidents from the armed and political opposition and there will be power-sharing in the government. The agreement has come about after mediation by the United Nations and South Africa.

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Key word: 7890

PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights visits Sweden

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Sergio Vieira de Mello, is visiting Sweden on 16 December as part of a tour of the Nordic countries. The host for the visit will be Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

During his visit to Sweden, de Mello will meet the Minister for Democracy and Integration Issues, Mona Sahlin, and the Director-General of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Bo Göransson, as well as Anna Lindh.

The UN High Commissioner will also have an opportunity to join Anna Lindh and Mona Sahlin at a lunch seminar where they will discuss current human rights issues with invited guests from the Riksdag, government authorities, NGOs and others.

At 15.30#17.00, Sergio de Mello will speak at the Olof Palme International Center in Stockholm.

Sergio Vieira de Mello (Brazil) succeeded Mary Robinson as United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in September 2002.

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Key word: 7878

PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Meeting of the Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs

The Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs has been summoned to a meeting at the Royal Palace on Tuesday 17 December at 3 p.m.

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Key word: 7872

PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish initiatives in St Petersburg in 2003

Sweden will strengthen its ties with St Petersburg through a special Swedish initiative in connection with the city's 300th anniversary celebrations in 2003. The Government has decided to allocate a total of SEK 10 million to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the Swedish Institute, the Swedish Trade Council and the Stockholm Region European Committee for this purpose.

Russia will be investing major resources in ensuring that the anniversary receives international attention. Sweden has a significant role in Baltic Sea cooperation, and unique historical and cultural links with St Petersburg. The aim of the initiative is to further develop the good contacts that already exist between Sweden and St Petersburg and to create new business opportunities. A variety of events are planned within such areas as culture, education, research, tourism, IT and the environment.

The main focuses of the programme are a "Swedish week" on 25-30 April, the participation of Swedish high-level representatives in the anniversary celebrations on 31 May and a Swedish business sector initiative on 1-4 September. However, other interesting Swedish events will also take place at other times during the year.

On 15 December this year, Sweden's Consulate-General in St Petersburg will celebrate its 30th anniversary. In this connection a detailed presentation of the Swedish initiatives in St Petersburg will be given to representatives of the Russian media and public authorities.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-12

Support for a new meeting-place in Visby for the Baltic Sea region

The Government decided today to contribute SEK 40 million as part financing of the construction of a congress hall in Visby. The Swedish Business Development Agency, NUTEK, will be responsible for managing the contribution which will be taken from the Baltic Billion Fund 1. NUTEK will also carry out a final assessment of the project.

Through today's decision the Government is supporting the efforts that Gotland is making to become an attractive meeting-place for all actors who are working for increased cooperation in the Baltic Sea region, Minister Jan O. Karlsson said in a comment.

A congress hall could be just such a meeting-place and, in addition, contribute to creating many new job opportunities which Gotland so urgently needs. The Government will now request NUTEK to carry out the final assessment of the project, among other things to ensure that the project has a sound commercial basis, said Jan O. Karlsson.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to Sami cultural centre in Lovozero, Russia

Today the Government decided to allocate a sum of SEK 1,215,000 for the development of a Sami cultural centre in Lovozero on the Russian Kola peninsula. Lovozero is a main centre for the Russian Sami population and the cultural centre will be an important contribution towards strengthening their cultural identity.

Sweden is making active efforts to improve the opportunities for indigenous peoples to take part in regional cooperation in the Barents region. In the run-up to the meeting of prime ministers in Kirkenäs on 10-11 January in connection with the 10th anniversary of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, Sweden wants to contribute to a cultural centre that will fulfil an important function as purveyor of culture, help to strengthen the cultural identity of the Sami population and build ties between Samis in Russia and the Nordic countries.

The contribution from the Government is intended for the renovation and refurbishment of a central building in Lovozero, where a cultural centre will be established, as well as a workshop for production of Sami handicraft, offices for the Sami association and production premises and branch offices for Sami radio broadcasts via NRK Sameradio, YLE and Sveriges Radio (the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation).

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden gives assistance to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

Today the Government approved a further grant of SEK 140 million to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Sweden's contribution to this fund will thus amount to a total of SEK 200 million in 2002.

AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria take the lives of millions of victims every year. According to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), HIV/AIDS has become the worst plague in world history, and there is no sign of the epidemic abating. These illnesses weaken people's ability to support themselves and thus deepen poverty.

"The aim of the UN is to halve the number of poor people in the world by 2015. For this aim to be achieved, we must reduce the spread of HIV, tuberculosis and malaria", says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

"It is vital for world development that all donors honour their commitments to the Global Fund", says Jan O. Karlsson.

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria was established by a number of interested countries, NGOs and UN bodies and began its work on 1 January 2002. The fund is playing an important role in the international fight against these illnesses which, every year, cost the lives of some five million people, primarily in the poorest countries. The Government intends to contribute SEK 600 million to the fund over a three-year period.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors

The following four Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 12 December:

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia's newly appointed Ambassador, Dejan Vasiljevic, was born in 1950. He holds a B.A. in Arabic and English from Belgrade University and has mainly been active as a journalist, specialising in foreign policy. He has been head of foreign policy at the Yugoslav news agency Tanjug and correspondent in Baghdad, London, Cairo, Tel Aviv and Bonn.

Since April 2001, the Ambassador has been head of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia's Embassy in Stockholm, as chargé d'affaires ad interim.

Israel's newly appointed Ambassador, Zvi Mazel, was born in 1939 and is a political scientist with a B.A. from the Institute of Political Science in Paris. He entered his country's foreign service in 1966 and has since alternated between service at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Jerusalem and at Israeli missions abroad.

In recent years Ambassador Mazel has held the following posts:

1989 - 1992 Ambassador to Romania

1992 - 1993 Head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Division for Eastern Europe

1993 - 1996 Head of the Africa Department

1996 - 2001 Ambassador to Egypt

The Republic of South Africa's newly appointed Ambassador, Gladys Kudjoe, was born in 1959.

She is a lawyer and has an M.A. in criminal law from Kishinev State University in the former Soviet Union. She continued her law studies at Hull University in the United Kingdom and in Pretoria. In recent years, she has been working in academia and conducted research on and analysis of Africa for the South African intelligence and security service from 1995-1998.

From 2000 and until her appointment to her post in Sweden, Ambassador Kudjoe was head of the foreign ministry multilateral Africa division.

The Republic of Djibouti's newly appointed Ambassador, Mohamed Moussa Chehem, (concurrently accredited in Brussels) was born in 1949. He has a degree in veterinary science from Niamey in Niger and in 1985-1987 was Secretary-General for the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1987 - 1993 Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries

1993 - 1995 Minister for Planning and the Environment

1995 - 1999 Minister for Foreign Affairs

1999 - Ambassador in Brussels

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Agreement between Sweden and the UN concerning archive material on Dag Hammarskjöld

The Government today decided to enter into an agreement with the United Nations on preservation of archive material relating to Dag Hammarskjöld. The Agreement will be signed on Thursday 19 December at a ceremony at UN headquarters in New York by Pierre Schori, Ambassador to the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the Office of the United Nations, and Mr Shahsi Tharoor, Under-Secretary-General at the UN Department of Public Information.

A considerable amount of historically valuable material is kept in the UN archives, inter alia several newsreels on the Swede Dag Hammarskjöld who was Secretary-General of the United Nations from 1953-1961. There is a risk that this film material will be destroyed in time if measures are not taken to secure its preservation. Sweden and the UN have therefore agreed that the films be transferred to Sweden to be taken care of here. The Swedish Film Institute will restore and preserve the films on behalf of the UN. They will subsequently be available for research and studies at the National Archive of Recorded Sound and Moving Images. The film material will also be available in digital form at UN headquarters in New York.

#It is very positive that Sweden can contribute in this way to the preservation of the important heritage that these films represent,# the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, said in a comment. #Dag Hammarskjöld was, and is, one of the most prominent UN leaders and we are proud that Sweden has been given this trust.#

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Easier way into the WTO for the world's poorest

It is to become easier for the world's poorest countries to become members of the World Trade Organisation. The WTO General Council took a decision to this effect today.

New guidelines will make it possible also for the least developed countries to carry out the negotiations required for WTO membership. Sweden is chairing the committee that has drawn up the guidelines and the Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, considers today's decision to be of central importance for moving forward the position of developing countries in the trade system.

- We have prioritised this work and rapidly succeeded in achieving results. The decision means that the least developed countries, LDCs, can more easily become members and thereby also share the advantages this implies.
- The guidelines will be important for overcoming the problem caused by certain WTO members placing unreasonably high demands on developing countries in the accession negotiations.
- The decision is also crucial for confidence in the ongoing
- WTO negotiations where development issues are in focus.

Since the establishment of the WTO in 1995, none of the LDCs have become new members of the organisation. Complicated and resource-demanding membership negotiations have obstructed the accession of these countries to the organisation. The new guidelines for accession negotiations adopted today focus on four areas: market access, the WTO system of rules, the accession process and technical assistance.

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Key word: 7802

PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Peace agreement signed for Aceh

Today, the Indonesian Government and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) signed an agreement on a cease-fire in the Indonesian province of Aceh at the northern tip of the island of Sumatra. Sweden will contribute logistics and communications to the monitoring mission which will control compliance with the agreement. This assistance of around SEK 13 million will be administered by the Swedish Rescue Services Agency and financed by Sida over a four-month period while services are being built up.

"I welcome the fact that the parties have taken this important step towards a sustainable and long-term solution to the conflict", comments Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

"It is vital that the Indonesian Government and GAM do all that is in their power to live up to the agreement that has now been signed in order to bring lasting peace to a democratic Aceh".

Fighting has been under way for more than 26 years, and the agreement is part of the process of creating lasting peace in Aceh. The Geneva-based human rights organisation, the Henri Dunant Centre (HDC) has mediated in the negotiations between the Indonesian Government and GAM for almost three years and will be hosting the signing of the agreement today. A monitoring mission under the leadership of the HDC will immediately control that the agreement is respected.

"The efforts of the HDC and the support of the international community for the monitoring mission in particular and Aceh's future in general was clearly demonstrated at the donor conference in Tokyo on 3 December. Through Ambassador Bengt Säve-Söderbergh's role as advisor to the parties and the HDC, Sweden has contributed to the parties' agreement to solve the conflict via negotiations", says Anna Lindh.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Lilja 4-ever part of Government campaign against trafficking

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is to allocate SEK 150 000 to the Swedish Institute to organise seminars and meetings jointly with Swedish embassies and consulates, in connection with presentations of the film Lilja 4-ever. The film will be shown in Eastern European countries and other parts of the world. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has also financed an English sub-titled version of the film.

"Lilja's terrible fate in Lukas Moodysson's film Lilja 4-ever reveals the current ruthless and cynical trade in women and children. We hope that by giving financial support, it will be possible to show the film to groups that would otherwise be unable to see it. It is important to fight attitudes that make this modern type of slave trade possible. The film Lilja 4-ever will play an important role in forming public opinion", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

An agreement on showing Lilja 4-ever has been concluded with Memphis Film Rights AB.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New organisation to support developing countries in the WTO

Unofficial translation

Today, Sweden signed an agreement on the establishment of an international organisation, the Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation (AITIC), which will support the poorest countries in ongoing WTO negotiations.

"This is part of our endeavours to give the poorest countries a better chance to promote their interests", says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky who, together with Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson, was one of those behind the initiative.

"Sweden is one of the countries that is most active in promoting more resources and greater know-how and skills in trade issues for poor countries. This is partly to enable them to make use of their potential in negotiations and partly to give them a stronger trade position in general".

AITIC will provide services to poor countries' negotiators in the ongoing WTO round, with particular focus on the 25 developing countries without representations in Geneva. Many developing countries are represented only by one or two persons. At the same time, the agenda of the World Trade Organisation has broadened and the current round of negotiations in the WTO is entering into an increasingly intensive phase.

"AITIC is a good example of how to enhance, with relatively small means, the ability of developing countries to influence their economic outlook themselves", says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

In addition to Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom are supporting AITIC. The organisation will have a budget of around SEK 120 million for the first five years of its operations. Sweden's contribution for this period will be SEK 12 million.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

China invests in Sweden

An announcement today revealed that Shanghai is planning the opening of a trade and investment office in Sweden. The office is to be located in Göteborg.

"This is important both for Göteborg and for Sweden given the role that the office will play in the Baltic region," says State Secretary Sven-Eric Söder, who on Friday completed his visit to China. During his visit to China this week, Sven-Eric Söder has led a delegation from the Invest in Sweden Agency (ISA). The main purpose of the visit has been to promote Sweden as an investment country in Beijing and Shanghai. The programme has included seminars, company visits and meetings with central and regional ministries. The visit is part of the Swedish Government's comprehensive China campaign.

China's membership of the WTO along with the Chinese Government's "Go Abroad" policy of encouraging Chinese companies to establish themselves abroad will lead to China eventually becoming a major investor in other countries.

"Our goal is to see Sweden become one of Europe's largest recipients of Chinese investments," says Sven-Eric Söder. "This is why we are out in good time now that things are beginning to move."

To date, China has made about ten investments in Sweden. These include the large IT and telecom companies Huawei and ZTE.

The week has also seen ISA enter into a cooperation agreement with Citic Bank and the State Development and Planning Commission (SDPC). In addition, State Secretary Söder and ISA have drawn up guidelines with the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (MOFTEC) and the State Economic and Trade Commission (SETC) for continued investment initiatives.

Today ISA opened its office at the consulate-general in Shanghai. In addition to being represented there, ISA will also be represented in Beijing.

"The response we have received from the Chinese to our efforts to attract investments has been enormous," says ISA's Director-General Kai Hammerich. "Now that work is under way, our partners and contacts in China are major players in the field."

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky to visit Paris on 5-6 December

Minister for Industry and Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, will visit Paris on 5-6 December. His programme will include participation in the promotion event "Swedish December" with design, fashion, food and musical performances at the Centre Culturel Suédois (Swedish Cultural Centre) and a speech at a Chamber of Commerce Evening at the Opera.

The Minister for Industry and Trade will also take part in meetings with Jean-Claude Trichet, Governor of the Banque de France, and Pierre Moscovici, former EU Minister and representative in the EU Convention.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Temporary border controls in Skåne in connection with summit in Copenhagen

The Government today approved the introduction of temporary border controls in Skåne during the period 6-14 December in connection with the meeting of the European Council in Copenhagen on 12-13 December.

The Government shares the view of the National Police Board that there is cause, to and need for introducing border controls in Skåne in connection with the summit in Copenhagen.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to give budget support to Nicaragua

The Government decided today to approve an allocation of SEK 60 million in budget support to Nicaragua.

Swedish budget support is a form of direct assistance extended to poor countries that pursue sound, responsible economic policies with a clear poverty-reduction orientation. Support to Nicaragua is thus intended to speed up implementation of its own prioritised poverty reduction policies, as set out in its poverty reduction strategy.

The new government that came into power about a year ago has shown clearly that it intends to deal with the country's problems with corruption, a budget deficit and not least, poverty. The Swedish support will contribute significantly to strengthening Nicaragua's own efforts to improve living conditions for the poorest people in the country.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-12-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson to visit Canada on 1-4 December

Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, will visit Canada on 1-4 December.

The purpose of the visit is to exchange experience in the field of migration policy and to discuss development assistance issues of common interest to Sweden and Canada.

Mr Karlsson will participate in talks with, among others, Canada's Minister of Immigration Denis Coderre and Minister for International Cooperation Susan Whelan.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Support to Stockholm International Water Institute

The Government today announced the allocation of a SEK 5.3 million grant to the Stockholm International Water Institute, SIWI.

SIWI, founded in 1997, conducts its activities within the framework of Stockholm Water. Included in the organisation's activities is the annual

Stockholm Water Symposium at which several international water prizes # the Stockholm Water Prize, the Stockholm Junior Water Prize,

the Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award and the Stockholm Industry Water Award # are presented.

SIWI has previously received a SEK 9 million grant from the Government for 2000 and 2001. An important aspect of SIWI's work is its focus on developing countries and water-related issues in these countries such as food supply, health and environment.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Foreign Minister of Cyprus Ioannis Kasoulides to visit Sweden

Cyprus' Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ioannis Kasoulides, will pay a visit to Stockholm on 28-29 November.

Ioannis Kasoulides will be meeting the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, on Friday for talks, inter alia, about EU enlargement and the UN proposal for a solution to the Cyprus issue.

During his visit to Stockholm Mr Kasoulides will also be meeting Deputy Prime Minister, Margareta Winberg, the Speaker of the Riksdag, Björn von Sydow, and members of the Riksdag's Advisory Committee on EU Affairs and Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Foreign Minister Ioannis Kasoulides will also hold a lecture at 5 p.m on Thursday 28 November at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs.

To the editorial office: Ioannis Kasoulides and Anna Lindh will be available for the press before their meeting. Assembly at the entrance to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg, Friday 29 November at 12.15 p.m. Please bring your press credentials!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

To the editorial office: Invitation to a press conference on UNFPA's annual population report

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) invite you to a press conference on Tuesday 3 December at 10.00 at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre, Fredsgatan 4-6. The press conference will be led by Kerstin Trone, UNFPA and Annika Söder, State Secretary at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Kerstin Trone will present the annual UNFPA report: "The State of World Population 2002". This year's report focuses on population issues and poverty. Among other things, the report establishes that the relation between population and development is a complex one, largely depending on population growth trends, political, social and economic factors.

The UNFPA deals with issues concerning sexuality, reproductive health and rights, gender equality and HIV/AIDS. Sweden is one of the UNFPA's largest donors. This year, Sweden gave SEK 185 million to the organisation.

Sweden has actively contributed to drawing attention to issues relating to gender equality, sexuality and HIV/AIDS in such organisations as the UN.

Please bring your press credentials!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Kenya

The Government decided today to send eight election observers to Kenya. They are to take part in EU-coordinated election observation. Parliamentary and presidential elections are to be held in Kenya on 27 December this year.

Sweden has bilateral development cooperation with Kenya of long standing, including inter alia a dialogue on issues concerning human rights, democracy and good governance.

By participating in the EU's election observation Sweden is supporting a continued development towards democracy.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government to back import drive: Portuguese import days on 2-3 December in Stockholm

The Government decided previously this year to allocate SEK 3 million in 2002 to the Swedish Federation of Trade for practical measures to stimulate imports. The money is to be spent on building up a Swedish profile for import promotion which will stimulate price competition and a more dynamic business sector. The Government is expected to allocate a corresponding amount annually over the next two years.

In the first project, cooperation has been initiated between the Swedish Federation of Trade, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Embassy of Portugal and its trade department (ICEP). They

have taken the joint initiative for Portuguese import days in Stockholm, when Portuguese products for the building sector will be shown. Some 20 suppliers of tiles, floor tiles, marble, limestone, fittings, door handles, taps, washing-up sinks, bathroom fittings and electronic control systems for houses will present their products for Swedish companies in a two-day campaign. The official inauguration by the Ambassador of Portugal, H.E. Mr Zanatti, will take place at the Hilton Hotel Stockholm Slussen on 2 December at 10.00.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-28
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden presents proposals for sustainable urban environment during business sector visit to China

In connection with Leif Pagrotsky's visit to China accompanying Swedish business representatives, there will be a presentation of #The Sustainable City# # a project exhibiting innovative solutions for a sustainable urban environment. This project focuses on environmentally sound solutions for such facilities as water supplies and sewage, traffic planning, energy and waste management.

#Nearly half the global population lives in cities, and this is expected to rise to two thirds in the space of the next 25 years. Managing sustainable development in the cities given this degree of urbanisation is one of the most urgent global challenges,# says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

The #Sustainable City# project aims at marketing Swedish experience in the field of sustainable urban development, particularly in the run-up to the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, which will be preceded by vast investments in the infrastructure and comprehensive modernisation of the Chinese capital.

#In many cases, Sweden has world-leading solutions for a good urban environment and can contribute to an important exchange of experience in China. My hope is that this will lead, ultimately, to significant business opportunities for Swedish companies in such areas as environmentally sound technology and competence,# says Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

The project is based on a Swedish-Chinese partnership focusing on planning proposals for a satellite city for Shanghai, using a Swedish model incorporating environmentally sound solutions. Read more about the visit of the Minister for Industry and Trade to China at www.ud.se

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson to attend migration council meeting in Brussels

On Thursday 28 November, Jan O. Karlsson, the Swedish Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, will attend a meeting of the EU's Justice and Home Affairs Council in Brussels.

The meeting will primarily focus on continued negotiations on three comprehensive legislative proposals:

- the Dublin regulation, which deals with criteria and mechanisms for determining which Member State has responsibility for examining an application for asylum;
- the directive on grounds for protection, which deals with minimum standards for when citizens of a country outside the EU and stateless persons are to be regarded as refugees or in need of protection for other reasons, and the legal status of these individuals;
- the directive on conditions for reception, which deals with minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers.

The Council is expected to agree on a common returnee programme, which contains guidelines for practical cooperation in the field of returnee issues. A decision on the EU programme for the return of Afghan refugees is also expected, as well as conclusions on extended cooperation and the establishment of a networks between migration liaison officers.

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Key word: 7570

PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Latvia's Foreign Minister Sandra Kalniete to visit Sweden

The new Latvian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sandra Kalniete, will pay a visit to Stockholm on Thursday 28 November for talks with Swedish Foreign Minister, Anna Lindh. Among other things, the talks will focus on EU enlargement and NATO's summit meeting in Prague.

Sandra Kalniete will also be meeting the Speaker of the Riksdag, Björn von Sydow, and members of the Riksdag's Committee on Foreign Affairs.

This is Kalniete's first visit to Sweden in her capacity as Foreign Minister.

Sandra Kalniete is 49 years old, and has most recently served as Latvia's Ambassador in Paris. Many Swedes remember her involvement in the Latvian freedom movement as one of the founders of the popular front and one of its few women leaders. In 1990, Kalniete was appointed Head of the Protocol Department of the Latvian Foreign Ministry and Deputy Foreign Minister. Following Latvia's independence in 1991, Kalniete became Ambassador in Geneva (UN) and then Paris. During her time in Paris, Kalniete began to write and her first book was a comprehensive history of the Latvian popular front.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministry of the Environment

Iceland must follow international regulations banning whaling

Sweden will today deliver its official objection to Iceland's declaration that it intends to hunt whales despite the international ban.

Earlier this autumn Iceland acceded to the International Whaling Convention and so became a member of the commission linked to the Convention, the International Whaling Commission (IWC). A country joining the Convention is expected to respect the IWC regulations. But Iceland entered a reservation against the ban on whaling.

The IWC is trying to draw up a sustainable regulatory framework to preserve the world's whales and on which the majority of countries are able to agree. Sweden is playing an important role in these efforts and would like to see Iceland participate.

But Iceland's reservation means that unless progress is made in amending the regulations, Iceland

does not consider that it is under any obligation to respect the IWC whaling ban as of the beginning of 2006. It was this condition that Sweden believes should have been examined at the last IWC meeting in Cambridge.

"Iceland's unilateral condition is incompatible with IWC cooperation and its objectives. If Iceland is to be a member of the IWC, Sweden intends to place the same demands on Iceland as upon other IWC members", comment Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh and Minister of the Environment Lena Sommestad.

This is also stated in the written objection to be presented today by Sweden to the Depositary of the International Whaling Convention in Washington. The objection means that Sweden declares that it does not accept the condition laid down by Iceland for its membership. Sweden's objection applies irrespective of whether previous or future decisions of the IWC accept or reject the Icelandic condition.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-25
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Industry and Trade Leif Pagrotsky inaugurates Swedish consulate-general in Canton

Leif Pagrotsky, Sweden's Minister for Industry and Trade, today inaugurated Sweden's consulate-general in Canton in the province of Guangdong. It is the third Swedish consulate-general to be opened in China, after Hong Kong and Shanghai. Among those attending the inaugural ceremony was Jan-Ove Waldner, Sweden's former world table tennis champion.

"By opening a consulate-general in Canton, we in Sweden are further strengthening our ties with southern China," said Leif Pagrotsky. "Guangdong is among the richest and most open provinces in China, and is one of the country's economic pioneers. It will be an important market for Swedish industry in the future, not least in the IT and telecom sectors. There will also be a considerable need for environmental skills here, which should create some interesting opportunities for Swedish enterprise.

"The dynamic development of southern China is constantly throwing up new business openings," the minister added. "Swedish companies can become considerably more active here, on both the import and export side."

The new consulate-general is to focus on trade promotion in particular and be responsible for the provinces of Guangdong, Fujian and Hainan, and also for the autonomous region of Guangxi.

Together they have 160 million inhabitants. In addition, the consulate-general will be working with information about Sweden and encouraging the development of regional cooperation between twin towns.

For further details of Leif Pagrotsky's trip to China from 24 to 29 November, please visit www.ud.se or www.naring.regeringen.se

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh welcomes peace in Angola

Unofficial translation

The Secretary-General's Special Representative in Angola, Ibrahim Gambari, declared on 21 November that Angola is now at peace. The peace process took a great step forward after the ceasefire agreed in April between the Angolan Government and the former rebel movement UNITA, and is now declared to be successfully concluded.

#I welcome the fact that after 30 years of ravaging civil war, peace has now come to Angola,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh in a comment.

#It is vital that the Angolan Government now takes full responsibility for the reconstruction of the country. Important political and economic reforms are urgently needed. The government must, in particular, lay down a resettlement policy that embraces not only demobilised soldiers but also displaced persons and refugees returning from neighbouring countries,# continues the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

#I call upon all parties to continue to participate in the process which is intended to lead in time to general elections held openly in full accordance with democratic principles.

#One of the most important tasks is to reduce humanitarian suffering among the people of Angola. Sweden is currently one of the principal donors of humanitarian aid to Angola. This year alone we have given over SEK 100 million,# concludes Anna Lindh.

The Government has instructed the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency to draw up a proposal for a country strategy for future development cooperation with Angola. The strategy will aim to reduce poverty in the country, not least by promoting the society's democratic development and respect for human rights.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden prepared for UN appeal for humanitarian assistance

This week the UN will launch its annual package of requests # consolidated appeals # for humanitarian assistance. The appeals for 2003 will cover some 20 countries and amount, in total, to USD 3 billion for food, shelter, medicines and other basic needs for almost 50 million people afflicted by natural disasters, war and other emergencies.

"The UN appeals are an important means of achieving coordination, predictability and rapid funding of relief to areas hit by crisis", says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson.

Every year Sweden channels almost one third, or approximately SEK 300 million, of its humanitarian assistance through the UN appeals. Sweden is normally also among the first countries to respond, which it does through Sida as early as mid-January. The Swedish payments are then made soon after this # by April at the latest. This makes Sweden a leading country as regards a clear and rapid response to these considerable and important needs, which is highly appreciated by the UN and the international community at large. In addition to assistance through the appeals, Sweden also provides direct support to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA), which is responsible for coordination of the appeals.

The countries and regions at the receiving end of the 2003 appeals will include South Africa, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, the Palestinian territories, Tajikistan and North Korea. Other countries and regions are Angola, Burundi, Chechnya, the Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Great Lakes Region in Africa, Guinea, Indonesia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Uganda.

The theme of the appeals for 2003 is "Hope for the Future", to emphasise the importance of providing hope to communities afflicted by conflict and crisis, such as Afghanistan and Sierra Leone, where humanitarian assistance during a transitional period may lead to durable peace and sustainable development.

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Key word: 7500

PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh condemns terrorist act in Jerusalem

"I condemn today's Palestinian terror attack in Jerusalem, which took the lives of at least 11 people and injured around 40. Many of the victims were children, as was the case with the attack on a kibbutz last week. Our thoughts go to the victims and their families", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

"These despicable acts weaken the cause of the Palestinians and undermine prospects for peace. The Palestinians must put an end to the grotesque logic driving those who plan and carry out acts of terror".

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Hungarian Foreign Minister, László Kovács, to visit Stockholm

Unofficial translation

Hungary's Minister for Foreign Affairs, László Kovács, will visit Stockholm on Monday 25 November.

During his visit, Mr Kovács will meet the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, the Speaker of Parliament, Björn von Sydow and the Deputy Minister for Finance, Gunnar Lund.

Foreign Ministers Kovács and Lindh will also open round-table discussions between Sweden and Hungary at Haga Palace. Among other things, EU enlargement will be discussed. After these discussions a press conference will be held with Mr Kovács and Ms Lindh at 16.30 at Haga Palace. Please bring your press credentials!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Targeted sanctions against Belarus

Unofficial translation

Fourteen of the 15 EU foreign ministers decided yesterday to impose travel restrictions on Belarus President Lukashenko and the circle of people closest to him.

"We are deeply disappointed by developments in Belarus and the country's unwillingness to improve the situation by cooperating with the EU and OSCE. This year, several journalists have been sentenced to unreasonably long imprisonment for criticising the President, prosecution of a number of opposition politicians has been instituted and freedom of religion and belief has been limited. The OSCE office in the country has been thrown out by the authorities", comments Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

The restrictions will be targeted at the Belarus President and parts of his government. They are designed to affect the élite responsible in Belarus and not ordinary people.

"It has been important for Sweden not to agree to decisions that will further isolate the population. We shall also continue to promote cooperation with the Belarus people, by encouraging bilateral contacts", emphasises Anna Lindh.

A unanimous EU decision could not be taken because of Portugal's objections. Portugal is concerned that extended EU sanctions may affect the forthcoming summit in Portugal.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Association agreement between the EU and Chile

An association agreement between the EU and Chile was signed on Monday in Brussels by the foreign ministers of the EU and Chilean Minister for Foreign Affairs Soledad Alvear.

The agreement which contains three sections: political dialogue, cooperation and trade, is regarded as the most important entered into by Chile in modern times and the most far-reaching agreement entered into by the EU with a third country.

The EU and Chile will now pursue a regular political dialogue, endeavour to coordinate their positions and take common initiatives in international forums.

In addition, the EU and Chile will cooperate in the spheres of economics, science, technology, IT, culture, education, the fight against drugs and in combating organised crime.

From a Swedish trade perspective, the results of the negotiations are considered to be favourable, both regarding the import and export of industrial products. All industrial products are covered by the agreement and the majority will be duty-free when the agreement enters into force.

The agreement is also positive for the service sector. Full market access and non-discrimination is guaranteed in several major Swedish sectors.

In the field of investment, the agreement is one of the EU's most far-reaching bilateral free trade agreements. Conditions for direct investment will be improved, inter alia, by guaranteeing that such investment is dealt with at the national level. Both imports and exports may be expected to increase. The agreement means a considerable improvement for Swedish companies wishing to take part in public procurement in Chile.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Director-General for Political Affairs

The Government today appointed Anders Lidén as Director-General for Political Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Anders Lidén was born in 1949 and is currently Sweden's Ambassador in Tel Aviv. He has served inter alia at the Permanent Mission of Sweden

to the United Nations in New York and has been Head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs UN Department.

He was coordinator of Sweden's campaign for a seat on the UN Security Council in 1996.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors

The following four Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 14 November:

Cuba's newly appointed Ambassador Jorge Payret Zubiaur was born in 1939. He is a political scientist with a doctor's degree from the University of Havana and entered his country's foreign service in 1968. The Ambassador has served inter alia at Cuba's embassies in Sweden, Norway and in Denmark.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1991 # 1993 Head of the Press and Information Department at the International Press Centre

1993 # 1994 Service at the Foreign Ministry's European Department

1994 # 1998 Counsellor at the embassy in Quito

1998 - Head of the Protocol Department's Ceremonial Division

Lithuania's newly appointed Ambassador Petras Zapolskas was born in 1965 and studied history from 1984 # 1991 at the University of Vilnius. In 1991 he entered his country's foreign service. The Ambassador took a course in diplomacy in 1993 in the United Kingdom and in 1995 a course in security and defence policy in Germany.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1996 - 1999 Counsellor and Minister Counsellor at the Embassy of Lithuania in Moscow

1999 - 2000 Chargé d'affaires a.i. in Moscow

2000 - Head of the Information and Culture Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary

Albania's newly appointed Ambassador Shaban Murati was born in 1945. He studied from 1963 # 1967 at the Department of History and Philology at the University of Tirana and held a visiting professorship in aesthetics there from 1974 # 2001. After having worked as a journalist from 1967 # 1990 the Ambassador entered his country's foreign service in 1991 as Head of the Foreign Ministry's Press and Information Department.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1993 - 1997 Ambassador in Skopje

1999 - 2002 Foreign policy adviser to the Prime Minister

2000 - Head of the Foreign Ministry's Policy Analysis Department

2001 - 2002 Head of the Foreign Ministry's South-East Europe Department

Mongolia's newly appointed Ambassador Sodov Onon (concurrently accredited in Brussels) was born in 1952. She studied languages in Moscow from 1969 # 1974 and also holds a Master of Science degree after studies at the London School of Economics and Political Science from 1999 # 2000. The Ambassador has not previously served in Mongolia's foreign service but worked for the state committee for employment and social issues.

In recent years she has held the following posts:

1992 - 1995 Head of the International Department at the Ministry of Demography and Employment

1995 - 2001 Head of the National Poverty Alleviation Programme Office

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation: Presenting "New pictures of Sweden" and www.sweden.se

On Monday 18 November, Minister for Industry, Employment and Communications Leif Pagrotsky is scheduled to open a seminar on the image of Sweden abroad at the Stockholm Cultural Centre. At this seminar, the new Sweden portal www.sweden.se will also be presented. This portal will be the hub for a profile program that will comprise over one hundred websites. These will include Swedish embassies and consulates. They will all be designed using the same visual and graphic profile. The seminar is being arranged by the Council for the Promotion of Sweden (NSU), which is a cooperation organisation of the Swedish Trade Council, the Invest in Sweden Agency, the Swedish

Travel and Tourism Council, the Swedish Institute and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Participants include Consul-General Olle Wästberg, Ewa Kumlin, who was the initiative-taker behind Swedish Style in Tokyo, industrialist Carl Bennet, industrial designer David Crafoord and CEO of the Swedish Fashion Council Ingrid Giertz-Mårtenson.

The seminar will begin at 1.30 pm while the press showing of the new portal # the initiative of the Council for the Promotion of Sweden #will commence at 12 noon. The portal will be run and further developed by the Swedish Institute.

Venue: Stockholm Cultural Centre, Sergels torg, Hörsalen, Floor 3

Time: Monday 18 November 12.00 noon (press showing)

1.30 pm # 5 pm (seminar)

Welcome!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to support the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries in trade negotiations with the EU

Next year the EU will start negotiations on free-trade agreements with the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. The Swedish Government has therefore decided today to grant an extra SEK 500 000 to the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM). The Centre is responsible for increasing awareness and promoting cooperation between the ACP and the EU.

The purpose of the grant is to support the ACP countries in their negotiations with the EU.

The new trade order will enter into force in 2008. It means a revolutionary change for about half of the world's least developed countries. In the long term, customs tariffs will be reduced, tax systems revised, and one-sided preferences abandoned in favour of reciprocal trade preferences.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Seminar on new UNDP report on global public goods

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are arranging a seminar in Stockholm on 13 November. The seminar will be led by Director-General Ruth Jacoby of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Inge Kaul from UNDP, who will present a new report: #Global Public Goods: Managing Globalisation#. Other participants will include Fredrik Erixon, Chief Economist at the think tank Timbro.

The issues discussed in the report to be presented include better ways for the international community to tackle an increasing number of matters of global interest, such as HIV/AIDS, climate change, biological diversity, financial stability and peace and security. These issues have obvious cross-border effects and require new forms of cooperation if they are not to pose a growing threat to world and human survival.

To the editorial office

If you wish to attend the seminar, please contact Pernilla Johansson by telephone at 08-405 55 26.

Venue and time: Rosenbad 1, Bella Venezia, Wednesday 13 November at 11.00-12.30.

Please bring your press credentials!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Russian diplomats declared persona non grata

The State Secretary for Foreign Affairs today conveyed to the Russian Ambassador in Stockholm that two members of the Embassy staff have been declared persona non grata on grounds of activities that are incompatible with their diplomatic status. The two diplomats have already left Sweden.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh comments on the UN resolution on Iraq

#Sweden has given its full backing to the efforts of the United Nations Security Council to secure unconditional weapons inspections in Iraq. It is good that the Council has been able to unanimously adopt a new resolution. This sends a strong signal to Iraq that the country must cooperate to the full with the UN and the weapons inspectors,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

#Sweden regards the weapons inspections as essential for achieving a solution to the conflict with Iraq. The new resolution strengthens the mandate for the inspections further, and I feel great confidence that UNMOVIC, under the leadership of Hans Blix, and the IAEA will be able to perform their difficult task,# says the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

#The responsibility for enabling the inspections to be implemented in accordance with the resolution now rests with Iraq,# concludes Anna Lindh.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New state secretaries and ambassadors

The Government today appointed Annika Söder and Barbro Holmberg as state secretaries at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Annika Söder will assume the post of State Secretary responsible for international development cooperation and development cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe. Ms Söder is currently Director and Head of the European Security Policy Division at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Her previous positions have included Head of the Press and Information Department, Swedish deputy negotiator at the most recent Intergovernmental Conference and acting Director-General for Development Cooperation.

Barbro Holmberg has a background in sociology and has been editor of *PsykologTidningen* and the magazine *Socialpolitik*. She has worked as a research officer on the parliamentary Committee on the Rights of the Child and on the committee of inquiry appointed to review the activities of the Office of the Children's Ombudsman. Since 1999 Ms Holmberg has been political adviser to the Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy.

Annika Söder and Barbro Holmberg are to be state secretaries to Jan O Karlsson, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy. They will take up their posts on Monday 11 November.

State Secretary to Mr Karlsson Gun-Britt Andersson has been appointed Ambassador and will be at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs before taking up her new post as head of Sweden's delegation to the OECD in Paris in the spring of 2003.

Gun-Britt Andersson has over thirty years' experience in the areas of finance, development and migration issues from the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

The Government today appointed former cabinet minister Maj-Inger Klingvall as Ambassador at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Africa Department.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-11-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson on cooperation with Russia on migration

In view of the large increase this year in groundless applications for asylum from ex-Soviet citizens, Jan O. Karlsson travelled to Moscow last week for talks with Deputy Foreign Minister Valery Loshchinin, Minister of the Interior Boris Gryzlov and Deputy Interior Minister Andrei Chernenko

(head of the Russian Federal Migration Service). The discussions continued on Tuesday at expert group level.

“We were given a very positive reception by the Russian ministers and have reached agreement on a range of joint measures. This is a matter of constructive cooperation between neighbours, aimed at putting a stop to crime and to the exploitation of the asylum system. Within just a few days of our meetings, it has proved possible to solve a number of cases with the help of the Russian authorities,” says Jan O. Karlsson.

As a result of the talks in Moscow, the most senior official of the Russian Federal Migration Service, Igor Junash, is in Stockholm today for negotiations on a Swedish-Russian agreement on:

- #h Establishment of citizenship and issuing of exit documents. Sweden and Russia will cooperate on establishing citizenship and issuing exit documents, by means of direct contacts between the Swedish Migration Board and police authorities, and the Russian Ministry of the Interior and migration service.

- #h Police liaison officer at the Russian embassy in Stockholm. At present Sweden has a police liaison officer at its embassy in Moscow and another at the consulate-general in St Petersburg. Sweden has requested that Russia station a similar Russian police liaison officer at its embassy in Stockholm.

- #h Enforcement of sentences. Sweden wants to have the option of sending Russian citizens who commit crimes in Sweden back to Russia to serve their sentences there. Russian authorities will now examine a Swedish draft for a bilateral agreement on enforcement of sentences.

- #h Further expert contacts. The Russian-Swedish expert group that was established in Moscow last week will continue to meet in future and will follow cooperation between the authorities on an ongoing basis.

Dubious Russian travel agencies are also known to exist, selling complete “asylum packages”, which can contain visas, false documents and instructions on how to progress through the asylum system. The Russian authorities have declared that they are prepared to assist Sweden in this matter as well.

Asylum-seekers from the former Soviet Union are now the second largest group of asylum-seekers reaching Sweden. In the last nine months, the number of asylum-seekers from the former Soviet Union has been almost three times as high as in the equivalent period last year. The great majority have no genuine reason for seeking asylum and of these a certain sub-category consists of active criminals. The National Police Board has estimated that approximately 15-20 per cent of them commit criminal acts while in Sweden. The National Police Board emphasises that a large number of cases remain undetected and the figures may consequently be considerably higher. The vast majority (97 per cent) seek asylum when in Sweden and then lack passports or other documents to confirm their citizenship. In cases where applications are obviously without valid grounds, the Swedish Migration Board currently takes decisions very swiftly by special rapid procedures. The agreement with the Russian authorities will facilitate the establishment of citizenship and issuing of travel documents for the return of ex-Soviet citizens.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sven-Olof Petersson new Ambassador

Today the Government appointed Sven-Olof Petersson as Head of the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the European Union in Brussels.

Sven-Olof Petersson, who was born in 1947, has most recently served as Director-General for Political Affairs. He has worked with EU issues in a number of posts since Sweden became a member of the EU. From 1989-1995, he was Minister and Deputy Head at the Embassy of Sweden in Washington.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Mountains and development assistance in Bishkek

#Mountains are the world's water tower. Through regional cooperation, the countries in Central Asia have a great responsibility for preventing conflicts over this important natural resource. Free trade and greater regional cooperation can also provide these countries with the benefits of a global economy.#

This was said by the Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson at the Bishkek Global Mountain Summit in Kyrgyzstan, initiated by that country on the occasion of the UN "Year of the Mountains". (Read his speech at www.ud.se)

Mountains and development assistance, migration and the market economy are some of the subjects being discussed at Jan O. Karlsson's bilateral meetings in Bishkek on 29-30 October. Today he will meet, inter alia, Kyrgyzstan's President Akayev, who visited Stockholm last spring. He has also had meetings with Deputy Prime Minister Otorbayev (responsible for economic development, trade and investment), Foreign Minister Aytmatov, Minister of the Interior Subanbekov and Speaker of the Parliament Borubayev.

Sida is currently working on drawing up a strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with the countries in Central Asia. This is expected to contain support for poverty alleviation and for initiatives promoting human rights. As part of efforts to strengthen relations between Sweden and Kyrgyzstan, Sweden intends to open an honorary consulate in Bishkek shortly. Sweden will also

contribute to a police training project under the auspices of OSCE in Kyrgyzstan.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-30
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs to attend the meeting of the Nordic Council in Helsinki

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, will participate in the 50th anniversary of the Nordic Council in Helsinki on 31 October. In conjunction with the meeting Ms Lindh will meet the other Nordic foreign ministers.

In 2003 Sweden will preside over Nordic intergovernmental cooperation. The Swedish presidency website is available at

www.ud.se as from Thursday 31 October.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-24
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Anna Lindh in connection with hostage drama

in Moscow

"Taking innocent civilians as hostages is an act of terror which must be unequivocally condemned, irrespective of the given reasons", says Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, in a statement in connection with the ongoing hostage drama in Moscow.

"The Russian authorities have the Swedish Government's full sympathy and support in their attempts to reach a solution without any harm to human lives."

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh condemns terrorist act in Israel

"I condemn yesterday's terrorist act in Israel, which took the lives of at least 14 people and injured around 40. Our thoughts today go to the victims and their families", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

"This deplorable act was committed at a time when international efforts are being made to bring peace to the region. Within the so-called Quartet, the EU, USA, UN and Russia are discussing a road map for creating a Palestinian state.

The Palestinian groups that use terror as a means must realise that their senseless attacks are obstructing these peace efforts. For peace to be achieved, everyone must recognise the state of Israel's right to exist.

I call upon all the parties to cease their acts of violence and not to allow extremists to destroy the chance for peace. Only through negotiation can we achieve the goal of a democratic Palestinian state side by side with Israel along secure and recognised borders".

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministry for Foreign Affairs UN archive to be presented to the Dag Hammarskjöld Library in Uppsala

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has decided to present its UN archive to the collections of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library in Uppsala. The Library has its own UN archive, founded at an earlier date. The formal presentation will be made by State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren on Thursday 24 October # United Nations Day # at a ceremony at Carolina Rediviva Library, at 9.30-10.30.

The role of the United Nations in international affairs often makes it the focus of attention. The decisions of global importance that it takes are based on a great many background documents and reports. The demand often arises for speedy access to such information and documents. Most UN documents from 1993 or later are available on the Internet, but older documents still largely exist only in paper media.

At the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, UN documents on paper have been collected in a special UN archive. The UN archive is the only one of its kind in the Nordic countries, as the collection contains UN documents from the foundation of the organisation up to the present day.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson to visit Russia and Central Asia

Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson is to visit Russia and Central Asia on 28 October # 1 November.

Jan O. Karlsson is travelling to Moscow on 28 October together with an expert group to discuss with Russian ministries and authorities stronger cooperation and concrete measures to combat the use of groundless applications when abusing the Swedish asylum system.

Jan O. Karlsson will meet, inter alia, First Deputy Foreign Minister Loshchinin, Minister for the Interior Gryzlov and the Head of the Russian Migration Services, Deputy Minister for the Interior

Chernenko.

The expert group consists of representatives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and the Swedish Migration Board. On Tuesday, the group will continue discussions with their counterparts from ministries and authorities.

Jan O. Karlsson will subsequently continue to the summit for the UN "Year of the Mountains" in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (the Bishkek Global Mountain Summit) and visit Dushanbe, Tajikistan and Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Project: Swedish lifestyle in Paris

The Government has decided to contribute SEK 275 000 to the "Swedish December" project which will take place in Paris on 5#19 December 2002. This project is part of a long-term initiative aimed at marketing the Swedish lifestyle and Swedish experience/lifestyle industry in France.

Swedish fashion and design will be exhibited at the Centre Culturel Suédois (Swedish Culture House in Paris), where a discussion on the Swedish lifestyle is also scheduled to take place. In connection with a major trade and industry promotional event, a prize will be awarded to the most successful Swedish company in France in 2002. The spotlight will be on Swedish culinary art and Swedish music, and "Swedish Indie-Go 2" will promote Swedish pop music. This project will bring together organisations in Sweden with potential partners in these areas and Swedish companies will have the opportunity to forge new business contacts.

--"Sweden is at the absolute forefront in new creative industries such as IT, biotechnology, music, media, design and fashion," says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky. "Sweden's unique combination of traditional industry and these new creative industries puts us in a strong position to challenge the stiff international competition."

The funds will be placed at the disposal of the Swedish embassy in Paris, which is cooperating on this project with the Swedish Trade Council in Paris, the Swedish Chamber of Commerce in Paris, the Centre Culturel Suédois (Swedish Culture House in Paris) Export Music Sweden (ExMS) and participating companies.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministry for Foreign Affairs to send expert group to Bali

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has decided to send an expert group to Bali to assist in the work of identifying the victims of the terrorist attack on Bali on 12 October.

The group includes Detective Superintendents Stig Edqvist and Bo Karlström of the National Police Board, Forensic Odontologist Irena Dawidson and Public Medicolegal Officer Riita Kauppila from the National Board of Forensic Medicine.

The expert group will land on Bali on Wednesday 16 October at 13.45 local time.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Support in the EU for measures to prevent abuse of asylum

"The increase in groundless applications for asylum from Russian/former Soviet citizens and the ensuing criminality that has been observed is a serious problem in Sweden today. To combat abuse of the right of asylum, close cooperation between the EU countries is necessary".

This was said today by Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson at the EU Council of Ministers meeting on justice and home affairs in Luxembourg. He gave an account of the situation and measures now being taken to stop abuse of the asylum system. After the meeting, Jan O Karlsson commented that he had met with understanding and a willingness to cooperate.

"I am shortly planning to send a delegation to Brussels so that we can learn about Belgium's similar experiences two years ago and the action they took to stop abuse of the asylum system", said Jan O. Karlsson.

At the open debate, both the asylum procedure directive and the student directive were discussed. Jan O. Karlsson emphasised the importance of procedures enabling rapid processing of applications that obvious lack grounds # procedures that we already use today in Sweden. The student directive aims at facilitating and simplifying regulations for entry and stay for students from countries outside the EU, which Jan O. Karlsson welcomed.

At the meeting, the status directive (a proposed directive on minimum standards for the qualifications and status of third-country nationals and stateless persons as refugees or as persons who otherwise need international protection), and the Council regulation establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national were also discussed. This regulation will replace the current Dublin Convention and is expected to be adopted at the end of the year. The status directive is a key directive which will constitute a guideline for all other directives in this area. What was discussed was on the one hand, a common definition and interpretation of the concept of refugee, and on the other, the way in which subsidiary protection (alternative forms of protection) should be defined.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

#Stop the abuse of the asylum system#

#The number of groundless applications for asylum has increased dramatically in the last year. We will now shift into a higher gear in cooperation between authorities and countries to reduce abuse of the asylum system and the related criminality which has also increased all over Sweden this year.# This was stated by the Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, at a press briefing this morning at which he reported the measures against the increasing number of groundless applications for asylum from Russian/former Soviet citizens.

Among former Soviet citizens who have sought asylum in Sweden this year there is a group of active criminals who use the asylum system to be able to legally stay in Sweden. They have contacts with criminal networks that provide them with housing, cars and mobile phones.

#It is totally unacceptable that the asylum system is exploited in this way. It affects all the other asylum seekers and also innocent people in the municipalities. This development must be stopped by taking measures in Sweden and together with Russia, and through EU cooperation,# Mr Karlsson said.

At the national level: The Swedish Migration Board now takes quick decisions as far as people who clearly lack valid reasons for asylum are concerned and they can be refused entry immediately. The possibility of custody facilitates the rapid enforcement of refusal of entry decisions (e.g. if people who have been refused entry are feared will go into hiding). The Swedish Migration Board has capacity for 90 today but the number will be increased shortly. Cooperation between the Swedish

Migration Board and the police will be intensified.

Cooperation with Russia: Migration Minister Jan O. Karlsson will travel to Russia in the near future to discuss the problems with representatives of the Russian government and develop cooperation. Among other things, the forms for readmission and enforcement, and possibilities for transfer of enforcement of sentence will be discussed. Cooperation between the Swedish and Russian police will be intensified.

Cooperation in the EU: To prevent new groundless applications for asylum from Russia, cooperation with other EU countries will be intensified.

Jan O. Karlsson will therefore raise the issue of enhanced visa cooperation at the EU meeting of Ministers for justice and home affairs in Luxembourg on Tuesday. Sweden will continue to actively press the Commission for the EU to bring about a readmission agreement with Russia.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New state-owned enterprise for more favourable export financing

The Government wants to start a new wholly-owned state enterprise to help Swedish companies obtain export orders abroad. The enterprise is intended to commence its operations after the turn of the year. The Minister for Trade, Mr Leif Pagrotsky, presented these plans today in connection with the 40th anniversary of the Swedish Export Credit Corporation.

The enterprise is being launched to give Swedish companies better chances of financing export business in important developing countries such as, for example, Brazil and Egypt. It will complement the current system for state-supported export credits which are handled by the Swedish Export Credit Corporation.

In some markets, wholly-owned state export financing enterprises are needed if exporting companies are to obtain favourable conditions in the buying country. With the new enterprise Swedish companies will enjoy equivalent conditions to those enjoyed by other countries' export companies.

#We want Swedish companies to be able to offer good financing possibilities all over the world,# says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky. #This will boost companies' chances of new orders and strengthen their competitiveness.#

#At the moment it is a matter of making things easier for companies like Ericsson and ABB. It will also have significance for other Swedish companies on markets where special demands are made on financing,# Mr Pagrotsky says.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Country strategy for development cooperation with East Timor

The Government today approved a country strategy for development cooperation with East Timor comprising SEK 100 million over a three-year period.

#When President Xanana Gusmão was in Stockholm in April this year we spoke of the importance of not abandoning our commitment now that East Timor has achieved its independence and that we should continue to help the population of East Timor fight poverty by securing peace, democracy, human rights and economic development,# says Jan O. Karlsson.

The greater part of Swedish assistance will be channelled through the UN system#s different organisations. Support to administration and education is being considered as is also broad economic support and security-building efforts.

In the period 1999-2002 Sweden contributed over SEK 135 million to East Timor. At present 10 Swedish civilian police officers and 2 military observers are taking part in the UN peace-keeping mission in the country.

The country strategy is available at www.ud.se

East Timor became independent on 20 May 2002 after more than two years# UN administration. The former Portuguese colony was occupied from 1975 to 1999 by Indonesia.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to give budget support to Uganda and Mozambique

The Government decided today to approve an allocation of SEK 65 million in budget support to Uganda. It also gave the go-ahead for the final instalment # amounting to SEK 100 million for fiscal year 2002 # of budget support for a protracted period to Mozambique.

"Swedish budget support is an expression of the fact that our partnership with poor countries goes beyond debt relief. It is a form of direct assistance extended to countries that pursue sound, responsible economic policies with a clear poverty reduction orientation. It has the direct aim of strengthening the countries' own political objectives to combat poverty", says Minister for Development Cooperation Jan O. Karlsson.

Swedish budget support is granted to poor countries that have, or will soon have, sustainable debts under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative introduced by the World Bank and the IMF.

"It is also about wanting to take our share of the responsibility for halving world poverty by the year 2015, in accordance with the internationally agreed UN millennium development goals", says Jan O. Karlsson.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh to take part in Danish-Finnish-Swedish meeting of prime ministers in Copenhagen

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh is to deputise for the Prime Minister when participating in the Danish-Finnish-Swedish consultations in Copenhagen before the EU summit in Brussels later in

October.

The prime ministers of the three Nordic members of the EU have met for consultations prior to each EU summit since the autumn of 2001. Enlargement and related issues are at the top of the summit agenda. The work of the Convention on the future of Europe will also be discussed.

Programme:

19.30 Consultations on the EU summit

20.15 Short press briefing

20.30 Working dinner

The venue of the entire programme is Marienborg, Nybrovj 410, 2800 Lyngby.

On Monday 14 October at 08.30, Anna Lindh will address the Baltic Development Forum Summit at the Copenhagen Business School.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

A big step towards a united Europe

#Now we can achieve the objectives we set during the Swedish Presidency of the EU in 2001. We had plenty of detractors back then who said it would be impossible to conclude the enlargement negotiations in 2002. The recommendations presented by the European Commission today show that we were right in drawing up our ambitious timetable#, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh in a comment.

#The candidate countries have made impressive progress. Much still remains to be done. The candidates must continue to fight corruption, improve their work on the environment and strengthen their administrative and legal capacities. At this point, however, EU membership is the best guarantee for further reforms#, says Anna Lindh.

The Commission bases its proposal on the progress made by the candidate countries, but also points out certain problems that need to be addressed before the countries join the EU. Ten out of a total of thirteen candidate countries are judged to be ready for accession in 2004. The present Member States are to adopt a position on the Commission's proposal at the EU summit in Brussels on 24-25 October. The final negotiations are to be concluded no later than the summit in Copenhagen in December.

The ten countries that the Commission proposes should conclude negotiations this year are Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Romania and Bulgaria are considered to need more time for reforms before they can join the EU. Turkey is deemed not yet to meet the political conditions required by the EU before negotiations

can be initiated.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Increased development cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe

In its 2003 Budget Bill, the Government proposes an increase in development assistance to Eastern Europe of SEK 50 million to a total of SEK 800 million for 2004. Cooperation will primarily focus on Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.

When the candidate countries in our immediate vicinity attain membership of the European Union, development cooperation with these countries will be phased out. Instead, cooperation with Russia and Ukraine will be intensified.

Reform and modernisation efforts in Russia and Ukraine, their accelerated WTO accession process and their growing cooperation with the EU are of major importance for Sweden.

"Cooperation with Eastern Europe represents an investment in the dynamic Baltic Sea region of growth", says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

"What is important is to promote sustainable development throughout the Baltic Sea region, increase general prosperity and reduce the gaps created in the region during most of the twentieth century. The Government gives high priority to cooperation with countries in Central and Eastern Europe".

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Substantial reinforcement of export promotion

In its 2003 Budget Bill, the Government proposes special investments in export promotion for 2003-2004. For 2003, export promotion will be allocated an additional SEK 52 million, over and above the SEK 45 million decided in the 2002 Budget Bill.

"We want to strengthen export promotion, particularly for smaller companies, and invest in increased presence and activity on strategic markets", says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky. "We want to market both new and established industries and Swedish cutting-edge expertise".

"It is essential that we continually renew our efforts and that an increasing number of companies gain a foothold on new markets. As internationalisation increases, so must our efforts also increase to take advantage of the opportunities offered", says Leif Pagrotsky.

Priority markets include Russia, the EU candidate countries in the Baltic Sea region, China, Japan, Mexico as well as markets that are already important, such as the USA, the Nordic countries and the rest of Europe.

The new money will also be used to promote imports.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Budget 2003: More resources to the agencies responsible for aliens

Migration policy will receive a total of SEK 4.4 billion in 2003. This is an increase of around SEK

1.7 billion compared with previous years.

"This reinforcement is necessary to cope with the increased influx of people seeking asylum in Sweden", says Minister for International Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

The increase is aimed at shortening processing times at the Swedish Migration Board and the Aliens Appeals Board and maintaining high standards in the Migration Board's reception system.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

More resources to investment promotion

In its 2003 Budget Bill, the Government proposes special efforts for investment promotion in 2003-2004. For 2003, investment promotion will be allocated an additional SEK 13 million, over and above the SEK 5 million decided in the 2002 Budget Bill.

"These new resources will enable us to give the Invest in Sweden Agency (ISA) greater opportunities to attract foreign companies to Sweden. We want to strengthen the ISA's presence abroad, for example, through the permanent establishment of the ISA in China", says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

"Foreign direct investments, know-how and technology are of major importance for growth and employment", says Leif Pagrotsky. "They are the motor for technological development, create new job opportunities and contribute to greater competition".

The Invest in Sweden Agency (ISA) is the central agency for investment-promoting measures in Sweden. Its operations focus on information campaigns, marketing projects in special target areas and regional cooperation and training. Target areas include IT, electronics and biological sciences. A new area planned for 2003 is "Intelligent systems for vehicle safety".

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Budget 2003: Further increases in development assistance

Further steps towards the achievement of the development assistance target of 1 per cent of GNI are proposed in the autumn Budget Bill.

Swedish development assistance will increase by SEK 7 billion between 2000 and 2004. In 2003, development assistance will amount to 0.81 per cent of GNI and in 2004, it will be raised to 0.86 per cent of GNI.

"It is by increasing development assistance and expanding cooperation in different policy areas that we can eliminate poverty in the world", says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson. "Development assistance and trade must interact, as must foreign, environmental and agricultural policies if we are to achieve sustainable development and meet the millennium goal of halving poverty in the world by 2015".

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh regrets Pakistan's missile test

#I deeply regret that Pakistan has carried out a new missile test today. It could lead to further weapons proliferation in the region with subsequent negative consequences for security,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

#Once again, I urge Pakistan and India to implement all steps in the UN Security Council Resolution 1172/98 on nuclear disarmament. The resolution urges India and Pakistan, for example, to cease the development of delivery vehicles for nuclear weapons.

On account of the tense situation in the region, I also urge Pakistan and India to do everything in their power to solve the current crisis by diplomatic means and to resume the political dialogue as soon as possible#.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government appoints Consul-General in Canton

The Government has today appointed Ulf Sörmark as Consul-General in Canton. The inauguration of the Consulate-General is planned for late November or early December this year. Together with Shanghai and Hong Kong, this will be the third Consulate-General in China.

Ulf Sörmark will move to his new post from his position as senior adviser at the Middle East and North Africa Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has previously served in Colombo and Seoul and was exhibition commissioner at Taejon Expo 93.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press briefing prior to Swedish initiated meeting in Bangkok to discuss trafficking

On a Swedish initiative an international meeting on trafficking in human beings has been arranged for 7-9 October in Bangkok, Thailand. Gun-Britt Andersson, State Secretary at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, will lead the meeting which will bring together more than 150 experts and decision-makers from European

and Asian countries and representatives of multilateral donors such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, various UN organisations, etc. Prior to the meeting Gun-Britt Andersson will hold a press briefing on Thursday 3 October at 11.00, at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs torg 1.

Sandwiches will be served for lunch # if you wish to attend please mail notification to jennie.landegren@foreign.ministry.se, not later than 16.00 on Wednesday. Please bring your press credentials.

The aim of the seminar is to analyse in what ways trafficking in humans is related to women's situation and to identify how trafficking in humans can be prevented through efforts for increased gender equality in development cooperation. The seminar will develop strategies for gender equality and against trafficking in humans in the areas of employment, education, migration, social attitudes, social security and legislation.

The seminar in Bangkok has been arranged by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in cooperation with the United Nations Development Fund for Women, UNIFEM, and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, UN ESCAP.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-10-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Deposits at Swedish foreign missions at the time of the Second World War and Nazi persecution

The Commission on Jewish Assets in Sweden at the Time of the Second World War presented its final report #Sweden and Jewish Assets# (Swedish Government Official Reports 1999:20) to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in March 1999. The task of the Commission was to find out whether property that had belonged to Jews killed in the Holocaust in one way or another had come into Swedish possession.

The Commission's final report recommended that further investigation should be carried out to ascertain whether such property had been deposited at Swedish foreign missions and never collected. A committee of inquiry into this matter has now completed its report. It was presented to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms Anna Lindh, on 1 October. The inquiry, which was carried out by Ambassador Thomas Ganslandt, is based on a scrutiny of preserved records concerning primarily Germany and states annexed or occupied by Germany or allied with Germany in Europe

at some stage of the Second World War.

The most essential conclusions of the committee are briefly as follows. The number of deposits at the missions studied appears to have varied from a very few or none at all to some hundred in Paris, about 150 in Budapest and perhaps a few hundred in Berlin. The depositors were both Swedes and citizens of countries for which Sweden was acting as protective power. Deposits by other foreign citizens were also accepted in certain cases.

Deposits of confirmed or probable Jewish origin identified by the committee at Swedish foreign missions can be established in Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, France, Italy, Switzerland and Denmark. However, they are relatively few. Regarding Berlin 15-20 cases are involved. In Budapest it is a matter of some ten cases. The total number elsewhere amounts to just over 20 cases.

The deposits mainly comprised money, valuable documents, personal documents and valuables that the depositors wanted to store in a safe place. Most of the deposits could be returned after the war. In Budapest, however, a considerable number of deposits were lost when the legation was plundered by Russian soldiers and others again during the chaotic situation there in the winter of 1945. Several of these were Jewish deposits. The war also caused losses of property at the consulate in Vienna. In other cities too, people were in contact after the war seeking deposits that could not be identified or found. As regards remaining deposits after the war that were not claimed, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and missions abroad made great efforts to return them to their owners. The department at the Ministry dealing with matters concerning Sweden's undertakings as protective power during the Second World War # known as Department B # worked to this end until 1952. A few deposits from the period in question whose owners it has not been possible to identify, chiefly a few jewels and small valuables, are still kept in the Ministry archives. The committee has not been able to establish that any deposits still in the possession of the state can be proved to have belonged to people subject to the Nazi persecution.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Finance

Sweden makes a new contribution to Debt Relief for the Poorest Countries

Sweden today announced an additional contribution to the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) and the World Bank's special initiative for debt relief for the poorest countries, the so called HIPC-initiative (Heavily Indebted Poor Countries).

- #This is a concrete way to support poor and highly indebted countries that have decided to come to terms with their debt problems, says Minister for Development Cooperation Jan O. Karlsson. The debt cancellations are an important step in the efforts to reach the common goal to halve poverty by 2015#, he says. Jan O. Karlsson is in Washington D.C. this weekend to participate in the World Bank's Annual Meeting and represent the Nordic and Baltic countries in the Development Committee meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

Sweden now pledges to make a further contribution, of SEK 200 million (approx. USD 21,3 million), to the HIPC Trust Fund. This contribution comes on top of the SEK 700 million (approx. USD 74,7 million) already disbursed.

#Sweden will continue to assume full responsibility for our share of the financing of the initiative, says Bosse Ringholm, Minister of Finance. #We urge others to do the same and place great importance on a reasonable burden-sharing of the costs. Disbursement of this contribution will be conditional upon similar commitment being made by major donors and creditors.#

The Swedish pledge is made in view of the upcoming IMF and the World Bank's Annual Meetings in Washington.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors

The following four Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Friday 27 September:

Finland's newly appointed Ambassador Pertti Torstila was born in 1946. He graduated in political science from Helsinki University in 1970. Ambassador Torstila has alternated between service at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Helsinki and at different missions abroad.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

Ambassador and Head of Finland's delegation at the Vienna Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) negotiations on military security

Deputy Chairman of Finland's delegation at the 1992 CSCE follow-up conference and summit in Helsinki

Ambassador in Budapest and Zagreb

Head of the Political Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Under-secretary of State

Malta's newly appointed Ambassador Alfred J. Falzon was born in 1943. He studied at Mid-Essex College in Chelmsford, England and at a seminary in Floriana, Malta and entered his country's public administration in 1962. The Ambassador's previous posts have included service at Malta's foreign missions in the UK and the USA, and at the UN Office in Geneva.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

First Counsellor and Deputy Head of Malta's mission in Rome

Deputy Director of the Department of Corporate Services

Director of the Department of Corporate Services

Moldova's newly appointed Ambassador Nicolae Tabacaru (concurrently accredited in Berlin) was born in 1955. He has studied, inter alia, at the Institute of Political Science in St. Petersburg and entered his country's foreign service in 1989. From 1990-1992, the Ambassador studied at the Moscow Diplomatic Academy and in 1993 he underwent a course in diplomacy at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

Minister Counsellor at the Embassy in Brussels, with concurrent accreditation in the Hague, London, Luxembourg, NATO and the EU

Head of the European and North American Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Chisinau

Foreign policy advisor to Moldova's President

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Ambassador in Berlin

Niger's newly appointed Ambassador Amadou Touré (concurrently accredited in Bonn) was born in 1944. He is an engineer within the field of telecommunications and was educated in Germany, the USA and France. The Ambassador has worked with information technology and telecommunications, both within the private and public sectors.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

Advisor on economic and social issues to the Prime Minister

Chairman of the Board of Compagnie Aérienne Air Inter

Special Advisor on European affairs to the Prime Minister

Ambassador to Germany in Bonn

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden gives a SEK 5.8 million grant to UNDP

The Government decided today to allocate a grant of SEK 5.8 million to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The money will be used for the organisation's follow-up of the UN millennium development goals.

In the Millennium Declaration of 2000, the world's heads of state and government declared the objective of halving the number of people living in extreme poverty by the year 2015. In 2001, the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan presented a proposal for following up this declaration.

At the request of Kofi Annan, the UNDP has taken the initiative for a strategy on ways in which the different UN organisations can help to ensure that these goals are achieved.

Sweden is very positive towards the way in which the Millennium Declaration is being followed up and to the will of the UN to organise its work around it.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to host climate meeting for the very poorest

Today Sweden will host an international climate meeting in Stockholm. The meeting is being arranged by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), which has been commissioned to convene donor countries for initial talks on support to the least-developed countries.

The meeting is a follow-up to last summer's major climate conference in Bonn. Among other things, the conference led to an agreement on the Kyoto Protocol, according to which the industrialised countries have committed to limit their emissions of greenhouse gases. A further outcome was the establishment of a special fund for the least-developed countries, which have already been hardest hit by climate change in the form of drought and floods, but also because of detrimental effects on human health. The occurrence of malaria is expected to rise in regions that were previously spared from the disease.

The fund is intended to support the development of national competence and capacity to deal with these changes in the climate.

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Key word: 6847

PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Dakar

The Government has today appointed Annika Magnusson as new Ambassador in Dakar, Senegal. Annika Magnusson has served most recently as Head of Department at Sida, with responsibility for East and West Africa.

Annika Magnusson has previously served, inter alia, at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm and at the Permanent Representation in Brussels and has worked for Sida in Stockholm and Africa.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Campaign for Swedish design for the disabled in Brussels

Unofficial translation

The Government has decided to allocate SEK 250 000 to the project #Swedish design without obstacles# in Brussels from 31 January until February 2003. With the project Sweden will be the first EU country in Brussels to mark the start of the 2003 European Year of People with Disabilities, on the theme of #Awareness#.

Swedish design in disability aids will be shown in two exhibitions, #Design for Everybody# and #The Children's Train#. In exhibitions and seminars, particular attention will be drawn to new expertise and technology within the field of disability aids. Swedish companies will be given the

opportunity to establish business contacts and to market their expertise and products. The project will also bring together organisations in Sweden and Belgium working with different dimensions of disability issues.

Swedish design has a unique success formula through its understanding of the user and its concern for the human being. Design for the disabled is an area in which Sweden has an extremely good reputation internationally and where it has much to offer, says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky. The money will be placed at the disposal of Sweden's embassy in Brussels which is running the campaign in conjunction with the Brussels Office of the Swedish Trade Council, the Belgian Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Public Health and the Environment, the Swedish Institute, the Swedish Society of Crafts and Design, the Swedish Handicap Institute, the Knowledge Foundation and the companies involved.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson to attend World Bank Annual Meeting in the USA

Jan O. Karlsson to attend World Bank Annual Meeting in the USA

On 26-30 September, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson will be in Washington D.C. to attend the World Bank Annual Meeting and a meeting of the Development Committee of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

At these meetings, which bring together finance and development ministers from all over the world, discussions will include ways in which the Millennium Goals may be achieved and implementation of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) and its financing.

At separate meetings, Jan O. Karlsson will also meet the so-called Utstein Group # development cooperation ministers from Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and the UK.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, comments on the situation in Ramallah

"I am dismayed at the Israeli army's destruction of the Palestinian Authority's headquarters in Ramallah and siege of President Arafat's office. I fear for the President's personal safety," says the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh.

"I urge Israel to show restraint and to raise the siege. The crucial work on reforming the Palestinian Authority and the preparations for the Palestinian elections must be allowed to continue. And the Palestinian Authority must do its utmost to fight terrorism," Ms Lindh continues.

"In my speech to the UN General Assembly on Thursday I regretted the two suicide attacks that had taken place in Israel the day before. Over a month had passed without any attacks of this nature. I appeal to all concerned to take responsibility and not allow extremists on either side to destroy the chance of peace," Ms Lindh concludes.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Cuba to accede to non-proliferation treaty

Cuba has announced its decision to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

"I am very pleased that Cuba is now choosing to join the other 187 states that are parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The treaty is a crucial instrument in international efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and promote disarmament. I welcome Cuba's decision and now call upon India, Pakistan and Israel, which remain outside the Treaty, to sign up too," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is a treaty dating from 1968 whose aim is to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons to countries other than the five nuclear-weapon states (the United States, Russia, China, France and the UK).

The NPT requires states that are parties to the treaty to enter into agreements with the UN#s International Atomic Energy Agency on the monitoring of their nuclear installations. The treaty also contains provisions regarding negotiations on nuclear disarmament. At a meeting in 2000 the parties to the treaty adopted a 13-step action plan for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

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Key word: 6807

PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Consul-General in Hamburg

The Government decided today to appoint Bo Emthén to the position of Consul-General in Hamburg.

At present he is Consul-General at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and works for the Projects Export Secretariat.

Bo Emthén was previously Consul-General in Gdansk. He has also served in Warsaw, at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York and in Baghdad.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

SEK 4 million to new Swedish contact centre for international operations

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has decided to contribute SEK four million to the new Folke Bernadotte Academy in Kramfors, which is due to launch its activities this autumn.

The Folke Bernadotte Academy will be headed by the former Ambassador in Belgrade, Michael Sahlin. The Academy will provide education and coordinated training for personnel preparing to take part in international disasters, crisis management and peace operations.

The Government decided in May to establish the Folke Bernadotte Academy, which will serve as Sweden's contact centre for international cooperation within its field of activities. The Academy will have an especially important role in the development efforts carried out in the EU to train experts for civil crisis management operations.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish contribution to fighting peat fires in Lithuania

The Government decided today to contribute SEK 250 000 to help Lithuania fight the serious fires that have been raging in forestry and peat areas for several months. The funds will be placed at the disposal of the Swedish Rescue Services Agency for immediate use.

Since the spring, Lithuanian authorities have been fighting more than 18 000 fires and the country's rescue personnel have been kept on a constant alert. It is primarily peat mosses that are burning and as they burn below ground, fire-fighting operations require special techniques. The Lithuanian rescue services agency has asked for Swedish support for the necessary fire-fighting and rescue equipment,

The Swedish Rescue Services Agency has been assigned the task of transporting redundant fire-fighting and rescue equipment for helping to fight these fires. This includes motor-driven pumps, hoses and other equipment. These supplies and technical instructors are now on their way to Vilnius.

"The serious fires resulting from the hot weather this summer have put a great deal of strain on the available equipment in Lithuania. This is why we need to assist the Lithuanian authorities in their rescue and fire-fighting efforts", says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh addresses the UN

The Minister for Foreign Affairs will address the UN General Assembly on Thursday 19 September. Afterwards she will meet the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The Minister's address will be posted on [http://www.ud.se/](http://www.ud.se/target=_blank).

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

King and Queen to pay state visit to Mexico

Their Majesties King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will be paying a state visit to Mexico on 5-7 November 2002 at the invitation of President Vicente Fox. The Swedish Government will be represented on this occasion. A delegation from the business sector, under the leadership of the President of the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, Sören Gyll, will visit Mexico at the same time.

The programme will include visits to Mexico City, Teotihuacán and Oaxaca.

To the editorial office: information about accreditation of accompanying media representatives will be

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden and China agreed on the opening of a Swedish Consulate-General in Canton

On 19 April the Government took a decision to open a Consulate-General in Canton, in the Guangdong Province, southern China. An agreement has now been concluded between Sweden and the People's Republic of China on the establishment of the new Swedish Consulate-General. It will be responsible for the provinces of Guangdong (where Canton is situated), Fujian and Hainan, as well as the autonomous region of Guangxi. The entire region has 160 million inhabitants.

The inauguration of the Consulate-General is planned for the turn of the month November/December. Together with Shanghai and Hongkong, this will be the third Consulate-General in China.

"With the new Consulate-General we are further strengthening our relations with southern China and one of the most rapidly growing regional economies in the world", says Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky.

Guangdong is one of China's wealthiest provinces. The capital, Canton, is aiming to become an international commercial centre, and a large number of infrastructure projects are planned, including new motorways, subways and exhibition centres. Shenzhen, with its rapidly growing IT industry, also belongs to this district.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky asks the European Commission to look into the Danish car market

According to information in the Danish and German media, Danish car dealers offer less favourable prices and delivery terms to customers non-resident in Denmark. This problem has been experienced by Swedish and German consumers, who have reacted to being offered terms in many cases inferior to those offered to Danish consumers.

"We will not accept Swedish consumers being discriminated against by Danish car dealers," says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

"We must ensure that free competition and equal treatment prevail in the EU internal market. I have therefore written to the Competition Commissioner Mario Monti today asking him to get to the bottom of this and to take appropriate action. I have also been in touch with my Danish colleague, Bendt Bendtsen, and have made it clear that we cannot accept illegal discrimination being practised in the Danish car market," Mr Pagrotsky says.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Contribution to business sector initiative during celebration of Saint Petersburg's 300th anniversary

The Government today decided to grant two million SEK to the Swedish Trade Council for a business sector initiative in Saint Petersburg during the celebration of the city's 300th anniversary in 2003.

The appropriation is part of Sweden's investment in Saint Petersburg during the jubilee year. Along with, inter alia, Ericsson and the Royal Institute of Technology, the Swedish Trade Council will organise several activities for five days, in areas such as IT, education and research. The aim is to promote the Swedish IT and telecommunications industry.

Saint Petersburg is one of Russia's leading regions for software development and the university of this city which has five million inhabitants is ranked a world leader in training programming

technicians.

#Through this initiative we hope to be able to develop the good contacts that already exist between Sweden and Saint Petersburg and thereby create new business opportunities,# the Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, says.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors

The following four Ambassadors presented their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 12 September:

Austria#s newly appointed Ambassador Norbert Pramberger was born in 1940. He is a lawyer with a doctor#s degree from 1964 and entered his country#s foreign service in 1966. Ambassador Pramberger has alternated between service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Vienna and Austrian missions abroad.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1990 - 1994 Ambassador in Cairo

1994 - 1997 Ambassador in Warsaw

1997 - Head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Department for General Legal Affairs

Honduras# newly appointed Ambassador Iván Romero Martínez was born in 1949. He is a lawyer and holds a doctor#s degree in international relations from Santo Domingos University. The Ambassador entered his country#s foreign service in 1973 and has subsequently alternated between service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tegucigalpa and various posts abroad.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1991 - 1994 Ambassador in Colombia

1994 - 1997 Ambassador to Belgium and to the European Union

from 1995 also Ambassador to the Netherlands and to Luxembourg

1997 - 1998 Ambassador in London

1998 - 2002 Chief of Protocol in the President#s Office

The Czech Republic#s newly appointed Ambassador Marie Chatardová was born in 1963. She is a lawyer with a degree from Masaryk University in Brno from 1985. She has worked in the sphere of company law and entered her country#s foreign service in 1994.

Ambassador Chatardová has chiefly been engaged in work on EU

enlargement and integration matters. In recent years she has held the following posts at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

1999 - Head of Section at the Department for EU Affairs

2000 - Head of the EU Information Department

Vietnam's newly appointed Ambassador Nguyen Ngoc Truong

was born in 1946. He holds a doctor's degree in international politics and

entered his country's foreign service in 1971. 1989-1995 the Ambassador served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press and Information Department, from 1992-1995 as editor-in-chief of its International Affairs Review.

In recent years he has held the following posts:

1995 - 1999 Minister Counsellor, chargé d'affaires and Ambassador to Mexico, Peru and Panama

1999 - 2001 Head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ad hoc 2000 Committee

2002 - Head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Research Center of Diplomatic History

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

SEK 7million to be invested in export promotion of environmental technology

The Government will appropriate SEK 7 million for continued promotion of Swedish environmental technology exports in 2003. The focus of the initiative will be on the Baltic-rim countries, Russia, the EU applicant countries and countries in Asia, primarily China and India. Sweden is extremely good in the environmental area, the Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, says. We have many able enterprises in this field and a good international reputation for proactively promoting environmental improvement.

The world market for environmental technology is growing rapidly. It is essential that Swedish companies make the most of the export opportunities. The purpose of this initiative is to meet the high demand among small and medium-sized companies for support for their export efforts, Mr Pagrotsky says.

The money will be at the disposal of the Swedish Trade Council under the Swedish Environmental Technology Exports programme. The aim is to promote exports of goods and services related to environmental technology. This includes, among others, areas such as air and water purification, waste management and recycling. Together with the companies, Swedish know-how, Swedish solutions and Swedish experience of measures to benefit the environment will be promoted on the international market.

#Global environmental challenges require the industrial countries to lead a development in which access is given to new and environmentally friendly technology. This is needed not least in our own vicinity on the other side of the Baltic Sea, and in Asia,# the Minister says.
The Government has also initiated measures to establish a national centre for export of environmental technology.

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Key word: 6727

PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press conference invitation: Leif Pagrotsky to present export promotion initiative for Swedish environmental technology

Unofficial translation

Leif Pagrotsky invites the press to a press conference at which he will present the Government's new export promotion initiative for Swedish environmental technology.

Time: Wednesday 11 September at 15.00

Venue: Jädersvägen 39, Arboga

Welcome!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson to attend Council of Ministers meeting in Copenhagen

The Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, is to take part in the informal meeting of the Justice and Home Affairs Council in Copenhagen on Friday 13 September.

This meeting will be the first since the Seville summit, at which the timetable for harmonisation of EU asylum and migration policies was set. For the first time, integration issues are on the agenda, a point that Sweden welcomes. Further subjects of discussion will be the interpretation of the concept of asylum and a common return policy.

The meeting of the Council of Ministers will take place at Eigtveds Pakhus, Asiatisk Plads 2 G.

A press conference is being arranged to take place at about 12.00.

Please contact Press Secretary Helena Gustavsson, 0708-135682, or Political Adviser Barbro Holmberg, 0708-269485.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Pagrotsky wants to create an international centre for simplified trade and customs procedures

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has decided to allocate SEK 88000 to the Board of Customs to finance a feasibility study for establishing Göteborg as a #centre of excellence# for simplified trade and customs procedures. The decision is part of the Minister for Trade's vision of making Göteborg the most efficient centre of commerce in the world.

International studies show that various types of trade procedures can cost between 2.5 and 15 per cent of the value of the exported or imported goods. On the assessment of the National Board of Trade, procedures connected with imports and exports cost Swedish enterprises and official authorities more than SEK 35 billion in 2001, a figure that makes Sweden one of the very least expensive countries. The customs-related expenses alone come to over SEK 3 billion or SEK 344

for each Swedish citizen. This is in spite of the fact that the Swedish customs are even now considered to be perhaps the most efficient and least bureaucratic customs authority in the world. For the EU as a whole, customs-related expenses amount to a total sum in the region of SEK 75 billion.

"I want to bring the costs of trade bureaucracy down even further to boost the competitiveness of Swedish industry. This year the Board of Customs has launched the world's simplest and least bureaucratic customs system - the 'Service Steps' system. This is a great advantage to Swedish business and I want to build on this success and make it an attractive option for foreign enterprises as well to transfer parts of their international customs processing to Sweden", says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

"The Board of Customs sets an international standard for simple and speedy electronic customs processing, the port of Göteborg is the leading transport and logistics centre in the Nordic countries and Sweden is a world leader in IT. As I see it, if we work together there is every prospect of making Göteborg the world's leading centre of excellence for simplified trade procedures", says Leif Pagrotsky.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-10
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky requests negotiations with the USA to secure direct transports from the port of Göteborg

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in the USA a year ago, the USA has tightened its security requirements for containers operating in US ports. The US authorities will give priority to the 20 largest ports in the world for direct transport to and from the USA in the future. The port of Göteborg is not on this list.

"We must ensure that Göteborg is not discriminated against", said Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky during a visit to the port of Göteborg on Tuesday. "This is why I have taken the initiative for negotiations between Sweden and the USA on an agreement that ensures that direct transport from Göteborg to US ports is able to continue without unnecessary delay and extra red tape. It goes without saying that we shall do all that we can to meet US security requirements".

A request for negotiations will be submitted to the US authorities by Sweden's Embassy in Washington this week.

"We cannot risk our exports taking so long that Göteborg and Sweden lose their competitiveness", continues Leif Pagrotsky. "The USA is Sweden's most important export market, and Göteborg is Scandinavia's largest container port by far, potentially capable of further growth".

Göteborg currently deals with 14 000 containers per year for transport to the USA.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation: Press Conference, Göteborg, Tuesday 10/9 Leif Pagrotsky to present measures to make Göteborg the world's most e

Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky is to visit Göteborg on Tuesday 10 September. At a press conference at which he will be joined by Municipal Commissioner Göran Johansson and the Director-General of the Board of Customs Kjell Jansson, Mr Pagrotsky will present measures to strengthen Göteborg's position as a trading city.

Time: Tuesday 10 September at 10.45

Venue: Port of Göteborg Head Office, Nordatlanten, entry 5

Welcome!

Leif Pagrotsky's programme for Tuesday 10 September

09.30 Meeting with Swedish Transport Workers' Union at Skandia Harbour, entry 4

10.45 Press conference. Address: Port of Göteborg Head Office, Nordatlanten, entry 5

15.00 Meeting with heads of foreign subsidiaries in Göteborg
Address: SAS Radisson (formerly the Sheraton Hotel)

17.30 Pre-match chat with Viveca Lärn on the Rix FM stage
outside Nya Ullevi Stadium

19.00 Present at the derby between IFK Göteborg and Örgyte IS
The media are welcome throughout the day!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Profile programme for Swedish design at embassies

As a next stage in the extensive campaign being run by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to turn Swedish embassies and consulates-general throughout the world into models of Swedish architecture, form and design, the Government has decided today to allocate SEK 400 000 to develop a proposal for a profile programme for design within Sweden's diplomatic representation. Using well-thought out design solutions, the Government wishes to enhance the image of Sweden abroad and promote Swedish export opportunities.

"I would like to spread an awareness of Swedish design. By consciously taking advantage of the asset represented by Swedish design in diplomatic representation environments, we can contribute to strengthening Sweden's position as a leading design nation", says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

Together with Svensk Form, the National Property Board, design and art institutions, companies and others, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will identify concrete measures to be taken within the framework of the resources allocated, both current and long-term. The purpose of this is to achieve through greater design awareness, more consistent decoration and design of the different environments around the world in which Sweden operates.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden sends observers to the presidential election in Serbia

The Government decided today to send five election observers to Serbia to monitor the presidential election there. The election is planned to take place on 29 September 2002.

The Swedish observers will be at the disposal of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

One million dollars to ILO

In accordance with a Government decision, Sweden will donate USD 1 million to the International Labour Organisation, ILO, for a project to combat youth unemployment globally. #The ILO project will contribute to ensuring that young people get jobs instead of being forced into prostitution and, ultimately, the abhorrent sex slave trafficking that afflicts our global society,# the Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, says. ILO reports that out of the world total of 160 million unemployed, 66 million are young people. World leaders therefore undertook at the UN Millennium Summit two years ago to #develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance of finding decent and productive work.# The UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, the President of the World Bank, James Wolfenson, and the Director-General of ILO, Juan Somavia, took a joint initiative for the establishment of a network to combat unemployment among young people, the Youth Employment Network. ILO is responsible for setting up a secretariat that will participate in the implementation of the undertakings from the Millennium Summit and assist the network in its operations. Sweden#s support of USD one million is a start-up contribution for the project, which will cost a total of SEK 35 million over three years.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden contributes SEK 70 million to Tunisian fund for issues concerning the environment and the position of women

The Government decided today to contribute SEK 70 million to a Tunisian fund which supports environmental efforts and projects to strengthen the position of women in Tunisia. Through annual meetings the Government will be informed of the implementation of the project.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Money for Swedish design at the furniture fair in Milan

The Government has decide to contribute SEK 375 000 for activities to promote and export Swedish design at the international furniture fair in Milan on 9-14 April 2003.

The exhibition "Excellent Swedish Design" is to be shown at the furniture fair. This is the first season that a whole year's selection of "Excellent Swedish Design" will be presented abroad. In connection with the exhibition, special initiatives to market Sweden and Swedish design as well as to promote Swedish export opportunities will be taken.

"Sweden is a small country that constantly has to struggle to be seen and to make an impact on the rest of the world. Today, Swedish design makes a substantial contribution to putting Sweden on the map. Design is invaluable for the Swedish export industry and is becoming increasingly important in the competition to win the favour of the customer. This goes for everything from cars and boats to music and fashion", says Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky.

The annual international furniture fair in Milan is one of the largest fairs of its kind. The funds will be placed at the disposal of the Swedish Society of Crafts and Design, which will consult with the Swedish Trade Council, the Swedish Institute and the Swedish Furniture Manufacturers' Association. Some 30 Swedish companies will participate in the exhibition "Excellent Swedish Design".

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

More Swedish support for the United Nations Population Fund

The Government decided today to grant a further SEK 20 million to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Sweden's contribution for 2001 will thus increase from SEK 165 million to SEK 185 million.

"We cannot accept the UNFPA's important efforts to improve women's rights and reproductive health being undermined by the United States' decision to withdraw its support to the organisation," says Jan. O. Karlsson, the Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy.

"Efforts to prevent unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, deaths in childbirth, venereal diseases and increased child mortality will now be impeded," Mr Karlsson says. "By increasing Sweden's support to the UNFPA, we hope to help change this disturbing situation.

"Sweden has actively contributed to the increased focus on issues relating to gender equality, sexuality and HIV/Aids in the UN and other forums. We must do what we can to safeguard the progress that has been made," says Mr Karlsson.

The UNFPA deals with issues concerning sexuality, reproductive health and rights, gender equality and HIV/Aids. Sweden is UNFPA's sixth largest donor. The United States decided in July to withdraw its support to the UNFPA of USD 34 million in view of the UNFPA's work in China.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to the fight against unemployment, prostitution and people trafficking

Sweden will donate USD 1 million to the International Labour Organisation, ILO, for a project to combat youth unemployment globally.

#The ILO project is a component in efforts to increase opportunities for young people to obtain meaningful and productive employment. In this way the risk of young people being forced at an

early age into prostitution, substance abuse and criminality can be reduced, # Anna Lindh said in Stockholm today at the EU-Africa expert meeting on trafficking in human beings. #Sweden will also contribute approximately SEK 2 million to the Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS, for its work to combat trafficking in human beings, # Ms Lindh said. ILO reports that out of the world total of 160 million unemployed, 66 million are young people. World leaders therefore undertook at the UN Millennium Summit two years ago to #develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work. # The UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, the President of the World Bank, James Wolfenson, and the Director-General of ILO, Juan Somavia, took a joint initiative for the establishment of a network to combat unemployment among young people, the Youth Employment Network. ILO is responsible for setting up a secretariat that will participate in the implementation of the undertakings from the Millennium Summit and assist the network in its operations. ECOWAS is a regional organisation in West Africa comprising fifteen member states. Trafficking in children is a widespread problem in the region. ECOWAS is the first African organisation to adopt an action programme to combat trafficking in human beings.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-03
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky to visit Göteborg on 4 September

Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky is scheduled to visit Göteborg on Wednesday 4 September. During his visit, Leif Pagrotsky will open the Fraunhofer-Chalmers Research Centre of Industrial Mathematics (FCC). The Centre currently employs twelve industrial mathematicians, whose task is to identify ways of making industry more energy efficient, environmentally friendly, cost-effective and innovative.

The minister's programme for the day is as follows:

- 10.15 Visit to Swedish Match's moist snuff factory, Tullhusgatan 1. Meeting with staff.
 - 14.15 Press conference in conjunction with the opening of the Fraunhofer-Chalmers Research Centre for Industrial Mathematics, Lilla salen, Chalmers's student union building, Chalmersplatsen 1.
 - 14.45 Opening ceremony, Fraunhofer-Chalmers Centre for Industrial Mathematics (address: see above).
-

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

NB: UPDATED VERSION : Anna Lindh at meeting of experts on people trafficking

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms Anna Lindh, will replace the Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Mr Jan O. Karlsson, for today's concluding speech at the close of the Africa-EU meeting of experts in Stockholm on trafficking in human beings. A press briefing will follow with, among others, Dr Chambas, Head of the Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS.

Time: concluding speech approx. 15.00, press briefing approx. 16.00

Venue: The Riksdag Building, First Chamber Hall.

Please send notification of your intention to attend by e-mail to helena.gustavsson@foreign.ministry.se, or telephone 0708-135682.

Participants in the expert meeting include representatives of some twenty African countries and EU member states, and several international actors involved in efforts to fight trafficking in human beings, among them ECOWAS, OSCE, ILO, UNICEF, UNODCCP and IOM.

The meeting of experts in Stockholm is part of the Cairo Process which was initiated at the summit meeting between Africa and Europe (the EU) in Cairo in the spring of 2000. The EU Foreign Ministers decided at their meeting in Brussels in October 2001 that an action plan for fighting trafficking in human beings, particularly women and children, should be formulated. The purpose of the Stockholm meeting is to begin work on the action plan which when completed is to be presented at the next summit meeting between Africa and Europe in Lisbon in April 2003.

More information about the meeting is available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website (www.ud.se) under the caption #Africa-Europe Meeting on trafficking in human beings#.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government wants more people trained in export sales

For a number of years, the Swedish Trade Council has been running a very successful training programme in export sales. The Government now wants to expand this training programme to

concentrate on new markets in which Swedish companies are keen to increase their activities. The Government has therefore instructed the Swedish Trade Council to undertake a study during the autumn into how an advanced training programme for about 100 people and in cooperation with interested companies could be designed.

The programme targets young graduates with linguistic and cultural knowledge of the relevant countries.

The project's objective is to train 100 people in export sales in 2003 and 2004 mainly for markets requiring specific language skills and where the expertise of people of immigrant backgrounds would be a particular advantage. These markets include Poland, Russia and other neighbouring markets as well as more distant and dynamic markets such as China, Japan and Korea.

The training programme is of six months' duration and includes both theory and traineeships at companies interested in participating in this programme. These companies will bear part of the costs involved.

#We need to make use of the expertise that exists around the country with regard to foreign language skills and knowledge of other cultures, especially amongst our immigrants,# says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky. #Personnel with these sorts of skills are invaluable to export-oriented companies.#

"This training programme has been so successful that we now want to raise the level of ambition. I hope that this will result in 100 new companies taking advantage of the trade opportunities that exist in different parts of the world," says Mr Pagrotsky.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-09-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press briefing at expert meeting on people trafficking

A press briefing will be held tomorrow, Tuesday, at the conclusion of the EU#Africa expert meeting on trafficking in human beings on 1-3 September.

The Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, and several other participants will talk about the work done at the meeting and the results achieved.

Time: Tuesday 3 September, at approx. 16.00

Venue: The Riksdag Building, First Chamber Hall.

Please send notification of your intention to attend by e-mail to helena.gustavsson@foreign.ministry.se,

or telephone 0708-135682.

Participants in the expert meeting include representatives of some twenty African countries and EU member states, and several international actors involved in efforts to fight trafficking in human beings, among them ECOWAS, OSCE, ILO, UNICEF, UNODCCP and IOM.

The meeting of experts in Stockholm is part of the Cairo Process which was initiated at the summit meeting between Africa and Europe (the EU) in Cairo in the spring of 2000. The EU Foreign Ministers decided at their meeting in Brussels in October 2001 that an action plan for fighting trafficking in human beings, particularly women and children, should be formulated. The purpose of the Stockholm meeting is to begin work on the action plan which when completed is to be presented at the next summit meeting between Africa and Europe in Lisbon in April 2003. More information about the meeting is available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website (www.ud.se) under the caption #Africa-Europe Meeting on trafficking in human beings#.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Johannesburg Summit: Sweden presents proposals for sustainable urban environment

Today, on Friday, at the UN Summit in Johannesburg, Sweden will present "The Sustainable City" # a project in which innovative solutions for a sustainable urban environment will be shown. What it will demonstrate are environmentally sound solutions for such facilities as water supplies and sewage, traffic planning, energy and waste management.

The Government has contributed SEK 300 000 to the project in order to market Swedish expertise in the field of sustainable urban development.

"In many cases, Sweden is a world leader in producing solutions for a good urban environment and can contribute to an important exchange of expertise in Johannesburg", says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky. "In the long term, this project may also lead to greater business opportunities for Swedish companies in such fields as environmentally sound technologies and skills".

The project is based on a Swedish-Chinese partnership involved in presenting proposals for planning a satellite city for Shanghai, using a Swedish model with environmentally sound solutions. "The Swedish-Chinese project will pave the way for other Swedish companies in China", says Leif Pagrotsky. "Swedish companies are at the cutting edge of environmental technology".

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden takes initiative to break the deadlock in disarmament negotiations

Today, Sweden together with Algeria, Belgium, Chile and Colombia present a joint proposal to break the deadlock in international disarmament negotiations, which for several years have been blocked by differences of opinion, primarily between China and the USA.

"The disarmament conference must yield results when it continues early next year", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh. "It is unacceptable that a few countries are able to delay these efforts. Our proposal is a reasonable compromise that takes into account the interests of all the countries participating. By presenting it, we want to help the negotiations make a fresh start".

The impasse in the disarmament negotiations is the result of dissatisfaction with the working programme of the conference on the part of China, the USA and a small number of other countries. The dispute is primarily about how the issue of armaments in outer space should be dealt with. China demands immediate negotiations, while the USA can only accept preliminary discussions. The compromise proposal presented today in Geneva, means that negotiations will deal with four central issues simultaneously. These four issues are: a prohibition against the manufacture of plutonium and weapons-grade uranium, nuclear disarmament, security guarantees for countries without nuclear weapons, and finally, armaments in space. The proposal has a chance of obtaining widespread support, since it is the first compromise to be presented by different groups of countries in cooperation with each other.

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2002-08-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Pagrotsky: the USA must amend its legislation, which is against WTO rules

On Friday, the WTO established that the EU is entitled to impose punitive tariffs against the USA worth approximately USD 4 billion per year, because US fiscal legislation for so-called Foreign Sales Corporations involves illegal export subsidies. This is the largest penalty ever to be imposed in connection with the WTO.

"This will put pressure on the USA to amend its legislation", comments Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky. "I hope that we will avoid ending up in a situation in which the EU is forced to impose punitive tariffs. So long as the USA makes serious efforts to live up to its WTO commitments, there is no cause for haste".

The EU Commission will now consult with European industry to compile the final punitive tariff lists regarding US exports.

"I will do my best to ensure that the effects on Swedish companies are as mild as possible", says Leif Pagrotsky.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson to inaugurate the Folke Bernadotte Academy on Sandö, in Kramfors

On Sunday 1 September, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson is to inaugurate the Folke Bernadotte Academy in Kramfors -- a national centre for education and training in international crisis management.

Michael Sahlin, whose previous appointments include that as Ambassador in Belgrade, has been appointed as Director-General of the Academy, according to a Government decision today. His appointment extends until the end of 2006.

The media are welcome to attend the inauguration on Sandö.

13.00-14.00 Inauguration speech by Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

Director-General Michael Sahlin
County Governor Gerhard Larsson

Municipal Commissioner Christer Nilsson
Head of College Rune Moberg
14.00-14.30 Press briefing
14.30 Lunch and guided tour

The Government made a decision in May on the establishment of the centre in Kramfors for the education and coordinated training of personnel who take part in international catastrophe- and peace operations.

The Folke Bernadotte Academy has been established to increase the level of education and cooperation nationally and internationally in the whole chain of support measures within peace support, emergency preparedness and crisis management. The academy will also be a focal point for international organisations' work on these issues, and will thus contribute to the development of international methods and know-how, via research and studies in close collaboration with Umeå and other universities.

Director-General Michael Sahlin has a PhD in political science from Uppsala University (1977) and his previous appointments included those as State Secretary at the Ministry for Defence (1991-94), Ambassador in Ankara (1995-98) and Ambassador in Belgrade (2000-02).

He can be reached by telephone no. +46 8-405 27 74

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden launches international task force on global public goods

This evening Sweden, along with France and UNDP, will launch an international task force on global public goods. This will take place at a seminar at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg at 18.00-20.30.

#The international community must adopt a more concordant approach to the increasingly complex international cooperation on various global public goods such as clean air, water, financial stability, health, peace and security. At UN conferences such as the ongoing one in Johannesburg there is a lot of talk on what we want to achieve. But how do we actually do it? On a national level we have our public sector. Internationally we have to find other ways to identify and tackle global problems, State Secretary for International Development Cooperation Ms. Gun-Britt Andersson says.

Sweden, France and UNDP are therefore launching an #International Task Force on Global Public Goods#. Its task will be to investigate how the most important global public goods are provided today and to propose how these crucial issues can be more effectively handled and financed to combat poverty and contribute to sustainable development.

The group will consist of 10-15 experts from governments, international organisations, civil society, the business sector and the academic world. The work is estimated to be ongoing for about 2 years. Ernest Zedillo, former president of Mexico, will lead the work with one other person to be

appointed in the near future.

A secretariat, under the leadership of a Swede, Sven Sandström, a former Managing Director of the World Bank, will be established in Stockholm. A reference group under the leadership of State Secretary Gun-Britt Andersson # #The Friends of the Task Force# - will also be linked to the task force.

A press conference will take place at 17.30 in the Sandton Convention Center press center and an informal press meeting will take place after the launching event at 20.30. Contact: Andreas Ershammar in Johannesburg +46-707386763.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh to take part in an informal meeting of EU Ministers in Helsingör

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms Anna Lindh, will take part in the EU#s informal ministerial meeting in Helsingör, on 30-31 August.

Issues to be discussed include the situation in the Middle East and EU enlargement.

Today and tomorrow Ms Lindh is hosting the Partners in Prevention conference in Helsingborg. In connection with the conference, the Foreign Minister will appear together with the British Foreign Minister, Jack Straw, at Lund University today at 17.00.

Partners in Prevention is an EU conference on conflict prevention with the participation of organisations such as the UN and the Council of Europe.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to press briefing prior to meeting of experts on people trafficking

On 1-3 September an international meeting of experts will be held in Stockholm on trafficking in human beings in Africa and Europe.

The Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, and Human Rights Ambassador Ulla Ström invite you to attend a press briefing prior to the meeting, on Wednesday 28 August at 15.00 at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs torg 1.

If you wish to participate please notify jennie.landegren@foreign.ministry.se or call 08-4053265 not later than Wednesday 12.00.

Participants in the meeting of experts include representatives of some twenty African countries and EU member states, and several international actors involved in efforts to fight trafficking in human beings, among others Ecowas, OSCE, ILO, Unicef, UNODCCP and IOM.

Concurrently, a global strategy is being drawn up for how Sweden can contribute through international development cooperation to preventing and fighting people trafficking.

The meeting of experts in Stockholm is part of the so-called Cairo Process which was initiated at the summit meeting between Africa and the EU in Cairo in the spring of 2000. The EU Foreign Ministers decided at their meeting in Brussels in October 2001 that an action plan for fighting trafficking in human beings, particularly women and children, should be formulated. The purpose of the Stockholm meeting is to begin work on the action plan which, when completed, is to be adopted at the next summit meeting between Africa and Europe in Lisbon in April 2003.

More information about the meeting is available on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website (www.ud.se) under the caption "Africa-Europe meeting on trafficking in human beings".

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Defence

Today, Sweden new member of cooperation on observation flights

Today Sweden will become a member of the cooperation on observation flights, the so-called Open Skies Agreement. The Agreement entered into force on 1 January 2002 and Sweden was the first new state to apply for membership on 4 January 2002. The Government approved the Agreement five months later.

Open Skies is a cooperation within the framework of conventional arms control and is legally binding. Member countries allow each other to carry out, at short notice, observation flights over all areas in their territories. Since 1999 Sweden has conducted several observation flights in the spirit of the Agreement.

Twenty-seven countries were originally signatories of the Agreement, which was signed in Helsinki in 1992. In those days, only members of NATO and the former Warsaw Pact were allowed to participate. When the Agreement entered into force, it was opened to all member states of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs takes initiative against the sex trade

"The sex trade in women and children is a disgusting phenomenon, which must be eradicated in today's Europe", said Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh at the meeting of Nordic-Baltic foreign ministers in Tallinn today.

"Efforts to combat trafficking in women and children have been initiated, inter alia, through Baltic Sea cooperation, but much remains to be done. All countries must give it priority, and openly give an account of their problems and countermeasures planned".

"Before the Swedish chairmanship of Nordic cooperation next year, we have taken the initiative for a working group against the sex trade. Its aim is to ensure that

the Nordic and Baltic Sea countries organise more effective measures. This initiative was given considerable support at today's meeting".

"What is needed is for all countries to introduce severe penalties against trafficking in human beings, greater cooperation between customs and police, and more support to these women. Sweden has already taken initiatives in this direction during its presidency of the EU. We also need to fight attitudes that make this modern slave trade possible. Work on forming opinions is also extremely important. Here, Lukas Moodysson's new film Lilja 4-ever will play an important role", says Anna Lindh.

According to the UN, more than half a million women and children are smuggled into the EU every year, and the sex trade has an annual turn-over of billions of crowns.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky comments on trade figures

According to preliminary figures from Statistics Sweden (SCB), foreign trade in goods gave a surplus of SEK 11.4 billion in July. Exports of goods have increased in value by 5 per cent and imports declined by 2 per cent, compared with figures from last July.

"Foreign trade continues to contribute positively to Swedish growth. It is a sign of strength for Swedish industry, that despite international turbulence, exports have increased in value", says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Increased support to marketing Swedish design via Swedish

embassies and consulates-general

Unofficial translation

Interest in Swedish form and design is enormous abroad. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has therefore decided to allocate a further SEK 400 000 for the rest of the year to market Swedish design abroad via Swedish embassies and consulates-general .

"Swedish form and design has a very good reputation abroad. I have seen an increasing number of positive examples demonstrating its value for Sweden's image as a modern, creative country. Design is also becoming an increasingly important factor in promoting companies' competitiveness and success", said Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky at the Porcelain Festival in Gustavsberg on Sunday.

"Swedish embassies and consulates-general can make an important contribution to spotlighting and drawing even more attention to Swedish design in the world", said Leif Pagrotsky.

The money will be used for seminars and other design projects, network building and dissemination of information. It will also be used to provide opportunities for participation at, for example, international trade fairs showing design and furniture.

These initiatives are part of the Government's long-term strategy to promote Swedish design abroad. Earlier in the year, SEK 1.6 million was allocated to Swedish design campaigns abroad via the Swedish Institute in collaboration with the Swedish Society of Crafts and Design, the Swedish Trade Council and embassies and consulates-general in the countries concerned. In 2002 large-scale events are being carried out or planned in Finland, Spain, the USA, Russia, Italy and elsewhere.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Investments in marketing Swedish biotechnology abroad

The Government decided today to grant a total of SEK 490 000 to three different biotechnology projects. The aim is to market Swedish biotechnology, to contribute to greater information on research, potentials and future prospects within the biotechnology sector and to build networks to increase business and cooperation.

The Consulate-General in Los Angeles is to receive SEK 225 000 for a series of symposia and seminars in the autumn of 2002.

Sweden's Embassy in Berlin will receive SEK 175 000 for seminars in Düsseldorf and Stockholm, also in autumn 2002.

Sweden's Embassy in London will receive SEK 90 000 for a seminar and company presentations in London on 17 September.

The initiatives are part of the Government's long-term strategy to promote Swedish biotechnology abroad.

"Sweden is one of the leading nations in biotechnology", says Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky. "In the face of tough international competition, it is important to take offensive action to market Swedish biotechnology in order to further strengthen our position."

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

More money for relief operations in Czech Republic

The Government decided today to contribute a further SEK 4 million for relief operations in the Czech Republic. A total of SEK 9 million has thus been granted for operations by the Swedish Rescue Services Agency to help combat the effects of heavy flooding.

In addition to the pumping and dehydration equipment already delivered to the Czech Republic, the Swedish Rescue Services Agency will send protective clothing, disinfectants, and decontamination and cleaning agents as the floodwaters recede, exposing polluted sludge.

"The hot weather increases the potential threat of disease, and we need to take rapid action to help the Czech authorities in their clean-up operations", says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

The relief package was initiated by the Government in consultation with Czech authorities and the Swedish Rescue Services Agency.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh welcomes the proposal to remove Swedes from the UN sanctions list

Today Sweden and the USA will each submit requests for two Swedish nationals, who have had their assets frozen and been restricted from travelling, to be removed from the UN list of persons and organisations suspected of connections with the Taliban, Al-Qaida etc. In doing this, a conclusive step has been taken for the sanctions against the two men to be lifted.

"I welcome the fact that the USA is now prepared to take this initiative to have the two Swedes removed from the UN list of sanctions, and am confident that the UN sanctions committee will take the same line. As a result, the two men can look forward to soon being able to return to a normal life, after having endured a long and difficult period. At the same time, Sweden, the USA and the lawyers involved will continue to work to bring about a new examination of the third Swede's case, so that he can also be removed from the list", says Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh.

"Today's results show that our efforts on behalf of the Swedes, and for greater statutory rights in connection with sanctions, have borne fruit. Other evidence of progress is the regulatory framework that has been adopted by the UN sanctions committee to make it easier for people on whom sanctions have been imposed to state their case, and the rules expected to be adopted shortly allowing exemptions from the sanctions for personal use. The Government has long been working to achieve these changes and will continue to be proactive in work with statutory rights issues in the UN and the EU to reduce the risk of individuals being caught in between".

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Each of the Swedish and US requests for the two Swedes to be removed from the list are to be submitted to the chairman of the UN sanctions committee. The case will be presented to the sanctions committee tomorrow (Friday), and its members will then have 48 hours to present possible objections.

When the Swedes have been removed from the UN sanctions list, the EU Commission must also take a decision to remove them from the equivalent EU list. The Government will work actively to ensure that this takes place as soon as possible. When the Commission has made its decision, the travel restrictions and freezing of the Swedish citizens' assets will be discontinued.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Baltic Sea Programme for the Future

The study on government measures to promote the development of trade and industry in the Baltic Sea Region after 2003 has now been completed.

The study "The Baltic Sea Programme for the Future" may be ordered from Anita Cau, tel: +46 8-405 39 75.

Questions may be answered by Ambassador Örjan Berner, who was commissioned by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to do the study, tel: +46 708-27 96 73.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky to visit Göteborg on Wednesday 21 August

Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky is scheduled to visit Göteborg on Wednesday 21 August. In the morning, he will visit the Western Sweden Chamber of Commerce and Industry's network of entrepreneurs, Next&Now. In the afternoon, he will speak at the Swedish-American Entrepreneurial Days.

The programme:

9.30 The Western Sweden Chamber of Commerce and Industry's network Next&Now. Leif Pagrotsky will be interviewed by Managing Director Anders Källström. Venue: Göteborg University, Vasaparken.

15.00 Leif Pagrotsky will speak at the Swedish-American Entrepreneurial Days at the Swedish Exhibition and Congress Centre, Göteborg.

The media are welcome to attend both events.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh condemns death sentence in Nigeria

"I am greatly dismayed that a woman has been sentenced to stoning in the year 2002", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

"I have raised the issue of capital punishment with the Nigerian Government on a number of occasions, most recently at my meeting with Foreign Minister Lamido in Stockholm earlier this year. Sweden has also pursued this issue through EU channels", continues the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

"It is gratifying that the Federal Government of Nigeria has clearly stated that it considers this type of punishment to be incompatible with the country's constitution. This being so, I have sent a letter to the Foreign Minister of Nigeria today, calling on the Federal Government to support Amina Lawal so as to ensure that the continued process of appeal has a satisfactory outcome", concludes Anna Lindh.

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It was yesterday (Monday) that the Court of Appeal for Sharia cases in the State of Katsina rejected an appeal by the Nigerian woman Amina Lawal, thereby upholding her conviction to execution by stoning. Amina Lawal has been tried and found guilty of having a child outside of wedlock. Her lawyers have announced that they intend to appeal the judgement. They have 30 days in which to lodge an appeal.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Opening of a flower exhibition at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Tuesday 20 August

Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky invites you to the opening of an exhibition in which the winner of the World Cup in flower binding, Per Benjamin, shows a sample of his different flower arrangements.

Per Benjamin won first prize at the Fleurop Interflora World Cup in the Netherlands at the beginning of the summer.

The opening of the exhibition will be a gathering of people who are working to market on the international arena Swedish expertise and creativity in new industries.

Venue: The entrance hall at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs torg 1.

Date and time: Tuesday 20 August, at 15.00 #17.00

If you wish to attend, please notify, by 11 o'clock on Tuesday 20 August at the latest, Richard Vesterberg, tel: +46 8 405 56 82, or e-mail: richard.vesterberg@foreign.ministry.se

NB: Please bring your press credentials with you.

Welcome!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky wants to stimulate more exchanges between Swedish and foreign chefs

Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky wants to expand opportunities for young Swedish chefs to obtain job experience in the restaurant industries of foreign countries and for young chefs from other countries to become trainees in Sweden.

"Sweden has a great potential for being a nation of food and gastronomy", said Leif Pagrotsky when he visited the training camp for the national team of chefs in Högbo at the weekend. "We have successful restaurants, a world-class national team of chefs and top-quality raw materials".

"To ensure renewal and stimulate new ideas from other countries, I shall be discussing with the industry how we can expand opportunities for young practising chefs to go for shorter or longer periods of time to countries relatively far from Sweden in order to obtain job experience", says Leif Pagrotsky.

The Minister for Trade also plans to take an initiative for a programme in which young chefs from other countries can come to Swedish restaurants in order to learn about Swedish culinary arts and raw materials.

"The Swedish team of chefs is today one of our most prominent national teams and a striking example of the success that can be achieved through hard work and good ideas from abroad. I hope that in the future, the national team of chefs will be able to share its experience with colleagues from other countries, such as those in Eastern Europe, in order to promote development there and to strengthen the links between our countries".

These efforts to promote skills exchange between Sweden and foreign countries are part of a campaign to market Sweden as a centre of expertise in gastronomy.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh welcomes the latest agreement between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority

"I am very pleased that yesterday's security meeting between the Israeli Minister of Defence, Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, and the Palestinian National Authority's Minister for the Interior, Abdel Razeq Yihye, has led to success", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

According to the plan agreed upon by the parties, the first step will already be taken today, when Israeli troops will be withdrawn from Bethlehem. After this there will be a further easing of restrictions for the Palestinians. At the same time, the Palestinian National Authority will be given great responsibility for the security situation.

"It is important that both parties make use of this opportunity to bring an end to the violence. This is a precondition for the plan to succeed", maintains Anna Lindh.

"The parties must also make use of this chance for further progress. The talks on the Palestinian reform process, to be held in Paris in the middle of the week, are another step in the right direction. It is now vital that this becomes the beginning of a political process that leads to negotiations, to an end to the occupation and to the goal of two states, Israel and Palestine, in peaceful coexistence", stresses Anna Lindh.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ambassador Michael Frühling new head of the Office of the UN High Commission for Human Rights in Colombia

Ambassador Michael Frühling is replacing Anders Kompass this autumn as head of the Office of the UN High Commission for Human Rights in Bogotá, Colombia. This is an essential and important post in the UN System in Colombia where the 40-year armed conflict has become increasingly intensive, with repeated violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. - The Office of the UN High Commission for Human Rights in Bogotá has a very important task to promote respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, and I am pleased that the UN has appointed Michael Frühling, and thus another Swede, to lead this work, says Anna Lindh, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

- The office has an essential task both in the present conflict situation and in the future when peace talks with the country's three armed illegal groups have resumed. At present, it is very difficult to see any scope for negotiations, but a negotiated solution is the only possibility of ending this conflict. Sweden should actively support this process, adds Anna Lindh. Ambassador Michael Frühling was previously Sweden's ambassador in Cuba and has recently led the Ministry for Foreign Affairs project "Conflict management, peace, democracy and development in Colombia".

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-15
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Campaign to market Swedish IT in North America

The Government has decided to allocate a total of SEK 1.65 million to the Swedish Trade Council and the Invest in Sweden Agency (ISA) for marketing of Swedish IT and telecommunications in North America. The aim is to establish Sweden and Swedish IT expertise as a world leader in order to promote the export opportunities of smaller Swedish companies and to attract investments in Sweden.

The Swedish Trade Council will receive SEK 1.2 million for a project to boost cooperation between Swedish and North American IT and telecom companies, so as to give Swedish products and companies greater visibility on the North American market.

ISA will receive SEK 450 000 for information activities in connection with the COMDEX Fall technology exhibition in Las Vegas on 18-22 November 2002. The initiatives are part of the Government's long-term strategy to promote Swedish IT abroad.

"Sweden is one of the world's leading IT nations", says Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky. "With the international problems currently affecting this sector, we need to make even greater efforts on the overseas markets."

"IT will continue to increase in importance and is vital for developments in large sections of the business sector, trade and other activities", says Leif Pagrotsky. "For this reason it is important to continue to take offensive action to

market Swedish IT."

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O Karlsson to inaugurate the Stockholm Water Symposium

Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O Karlsson is to inaugurate the Stockholm Water Symposium on Monday 12 August.

The Water Symposium is being held for the twelfth year running and is part of the Stockholm World Water Week on 11-17 August.

The theme of this year's symposium is 'Balancing Competing Water Uses # Present Status and New Prospects', how our limited water resources are being used in different parts of the world and what will be necessary to improve water use in the future.

Time: 09.00 Press conference

10.00 Inauguration

Venue: Stockholm Folkets Hus, Barnhusgatan 12-14

Please bring your press credentials!

Welcome!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky to participate in Cookery Book Day in Grythyttan

On Friday 9 August the Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, will take part in the Swedish Cookery Book Day and Crayfish Day at the House of Culinary Art (Måltidens Hus) in Grythyttan. At 2 p.m. the Minister will hold a speech entitled "The crayfish and the trade balance".

"It is important to market Sweden as a culinary and food-producing nation. Together the food industry and the catering trade employ a large number of the Swedish population # throughout the country # but as yet exports in this sector have been limited", said Leif Pagrotsky prior to the event. Participants will also include Professor Jan-Öjvind Swahn who will speak about crayfish consumption in a historical perspective and Professor Emeritus Louise Vinge who will talk about women in gastronomical literature, before the winners of the award The Best Swedish Cookbooks of the Year are presented.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Trade wants to promote Swedish food

"I think there is enormous unexploited potential in marketing Sweden as a culinary and food-producing nation", said Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky on Friday in a speech at the House of Culinary Art in Grythyttan in connection with the Swedish Cookery Book Day. "Greater attention should be given to the creativity and professionalism that have yielded both success and publicity in connection with international competitions and other contexts in recent years."

The Minister invited trade representatives and other actors to take part in a national campaign to promote food exports and tourism in Sweden.

"I believe that this could have considerable benefits, not only for the Swedish food industry and restaurant owners. The image of Sweden as a country at the cutting edge of developments in various sectors, and where creativity flows alongside curiosity also benefits more traditional sectors in Sweden such as the forest, steel and motor industries.

Last year Swedish food exports amounted to SEK 25 billion. This is more than double the figure of previous years. Agriculture, the food industry and the catering trade employ 175 000 people in Sweden today.

This is an important future sector for Sweden. We already export food for more than twice as much as we sell lorries for. Why not take up the challenge of motor-car exports? Last year these amounted to just over SEK 40 billion.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs welcomes Turkish reforms

"I welcome the package of reforms adopted today by the Turkish Parliament as an important step forward in Turkey's process of adaptation to the EU", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

The package contains important reforms # such as the abolition of the death penalty in peacetime, and the fact that other languages, like Kurdish, will be permitted in the media and education.

"It is positive that the reform package was adopted by a large majority in the Parliament. It is important that these reforms are now implemented in practice", says the foreign minister.

"Turkey should now continue with further reforms in other important areas in order to meet the remaining political demands included in the so-called Copenhagen criteria", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Bush trade mandate increases chances of success in current WTO negotiations

Last night, Swedish time, President Bush was granted a so-called Trade Promotion Authority (previously called a Fast-Track Authority) after a decision by the Senate. This is the first time in eight years for a US President to be granted this authority.

"President Bush's mandate is an important breakthrough. With this decision backing it, the USA can also be regarded as a credible partner in the negotiations. This is a precondition for our being able to

modernise the world trade system. Up to now, the EU has been relatively alone in bearing responsibility for leadership, while the USA has been on the sidelines. Let us also hope that this can be the beginning of a generally less protectionist policy on the part of the USA", says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

The decision means that both the Senate and the House of Representatives have now agreed to give the President greater authority to negotiate on behalf of the USA. It means, briefly, that the US Congress must approve or reject, in their entirety, future trade agreements that the President is expected to conclude with other countries, for example within the framework of the current round of negotiations in the World Trade Organisation (WTO). It will give the President considerably more leeway in these negotiations and increase the chance of the USA reaching agreement with its trade partners.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassador in Rome

The Government decided today to Staffan Wrigstad as ambassador in Rome. Wrigstad has served most recently as head of the Americas Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He has previously been ambassador in Guatemala and Chile and has also served, inter alia, in Ottawa and at the Swedish permanent delegation to the UN in New York.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-08-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh on UN report: Serious crimes against humanitarian law in Jenin

"I welcome the fact that the report from the UN Secretary-General has now been completed and that the events in Jenin have been investigated. At the same time I note that Israel's refusal to cooperate with the UN has meant that a full and comprehensive report has not been possible to produce", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

"The report shows that serious crimes against humanitarian law have occurred. Particularly disturbing is the report's information on Israel denying access to humanitarian personnel to the areas in which fighting occurred. The violence of both sides has caused great civilian suffering", continues Anna Lindh.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs sums up "The report reminds us, with painful clarity, how important it is for the violence to cease and peace talks to be resumed".

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Praise and blame for the EU's trade policy from the WTO

To guarantee openness about trade rules and reduce the risk of trade conflicts the WTO carries out regular reviews of members' trade policy. This week the EU's trade policy was reviewed.

The EU is praised for its tariff reductions and efforts to bring about new WTO negotiations. At the same time criticism is made of its considerable use of anti-dumping rules and continued barriers to trade for agricultural products and textiles and clothing.

"It is gratifying that the positive development is noted. I hope our success in opening EU borders for trade can inspire others to do the same," the Minister for Trade, Mr Leif Pagrotsky, says in a comment.

"At the same time we make no secret of the fact that for Sweden's part we would like to go further. Free trade is good for everyone. It benefits both us consumers and poor farmers in developing countries."

The general level of tariffs in the EU has been reduced since the review of policy two years ago and the Union's efforts to build support for the launch of a new round of trade negotiations in the WTO met with praise. Furthermore, last year's Swedish initiative for free trade with the least developed countries was noted.

To make it easier for developing countries to make use of access to the European market, the Swedish government presented a proposal for the establishment of a trade ombudsman. The task of the ombudsman would be to guide developing country exporters through the EU jungle of

administrative rules. The proposal has gained a great deal of attention in Brussels.

#It would be a major step in the right direction,# Mr Pagrotsky says.

The report can be downloaded from

 WTO's website

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Foreign Service Appointments

The Government today appointed Counsellor Håkan Åkesson as Sweden's Ambassador in Addis Abeba. Mr Åkesson, born in 1961, has previously served, inter alia, in the office of the Minister for Development Cooperation, in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Africa Department and most recently at the Embassy of Sweden in Singapore.

Martin Wilkens, Minister Plenipotentiary at the Embassy in Vienna will be Ambassador in Asunción, Paraguay. Mr Wilkens has previously served, inter alia, at the Embassy of Sweden in Santiago de Chile, in Nairobi and in Maseru.

Jan Knutsson is appointed Director and new deputy head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Global Security Department. Mr Knutsson has served as First Secretary in Moscow and Paris and most recently as Minister Plenipotentiary at our Embassy in Washington.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson criticises US decision

The Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Mr Jan O. Karlsson, today criticised the USA's decision to withdraw its support of USD 34 million to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

"The decision is deeply deplorable. The UNFPA carries out extremely important work for women's rights and particularly in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The withdrawal of US support can have serious consequences for these operations. It will above all affect those who are already most vulnerable, namely women in poor countries," Jan O. Karlsson says.

The decision has also met with protests from the EU which stresses the importance of the UNFPA's work. The European Commission will now increase its support to the UNFPA by EUR 32 million. The support will not cover the budget reduction caused by the US decision but will considerably alleviate the difficult consequences. It is directed at specific measures in the countries most affected where the mortality rate among new mothers is highest.

"I am pleased that the European Commission is now taking action and supporting the UNFPA but this does not relieve the USA of its responsibility. It is only a short-term solution. In the long term it is indefensible that the USA breaks its commitments in this way. It is a question of global responsibility and solidarity. The EU is now demonstrating that we are willing to assist. We will show the USA that this responsibility is also theirs," the Minister says.

On the initiative of Sweden and Luxembourg, at the end of May the EU unanimously adopted a statement in support of the UNFPA. With reference to the US decision on Monday the EU Presidency again expressed the importance of UNFPA work.

"It ultimately concerns women's rights, women's power over their own bodies. Efforts to prevent unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, deaths in childbirth, venereal diseases and increased child mortality will now be rendered more difficult," Mr Karlsson says.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swede appointed Director-General in EU Commission

Unofficial translation

The EU Commission decided today to appoint a Swede, Jörgen Holmquist, Director-General for

Fisheries. Jörgen Holmquist will move from his present position at the Budget Directorate General, where he has been Deputy Director-General.

"It is very pleasing that Sweden can again take up a Director-General's post on the Commission in an area, moreover, where major interests are at stake in the coming years. It is impressive of Jörgen Holmquist to be promoted to Director-General now, after just one year as Deputy Director-General. We are pleased about this, but we're not satisfied yet. There are many well-qualified Swedes serving on the EU Commission and we expect to see more of them appointed to leading positions in future", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

In his capacity as Director-General, Holmquist will join the group of just over thirty Directors-General who meet every week to discuss issues and take decisions that have an impact on the entire range of Community policies.

The fisheries policy, like agricultural and trade policy, is an area in which the Community has exclusive competence, which makes it particularly vital that cooperation between the EU Commission and the Member States functions well. The fisheries policy also plays an important role in the Community's relations with the world around it and in ensuring sustainable development of our natural resources. This means substantial coordination is required with other areas such as development assistance, the environment and the budget.

The Commission has recently presented proposals for a far-reaching reform of the EU fisheries policy and this will be a subject for intensive negotiations between EU Member States in the autumn.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky welcomes decision not to escalate steel conflict

"Sweden welcomes the EU Commission proposal not to further escalate the steel conflict with the United States. Now we can wait and see what action the United States chooses to take during the next month. I expect further exemptions from and restrictions in the American measures concerning important Swedish products," says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky in a comment.

"The fall of the dollar and the financial scandals in the United States have fundamentally changed the picture. It would not be responsible to escalate the situation in the sensitive position the world

economy now finds itself. Furthermore, the American companies' need for protection has diminished and the number of exemptions can be expected to increase," continues the Minister for Trade.

"A greater number of tariffs benefits neither the companies nor the consumers, who are of course the ones who will have to pay higher prices in the end," says Mr Pagrotsky.

The EU Commission has the support of the Member States in submitting a proposal to the Council of Ministers on postponing the decision concerning the EU's countermeasures in the steel conflict with the United States. The decision has been preceded by intensive consultations among the Member States.

A ministerial decision is expected instead after the United States has concluded its considerations regarding steel tariff exemptions which will continue until 31 August.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden donates medical equipment to the UN

The Government decided today that the Swedish Armed Forces should donate parts of their surplus medical equipment to the UN. The estimated value of the equipment is SEK 50 million. At the same time, the Government has instructed the Armed Forces to provide instructors and technicians to assist in training the personnel that will be responsible for the equipment.

"The UN has expressed a wish for this type of contribution and we consider it an important complement to our other peace-support efforts such as the participation of military observers and civilian police in UN missions," the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms Anna Lindh, says.

Sweden has previously donated similar medical equipment to the UN. It has been used in UN missions in Sierra Leone and East Timor.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

UN appeals for support for efforts in southern Africa

The UN today launched an appeal for support for the measures required to avert an acute food crisis in southern Africa. The UN has estimated that USD 614 million is needed for these measures. USD 507 million of this refers to direct food assistance. The remainder is for efforts inter alia in agriculture, water, health care, education as well as the transport and distribution of food.

Sweden already contributes extensive humanitarian support to southern Africa. It amounts to SEK 62 million for 2002. In June the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, allocated a further SEK 50 million to be able to support the UN as soon as an appeal was made. The Government is prepared to consider the allocation of additional funds if needed to avert the crisis. Sweden's support will primarily be used for so-called non-food assistance as the major food producing countries contribute most of the food support.

Great responsibility rests on the countries of the world since we can avert a human tragedy in southern Africa if the international community properly responds to the UN appeal, the Minister for Development Cooperation, Mr Jan O. Karlsson, says.

13 million people, 2.3 million of whom are children under the age of 5, are in danger of being affected if the necessary measures are not taken to combat the looming food crisis. This is naturally about food, but also about managing health care, and the transport and distribution of food. The political will for governments to work together is also necessary so that political disagreement and bureaucracy do not obstruct relief work, says Mr Karlsson.

The current crisis is not solely a matter of drought and weather conditions. Political mismanagement, poverty and HIV/AIDS have considerably exacerbated the situation. It is not simply a coincidence that Zimbabwe is the most badly hit. If we do not tackle these problems on a long-term basis, we can be sure that the food crisis will recur. Sweden recently adopted a regional strategy for southern Africa, a strategy that includes directing attention at these problems, says Mr Karlsson.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Two Swedes removed from US sanctions list

The American OFAC authority (Office for Foreign Assets Control) has announced that it intends to remove two Swedish citizens who have had travel restrictions imposed on them and have had their assets frozen from the list of persons and organisations that are suspected of collaboration with the Taliban, Al Qaida, etc. A decision from the UN Sanctions Committee can be expected as soon as all the formalities are completed.

-#We are pleased that the United States has reconsidered the decision about sanctions against the two Swedes. This means that a long and difficult period is now over for them. It would have been even better had the United States changed its mind about all three. The Government will therefore be requesting that the United Nations remove all three from its sanctions list,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

#Sweden has been actively pressing for a long time, in the UN, the EU as well as in its contacts with the American authorities, to improve the legal rights of the individual in decisions by the sanctions committees. The decision concerning the Swedes is evidence that improvements can be brought about. The Government will continue to pursue legal rights issues in the United Nations and the EU in order to reduce the risk of private individuals faring badly in the future,# says Ms Lindh.

Once the Swedes have been removed from the UN sanctions list, the EU Commission must also take the decision to withdraw them from the EU sanctions list which is not the same as the UN#. The Government will make efforts to ensure this happens as quickly as possible. When the Commission has made its decision, the travel restrictions and the freezing of the Swedish citizens# assets will be discontinued.

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See also www.ud.se

(UD:s frågor: Aktuella frågor)

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh regrets UN decision on International Criminal Court

#I welcome the fact that the United Nations Security Council made a decision last night that will make possible the continued presence of the peace-keeping forces and continued police operations in Bosnia,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

#It is regrettable however that this decision means that personnel in UN peace-keeping operations from the nations that have not joined the International Criminal Court (ICC) cannot be the subject of investigation by the International Criminal Court for the next year. Sweden has warmly supported the establishment of ICC from the beginning. We consider, therefore, that it is wrong in principle to temporarily exclude personnel from certain states from the jurisdiction of the Court. There is the risk that confidence in the Court and in the peace-keeping operations will be affected negatively. It is my hope that the temporary decision will not be extended next year and that the damage will thus be limited,# says the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden becomes WTO's largest donor nation

The Government decided today to allocate SEK 8 million to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) fund for trade assistance measures. Sida has previously contributed SEK 8 million. Today's decision means a doubling of Sweden's allocation compared with last year.

"At the WTO meeting in Qatar's capital Doha in November, we established that the focus should be on the interests of the developing countries. Sweden's increased contribution to the WTO fund shows that we are serious. All WTO members should be able to benefit from their membership," says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

WTO member countries have promised to contribute SEK 150 million. Sweden is responsible for some ten per cent of these contributions and is the largest donor to the WTO fund.

The money in the fund will be used for training representatives of developing countries in the various areas of WTO work. The focus is on the negotiations that are taking place currently (everything from negotiations on WTO membership, agricultural trade, market access for industrial products and intellectual property rights to agreements on investments and competition), strengthened analysis capacity and the implementation of agreements previously entered into.

The Swedish Government is also strengthening support to the other international organisations that provide trade-related development assistance. This includes:

- SEK 8 million to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to promote the investment climate and the fight against corruption in developing countries, as well as the capacity of the developing countries to negotiate an investment agreement in WTO,

- SEK 10 million to the International Trade Centre (ITC) to strengthen the ability of entrepreneurs in the least developed countries to export to the EU,
- SEK 3 million to the Integrated Framework (cooperation between the World Trade Organisation, UNCTAD, the International Trade Centre, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund) to integrate trade issues into the developing countries;| poverty strategies,
- SEK 2 million to the Advisory Centre on WTO Law (ACWL) in Geneva to help the developing countries make use of the WTO dispute settlement system.

As well as the contributions the Government is making to international organisations, Sida is an important actor in the work of strengthening the developing countries;| trade policy capacity, as well as in supporting the developing countries;| export sector and facilitating the flow of trade from the developing countries. During 2001, Sida contributed SEK 120 million to activities in this area.

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Key word: 6378

PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Foreign Service appointments

The Government has today made the following appointments in the Swedish Foreign Service. Mårten Grunditz is to be Ambassador in Athens. Grunditz has served most recently as Head of the Department for EU Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. His previous postings include Geneva and London.

Krister Bringéus is being appointed Ambassador and Head of Sweden's Permanent Delegation to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Vienna. Bringéus has served most recently as Head of the European Security Policy Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and has previously held positions in Moscow, Bonn, Washington and elsewhere.

The present head of the OSCE delegation in Vienna Nils Daag, is to become Ambassador in Dublin. His earlier career has included the positions of Head of the Department for International and Security Affairs at the Ministry of Defence and Ambassador in Zimbabwe.

Nils Daag is to succeed Ambassador Peter Osvald, who will take up a post as Ambassador at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Osvald has previously been Head of the Policy Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Ambassador at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York.

The present Ambassador in Singapore, Eva Walder-Brundin, is to become Head of the Asia and Pacific Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. She has previously headed the Departments for Human Resources and Trade at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and has also served in Dhaka, New York and Vienna.

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Key word: 6361

PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden commits EUR 10 million to environment and nuclear safety in North-West Russia

Sweden is committing EUR 10 million (close to SEK 100 million) to the environmental fund that has been set up to take care of nuclear waste and other problems in North-West Russia.

#There are urgent environmental initiatives to be taken in Russia and for several years now Sweden has been extensively involved in assisting Russia and has been a leading force in these efforts#, says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky in a comment.

At the conference on assistance held today by the Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership (NDEP) in Brussels, it was announced that Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the EU Commission are to put a total of EUR 110 million into the fund.

#Today#s conference is an important step in mobilising the international community to carry out environmental efforts in North-West Russia. Not only economic initiatives, but also international agreements regulating such matters as issues of responsibility will be needed to tackle the problems of nuclear waste#, continues Leif Pagrotsky.

The environmental investments will relate to both traditional environmental projects such as water and sewage treatment and action to manage nuclear waste from decommissioned Russian submarines and other sources.

The NDEP is a cooperative arrangement between the European Development Bank, the Nordic Investment Bank, the World Bank, the EU Commission and Russia.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson on the food crisis in southern Africa

At a press meeting during political week at Almedalen in Visby, Gotland, today, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson spoke about the acute food crisis in southern Africa. The crisis is worse than had previously been anticipated, but Sweden and a number of international institutions are prepared to take action as soon as the collective UN appeal is presented. The United Nations is expected to present its appeal on 15 July but has already released the preliminary news that it will be in the region of SEK 5#6 billion.

#13 million people, 2.3 million of whom are children under the age of 5, are in danger of being affected if the countries at risk and the rest of the world do not act decisively to prevent the threatening food crisis. This is naturally about food, but also about managing its transport and distribution, and about health care. The political will for governments to work together is also necessary so that political disagreement and bureaucracy do not obstruct relief work,# says Mr Karlsson.

#It is important that the main responsibility lies with the United Nations so that the relief efforts are coordinated. Sida has already taken the decision, therefore, to allocate SEK 50 million to provide support as quickly as possible. The Government is prepared to consider decisions on further economic resources if necessary,# says Mr Karlsson.

#The current crisis is not solely a matter of drought and weather conditions. Political mismanagement, poverty and HIV/AIDS have made the situation considerably worse. It is not simply a coincidence that Zimbabwe is the most badly hit. If we do not tackle these problems on a long-term basis, we can be sure that the food crisis will recur. Sweden recently adopted a regional strategy for southern Africa, a strategy that includes directing attention at these problems,# says Mr Karlsson.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to send observers to elections i Macedonia

The Government decided today to send up to three election observers(so-called long-term observers) as well as up to twenty election observers (so-called short-term observers) to monitor the parliamentary elections in Macedonia. The elections are scheduled to take place on 15 September. The Swedish observers will be at the disposal of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in

Europe (OSCE).

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New ambassadors appointed for Abuja, Belgrade and Singapore

The Government has appointed Birgitta Holst Alani as the Swedish envoy in Abuja, Nigeria. She is presently serving as Deputy Director at SIPRI, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Lars-Göran Engfeldt has been appointed envoy in Belgrade. His present position is with the Ministry of the Environment and his previous posts have included those of minister at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York and ambassador in Nairobi. The new envoy in Singapore will be Teppo Tauriainen. At present he is Director at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, International Trade Policy Department. His previous postings have included Helsinki and Santiago de Chile.

Press Officer Clas Thorson has been appointed Press Counsellor at the Embassy of Sweden in Washington. He is an adviser and consultant in company management and communications. He has previously been the correspondent in Asia for the Swedish television news programmes *Aktuellt* and *Rapport*. He has also been Head of Information Services within the Ericsson Group and Chief Executive of TV 4.

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Key word: 6328

PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson invites the press to a meeting in Almedalen

on the famine catastrophe that is threatening in Southern Africa

Southern Africa is facing one of the most serious food crises for ten years. Twelve million people in Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi and Zambia are risking starvation. The situation could lead to a catastrophe that lasts until the spring of 2003. The drought is only one explanation; political and economic factors are also important issues. At the same time, the spread of HIV/AIDS is making the situation more complicated than similar situations in the past. The world's countries and several UN bodies are now making plans and mobilising resources whilst a number of non-governmental organisations are planning their own operations.

A collective appeal to the world's countries by the UN is expected to be presented on 15 July. The United Nations World Food Programme has already sent out a preparatory appeal which states the extent of the help that is necessary to avert the crisis.

Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson is extending an invitation to a press meeting in Almedalen, Visby, on 8 July to discuss the reasons behind the situation and the extent of the problem, and to speak about what Sweden and the rest of the world is doing to counter the famine catastrophe that is threatening.

Time: 09.30, Monday 8 July

Venue: Strandriddaren, Wisby Hotell, Visby

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government welcomes extended mandate for the UN police force in Bosnia

"We welcome the extension of the mandate for the UN police force in Bosnia to 15 July. This will provide scope for further negotiations aimed at finding a solution to the crisis resulting from the US opposition to the International Criminal Court (ICC)", say Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh and Minister for Defence Björn von Sydow in a joint statement.

"It is also satisfying that the original proposal regarding immunity for participants in the peace-keeping operations was not adopted by the Security Council. We in the EU have been concerned to uphold the integrity and legitimacy of the ICC and to safeguard UN peace-keeping operations. The clear and concerted action on the part of the EU has played an important role in the lead-up to the decision taken by the Security Council last night."

The United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1421, extending the present mandate of the UNMIBH until 15 July, by a unanimous vote on 3 July. The United States accepted this compromise solution when it became clear that its proposed resolution would not win sufficient support to be adopted by the Security Council.

"It is highly regrettable that a link has been made between the ICC and UN peace-keeping operations, as this threatens to complicate continued American participation in peace-keeping. It is important that the United States joins in future peace-keeping operations", emphasise Lindh and von Sydow. The two ministers express the hope that the opposition demonstrated by the Security Council may lead the US to reconsider its attitude towards the ICC, bearing in mind that the prime purpose of the court is to strengthen international law.

The United States has urged that personnel engaged in UN operations should enjoy a general exemption from prosecution for war crimes or other serious offences under ICC jurisdiction. If a proposal of this kind had been approved, it would have had consequences not only for the legitimacy of the ICC but also for the credibility of the UN and the Security Council, and would have risked undermining confidence in personnel engaged in international operations.

"It is gratifying that the EU has acted in concert, as this enhances the credibility of the common foreign and security policy. Sweden and other EU countries have made determined efforts to promote the establishment of the International Criminal Court. International law embraces us all. Equality before the law is the corner-stone of a just global community", say ministers Lindh and von Sydow.

In a broader perspective, the resolution proposed by the United States threatens to cripple peace-support operations, whether under UN or EU leadership. To a certain extent, the development of an EU military crisis management capacity is conditional on close cooperation with NATO, especially as regards the potential use by the EU of existing NATO resources in planning and directing any military intervention. Such cooperation could be seriously complicated by the fact that US personnel hold a number of crucial positions on the NATO staffs that would be called upon if the need arose to assist the EU in planning and directing a military crisis management action.

In the opinion of Minister for Defence von Sydow and Minister for Foreign Affairs Lindh, "any such development would be very serious, as it threatens to paralyse all peace-support operations in their present form".

A new US proposal would restrict immunity to personnel from states that are not parties to the Treaty of Rome. However, this proposal too would have similar consequences.

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Key word: 6326

PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

AIDS spreading most rapidly in countries adjacent to Sweden

In Stockholm on Tuesday, the UN is to present its latest report on the AIDS epidemic in the world. "The report shows that the decline in the spread of the epidemic that many had predicted or hoped for was wishful thinking," says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

According to the UNAIDS report, it is not only in Africa that the AIDS epidemic is growing. The disease is spreading most rapidly in countries adjacent to Sweden, in Eastern Europe and in other parts of the former Soviet Union. According to Mr Karlsson, the EU bears a major responsibility for stopping the spread of HIV/AIDS in Eastern Europe. But increasingly less attention is being paid to AIDS in the EU.

"There is a kind of 'All clear' thinking in the rich countries. In its wake there are also danger signals in Sweden that fewer people are protecting themselves when they have sex."

The area in the world that is worst affected is sub-Sahara Africa where there are two thirds of the people who live with HIV/AIDS.

"The fight against AIDS is the most important development issue in the world today," says Mr Karlsson. "Measures will be tailor-made in order to reach the families that have been affected by HIV/AIDS."

UNAIDS, the United Nations body for combating HIV/AIDS, is to present the report at a press conference at 11.00 on Tuesday 2 July at Noaks Ark, Drottninggatan 61, Stockholm. Contact: Håkan Ahlström, 08-37 86 26.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-07-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson hosts launch of UNDP report

Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson will be the host when the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) presents its Human Development Report in Stockholm on 24 July. This year's theme is Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World.

The report, which focuses this year on democracy and politics, will be an important contribution to our own policy on global development which is to be formulated during the autumn, says Mr Karlsson.

Welcome to the presentation of UNDP's Human Development Report.

Time: Wednesday 24 July, 10.00-11.30

Venue: Bella Venezia, Rosenbad 4, Stockholm

Please note: if you wish to attend, you should notify Mattias Sundholm, Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Service, by e-mail: mattias.sundholm@foreign.ministry.se.

The report ranks the countries of the world according to human development. Sweden's placing has changed since last year. The report also contains a human poverty index, gender-related indices as well as new democracy indices.

In addition, the report presents statistics on the incidence of democratic polity in the world.

Democracy and good governance are preconditions for human development and the alleviation of poverty. The report is an important measure of how far we still have to go to achieve the UN Millennium Goal, says Mr Karlsson.

Journalists can order the report and press material under embargo until 10.00 on 24 July. Please sign the embargo slip and fax it to the UNDP Nordic Office on 08-22 22 23, or +45 3546 7095.

For further information, please contact Peter Gustafsson at the UNDP Nordic Office, tel: 08-545 232 50, e-mail: peter.gustafsson@undp.se, or Staffan Landin, tel: +45 35 46 71 56, e-mail: staffan.landin@undp.se.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government increases support to the fight against

people trafficking in Europe

The Government decided today to make a grant of nine million SEK to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, SIDA, to strengthen Swedish efforts to combat people trafficking in Central and Eastern Europe.

The Government has previously invested SEK 48 million in work in this area. This decision means that there are Swedish-supported projects in the area from Russia in the east to Bosnia and Albania in the west.

The contribution is primarily to be used for preventive measures, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for the victims of people trafficking and for development of the legal system in Russia, the Baltic states, Ukraine, Belarus, Romania and Bulgaria.

#Sweden already gives considerable support to the fight against people trafficking in Europe but, even so, the Government is concerned about the people trafficking ongoing in our neighbouring region, # the Minister for Trade, Mr Leif Pagrotsky, says.

#In many countries people trafficking is very inadequately tackled. This is therefore an issue of highest priority in the country strategies for development cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe now being drawn up at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. #

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Key word: 6295

PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government appoints International Humanitarian Law Delegation

The Government has decided to establish an International Humanitarian Law Delegation, whose task it is to identify, follow-up and propose priorities in international humanitarian law that are of importance for Swedish foreign policy. The delegation will, inter alia, monitor and analyse developments in international humanitarian law, and its interplay with other related fields of international law. These include disarmament and human rights.

The Swedish tradition, reflected in its advisory group in the field of humanitarian law, goes back thirty years and will remain an important part of the Swedish Government's commitment and standpoint in this area. What distinguishes the new International Humanitarian Law Delegation

from previous groups is that it will have somewhat different working forms and other powers, in order to be able to meet new needs and challenges as efficiently as possible. Working groups will be appointed, for example, to make analyses and to act as think-tanks.

State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will be appointed as Chairman of the Delegation and State Secretary Yvonne Gustafsson at the Ministry of Defence will be Vice-Chairman.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Foreign Service Appointments

The Government today appointed the Director-General for Trade Policy at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Mats Ringborg, to be Sweden's Ambassador in Oslo. The new Director-General will be the Minister at Sweden's Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels, Lars-Olof Lindgren.

Ingrid Hjelt af Trolle, Director at the Prime Minister's Office, will be a new minister and take up a post as deputy head of Sweden's Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels.

Director Mikael Lindström has been appointed Ambassador in Tokyo, succeeding Krister Kumlin, who will take up a post as Ambassador at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Kjell Anneling, Ambassador in Peking, will succeed Mikael Lindström as principal coordinator of the Foreign Service's trade and investment promotion activities.

Director Bertil Jobeus, Head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Office, has been appointed Ambassador in Reykjavik, succeeding Herman af Trolle. Herman af Trolle will serve as an Ambassador at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Nina Ersman, Press Counsellor at the Embassy of Sweden in Washington has been appointed Director and new Head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Office.

Ambassador Erik Åberg has been appointed Ambassador in Kampala. He is currently Sweden's Ambassador in Maputo.

Ambassador Magnus Vahlquist will take up a post as Ambassador at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

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Ambassador Magnus Vahlquist will take up a post as Ambassador at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Counsellors for Cultural Affairs appointed to London and Warsaw

The Government today appointed Maria Schottenius to be Counsellor for Cultural Affairs in London. She holds a PhD in comparative literature and was previously, inter alia, the editor of Bonniers Litterära Magasin. Since 1993 she has been chief editor for literature and the arts of the newspaper Expressen.

Mika Larsson has been appointed Counsellor for Cultural Affairs in Warsaw. She started her career as a journalist and worked in Poland as a foreign correspondent in the early 1980s. She has also worked in the publishing business and was Cultural Attaché at the Embassy of Sweden in Warsaw from 1992-1997. Today she runs her own operations, focusing on Baltic Sea cooperation.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Strategy for regional development cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa

The Government today adopted a strategy for Swedish support to regional development cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa for the period 2002-2006.

#With this strategy Sweden can contribute to strengthening cooperation in Africa to solve conflicts and tackle common development problems,# the Minister for Development Cooperation, Mr Jan O. Karlsson, says. #Just as we in the Nordic countries and Europe have greatly benefited from regional cooperation, the countries of Africa can also benefit from such cooperation.#

#Regional cooperation is a precondition for alleviating the effects of the impending food disaster in southern Africa. Regional assumption of responsibility is needed to compensate for the misgovernment underlying the famine,# Mr Karlsson says.

Regional cooperation in Africa has intensified in recent years.

The transformation of the Organisation of African Unity, OAU, into the

Union is part of this development. A new strong will to take responsibility and to make joint efforts will also be expressed in NEPAD, the New Partnership for African Development, which represents a new partnership between reform-disposed countries in Africa.

Under the strategy, support for regional and sub-regional development cooperation efforts will primarily focus on conflict prevention and conflict management, economic cooperation, integration, a common infrastructure and natural resources. Support will also be given to, among other things, research, higher education, cooperation in fighting HIV/AIDS, networks for journalists and organisations that can carry out human rights work. African priorities and development plans will serve as guidance for Swedish support. Coordination with other donors, particularly the EU, is emphasised in the decision.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Yossi Beilin to visit Sweden

Yossi Beilin, member of the Israeli Knesset and former Minister of Justice in Ehud Barak's government, is to visit Sweden on 27 June. Beilin has recently launched a new political movement, Shahaar (dawn), whose aim is to inject new energy into the Israeli Left.

During his visit to Stockholm, Yossi Beilin will meet Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh. The talks will focus on the serious situation in the Middle East.

To the editorial office:

A joint press conference with Yossi Beilin and Anna Lindh will be held on 27 June, at 14.00-14.30 at the Press Centre in Rosenbad 1.

Please bring your press credentials!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Anna Lindh concerning George W. Bush's speech last night

What is positive about President George W. Bush's speech is that the United States is indicating strong support for a Palestinian state and for the Palestinians # on humanitarian, economic and political levels. He speaks clearly about a Palestinian state being established within a relatively short period of time # three years # and that is good.

It is also good that President Bush is unequivocal about continued occupation threatening Israel's identity and democracy and that this occupation must therefore be brought to an end in accordance with UN Resolutions 242 and 338, and that the issues of Jerusalem and the refugees must be solved, that the Israeli settlements must be stopped and the Palestinian funds repaid.

One problem is that conditions are being made regarding who is to be the Palestinian leader and this is something we cannot support. No-one other than the Palestinians themselves can decide on this issue and it is vital from the point of view of international law, and also from the moral aspect, that it is the people themselves who are allowed to decide who their leader is to be.

Another problem is also that President Bush does not say anything about how to move forward in the peace process. There is no mention in this speech of the international conference we have previously talked about. This conference is important if progress is now to be made with a political solution and the violence brought to an end.

The quartet (US, EU, UN and Russia) must now make further intensive efforts to ensure that the vision of two democratic states living peacefully alongside each other can become a reality.

PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh on the latest developments in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

"The past twenty-four hours' Israeli military offensive in the West Bank and Gaza is extremely disturbing. I deeply regret the Israeli government's decision to re-occupy large parts of the West Bank. This decision risks giving more ammunition to the forces opposing a peaceful solution. The Israeli troops must withdraw from Palestine-controlled areas", comments Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh.

"Agreement can only be reached through negotiation. Sweden and the EU recommend that an international conference be called as soon as possible. The occupation must be brought to an end and a democratic Palestine established. This must be undertaken in peaceful co-existence with Israel, along secure, recognised borders", continues Anna Lindh.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supports Red Cross Nordic United World College

The Government decided today to allocate SEK 6.1 million for 2002 to the Red Cross Nordic United World College. The college started in 1995 in Norway and Sweden has contributed to its operations since the beginning.

Every year, the college takes in pupils from some 80 countries. About a third of them come from developing countries. The aim of the college is to enable young people to become politically and environmentally aware citizens through an international training, the exchange of experiences and social service.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh condemns suicide attack in Jerusalem

"The suicide attack that today killed and injured large numbers of people in Jerusalem is in contravention of all humanitarian norms and must be unequivocally condemned", says Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh.

"This bombing attack is another terrible example of the spiral of violence now besetting this area. Both the countries in the region and the surrounding world are responsible for making clear to those responsible for this insane act that they are only serving to create polarisation and more violence".

"One ray of hope is all the attempts being made by the so-called quartet, the EU, the USA, the UN and Russia, and by the forces for good within the Israeli and Palestinian societies who are engaged in an uphill struggle to reverse developments so that they take a peaceful course".

"What we must do is to achieve a just solution for peace, with the final aim of two states # Israel and Palestine - living in peaceful coexistence. The international conference that is planned may be able to play a decisive role here", says Anna Lindh.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Trade Minister Leif Pagrotsky to visit the Hultsfred Festival

Unofficial translation

On Saturday 15 June, Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky is scheduled to visit the Hultsfred Festival. During his visit, Leif Pagrotsky will visit representatives of the Swedish and international music industry.

"Sweden continues to strengthen its position as a modern, innovative and creative country. Together with other youthful sectors such as design and biotechnology, music is now projecting a new image of Sweden that differs from the traditional one. I believe that we are about to see an increasing number of successes, both within the music industry and in other young, creative sectors", says Leif Pagrotsky before the visit.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson at ministerial meeting in Luxembourg

Unofficial translation

European migration policy must be distinguished by efforts to combat xenophobia, defence of the right to asylum, preventive action in countries of origin and transit, and increased cooperation on border control issues. There was broad agreement on these points when EU migration ministers gathered today in Luxembourg.

Trafficking in human beings and illegal immigration were the topics on the agenda, in preparation for the European Council in Seville over the midsummer weekend. The ministers agreed on measures to prevent and combat illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings across maritime borders. In addition, an action plan was adopted on the implementation of controls at the external borders of the Union.

"I can say that, when all is said and done, there is a broad consensus concerning the need to both defend the fundamental right to asylum and find common solutions in the fight against illegal immigration", says Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

"Another important signal from the ministers for migration policy to the summit in Seville was that the EU must put greater energy into carrying through the harmonisation of asylum and migration policies", says Jan O. Karlsson.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to a press breakfast with Leif Pagrotsky to present the report "An integrated globalisation policy - for equitable ec

The Statement of Government Policy for 2000 gave the Minister for Trade the task of formulating an integrated globalisation policy. In January 2001 an overview was presented of the actions on globalisation issues that are being pursued by departments throughout the Government Offices. Now comes a report entitled #An integrated globalisation policy#. The report links the policies implemented in Sweden in response to the internationalisation of the economy with what Sweden is doing in the international arena in order to meet new challenges.

We are pleased to invite you to a press breakfast with Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

Date and time: Friday 14 June at 08.30.

Venue: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1.

If you wish to attend, please notify Press Assistant Gabrielle Karlsén no later than 15.00 on Thursday 13 June,

tel. 08-405 44 81, e-mail gabrielle.karlsen@foreign.ministry.se.

NB: Please bring your press credentials with you.

Welcome!

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Key word: 6115

PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

#Halving poverty by 2015 # it can be done#

At a press conference today, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson gave a preview of the information campaign #It can be done#. The purpose of the campaign, which will be formally launched in the autumn, is to increase knowledge about the UN#s Millennium Goal # to halve world poverty by 2015.

#Halving poverty by 2015 is a great challenge and a difficult task. But it can be done, and what#s more it must be done, for the sake of developing countries and for our own sake#, says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

#The point of the information campaign we are now setting in motion is not to tell people about the Millennium Goal, development assistance and solidarity in broad, general terms. The point is that achieving the Millennium Goal will require big decisions, and tough decisions, which will affect us and our own society, not just the developing countries# says Jan O. Karlsson.

#It will involve reforming agriculture in the EU, lowering trade barriers, establishing new patterns of production and consumption # decisions that will have a great impact on our own day-to-day life, far greater than the effect we feel from giving conventional development assistance.

#This is going to put solidarity to the test. Public opinion in Sweden is very positive towards development assistance. It is important that we nurture this positive attitude and turn it to good account.#

More than 90 per cent of Swedes think it is important that Sweden help to achieve the Millennium Goal. However, 86 per cent believe the attempt will fail.

#We want to draw attention to the advances that have actually been made in developing countries over the past 30 years. This will strengthen belief in the possibility of progress. The key to success is the political will of all those governments, in the South and in the North, that have committed themselves to taking the action required to halve world poverty and create sustainable development. Here popular opinion has a very significant role to play#, says Jan O. Karlsson.

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Key word: 6114

PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson and UNFPA Director on countermeasures

Tomorrow, Wednesday, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson is to meet the Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in China, Ms Siri Telleri Melchiro. UNFPA works on such issues as women's reproductive health and rights and

preventing the further spread of HIV/AIDS.

Support for UNFPA has declined recently and the organisation is facing serious financial problems. The United States has frozen its contribution to UNFPA for 2002 in light of the work carried out by UNFPA in China, among other things. Tomorrow's meeting is being held to discuss measures to counter these developments, that is to say, how the organisation's operations can be supported and strengthened in the future.

The UNFPA annual general meeting will begin in Geneva next Monday and Sweden will be giving its firm support to the organisation and urging other countries to cooperate actively with UNFPA. Sweden will also emphasise the importance of young people having access to information and advice on how they can protect themselves against HIV.

During their Council meeting last week, the EU ministers for development cooperation unanimously adopted a declaration in favour of efforts within the United Nations Population Fund. It underlines the central importance that sexual and reproductive health and rights have in the battle against poverty and in achieving the objectives of the UN Millennium Declaration. The Declaration also welcomes the Commission's intention of strengthening cooperation with UNFPA. The initiative to the Declaration was taken by Luxembourg and Sweden in conjunction with the EU ministers for development cooperation meeting Executive Director of the Fund, Ms Thoraya Obaid. The meeting took place against the background of US opposition to issues surrounding sexual and reproductive health and rights.

To the editorial office:

If you would like the opportunity to meet Ms Siri Telleri Melchiro and Jan O. Karlsson in conjunction with the meeting, please contact Ms Helena Gustavsson, 08-405 55 50.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish companies exempted from American steel tariffs

A number of Swedish companies have been granted exemptions from the American penalty tariffs on steel. Products from AB Sandvik Steel and Uddeholm Tooling AB are on the list of exemptions announced last Friday by the US Department of Commerce in Washington.

It is a relief for all the employees in Sandviken and Munkfors. I am pleased that efforts to obtain exemptions for Swedish manufacturers are now beginning to show results, says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky in a comment. But there still remain steel products from several companies that should also be granted exemptions. I expect more Swedish-produced goods to have been exempted before the Americans have concluded their exemptions at the beginning of July.

On Monday, the EU Council of Ministers decided to introduce supplementary tariffs on the import of certain selected products from the United States. The implementation of them will, however, be postponed until the American exemptions have been finalised.

-
#We will then decide how we will react towards the United States,# says Mr Pagrotsky. #I hope the US will make efforts to give the EU countries legitimate compensation for the steel tariffs and generous exemptions for our companies# products. I hope, of course, that the EU will be able to avoid introducing tariff increases at all, but I cannot rule out that it may be necessary. The actions of the United States will be decisive.#

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press breakfast with Jan O. Karlsson on 11 June

Are Swedish and international efforts in vain, or do development assistance and development policy do any good? Is it reasonable to believe we can halve poverty by the year 2015? Is it at all possible to eradicate world poverty in our time?

The Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, invites representatives of the press to a breakfast on Tuesday, where he will present the information drive #It can be done# and lead a discussion starting from the prospects of achieving the UN Millennium Goal of halving poverty. More than 90 per cent of Swedes think it is important that Sweden help to achieve the Millennium Goal. But the image of developing countries mired in misery is hard to overcome # 86 per cent believe the attempt will fail.

Following the Monterrey conference on financing for development, preparations are now under way for the Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg in September. Ruth Jacoby, who was responsible for preparations for Monterrey, is now Director-General for Development Cooperation at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Having just returned from the preparatory commission before Johannesburg, she will speak at the press conference about the ongoing work.

Date and time: Tuesday 11 June, 08.30-09.30

Venue: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs torg 1

If you plan to attend, please notify Helena Gustavsson # helena.gustavsson@foreign.ministry.se # no later than 12.00 on Monday.

Please bring your press credentials.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Proposal referred to the Council on Legislation for a new order for appeals and procedures in cases relating to foreign national

The Government decided today to present to the Council on Legislation a proposal for a new order for appeals and procedures in cases relating to foreign nationals.

The main purpose of the proposed reform is to enhance statutory rights in cases relating to aliens by introducing a two-stage procedure enabling oral negotiations before a court of law in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Court Procedure Act. Appeals in cases relating to foreign nationals and citizenship will no longer be dealt with by the Aliens Appeals Board. Appeals against decisions of the Swedish Migration Board will instead be lodged at certain county administrative courts, whose decisions in turn may be appealed at the Administrative Court of Appeal in Stockholm.

After the Council on Legislation has dealt with the proposal, the Government intends to present a Government Bill to the Riksdag in the autumn.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson and Amartya Sen on globalisation and

human rights, 11 June

Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson is to lead a seminar on #Globalisation and Human Rights# at the Olof Palme International Center (www.palmecenter.se), on Tuesday 11 June at 13.00#16.00. The invited speaker is Professor Amartya Sen, Nobel Laureate in Economics, who is in Sweden for the third meeting of the Commission on Human Security (CHS).

CHS was founded in January 2001 as a step in the elaboration of the UN#s Millennium Declaration. The Commission aims to promote understanding of the concept of human security and to propose a programme of action for achieving the human security objectives put forward in the Millennium Declaration. The Commission has held two previous meetings, in New York and Tokyo. Sweden is hosting the third meeting, which will take place at Haga Palace in Stockholm. Further information about the work of the Commission may be found at www.humansecurity-chs.org

The Commission is co-chaired by Amartya Sen and Sadako Ogata, the former UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

The other members of the Commission are:

Lincoln C. Chen, Harvard Kennedy School of Government

Bronislaw Geremek, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland

Frene Frenny Noshir Ginwala, Speaker of the South African Parliament

Sonia Picado, Head of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights

Surin Pitsuwan, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand

Donna E. Shalala, President of the University of Miami, former US Secretary for Health and Human Services

Peter Sutherland, Goldman Sachs International

Albert Tevoedjre, former Deputy Director-General of the ILO and Minister for Planning of Benin

Carl Tham, Swedish Ambassador in Berlin

Lakhdar Brahimi, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New press counsellors to Helsinki and Tokyo

Today the Government has appointed Anders Eriksson as Press Counsellor in Helsinki. Anders Eriksson has worked, inter alia, as foreign correspondent for Sveriges Radio (the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation) in Helsinki, Moscow and Riga. His most recent post was as sub-editor at the Sveriges Radio news room, Eko.

The new Press Counsellor in Tokyo will be Åsa Arvidson. She has previously held posts, inter alia, in Washington, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, Harare and Teheran. Her most recent appointment was at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Press Service.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Director-General for Administrative Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government decided today to appoint Director Per Thöresson to the position of Director-General for Administrative Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He will take up his new duties on 10 June.

Per Thöresson has been head of the office of the Minister for Foreign Affairs since 1999 and has previously served at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York and the Swedish Delegation to the OSCE in Vienna.

At the same time the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has decided to establish a new position, directly below the Director-General for Administrative Affairs, to be in charge of development and availability of qualified personnel.

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Key word: 5820

PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government grants support to water project

The Government today announces a decision to grant SEK 5 million in support for the study "Dialogue on Effective Water Governance". The purpose of the study is to promote a better dialogue between different parties to ensure that sustainable use is made of the world's freshwater resources.

The project is being carried on in the form of round-table talks and conferences. It brings together representatives of the public sector, the business sector and civil society.

The direct recipient of the grant is the Stockholm-based Global Water Partnership Organisation (GWPO), which is coordinating the study. Other bodies participating in the study are the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The results will later be discussed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg and in connection with the World Water Forum to be held in Kyoto in 2003.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Vietnam's Minister for Foreign Affairs visits Sweden

At the invitation of Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh, Vietnam's Minister for Foreign Affairs Nguyen Dy Nien will visit Sweden on 3-5 June. The visit is a follow-up to Ms Lindh's visit to Vietnam last August.

During his visit, Mr Nien will have discussions with Ms Lindh. He will, in addition, have discussions with the Speaker of the Riksdag Birgitta Dahl, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O Karlsson and Director-General of Sida Bo Göransson. Mr Nien will also meet representatives of the business sector.

Issues to be discussed will include Swedish development cooperation with Vietnam, political and economic developments in Vietnam, human rights, bilateral trade and current foreign policy matters such as terrorism and legal security.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

SEK 2.8 million for export training for SMEs

The Government has decided to provide SEK 2.8 million to pay for a trainee programme for small and medium-sized enterprises. The programme targets young graduates with linguistic and cultural expertise relating to Latin America.

The aim is to encourage SMEs to engage in increased trade with Latin America by recruiting young graduates with linguistic skills and training them in the export sales field.

#We need to make use of the expertise that exists around the country, both skills in Spanish and Portuguese and knowledge of Latin American culture#, says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

#Personnel with these sorts of skills are invaluable to export-oriented companies.#

The training programme will be carried out by the Swedish Trade Council. 40 people will be offered places on the 6-month trainee programme.

#I hope this will lead to us seeing up to forty new companies taking advantage of the trade opportunities that exist in several parts of Latin America#, says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Additional funds for trade promotion in Mexico and Chile

The Swedish embassies in Mexico and Chile are to receive additional allocations amounting to SEK 250 000 and SEK 200 000 respectively in a bid to boost business opportunities for Swedish companies.

The money forms part of a package of special Government measures aimed at promoting Swedish exports at a number of embassies abroad.

#Mexico and Chile are exciting markets, and Swedish companies should be up there with the front-runners,# said Trade Minister Leif Pagrotsky. #The problems in Argentina should not blind us to the fact that Latin America offers enormous potential,# he added.

Mexico is one of the world's twelve largest trading nations. The far-reaching free trade agreement between Chile and the EU which comes into force in 2003 will open up new opportunities for Swedish companies in Chile.

#I am delighted that both these countries will now have free trade agreements with the EU. It will give companies enhanced opportunities for trade in Latin America. Chile has shown particular interest in Swedish IT know-how.#

This autumn, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in association with a number of bodies including the Swedish Trade Council, chambers of commerce and the Chilean embassy will organise a series of meetings with companies around Sweden to inform them about the tariff reductions provided for by the free trade agreement between the EU and Chile.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Four perspectives on globalisation in new EGDI study

The lively and often polarised debate on globalisation is ultimately about how a world order can and should be structured. In a new study, the Expert Group on Development Issues (EGDI) has adopted a broad approach to the matter and presents four very different perspectives on globalisation, focusing particularly on patterns of conflict and the consequences for international development cooperation.

The study entitled #Global Governance in the 21st Century: Alternative Perspectives on World Order# is to be launched on 5 June at a seminar arranged by EGDI in cooperation with the Swedish Institute of International Affairs. The authors are renowned researchers in international relations, peace and development studies.

The seminar will be chaired by State Secretary Gun-Britt Andersson from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The study will be presented by Professor Björn Hettne, Professor Indra de Soysa, Professor

Mark Duffield, Professor Raimo Väyrynen and Counsellor Bertil Odén. Malin Berggren, former chairman of the National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations and member of the Gothenburg Commission, and Gunnar Wetterberg, head of social policy at the Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations (SACO), will also take part in the discussions.

The seminar will be held on 5 June at 13.30#17.00 at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Lilla Nygatan 23.

If you wish to attend, please contact the Swedish Institute of International Affairs directly: 08-696 05 00 or info@ui.se

You will be able to download the EGDI 2002:2 study from www.egdi.gov.se or order it from egdi.secretariat@foreign.ministry.se

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-06-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press conference invitation: Leif Pagrotsky presents Latin America initiatives

The Latin American market has great potential for Swedish companies. Brazil is Sweden's twentieth most important export market, Mexico is one of the world's twelve largest trading nations and negotiations were recently completed on a free trade agreement between the EU and Chile.

On Tuesday 4 June at 11 a.m., Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky will present new initiatives being taken to boost the prospects for Swedish companies in the Latin American market, and to enhance opportunities for increased imports from Latin America.

Date and time: Tuesday 4 June, at 11 a.m.

Venue: Lilla pressrummet, Press Centre, Rosenbad

NB: Please bring your press credentials with you.

Welcome!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky comments on Baltic Conference on copyright and patent law

Today, 30 May, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will be holding a seminar on copyright and patent law in the Baltic states. The seminar was organised in collaboration with Stockholm University. #Copyright, patent law and trademark law are crucial to the protection of the work of countless creative people,# commented the Swedish Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky. #At worst, pirating and the sale and smuggling of illegal copies over national borders can deprive hard-working people of the opportunity to continue doing work that gives pleasure to us all,# he went on. #Moreover, it#s a consumer issue,# he added. We must know what it is we are buying and not, for example, risk picking up illegal copies that could damage our computers at home.# The seminar marks the climax of more than two years# work carried out within the Council of the Baltic Sea States under Sweden#s leadership. Its purpose is to communicate the importance of protecting and respecting copyright and patent law to the widest possible audience and propose ways in which this can be achieved.

The seminar, which will be held at the National Board of Trade in Stockholm, will be attended by some 70 delegates from all the countries in the Baltic Sea region.

Information on copyright and patent law can be found through (www.balticmarket.org).

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

International Council for the Swedish Institute in Alexandria to meet in Stockholm

In February of this year, the Government appointed an international scientific council of 12 members for the Swedish Institute in Alexandria. The council is to meet for the first time in Stockholm on 3 June, together with the board of the Institute.

In conjunction with the meeting in Stockholm, the council members will take part in a seminar at

the Swedish Institute of International Affairs (UI) on 4 June at 15.00#17.30, Lilla Nygatan 23. The title of the seminar is Dialogue and cooperation in the Mediterranean.

The Scientific Council for the Swedish Institute in Alexandria includes a number of internationally known researchers and cultural personalities, such as the head of the new Alexandria Library Ismail Serageldin, the well-known sociologist Fatima Mernissi and, from the Palestinian areas, the architect Suad Amiry. From Sweden, the head of the Gothenburg Theatre Jasenko Selimovic, professor in Iranistics Bo Utas and expert on Turkey Elisabeth Özdalga will be taking part.

To the editorial office:

The International Council for the Swedish Institute in Alexandria will be available to speak to the media directly after the UI seminar on 4 June at 17.30. Venue: Lilla Nygatan 23.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-30

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Foreign Service appointments

The Government has decided today to appoint Börje Ljunggren to the position of Ambassador in Beijing. He has been Head of the Asia and Pacific Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs since 1999 and has also been Ambassador in Hanoi and Chargé d#Affaires in Vientiane. Mr Ljunggren previously worked at the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency where, for eight years, he belonged to the management team responsible for Asia. He has also been Head of the Development Assistance Office in Dhaka.

In Beijing Mr Ljunggren succeeds Ambassador Kjell Anneling who returns to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Director Annika Söder has taken up her appointment as Head of the European Security Policy Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

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Key word: 5732

PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Lithuanian foundation receives 2002 Baltic Sea Award

Unofficial translation

The Lithuanian Housing and Urban Development Foundation is to receive the 2002 Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award. The award is being made in recognition of the Foundation's innovative programmes and projects for environmental conservation in the Baltic Sea and Lithuania.

The Foundation's efforts have helped bring about a reduction in Lithuanian discharges of organic matter into the Baltic Sea from 1 500 to 100 tonnes per year for the projects concerned. The approach used can serve as a model for other parts of the Baltic Sea region.

The Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award, which was established by the Swedish Government, honours direct, practical initiatives that help improve the quality of water in the Baltic Sea.

The Housing and Urban Development Foundation (HUDF), which is a state foundation instituted by the Lithuanian Ministry of Finance, is being rewarded for having taken a comprehensive approach to reducing the pollution burden in a large part of Lithuania and for its active contribution to developing and coordinating the resources and know-how above all of relatively small municipalities in this field.

These initiatives have led to a reduction of eutrophication effects in both watercourses and coastal areas in the Nemuna drainage basin, which affects 75 per cent of the country, thereby benefiting both the environment and the people who live in the area.

The Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award was founded by Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky and is administered by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI). The purpose of the award is to recognise efforts that have made a concrete contribution to improving the quality of water in and around the Baltic Sea.

This is the fourth time the award is being made, and State Secretary Sven-Eric Söder will present the prize of SEK 100 000 to the Foundation's Managing Director Mr Aloyzas Vitkauskas on 15 August, in connection with the annual World Water Week in Stockholm.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden and Romania sign agreement

On Wednesday 29 May, the Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, and the Romanian Minister for Industry, Ioan Popescu, will sign a bilateral agreement on the mutual promotion and protection of investment which includes, inter alia, rules for compensation on expropriation, the free transfer of capital and international dispute resolution.

After signing the agreement, Leif Pagrotsky and Ioan Popescu will attend the signing of a contract between ABB and the Romanian state electricity company Transelectrica S.A. ABB will build a transformer plant which will supply Romania's capital, Bucharest, with electricity. It is expected that the contract will create a number of job opportunities in Ludvika and Västerås.

To the editorial office:

The media are invited to attend the signing of the agreements.

Date and time: Wednesday 29 May, at 11.35

Venue: Media representatives assemble at the entrance to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1.

Please bring your press credentials.

Welcome!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Bilateral agreement with Romania on protection of investments

Following negotiations with representatives of the governments of Sweden and Romania, an agreement has been concluded on the promotion and reciprocal protection of investments.

#It is gratifying to be able to sign an agreement on protection of investments after several years# discussions. The agreement also reflects a growing interest in investment in Sweden in Romania and Swedish investors increasing interest in Romania,# the Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, says. The aim of the agreement is to further promote trade and economic exchanges between Sweden and Romania. By creating predictable conditions investment and trade will be encouraged. The

agreement also contains the right to international arbitration proceedings in the event of disputes within the scope of the agreement.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-29
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government bills presented to the Riksdag

Today the Government presented two government bills to the Riksdag: no. 2001/02:185, Residence permits with temporary protection for displaced persons in cases of mass exodus, and bill no.2001/02:182, Mutual recognition of decisions on refusal-of-entry and expulsion. Political agreement was reached during the Swedish presidency of the EU for a directive for minimum standards for giving temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons. The directive was adopted in July 2001 and will now be incorporated into Swedish legislation. According to the directive, the Council of the European Union, can, under certain circumstances, take a decision establishing the existence of a situation of mass influx. In such situations, the member states can provide temporary protection for displaced persons. The Government bill proposes that displaced persons be granted residence permits with temporary protection during the period covered by the EU decision. In May 2001, the EU adopted a directive on mutual recognition of decisions on refusal-of-entry or expulsion of third country nationals. This directive too, will now be incorporated into Swedish legislation. The Aliens Act will be amended to comply with the Directive so that refusal-of-entry and expulsion decisions made by another member state of the EU may be enforced by Swedish authorities. However, Swedish authorities are required to have made an independent examination of the case before enforcement. The deciding authority should take the foreign decision into account when examining the case.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Trade comments on ABB order to Romania

A contract worth approximately SEK 370 million was signed today between ABB and the Romanian state energy company Transelectrica S.A. ABB has been given total responsibility for building a transformer plant, Slatina, which, inter alia, will supply power to Bucharest.

Equipment for the transformer plant will be manufactured in Västerås and Ludvika.

"I am pleased that this contract will mean greater trade links with Romania. The Government agreement signed with Romania last year on cooperation in the fields of energy and environment has obviously had a positive effect", says Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky.

Leif Pagrotsky also contends that Swedish industry has much to offer when Romania modernises its economy and prepares itself for EU membership.

"The Swedish manufacturing industry is at the cutting edge, technologically speaking, and is responsible for a large proportion of Swedish exports. This contract is a fine example of the exciting new markets that are to be found in eastern Europe and of ways in which we will be able to contribute there", he continued.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swede to head Wassenaar Secretariat in Vienna

Ambassador Sune Danielsson has been appointed as the new head of the Wassenaar Secretariat, whose task is to work for export controls on conventional weapons and products that can be used both for civil purposes and in the production of weapons of mass destruction. Mr Danielsson will take up his duties on 2 June.

The Secretariat, which was established in 1996, is based in Vienna and has 33 participating states. During the past year Sune Danielsson has served at the EU Commission in Brussels. During the Swedish EU Presidency he was Sweden's chief negotiator for light weapons.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government opens human rights website

Unofficial translation

The Government is today opening a new website devoted to human rights: www.humanrights.gov.se. The website contains information about what human rights are, what the Government is doing in this area both in Sweden and internationally, and an archive of documents related to human rights.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh and Minister for Democratic Issues Britta Lejon also hope for a discussion on human rights on the website. In their own contributions to the website discussion forum, they therefore invite visitors to give their views about issues to which Sweden should devote more attention.

#The Swedish Government wants to strengthen and promote human rights and respect for them. To achieve this, it is important that people know about human rights and about Swedish undertakings in this area. The new website should be seen in the light of these aims#, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

In order to reinforce efforts at national level and to lay the foundation for a more integrated approach to human rights issues in Sweden, the Government decided this spring on a written communication entitled #A national action plan for human rights#. This written communication has subsequently been presented to the Riksdag for discussion.

#In the course of work on the action plan, many interested parties stressed the importance of information on human rights for generating increased awareness about the issues. So we take great pleasure today in presenting a special website devoted to human rights#, says Minister for Democratic Issues Britta Lejon, who also hopes the website will be instrumental in promoting intensive debate.

The national action plan, along with information about the website at www.humanrights.gov.se, has been circulated broadly to some 900 organisations, municipalities, county councils, other public authorities, etc.

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Key word: 5685

PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson to attend meeting of the Development Council in Brussels

Jan O. Karlsson is to take part in a ministerial council meeting for cooperation and development issues due to be held in Brussels on Thursday 30 May.

Included on the agenda are preparations for the summit on sustainable development in Johannesburg, discussions on democracy and "good governance" and the action plan for development cooperation.

A press conference will take place in the Swedish briefing room at the Council buildings at approximately 15.00. The contact person is Press Counsellor Anders J. Eriksson, tel: +32-475-245660.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Director-General of Swedish Migration Board reappointed

The Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, announced today that the Government intends to take a formal decision in the near future to extend the appointment of the Director-General of the Swedish Migration Board, Lena Häll-Eriksson. Her

reappointment will be for a three-year term.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson on migration, integration and SFI at a conference in Tylösand

#There can be no more important priority at this time than to strengthen the front against xenophobia that now exists in our Swedish society. My contribution to this project is to build further on the honest will to consensus that asylum and migration policy currently enjoys in the Riksdag.#

These were the words of the Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, speaking at a conference today in Tylösand on migration, integration and Swedish for Immigrants (SFI), which was organised by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and the Kronoberg Association of Local Authorities.

#There is a chill wind blowing, and xenophobic tendencies are in evidence in many places in Europe. This makes it important for us to keep up the high level of ambition we have in Sweden. I am doing my best to ensure that we design the best possible system for receiving refugees and I see improvements in this very difficult policy area as a continuous process#, said Jan O. Karlsson, drawing attention to a few of the changes that are planned.

#We intend to create greater confidence in the processing of asylum cases by transferring appeals to the general administrative courts. We shall extend the refugee concept to include women persecuted because of their sex and amplify the possibilities for close relatives to immigrate.#

Jan O. Karlsson stressed in particular how important it is that children seeking asylum be seen in the first instance as children and only in the second place as asylum-seekers.

#Children seeking asylum must enjoy the same rights as other children. This applies both to children accompanying their parents and children who arrive in Sweden on their own. There is no question but that the reception of children arriving on their own must be improved.#

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to the press: Recipient of this year's Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award to be announced

Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky will announce the name of this year's winner of the Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award on Wednesday 29 May at 10.00 at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (bankhall), Fredsgatan 4-6.

The prize was instituted by the Government to draw attention to direct and practical measures that contribute to improving the quality of the water in the Baltic Sea and will be awarded this year for the fourth time. The prize money of SEK 100 000 will be presented in Stockholm on 15 August.

For further information about the prize: www.siwi.org.

Welcome!

Please bring your press credentials.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

First EU crisis management exercise

On 22-28 May, the first EU crisis management exercise (CME 02) will take place within the framework of the European security and defence policy. The exercise is a crisis management exercise at politico-military level aimed at practising and evaluating the Union's crisis management procedures and structures, including the coordination of various crisis management instruments.

The exercise is an important step in the development of the EU's crisis management capability.

CME 02 is based on a fictitious scenario in which the island of "Atlantia" and its three countries are affected by disturbances that threaten to become more serious. To prevent such a development, the EU is considering various civilian and military measures.

Taking part in the exercise are member states (capital cities and delegations in Brussels), Council

institutions, the Secretary-General/High Representative, the Commission and the EU satellite centre. Representatives of NATO, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the UN have been invited to take part as observers. Consultations with third party countries will also take place during the exercise.

Taking part for Sweden are the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Justice, in addition to the permanent representation in Brussels.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Stockholm diplomatic corps on study visit to Västra Götaland

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is arranging a three-day study visit for the heads of foreign missions on 26#28 May. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs extends regular invitations to this type of visit in order to give foreign envoys the opportunity to familiarise themselves with Sweden and Swedish conditions and to establish contacts at regional level.

This year#s study visit will be to Västra Götaland and some sixty heads of mission and their spouses will be taking part. During the visit, the group of diplomats invited will meet local representatives of the business sector, culture and administration in Skara, Lidköping, Läckö, Sätenäs, Vänersborg, Trollhättan, Skärhamn and Gothenburg. In Vänersborg and Trollhättan the diplomats will also meet representatives of the Västra Götaland Region.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs will host a dinner at Läckö Palace where County Governor Göte Bernhardsson, who is also chairman of the Läckö Palace Foundation, will be among those participating.

The visit will be concluded with a reception given by the County Governor and the City of Gothenburg in the County Governor#s Residence in Gothenburg.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh welcomes treaty between USA and Russia on strategic nuclear warheads

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh welcomes the signing of a legally binding treaty by the United States and Russia in which the two countries have agreed to cut their number of strategic nuclear warheads by about two-thirds.

#This is definitely a step in the right direction towards the final goal: a world free of nuclear weapons. The fact that the two countries were able to agree on a legally binding treaty is positive. It is important now that the warheads are actually destroyed, not just put into storage. The process of disarmament must be made irreversible#, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

#Furthermore, it would be desirable for the United States and Russia to proceed to the next step and reduce the number of tactical nuclear weapons.#

Presidents Bush and Putin today signed a treaty in Moscow on substantial cutbacks in their countries# nuclear arsenals. The two countries have undertaken to reduce their number of operationally deployed warheads with strategic range to between 1 700 and 2 200 each, by 31 December 2012.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky wants Finnish design manifestation in Sweden

Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, urges the Swedish-Finnish business sector to invest more in design and to give themselves more opportunities to meet and inspire each other to increase their impact on the world market.

At the annual general meeting of the Swedish-Finnish Chamber of Commerce in Stockholm, Minister for Trade Pagrotsky gave his views on how Sweden and Finland should be able to cooperate in the field of design. Pagrotsky stated that one element of more developed cooperation in design could be a Finnish design manifestation in Sweden as a follow-up to the Swedish manifestation in Helsinki earlier this spring.

"We need to get to know each other better, not least in order to inspire one another. I wish Finland would show Finnish design and designers from Finland here in Sweden in the same way as we did in Helsinki. I would like to see a continuation here in Stockholm", said Leif Pagrotsky.

"Design is becoming increasingly important for our competitiveness and prosperity. Both Sweden and Finland are good at design. We need to improve our cooperation to achieve greater impact on the world market", said Leif Pagrotsky.

In March a large Swedish-Finnish industrial design seminar was arranged at the Swedish Embassy in Helsinki, while modern Swedish design was exhibited at the Artek design centre. A number of prominent Swedish and Finnish designers took part, along with representatives of the Swedish and Finnish business sectors. The event was led by Michael Treschow and Mining Inspector Krister Ahlström.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government supports Västerbotten's participation in

Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation

The Government has decided to contribute SEK 2 100 000 to the participation of the County of Västerbotten's participation in the Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation, to preliminary studies and projects within the Barents region and to preparations for the County of Västerbotten's presidency of the Barents Regional Council from 2003 to 2005.

The Barents Regional Council has the task of increasing regional cooperation in the most northerly parts of Europe and comprises 13 counties in Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. In Sweden, Norrbotten and Västerbotten are members.

The Government considers that the participation of the Swedish counties in the Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation is important for positive long-term development in the northern parts of Europe. Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation exists to facilitate cross-border exchange, not least in respect of trade, which benefits the entire region. Sweden and other countries should strengthen and develop this cooperation, says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

The contribution is to be used for participation in the work of the Regional Council, the Committee of the Regions and the regional working groups. The money is also to be used to finance preliminary studies and smaller projects within, for example, the environment and youth cooperation and for measures aimed at creating contacts for decision makers in the public sector, the business sector and in clubs and societies. The aim is also to create awareness of Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation among organisations and the general public.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs to visit Warsaw

At the invitation of Poland's Minister for Foreign Affairs Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Sweden's Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh will visit Warsaw on Monday 27 May. During the visit, Ms Lindh will have discussions with her Polish counterpart and will also meet the President of Poland Aleksander Kwasniewski.

Both foreign ministers will take part in the round-table talks between Swedish and Polish government officials, parliamentarians, academics and journalists which are to take place on Monday. Ms Lindh will also visit the Eagle and Three Crowns exhibition at the Royal Castle in Warsaw. The exhibition shows Swedish-Polish relations between 1500 and 1800, and is the largest single Swedish cultural manifestation ever to be undertaken in Poland.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

More Swedish civilian observers to Sri Lanka

The Government decided today to commission the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency to recruit a further two civilian observers to the Nordic monitoring mission in Sri Lanka. On 28 February 2002, the Government decided that Sweden should send six observers to participate in the mission.

After the increase, the mission will comprise 45 observers from the five Nordic countries. The task of the observers is to monitor the observance of the agreement that has been reached. Along with representatives of the conflicting parties, they will have the additional task of facilitating mediation in conflicts at local level. The initiative for the observer mission comes from the parties involved in the conflict.

The observer mission is a joint Nordic undertaking led by Norway. Since 1998 the Norwegian government has served the government of Sri Lanka and the Tamil Tigers (LTTE) as a go-between in negotiations aimed at bringing about a cessation of hostilities. The cease-fire agreement is an important first step towards achieving a negotiated solution to the conflict, and permanent peace in Sri Lanka.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

To the editorial office: Invitation to a press conference with Syria's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Farouk Al

Syria's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Farouk Al-Sharaa, who is on a visit to Sweden, will hold a press conference on Friday 24 May at 11.00 # 11.30, at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre, Fredsgatan 4-6.

Please bring your press credentials!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

El Salvador's foreign minister visits Sweden

El Salvador's foreign minister, Maria Eugenia Brizuela de Avila is visiting Sweden on 21-23 May. During her visit to Sweden, foreign minister Brizuela will meet Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O Karlsson, State Secretaries Gun-Britt Andersson and Lotta Fogde, Sidas Director-General Bo Göransson, and members of the Riksdag.

The Embassy of El Salvador invites you to a press briefing, hosted by the honorary consul of El Salvador, Tomas A. Hammar, on 23 May at 10.15-10.45 at Västra Trädgårdsgatan 11B. Please bring your press credentials!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish Ambassador in Dili, East Timor

Ambassador Harald Sandberg today presented his letters of credence to the President of independent East Timor Xanana Gusmao, thus becoming Sweden's first ambassador to the new state.

Harald Sandberg has been Ambassador in Jakarta since 1998 and will continue to be stationed there in the future.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Syrian Deputy Prime Minister and minister for Foreign Affairs Farouk Al-Sharaa to visit Sweden

The Syrian Deputy Prime Minister and minister for Foreign Affairs Farouk Al-Sharaa is to visit Sweden on 22-25 May.

During his visit to Stockholm Al-Sharaa will meet the Prime Minister, Göran Persson, and Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

The talks will centre on the crisis in the Middle East and attempts to restart the peace process. In connection with his visit, Al-Sharaa will open the new Syrian Embassy in Stockholm.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Thursday press briefing at OECD meeting in Paris

The Minister for Development Cooperation, Jan O. Karlsson, and the Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, will participate in the meeting of the OECD ministerial council in Paris on 15-16 May. At a press briefing on Thursday they will describe the meeting and their impressions.

Date and time: Thursday 16 May, at 15.10.

Venue: Sweden's OECD Delegation, 19 rue de Franqueville, 75116 Paris (lift no.2 on the left, 4th floor)

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson to visit Paris and Berlin

The Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, will

participate together with the Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, in the OECD ministerial council meeting in Paris. For the first time, both Ministers for Development Cooperation and Ministers for Trade from member countries will participate in the same OECD meeting. Jan O. Karlsson will also take part in a meeting of the OECD Development Assistance Committee, DAC.

On 17-18 May Mr Karlsson will travel to Berlin. There he will meet, among others, his German colleague, the Minister for Development Cooperation, Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, to discuss future development policies of their countries and the EU.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press breakfast with Jan O. Karlsson and Leif Pagrotsky

The Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, and the Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, will participate in the meeting of the OECD ministerial council in Paris on 15-16 May. Prior to the meeting they are pleased to invite you to a press breakfast to go through the issues Sweden will be pursuing at the meeting.

For the first time, both Ministers for Development Cooperation and Ministers for Trade from member countries will participate in the same OECD meeting. Sweden has long actively pressed for greater agreement between trade and development. At the press conference the Ministers will present a Ministry for Foreign Affairs report on trade and development.

The press breakfast will take place on Wednesday 15 May at 08.30 at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1.

If you wish to participate, please notify gabrielle.karlsen@foreign.ministry.se or 08-405 44 81, not later than today, Tuesday, 16.00.

Please bring your press credentials!

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD, was established in 1960. It is an international economic organisation and a cooperating organ for the governments of its member states. OECD activities include, inter alia, policy analysis and recommendations, exchanges of experience and a critical audit of all member states. The ministers of the OECD countries meet once a year. Traditionally the Ministers for Trade and Finance have participated. This year, for the first time, the meeting of the ministerial council is a joint meeting for Ministers for Trade and Ministers for Development Cooperation. There are currently 30 member states in the Organisation: all the EU countries, USA, Canada, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Mexico, Norway, Switzerland, Iceland and Turkey.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Investments in marketing Swedish biotechnology

The Government has decided to allocate SEK 2.5 million to the Invest in Sweden Agency (ISA) for marketing Swedish biotechnology abroad. This grant covers the first year of a three-year project to establish Sweden as a leading country in Europe within the biotechnology sector. The aim is to attract foreign investment and to strengthen Sweden as a research-oriented nation of economic growth.

" A growth in the inflow of foreign investments and greater exports within the biotechnology sector are important preconditions for further development of Swedish biotechnology and for strengthening its international competitiveness", says Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky.

Swedish biotechnological research is at the forefront of developments in many areas. Sweden has the fourth largest biotechnology industry in Europe. Three of Europe's major biotechnological clusters are situated in Sweden # Stockholm/Uppsala, Göteborg and Malmö/Lund.

"There is a long tradition in Swedish biotechnology of close and fruitful collaboration between industry, academia and hospitals. With an inflow of foreign capital and skill, we will be able to build on this strength", says Leif Pagrotsky.

The ISA is undertaking this project jointly, inter alia, with Swedish regional investment organisations.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Trade sets up "Swedish Biotech Promotion Team"

Unofficial translation

Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, has brought together a group of leading representatives of the Swedish biotech sector to help promote Swedish biotechnology abroad.

The group will be able to help launch Swedish biotechnology abroad and provide information about Swedish biotechnological expertise and entrepreneurship in different contexts overseas.

The group consists of the following people:

Per Belfrage, Professor at Lund University and Chairman of the Medicon Valley Academy

Agneta Bladh, State Secretary, Ministry of Education and Science

Anki Forsberg, partner Health Cap

Olle Isaksson, Professor at Göteborg University and member of the board of the Sahlgrenska Academy

Björn Nilsson, CEO, KaroBio

Mathias Uhlén, Professor at the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH)

Hans Wigzell, Professor and President of the Karolinska Institutet

"I am very pleased that such qualified people are willing to contribute their expertise and contacts at the international level", says Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky. "Their efforts will be very valuable in the work of spreading information abroad about Swedish biotechnological expertise".

"The formation of the Swedish Biotech Promotion Team is part of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' long-term project for the promotion of Swedish biotechnology abroad", says the Minister for Trade.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press conference invitation: Leif Pagrotsky presents

investments in biotechnology

Swedish biotechnological research is at the forefront of developments in many areas. Qualified stem cell research at Swedish universities has attracted particular attention. Sweden has the fourth largest biotechnological industry in Europe.

On Tuesday 14 May, Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky will present efforts to market the Swedish biotechnology sector internationally in order to attract foreign direct investments and support Swedish exports.

Date and time: Tuesday 14 May, at 11.00

Venue: Lilla pressrummet Rosenbad

Welcome!

Please note: Bring your press credentials with you.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Gun-Britt Andersson to visit Mongolia and the Philippines

State Secretary Gun-Britt Andersson is to visit Mongolia on 13-15 May and the Philippines on 16-17 May, for bilateral talks and a visit to the Asian Development Bank in Manila.

In Mongolia Gun-Britt Andersson will have meetings with the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance (who is responsible for development assistance issues) and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. During her visit she will present the country strategy for Swedish development cooperation with Mongolia for 2002-2006, which was adopted in the autumn. The main objective of Swedish development assistance is to combat poverty by supporting reform processes and institutional development that help build a democratic society and promote respect for human rights.

During her visit to the Philippines Gun-Britt Andersson will meet both members of the government and representatives of civil society. Talks will focus on common interests in migration issues and trafficking in human beings, on which there is a cooperation arrangement between the Philippines, Sweden and Thailand. Development cooperation will also be discussed. In 2001 the Swedish Government adopted a new country strategy for 2002-2005. Swedish cooperation, which is to proceed from a poverty reduction standpoint, is intended to support environmentally sustainable use of natural resources and to help strengthen democratic governance and civil society.

In Manila, Gun-Britt Andersson will also visit the headquarters of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), where she will meet the President of the Bank, Tadao Chino. They will discuss ADB initiatives to boost regional cooperation and the role of the Bank in promoting further development of the private sector and local capital markets in the region.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

South Korea's foreign affairs and trade minister to visit Sweden

South Korea's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Choi Sung-hong will be making a working visit to Sweden on 12-13 May 2002, as part of a trip that includes visits to several European countries.

During his visit Minister Choi will meet Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson and Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky. Their talks will cover the latest developments on the Korean Peninsula as well as trade policy and economic issues.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Anna Lindh concerning the suicide bombing

in Israel

Unofficial translation

#I feel dismayed and sad this morning after the bombing in Rishon le Zion which claimed the lives of many innocent people and injured over 60,# the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, says. #Sad for the families and close friends of the many innocent Israeli victims. Dismay because the suicide bombers# terror must be condemned not just from the human perspective but also because they have become an engine of an insane military spiral. The attack is a direct attempt to thwart chances of peace negotiations.# #It is therefore the clear duty of all Palestinians to put a stop to the grotesque romanticism that motivates the suicide bombers,# Ms Lindh says.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh regrets that the USA has withdrawn its support for the International Criminal Court

"It is highly regrettable that the USA has decided to withdraw its support for the International Criminal Court. The USA is needed in the struggle for human rights and against legal impunity", says Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh after hearing that the USA has notified the UN that it does not intend to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

"We now hope that the USA will still adopt a positive position and not work against the court. It will have very high safeguards protecting legal rights and we consider that the objections given are unfounded", says Anna Lindh.

The USA has feared, inter alia, that the court would judge American citizens for political reasons. Through its message the United States has now disassociated itself from President Clinton's signing of the Rome Statute on 31 December 2000.

Together with other EU states, the Swedish Government has worked hard to realise the court.

The statute will enter into force on 1 July this year, and the court is expected to be in place next year. It will be able to pass judgement on genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky in Malmö and Helsingborg

Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky will visit Malmö and Helsingborg on Tuesday 7 May.

The programme in brief:

Malmö:

08.30: Breakfast meeting about integration in the Öresund region, organised by the Rapidus news agency and Club Öresund. Address: SEB Regional Office, Östergatan 39

09.30: Press conference. Address: SEB Regional Office, Östergatan 39

11.00: Inauguration, Leo Pharma Nordic. Address: Citadellsvägen 19

Helsingborg:

13.45: Visit to IKEA. Address: Väla centrum

During the afternoon, Mr Pagrotsky will have meetings with the Social Democrats in Helsingborg and with representatives of the municipality of Helsingborg. Thereafter, there will be a meeting with some of the keen supporters of integration in the Öresund region, including Uffe Ellemann Jensen.

16.40: Press conference with Mr Pagrotsky and Mr Jensen. Address: Dunkers Kulturhus, Kungsgatan 11

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh welcomes the release of Burma's leader of the opposition, Aung San Suu Kyi

#I welcome the lifting of the house arrest of Burma's leader of the opposition,

Aung San Suu Kyi. Her release is an important first step on the road to national reconciliation and democracy in Burma,# the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, says.

#I urge the Burmese government to take further steps in this direction and to release all the remaining political prisoners in the country. It is of the utmost importance that Suu Kyi and the opposition party NLD are allowed to work freely and can carry on their political work without restrictions.#

#The news that Suu Kyi is now free is an important event for the development of the whole of South-East Asia,# Ms Lindh concludes.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson to visit New York and Washington

Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson will be travelling to the USA on 5-8 May.

In New York meetings are scheduled with Mark Malloch Brown, head of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Thoraya Obaid, head of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), representatives of the UN Secretariat#s Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), Jayantha Dhanapala, head of the UN Secretariat#s Department of Disarmament Affairs (DDA), and Michael Doyle, Kofi Annan#s Special Adviser on follow-up of the Millennium Declaration.

In Washington D.C., Jan O. Karlsson has two meetings at the White House, where he will meet the President#s special envoy to Afghanistan, Zalmay Kahlilzad, and the President#s special adviser on development, democracy and human rights issues at the US National Security Council (NSC), Elliott Abrams. Jan O. Karlsson will also meet Under Secretary of State Paula Dobriansky, Andrew Natsios, head of USAID (the American equivalent of Sida), Horst Köhler, head of the International Monetary Fund, and directors of the World Bank.

This is Jan O. Karlsson#s first official visit to the United States as a Swedish Government minister. The subjects covered by the talks will include follow-up of the Millennium declaration and the commitment of the international community to halve poverty by 2015. Some other current issues

for discussion are the follow-up to the Monterrey conference on financing for development and preparations for the Johannesburg summit on sustainable development in September.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-03
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden signs protocol that places total ban on death penalty

Sweden, together with 35 other states, is among the first of the Council of Europe member states to sign a new annex to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. The annex # Protocol No. 13 # places a total ban on the use of the death penalty and is based on a proposal submitted by the Swedish government at the end of 2000. The protocol is signed today in Lithuania#s capital, Vilnius, where the Council of Europe#s Committee of Ministers is meeting.

Protocol No. 13 supplements the existing ban on the use of the death penalty in peace time which already exists under the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. The protocol also prohibits the use of the death penalty in time of war or imminent danger of war. This is the first international agreement in the world that does not permit any exemptions whatsoever from the ban on the use of the death penalty. Thus the protocol indicates strongly to other parts of the world that Europe is now prepared to relegate this inhumane punishment to history.

The protocol will come into effect when it has been ratified by ten countries. Sweden intends to do so as soon as possible. In a Government Bill later on this year, therefore, the Government will propose that the Riksdag approve the protocol.

The Council of Europe has been working for democracy and human rights in Europe since 1949 and now has 44 member states. The decision on the new additional protocol which places a total ban on capital punishment was taken in the Council of Europe#s Committee of Ministers in February of this year.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh on the fact-finding mission to Jenin

"Sweden deeply regrets that the Israeli government has acted so that the Secretary-General's fact-finding mission will be unable to investigate events in Jenin", says Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh.

"The Israeli government flouts the decision taken by a unanimous Security Council in Resolution 1405. In doing so, the country shows lack of respect for the United Nations, which represents the basis of the international legal system. Suspicions grow that the Israeli armed forces have committed serious crimes against humanitarian law in Jenin", continues Anna Lindh.

"Israel's government has chosen a course of action that risks placing the country outside the rest of the world community. This is both unfortunate and ominous", summarises the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to a press breakfast on 3 May

Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson and researcher/writer Tor Sellström invite you to a presentation of the book "Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa. Volume II: Solidarity and Assistance 1970-1994" at a press breakfast on Friday 3 May from 08.00-09.00 at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs torg 1. Swedish support to the liberation struggle in southern Africa from the 1960s to the early 1990s was comparatively unique internationally, both in terms of the considerable financial support and of the broad popular commitment it received.

The book is the second volume of the study "Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa". The first, published in 1999, discusses the various factors that led to this widespread Swedish commitment. The new volume surveys and describes the different types of initiatives taken after

1970 and until democratic elections took place in South Africa in 1994.

Tor Sellström has been coordinator for the Nordic Africa Institute's project National Liberation in Southern Africa: The Role of the Nordic Countries from 1994 to 2001 . The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sida have financed and supported the work of producing and publishing these books. For his work with the first section, Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa: Formation of a Popular Opinion, Tor Sellström was awarded in 2000 the Illis Quorum medal. Later this year, he will be awarded a scholarship by FUF, the Swedish Development Association.

If you plan to attend, please notify helena.gustavsson@foreign.ministry.se

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Director for the Swedish Institute in Alexandria

The Government decided today to appoint Jan Henningsson Director of the Swedish Institute in Alexandria. At present Jan Henningsson is Visiting Professor of Islamic Studies at the Henry Martyn Institute for Interfaith Research and Reconciliation in Hyderabad and Head of the Department of Mission, Ecumenism and Dialogue at Gurukul Lutheran Theological College and Research Institute in Chennai, both in India.

Jan Henningsson has devoted his entire professional life to issues related to the Middle East and to encounters between Islam and other cultures and religions. He has earlier worked at both the international department and the Ecumenical Secretariat of the Church of Sweden, taught at the American University in Cairo, the Pastoral Institutes in Uppsala and Lund and the Swedish Theological Institute in Jerusalem, and been coordinator of the Oriental Studies Programme at the Asian and African Languages Department at Uppsala University. From 1995 to 1998 he was Chairman of the Church of Sweden's Islam Project.

The Swedish Institute in Alexandria was opened in October 2000 and is part of the foreign representation of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. By its activities the Institute aims to promote meetings and dialogue between different actors in the Middle East and between these actors and counterparts in the EU.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Folke Bernadotte Institute to be established in Kramfors

The Government made a decision today about the establishment of a new institute for the education and coordinated training of personnel who take part in international catastrophe- and peace operations. It will be called the Folke Bernadotte Institute and will be located in Sandö in the municipality of Kramfors. The Institute will commence its activities on 1 September 2002.

It is important that Swedes who go out on international missions have the opportunity for thorough preparation, including in areas of operation other than their own. This is where the Folke Bernadotte Institute comes in. It is a question of cooperation between the various professional categories out in the field, says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O Karlsson. Everyone will receive fundamental knowledge about human rights, international law and the mandates and roles of the different actors.

There are in the region a series of organisations that have links with the Institute, organisations including the Sida Civil Society Centre in Härnösand, the University of Umeå (which, together with Akademi Norr, the Swedish Rescue Services Agency, and the municipalities of Kramfors and Sollefteå will initiate a training programme in crisis- and conflict management), the Swedish Rescue Services Agency School in Sandö, and the Dog Training School in Sollefteå. SWEDINT, other universities and the Swedish National Defence College will also be important cooperation partners for the Institute.

The Folke Bernadotte Institute is being established to increase the level of education and cooperation nationally and internationally in the whole chain of support measures within peace support, emergency preparedness and crisis management.

The Government made a decision today about directives to an organisational committee to implement the establishment of the Institute. Ambassador Michael Sahlin will be starting up the operations. He is a Doctor of Philosophy in political science and is at present Ambassador in Belgrade. His previous posts have included that of State Secretary at the Ministry of Defence.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-05-02

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government gives SEK 210 million for food for the starving

The Government decided today to enter into an agreement with the World Food Programme (WFP) on the use of this year's general grant of SEK 210 million. The money will be used for disaster situations, reconstruction and development initiatives.

Poverty, conflicts and disasters in the world lead to the suffering of some 800 million people every year from hunger and starvation. Eighty million of these receive assistance from the WFP.

Children and people fleeing from conflicts and natural disasters and displaced in their own countries are vulnerable groups to which Sweden wishes to draw special attention in this year's WFP work.

Sweden, which has long been one of the WFP's largest donors, wants to help streamline and raise the quality of WFP operations. Sweden is also advocating that the WFP coordinates its operations more effectively with other actors, in order, for example, to survey and analyse the reasons for food shortages.

Work on gender equality and the environment will be further developed. It is intended to improve the WFP's capacity to analyse how local markets are affected by starvation relief measures, and to increase its commitment to food safety.

In terms of size, the WFP is the largest voluntarily financed UN body for starvation relief. In addition to Sweden's general grant, the WFP receives funds from Sida for unforeseen humanitarian measures, following applications for assistance. The WFP also has a special agreement with the Swedish Rescue Services Agency.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ambitious free trade agreement finalised between the EU and Chile

Unofficial translation

The EU and Chile on Friday finalised an Agreement on Association, containing, among other arrangements, the most far-reaching free trade agreement ever entered into by the EU.

The trade agreement regulates both trade in goods and services and terms applying to investments, competition and public procurement.

#This high level of ambition should set a pattern for future EU agreements on free trade#, comments Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky, who was personally responsible for launching the trade negotiations with Chile during the Swedish EU presidency in June 2001.

#I am pleased that the EU and Chile have been able to sew up this broadly conceived deal so quickly, and I hope the agreement will serve as a stimulus to the ongoing negotiations with Mercosur (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay)#, says the Minister for Trade.

The negotiations have been concluded in time for presentation at the summit meeting between the EU, Latin America and the Caribbean on 17 May in Madrid.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-26
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Joint U.S. - Swedish Press Statement following Meeting between Treasury Secretary O'Neill and Swedish Foreign Minister Anna

Time and Date of Meeting: 9:00-9:30AM, Friday April 26.

We had a useful and productive meeting.

We agreed that stopping the financing of terrorist organizations and enforcement of UN sanctions is an absolutely essential, non-military tool in the battle against global terror.

We agreed that the tools to advance the financial fight against terrorism should be reviewed and improved to sharpen our effectiveness and protect the legal rights of individuals.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-26
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson to visit Gimo refugee residential centre

Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson is to visit the refugee residential centre

in Gimo on the afternoon of Tuesday 30 April. At 16.45 he will visit the youth section which houses the children who come to Sweden alone, and afterwards he will meet families at the centre who are seeking asylum.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Demands for stronger support for UNFPA's work on reproductive health

The Swedish Minister for Development Cooperation Jan O. Karlsson and his Luxembourg counterpart Charles Goerens decided at a meeting today to launch a joint initiative on behalf of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) at the next Council of EU ministers for development cooperation. Their aim is to persuade EU ministers for development cooperation to provide vigorous support to UNFPA, which has been hit by major expenditure cutbacks in the last few years.

UNFPA works on such issues as women's reproductive health and rights and preventing the further spread of HIV/AIDS.

"The work UNFPA performs is extraordinarily important", says Jan O. Karlsson. "It's a matter of giving women power over their own bodies, giving them access to sexual counselling and information, contraception and maternity care."

"In some countries there is opposition to the work done by UNFPA. The EU must take a united stand against reactionary forces that question women's fundamental rights", says Jan O. Karlsson.

* * *

The financial position of UNFPA has deteriorated for various reasons, including the delay by the USA in paying its 2002 contribution of USD 34 million. UNFPA activities in developing countries will be the main casualties. This will reduce the chances of the developing countries reaching the objectives agreed by world leaders at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in autumn 2000.

Sweden is one of the largest donors to UNFPA, contributing SEK 160 million in 2001. Sweden is making active efforts in the UN to win higher priority for issues relating to HIV/AIDS, reproductive health and opportunities for young people to obtain information about sex.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to UN Guards Contingent in northern Iraq

The Government decided today to give SEK 2 million in continued support to the UN Guards Contingent in northern Iraq (UNGCI). UNGCI has been in place since 1991 and is responsible for protecting UN personnel and property.

Sweden has supported UNGCI since its inception and is also one of the largest donors of humanitarian assistance to Iraq, giving around SEK 50 million per year.

The UN administers an extensive programme of humanitarian assistance in northern Iraq. UNGCI employs just over 1 600 local guards and 89 international staff.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to chair WTO committee on the poorest countries

The members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) have elected Ambassador Johan Molander to be the new chairman of the Sub-Committee on Least-Developed Countries (the LDC Committee). Johan Molander is head of the Permanent Mission of Sweden in Geneva.

"The appointment of Ambassador Molander is recognition of Sweden's active efforts to integrate the world's poorest countries into the world economy and WTO cooperation", says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky in a comment. "Sweden considers it important that these countries are given an opportunity to run their own trade policies and develop their export trade themselves. The Sub-Committee may come to play a decisive role for the chances of success for the poorest countries in the ongoing trade negotiations."

The tasks on which the Sub-Committee will focus in future will include improving market access for the poorest countries and enhancing trade-related development assistance to the least-developed

countries.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Inquiry proposes concentration of forces involved in Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation

A rapidly compiled report on Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation was handed in to the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh last Wednesday. The author of the report, Ambassador Fredrik Vahlquist, advocates the creation of a community of endeavour involving officials employed by the county administrative boards of Norrbotten and Västerbotten and engaged in Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation in one or other capacity. This would take the form of a #Swedish Barents Secretariat#.

Sweden holds the presidency of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council until the autumn of 2003. The Council plays a key role in regional cooperation in the northernmost parts of Europe. It is composed of the foreign ministers of the five Nordic countries and Russia, and a representative of the European Commission.

#The Government considers that Barents Euro-Arctic cooperation is also important in the long term. There must be no reduction in personnel or financial resources after 2003. On the contrary, Sweden and other countries should be looking to extend and intensify cooperation,# said Ms Lindh. The report refers to the need for an interface; members of the public, companies, institutions, authorities or NGOs should have someone to turn to with their questions, proposals or ideas for projects. In the long term, cooperation will help boost trade in the Barents Sea region.

Ensuring that government funds for cooperation in the region are managed more efficiently than at present is a crucial concern. The report also proposes better utilisation of certain multilateral funding sources, such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the Nordic Investment Bank, the EU and the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs has allocated approximately SEK 40 million to cooperation projects and programmes. Sida and the Swedish Institute have contributed over SEK 200 million over the same period, chiefly in the Russian territories in the region.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

West Bank to receive Swedish humanitarian support

Sweden is to intensify its support to the West Bank. In the next few days, the Swedish Rescue Services Agency, SRV, will be dispatching a specialist in radio communications, four lorry drivers and four lorry mechanics to the West Bank. There they will assist the UN agency for Palestine refugees, UNRWA, in the task of delivering humanitarian aid to refugees on the West Bank. A decision on funding for the project will be taken by Sida today.

Swedish Rescue Services Agency personnel are already on the spot, assessing the feasibility of providing logistical support to the UN World Food Programme (WFP), which is supplying food to the Palestinian territories along with UNRWA.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-23

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government to back import drive

The Government has approved the allocation of SEK 3 million to the Swedish Trade Federation. The money is to be spent on practical measures aimed at stimulating imports, thereby promoting price competition and a more dynamic business sector. The Government is expected to allocate a corresponding amount annually over the next two years.

#Imports force prices down and strengthen consumers,# said Leif Pagrotsky, the Swedish Minister

for Trade. Higher imports also reduce the risk of monopolies and cartels.
#Imports generate many jobs in Sweden and are crucial to economic growth. Our export industry needs a healthy import flow if it is to be competitive in the world market.#
#We must make it easier for developing countries to sell to Sweden. One way of doing this is to help exporters in these countries to orient themselves in our market, not always an easy task,# said Mr Pagrotsky.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to press conference with East Timor's newly elected President Xanana Gusmão

Xanana Gusmão is scheduled to visit Sweden on 21-24 April to take part in the Stockholm International Forum conference: Truth, Justice and Reconciliation. He will be received in audience of His Majesty the King and will also meet the Speaker of the Riksdag Birgitta Dahl, Prime Minister Göran Persson, Deputy Prime Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallén, Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson and Minister for Democratic Issues Brita Lejon.

A press conference with Xanana Gusmão will take place.

Date and time: Monday 22 April at 11.15

Venue: Press Centre at Rosenbad

Please bring your press credentials with you.

Welcome!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Initiative number 3 for trade with China: Swedish business opportunities in the run-up to the Summer Olympics in Beijing

As part of a major investment in China, the Government has decided to allocate SEK 875 000 to a project to promote Swedish business opportunities in the run-up to the Olympic Games in Beijing. The 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing are being preceded by major investments in infrastructure and a modernisation of the entire Chinese capital. This means important business opportunities for Swedish companies, says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

The first stage of the Olympics initiative entails seeking project information and passing it on to Swedish companies, building networks and organising activities of different kinds, such as symposiums and delegation visits to Beijing. Sweden's embassy in Beijing will be the hub of the activities, in close cooperation with the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Swedish Trade Council, the Sweden-China Trade Council and the Swedish Chamber of Commerce in Beijing.

The first step will be an information meeting that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Sweden-China Trade Council and the Swedish Trade Council will hold in Stockholm on 15 May. I am inviting all representatives of the business sector who may be interested to take advantage of these opportunities, says Mr Pagrotsky.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Initiative number 1 for trade with China: Sweden to open Consulate-General in Canton

As part of a major investment in China, the Government has decided to establish a Consulate-General in Canton, Guangdong Province, in southern China. The new Consulate-General, the third in China alongside Shanghai and Hong Kong, is expected to open in the autumn of 2002. The Consulate-General will focus on the promotion of trade. It will also devote attention to providing information about Sweden and to promoting regional cooperation between

twin towns.

#Sweden must make full use of these new opportunities to strengthen economic relations with China after China's membership of the WTO,# says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky. Southern China offers interesting business opportunities to Swedish companies and it is important that the Government supports their efforts, not least those of small and medium-sized companies.

#Guangdong is one of China's richest and most open provinces and is something of an economic pioneer in China. IT initiatives permeate the province's business sector. There is also a great need for environmental expertise, which presents interesting opportunities for Swedish companies,# says Mr Pagrotsky.

The Government has previously taken a decision to allocate SEK 1.4 million to the Swedish Trade Council for 2002 to help Swedish companies and to promote Swedish interests in southern China.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Initiative number 2 for trade with China: Sweden wants to attract investments from China

As part of a major investment in China, the Government has decided to allocate SEK 3 million per year over three years for special initiatives to attract Chinese investments in Sweden.

#China's membership of the WTO has considerably improved the enabling conditions for increased trade between China and Sweden,# says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

#Chinese companies will establish themselves abroad to a greater extent in the future. It is important that Sweden makes itself visible so that Chinese presence in this country also increases. In addition, we are expecting new opportunities for Swedish companies in China and thus also the promotion of Swedish exports,# says Mr Pagrotsky.

The investment promotion activities will be carried out as a project over three years and will focus on high-tech branches and areas in which Sweden is an international pioneer with strong clusters of expertise, including information technology, microelectronics and systems technology within telecommunications, vehicle technology and telematics. The project, which entails activities directed at companies within the relevant sectors and at Chinese universities and creators of public opinion, will be implemented and financed in cooperation with the Invest in Sweden Agency (ISA), public authorities and regional actors. Gothenburg, Stockholm and Skåne (Scania) are among the regions that have expressed an interest in participating.

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See also www.ud.se

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Joint Indonesian-Swedish statement

A high level Indonesian delegation under the leadership of Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs Mr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono visited Sweden on the 18th and 19th of April 2002. During his visit he met with Deputy Prime Minister Ms Lena Hjelm-Wallén, Minister for Foreign Affairs Ms Anna Lindh and Minister for Justice Mr Thomas Bodström.

The purpose of the visit was twofold, i.e. reviewing the bilateral relations and seeking ways to further promote the relations as well as exchanging views on regional and international situations, in particular the deteriorating situation in the Middle East and the fight against international terrorism. Both sides are of the view that all relevant UN Security Council resolutions should be implemented.

In response to the Swedish inquiries, the Indonesian delegation briefed the Swedish side regarding the continuing reforms that take place in Indonesia, in particular Indonesia's efforts to strengthen its economic recovery and the process of democratisation, the efforts to re-establish rule of law and security and order as well as to maintain its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Regional issues were discussed and both sides agreed that conflict is best resolved by negotiated peaceful settlement in freedom and democracy, as well as in respecting human rights and human dignity. The Swedish Government reiterated its support for Indonesian efforts to solve outstanding issues of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) and refugees. With regard to the case of Aceh, the Government of Sweden supports special autonomy for Aceh within

the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Indonesia as agreed in the continuing dialog between all parties concerned. Furthermore the importance of respect for human rights and of the settlement of outstanding legal issues was agreed.

Both sides underlined the importance of good neighbourly relations between Indonesia and the new independent East Timor and of the resolution of residual matters between the two countries.

The exchange of views was conducted in a cordial and frank manner and the Indonesian delegation highly appreciated the understanding and support shown by the Government of Sweden. The Indonesian delegation briefed the Swedish side on the improving security situation in Indonesia as well as progress in the Indonesian economic recovery. The two sides explored ways for the two countries to cooperate and for Sweden to support Indonesia's reform process. Coordinating Minister Yudhoyono expressed the appreciation of the Indonesian delegation for the warm welcome and excellent arrangement of the visit.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Nabil Shaath's meeting with Jan O. Karlsson

Unofficial translation

On his visit to Sweden, Nabil Shaath, Palestinian minister and chief negotiator, met the Swedish Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson. Their talks concerned the humanitarian situation on the West Bank and Gaza, Swedish aid and the situation of Palestinian refugees in the area.

"The images of destruction and human suffering now emerging from the Jenin refugee camp and other places are shocking", says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson. "We are deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation on the West Bank and Gaza Strip and call upon Israel to give humanitarian organisations immediate access so that damage can be assessed and those in need can receive help", says Jan O. Karlsson.

In its humanitarian efforts, Sweden will concentrate on emergency measures to assist those affected. The UN body for Palestine refugees (UNRWA) and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA) are now carrying out needs assessments in Jenin and other areas that have been hit. Sweden is prepared to contribute medico-legal expertise, in part through the Swedish Rescue Services Agency, in the near future. The Swedish Rescue Services Agency will also shortly join the UN food programme (WFP) in a needs assessment in the area to investigate the

possibility of providing assistance in the form of food transports. Employment support and support to children # areas in which Swedish development assistance has already been playing a leading part # will also continue.

"We are very upset at the extent of the damage inflicted on the civil infrastructure and institutions of the Palestinian National Authority", says Jan O. Karlsson. "Many projects financed by development assistance have been destroyed or damaged. The market, connecting road and square outside the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem are projects that have recently been completed with Swedish development assistance. This is now a scene of great devastation. The Swedish-built Peace Centre adjoining the square in Bethlehem has been taken over by the Israeli army. This is very disheartening", says Jan O. Karlsson.

Swedish development assistance to the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 2002 will come to at least SEK 165 million. On top of this, Sweden is one of the largest donors to the UN body for Palestine refugees, UNRWA. In 2002, the regular contribution to the UNRWA will amount to SEK 170 million. An additional SEK 40 million has been provided in humanitarian assistance.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

US steel tariffs: Pagrotsky requests exemptions from EU retaliation list

Sweden has now reacted to the list of imported goods worth over SEK 22 billion on which the EU Commission has proposed a levy of penalty tariffs if the United States refuses to compensate the EU for the penalty tariffs on steel that the United States introduced at the end of March.

The list contains goods imported to Sweden for more than SEK 600 million. Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky has requested that 26 of these products be removed from the list.

#If we prevent the United States from exporting these goods to Europe, individual Swedish companies will be very seriously affected. It is very difficult to penalise the United States for violating world trade regulations without also penalising ourselves. I hope we will not have to use the Commission's list in its entirety, but if the Americans refuse to compensate us then I am afraid

we will be forced to. If that is the case, it is important which products are on the list,# says Mr Pagrotsky.

Motorcycles for SEK 171 million, raw cotton for SEK 47 million and juice concentrates for SEK 13 million are among the goods that Sweden would like to remove from the list. The companies that would be worst affected are JO-bolaget, Borås Wäfverier and Harley-Davidson.

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Key word: 6081

PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Indonesia#s Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs to visit Sweden

Indonesia#s Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs, Soesilo Bambang Yudhuyono, will visit Sweden on 18 and 19 April 2002. During the visit, he will meet Deputy Prime Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallén, Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh and Minister for Justice Thomas Bodström.

The ministers will discuss the promotion of Swedish-Indonesian relations and international issues of common interest, including the situation in the Middle East and the fight against international terrorism.

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Key word: 6061

PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press conference invitation: Leif Pagrotsky to present new initiatives for trade with China

China is becoming an increasingly important market for Swedish companies. Its accession to the WTO has opened up new prospects for the Swedish business sector, while the 2008 summer Olympic games in Peking will generate further commercial opportunities.

The Government plans to implement a number of initiatives aimed at stimulating trade with China. These will be presented by the Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, at a press conference on Friday, 19 April at 09.30 hrs.

Time: Friday 19 April, 09.30

Venue: Press Centre at Rosenbad

Please have your press credentials with you.

Welcome!

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Key word: 6060

PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to extend support for study on water cooperation

Water scarcity and contamination are significant factors in the development of poverty and political instability. Water is a high-priority issue in the context of Swedish development assistance as access

to good quality water is a key element in the fight against poverty. Sweden will therefore be contributing SEK 300,000 towards a study of cooperation in connection with cross-border water resources. The study will be conducted by the environmental organisation Green Cross International in collaboration with UNESCO, the UN educational, scientific and cultural organisation.

Its purpose will be to increase our knowledge and understanding of the relationship between water resources, international cooperation and security. It will aim to show how situations in which conflict could arise over access to water from the same river or source by two or more countries can be turned into opportunities for cooperation.

Six river systems will be examined, including the River Jordan and the Okavongo River in southern Africa. The findings of the study will be presented at the 3rd World Water Forum in Kyoto in March 2003.

The importance of water in the fight against poverty and the establishment of cooperation is further emphasised by its priority status at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa at the end of August this year.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to increase development assistance

The outcome of earlier government decisions to raise Swedish development assistance over the next two years is reflected in this year's spring fiscal policy bill. Development assistance for 2002 will amount to SEK 16.5 billion, equivalent to 0.74 per cent of GNI. In 2003 and 2004, assistance will grow to 0.81 and 0.86 per cent of GNI respectively.

These increases clearly reflect the Government's aim to re-achieve the development assistance target of 1 per cent of GNI, said Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson.

Between 2000 and 2004, the volume of assistance will have increased by 50 per cent, from SEK 14 to SEK 21 billion.

Sweden is at the forefront of a break in the international trend. Development cooperation is on the rise for the first time in 10 years, with increases pledged by the EU and the USA. This is a major step towards our goal of halving world poverty by 2015, Mr Karlsson added.

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Key word: 6047

PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

More money for refugee reception

The Swedish Government will continue to boost resource allocation in the sphere of migration policy, earmarking an extra SEK 680 million in this year's supplementary budget.

As the number of asylum seekers in Sweden continues to rise, it is essential that authorities responsible for aliens receive the extra resources needed to ensure that migrants are properly received, said Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson.

- The Swedish Migration Board and the Aliens Appeals Board will receive an additional SEK 60 and 20 million respectively to handle asylum cases and keep processing times down.
 - The appropriation for reception of asylum seekers has been increased by SEK 560 million.
 - The Government has allocated SEK 20 million respectively to cover legal representation in asylum cases and travel costs for applicants who have been refused entry or expelled.
- Expenditure in connection with migration policy in 2002 is budgeted at SEK 3.4 billion.
-

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Key word: 6046

PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh to Washington

Unofficial translation

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh will visit Washington on 26 April to meet US Secretary of

State Colin Powell and US Secretary of the Treasury Paul O'Neill.

The situation in the Middle East and the current peace efforts are at the top of the agenda for the meeting with Mr Powell. Terrorist financing is on the agenda for the meeting with Mr O'Neill.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Meeting of the Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs

A meeting of the Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs has been convened at the Royal Palace in Stockholm at 09.00 on Tuesday 16 April.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh on Israel's actions: A week of shame

During the past week, frightening reports have reached me concerning the destruction the Israeli military offensive has left in its wake in the refugee camps in Jenin and Nablus. We do not yet know the extent of the destruction since Israel is blocking the reporting of all news. There is talk of a massacre. Thus, I fear the worst in this week of shame, says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh in a statement concerning the events of the past week.

I have reacted very strongly to what has been happening. The offensive can in no way be defended. It is provocative of Israel's government to continue the offensive in contravention of Security Council resolutions and despite strong calls from the international community, including

the EU, the US and Russia, for an immediate retreat. Israel's government has acted illegally as well as immorally, says Ms Lindh.

In Sweden, we are now pinning our hopes on Colin Powell succeeding in his difficult mission during his current visit to the region. He has the active support of the EU, the UN and Russia. The visit must be used to bring about an immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from Palestinian territory. International observers are needed to supervise the cease-fire. But, in addition, impartial investigations are also needed into the information that has emerged about massacres in the refugee camps in order to establish what has actually happened.

We must use all our efforts to put a stop to the crisis before it becomes totally out of control, concludes Ms Lindh.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

State Secretary Gun-Britt Andersson in West Africa

As a step in preparing a strategy for Swedish development cooperation in West Africa, State Secretary Andersson is visiting Nigeria and Mali on 8-12 April.

In Mali, which is shortly to hold its third democratic election, a programme of Swedish support to the education sector has been announced, worth SEK 100 million over a period of three years. The purpose of this support, which is being extended in close cooperation with the Netherlands, is to help Mali - one of the poorest countries in the world - achieve the objective of education for all.

In Mali talks are being conducted with President Konaré and representatives of the government and NGOs, focusing on the country's development efforts and needs.

The visit to Nigeria included talks on democracy and regional cooperation with representatives both of the government and of the regional cooperation organisation ECOWAS. State Secretary Andersson has also opened the new Swedish Embassy in Abuja.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement on today's bombing attack in Jerusalem

Sweden deeply regrets that a new suicide attack has been made today in Jerusalem, with many people killed and injured. We wish to convey our sympathy with the families of the victims and express our compassion with the injured and other survivors. Palestinian suicide bomb attacks and other acts of terror against innocent Israelis are ruthless outrages that must be condemned.

At the same time, we see that the violence cannot be stopped by force alone. The situation can only be improved in the long term by putting a stop to the policy of occupation and the establishment of a democratic Palestinian state. We urge all the parties to give Colin Powell all the support possible for his peace mission to succeed in the grave situation now prevailing. Only through a halt to military operations and the resumption of the peace process can we hope for a better future.

Key word: 6004

PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Decision on refusal-of-entry and return to Northern Iraq

Today the Government has taken a guideline decision in relation to refusal-of-entry and return to Northern Iraq. The decision involves a category of people who have hitherto been granted residence permit in Sweden because it has not been practically possible for them to return to Northern Iraq. The situation has changed because of the agreement that the Swedish Migration Board has signed with the International Organisation on Migration (IOM), which in turn has a cooperation agreement with the Turkish NGO, the Anatolian Development Foundation (ADF), authorised by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to help returning refugees. The organisation only works with people who return voluntarily.

Regarding persons, who after an individual examination, have been assessed as not requiring protection, it was decided by the Government that

- those who come from northern Iraq may return there
- those who come from central Iraq may return to northern Iraq if they have a clear connection with this region

Five separate cases had been forwarded from the Swedish Migration Board to the Government for guideline decisions. One of the applicants was granted a residence permit because of a need for protection. The other four cases were forwarded back to the Swedish Migration Board for further processing owing to the need for a more extensive examination and to the fact that the principle for examining asylum cases in more than one instance should be maintained.

* * *

The Government has also taken a guideline decision regarding the principle of refusal-of-entry and

return to Germany in accordance with the Dublin Convention. It refers to an Iraqi national who applied for asylum in Germany before coming to Sweden.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Decision on refusal-of-entry and return to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Today the Government has taken a guideline decision in relation to refusal-of-entry and return to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Government decided that the so-called internal flight alternative will apply to asylum seekers from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The current situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the normalisation process for returning Bosnians mean that there is no reason to grant residence permits for political-humanitarian reasons to the majority of asylum-seekers from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Persons who believe that they would have difficulties in living in one place have the option to settle in other parts of the country. However, each specific case is examined individually.

The decision involves a Bosnian family whose case was previously examined by the Swedish Migration Board. The Aliens Appeals Board forwarded the case to the Government.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statute of the International Criminal Court enters into force

When ten states have today deposited their ratification instrument for the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, the required ratification by 60 states will be fulfilled. This means the Statute will enter into force on 1 July this year and the Court can soon become a reality.

#The establishment of this permanent International Criminal Court is a historic event, perhaps the most important in international law since the Charter of the United Nations,# the Minister for Justice, Thomas Bodström, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, say in a comment.

#This Court will provide the international community with an essential tool for fighting violations of human rights and war crimes.#

#Together with many other states, and particularly within the framework of the European Union, Sweden has worked hard to realise the Court.#

#We urge all other states to demonstrate their support for democracy and human rights by ratifying the Statute. It is essential that respect for the Court be strengthened by all countries and major judicial systems being represented.#

The Court, which will be situated in The Hague will be able to pass judgment on war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity and, in the future, perhaps also crimes of aggression. The Statute was adopted on 17 June 1998. It has been signed by 139 states and so far has been ratified by 66, of which Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ireland, Jordan, Mongolia, Niger, Romania and Slovakia ratified today. During the autumn and winter 2002-2003 the states will take a number of decisions, inter alia on the budget and selection of judges and prosecutors. The Court is expected to be fully operational in a year or two.

On 11 June during the Swedish Presidency, the EU Council of Ministers adopted a common position. It comprises several measures which will be taken by the Union to support the establishment of the Court and world-wide accession to its Statute.

Sweden was the 36th state to ratify the Statute on 28 June. The Riksdag is currently processing draft legislation for Swedish judicial cooperation with the Court. Furthermore, a special committee of inquiry is reviewing matters relating to international crime in Swedish law.

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Key word: 5985

PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Vice-President of Burundi to visit Sweden

On Friday 12 April the Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O Karlsson, will receive the Vice-President of Burundi, Domitien Ndayizeye, for talks on the peace process and Swedish development assistance. The visit to Sweden, which is part of a tour of European capitals, will also include a courtesy call on the Speaker of the Riksdag, Birgitta Dahl, and a visit to the Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala.

A broad transitional government took office in Burundi in November 2001. Sweden and the world community have expressed their strong support for the peace process and also urged the rebel movements to accede to it.

Swedish assistance to Burundi amounts to approximately SEK 30 million a year and mainly focuses on humanitarian efforts but is also donated to efforts to promote democracy and human rights.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Four new Ambassadors to Stockholm

The following four Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 11 April:

Argentina's newly appointed Ambassador Elda Beatriz Sampietro was born in 1943 and is a lawyer graduate from Buenos Aires. She entered her country's foreign service in 1967. Ambassador Sampietro has alternated between service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Buenos Aires and abroad. In recent years she has held the following posts:

1993 # 1998

Ambassador in India, with concurrent accreditation in 1994 in Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Nepal and Bangladesh

1998 # 1999

Director-General for Political Affairs for Europe, North America, Africa, Asia, Oceania and International Organisations

1999 # 2001

Head of the Africa and Middle East Department

Ethiopia's newly appointed Ambassador Ato Berhanu Kebede was born in 1956. He is an economist with MA degrees from the University of Brussels in 1986 and 1988. He entered his country's

foreign service in 1978 and served at Ethiopia's embassy in Brussels from 1983-1992 as an economist. From 1993-2000 Ambassador Kebede was head of the Department for International Organisations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Addis Abeba. In 2001, he headed Ethiopia's embassy in Moscow as chargé d'affaires.

Slovenia's newly appointed Ambassador Darja Bavda# Kuret was born in 1956. She graduated in political science and international relations from the University of Ljubljana. Before her entrance into her country's foreign service in 1991, she acted as adviser to the chairman of the National Committee for International Cooperation.

In recent years Ambassador Bavda# Kuret has held the following posts:

1995 # 1999

Ambassador in Tel Aviv

1999 # 2000

Head of the Department for Relations with Neighbouring Countries at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ljubljana.

2000 # 2001

Head of the Secretariat for Analysis and Planning at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ghana's newly appointed Ambassador Emmanuel Kwadwo Adu (concurrently accredited in Copenhagen) was born in 1945. He is an economics graduate and has mainly worked in the business sector.

In recent years Ambassador Adu has held the following posts:

1992 # 1994

Vice President of Ghana's Football Association

1994 # 1997

President of the Kumasi Asante Kotoko Football Club

1999

Managing Director Victory Broadcasting Network Ltd

2000

Consultant, Scancem International

2001

Ambassador in Copenhagen.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish initiative on culture and information in preparation for the celebration of St Petersburg's 300th anniversary

The Government decided today to contribute SEK 3 million to the Swedish Institute initiative focusing on culture, information, education and research during the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the founding of St Petersburg in 2003.

The grant will be dedicated to cultural projects connected with the common history shared by Sweden and Russia. Sweden has a significant role in Baltic Sea cooperation, as well as unique historical and cultural links with St Petersburg. It is also important, therefore, that the activities are closely connected with the operations of Swedish organisations and authorities. Applications for project support will be considered by the Swedish Institute.

Russia will be investing major resources in ensuring that the anniversary receives international attention. Government decisions to increase the number of Swedish business development projects in St Petersburg are also expected shortly so that projects in areas such as tourism, IT and the environment can be undertaken next year.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support for the return of refugees in Afghanistan

Sweden contributes SEK 70 million to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) programme for the return of Afghan refugees and internally displaced persons.

"Many more refugees have returned than expected, but UNHCR funds are starting to run out. It is important that all Afghan refugees wishing to be given the opportunity to return now that the warmer season is here", says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson.

"The return of Afghan refugees is a crucial step in the process of normalisation for Afghanistan and stabilisation in the entire region", says Jan O Karlsson.

Since the change of regime, some 330 000 people have returned. The UNHCR estimates that 1.2 million Afghans will choose to return during 2002, including internally displaced refugees and those who had fled to Iran, Pakistan and other countries. Support to returning refugees consists of immediate assistance and job-creation measures, agricultural support and other forms of support, such as, for example, judicial assistance.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh to visit Iran

Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh is to visit Iran on 16#17 April.

During her visit, Ms Lindh will meet President Mohammad Khatami, Minister for Foreign Affairs Kamal Kharrazi and representatives of non-governmental organisations working with human rights. The Minister for Foreign Affairs will also have discussions with representatives of organisations that focus on the situation of women in Iran.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Head of the Palestinian Children's Secretariat visits Sweden

Unofficial translation

Cairo Arafat, Head of the Children's Secretariat at the Palestinian Ministry of Planning, is currently visiting Stockholm.

After her meeting with Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh, Cairo Arafat and the Minister for Foreign Affairs will be available to meet the media on Tuesday 9 April at 13.20.

Please assemble at the entrance to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs at 13.10. Please have your press credentials with you.

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Key word: 5934

PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh in round-table talks with the Foreign Minister of the Czech Republic

Unofficial translation

On Monday, Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh will begin a two-day round-table discussion in Prague with her Czech counterpart, Minister for Foreign Affairs Jan Kavan. The discussions will focus on various issues arising from the Czech Republic's pending entry into the EU. In addition to EU enlargement, discussions will also cover European security policy, the situation in the Balkans and relations with Russia and Ukraine.

Ms Lindh will also hold bilateral discussions with the Czech Foreign Minister during her visit. Some ten persons from each of the countries will take part in the round-table talks. Ms Lindh will travel home on Monday, after which the Swedish delegation will be led by Director-General for Political Affairs Sven-Olof Petersson of the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Sweden will also be represented in the discussions by Members of Parliament Sören Lekberg (s) and Karl-Erik Olsson (c).

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Key word: 5933

PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to: Yalla! Let's redecorate the tree! Sweden and the Muslim cultural sphere

Unofficial translation

To mark the publication of the book Yalla! Let's redecorate the tree! Sweden and the Muslim cultural sphere, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs invites the press to meet Ministers Anna Lindh, Britta Lejon, Mona Sahlin and Thomas Östros at a press conference.

Time: Thursday 11 April at 12.00.

Venue: Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities, Fredsgatan 2.

There will also be a photo opportunity when Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh formally presents the book to the Association of Young Muslims in Sweden at the Stockholm Mosque on Södermalm (address: Björns trädgård), on Thursday 11 April at 14.00.

<hr width="50%">

Yalla! Let's redecorate the tree! is being distributed to all pupils in the first two years of upper secondary school and to libraries and youth organisations. Yalla! contains interviews, essays, poems, pictures and documentary reports written by some thirty young people, writers and experts, several of whom have roots in the Middle East and North Africa. The book, which is being printed in 250 000 copies, is published by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. It will also be available in English and Arabic translations.

If you plan to attend the press conference, please notify Gufran Al-nadaf, Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Service, tel: 08-405 57 18, 0709-328739 or

e-mail: gufran.al-nadaf@foreign.ministry.se

Please bring your press credentials!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to be sent to Sierra Leone

Unofficial translation

The Government decided on Thursday that Sweden will send election observers to Sierra Leone for the presidential and parliamentary elections, due to take place on 14 May 2002. Sierra Leone is now recovering after a ten-year civil war and the forthcoming elections are an important step in consolidating peace and the development of democracy.

The EU has decided to send election observers and has invited the member states to propose candidates. In Thursday's Government decision, Sida was assigned the task of recruiting and training a maximum of seven election observers to monitor the elections in Sierra Leone. These will be part of the joint EU election observer group.

Before the forthcoming elections in Sierra Leone, and as part of EU efforts to promote peace and stability in the region, the EU Presidency's special representative, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Hans Dahlgren will be visiting Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea next week.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to a press conference with Leif Pagrotsky and the incoming Director-General of the WTO Dr Supachai Panitchpakdi

Unofficial translation

Dr Supachai Panitchpakdi will take up his duties as Director-General of the WTO on 1 September. He will lead the WTO and the negotiations on the Doha Development Agenda which was decided at the WTO ministerial conference in Doha, Qatar, last year. Dr Supachai has previously been Minister for Trade and Deputy Prime Minister in Thailand.

Dr Supachai will visit Sweden on 8#9 April and will meet Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O Karlsson, Deputy Prime Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallén, as well as representatives of the business sector and civil society. He will also give a lecture at the Stockholm School of Economics.

To the editorial office:

Press conference with Dr Supachai and Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky will take place:

Time: Monday 8 April at 12.15

Venue: Press Centre at Rosenbad

Please bring your press credentials!

Welcome!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh welcomes the cease-fire in Angola

Unofficial translation

#I warmly welcome the agreement on a cease-fire which was signed today between the Angolan government and the UNITA guerrilla,# the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms Anna Lindh, says.

#Peace finally appears to be within reach in Angola.#

The 1994 Lusaka peace agreement will now be fully implemented. This means the UNITA guerrilla army will be disarmed and integrated into society. Furthermore, broad participation in political life will be encouraged in preparation for a general election.

#A new strategy will now be drawn up for Sweden#s cooperation with Angola. A starting-point for Sweden is that the Angolan government bear the main responsibility for assisting the millions of Angolans in need and for the reconstruction of the country. I therefore take note of the Government#s pledge to give special priority to the needs of the civilian population,# Ms Lindh says.

#I will shortly be sending a personal representative to Angola to see how Sweden can best assist in this new hopeful situation. This will give us a chance to discuss the matter on the spot with the Angolan government and with the UN which still has an important role to play in the peace process.#

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Review of regulations and practices when enforcing refusal of entry and expulsion decisions

Unofficial translation

The Government decided today to appoint a one-man committee to review rules and practices when enforcing refusal of entry and expulsion decisions, particularly in cases in which the identity of the alien is unclear.

The investigator will conduct a review of current regulations to see whether they are appropriate. The use of coercive measures and forms for cooperation with foreign authorities will also be studied by the one-man committee.

If necessary, the committee will present proposals for amendments to the regulations and other measures.

The assignment will be completed by 20 December 2002.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-04-03

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Extra foreign ministers meeting at the EU

Unofficial translation

This evening, the foreign ministers of the EU will gather for an extra meeting in Luxembourg to discuss the latest events in the Middle East.

Sweden will be represented by Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Anna Lindh on the developments in the Middle East

Unofficial translation

#It is with great dismay that I have heard Israel's Prime Minister declare President Arafat to be his enemy,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

#What is now taking place is particularly serious.#

#To attempt to crush the Palestinian leadership is unacceptable to the international community and will only lead to even greater losses and insecurity for Israel. Israel's government must display maximum restraint and act in such a way that the Palestinians who wish to live in peace with Israel are not marginalised further,# says Ms Lindh.

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Key word: 5886

PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Anna Lindh in connection with the terrorist bombing in Natanya

"I condemn the act of madness in Natanya in the strongest possible terms," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh in a statement after the terrorist bombing in Israel on Wednesday evening.

"Our thoughts go first to the survivors, to the many victims, and particularly to the family of our fellow-countrywoman."

#The Palestinian leadership, indeed the entire Palestinian society, must ensure that the grotesque logic followed by the suicide bombers is broken. It leads only to even greater losses for the Palestinian people and marginalises even more the influence of those in Israel who want to live in peace with their neighbours,# says Ms Lindh.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, and Chile's president Ricardo Lagos to inaugurate IT project

Today Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky and Chile's President Ricardo Lagos will inaugurate a bilateral IT cooperation project in Kista and Santiago de Chile.

The IT University of the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) has produced a technological concept that enables distance education throughout the world. The university in Chile is the first cooperation partner.

With the help of the new technology, Leif Pagrotsky will be linked to President Lagos at the university in Santiago de Chile.

Venue: Forum, the IT University, Isafjordsgatan 39 in Kista.

Date and time: 27 March at 15.30

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to children in the Balkans

The Government decided today to contribute SEK 2.6 million to a new regional centre in Slovenia which will work with children in the Western Balkans. Sweden will finance a sub-project for training teachers to work with children suffering from trauma after their distressing experiences of war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Yugoslavia.

The grant is part of the Government's international efforts to support children in vulnerable situations. The project is run primarily by the Slovene Philantropy organisation which has taken part in a series of rebuilding initiatives in the Balkans.

"The children's centre will carry out vital work for children who have suffered traumatic experiences during the war years," says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-27

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Anna Lindh on being informed that two members of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH) have died af

"I am dismayed and shocked to have received the news that two members of the TIPH, a Swiss man and a Turk died yesterday evening after the car in which they were travelling was shot at. A third member of the TIPH force was injured in the same incident. Such acts of terror must, of course, be condemned", comments Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh.

This is the first time for anyone in the TIPH to lose their life since the force was established in January 1997.

"My thoughts go to the families of those who have died, to all the members of the TIPH and naturally to the ten Swedes who are there. I have extended our deepest sympathy via our special envoys in Ankara and Bern", says Anna Lindh.

The task of the TIPH of ensuring greater security to the people of Hebron is vital. The TIPH may also serve as a model for a future international observer force in the region.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to a press conference with Leif Pagrotsky

On Wednesday 27 March, the Invest in Sweden Agency (ISA) will present its annual report "The climate for foreign investments in Sweden" to the Government.

The Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, will comment on this report at a press conference at 12.00 on Wednesday. ISA Director-General Kai Hammerich will also attend.

Date and time: Wednesday 27 March, at 12.00

Venue: the Press Centre at Rosenbad

NB: Please have your press credentials with you.

Welcome!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Anna Lindh in response to Arafat being prevented from travelling to Beirut

"The European Council in Barcelona called upon Israel to lift all remaining restrictions on Yasser Arafat's freedom of movement. It is deeply regrettable that this demand has not been heeded", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh in a comment on the decision by Prime Minister Sharon to prevent Arafat from travelling to the Arab League summit in Beirut.

"It goes without saying that Arafat has a right to take part in this important summit, where the Saudi initiative could potentially break the tragic spiral of violence and pave the way for a resumption of negotiations.

"Moreover, the development of the spiral of violence to date shows that Arafat's house arrest has been nothing but counter-productive", notes Anna Lindh.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Kick-off in Monterrey in fight against poverty

Unofficial translation

"The results in Monterrey are far better than anticipated", says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson in a comment on the conference on financing for development that concludes today in Monterrey. "The amount of development assistance provided by the world's rich countries has declined over the last fifteen years. But in Monterrey both the USA and Europe have undertaken to substantially increase development assistance. This is an important change of direction", says Jan O. Karlsson.

"But it will take more than development assistance to eradicate poverty. Trade and direct investments will have to play their part, otherwise there will be no development", says Minister for Finance Bosse Ringholm. "The developing countries need tools to enable them to take advantage of globalisation. They need to be given a better chance to manage their debts, attract foreign investment and negotiate reasonable trade agreements", says Bosse Ringholm.

The Monterrey conference is widely regarded as a great step forward. The fact that the final document of the conference, the Monterrey Consensus, was negotiated even before the conference began (Ruth Jacoby from Sweden was among those leading the negotiations) was progress in itself, since the Consensus now serves as a launch pad rather than a finishing line for the objectives and

ambitions of the conference. In Monterrey, the international community has given its full support to crucial demands pushed by Sweden. These include the requirement for each country to demonstrate a will to deepen its democracy and respect human rights so that development can reach the poor, greater harmony between trade, development assistance and investment, increased market access for developing countries and augmented capacity for debt management.

"The results in Monterrey inspire optimism and prepare the way for further progress in the run-up to the conference on sustainable development in Johannesburg, South Africa, in September this year", says Jan O. Karlsson.

A few specific Swedish undertakings in Monterrey:

* The Swedish initiative for an international commission on global public goods has received widespread support. The commission is intended to promote international cooperation to solve global problems, for example, water supply and the fight against diseases such as HIV/AIDS and malaria.

* Sweden has entered into an agreement with the World Bank that will mean more than SEK 20 million in support to assist African governments in their endeavours to make development assistance more effective and implement their anti-poverty strategies.

* In association with a number of other countries, Sweden is establishing a new international organisation whose role will be to strengthen the position of developing countries in world trade negotiations by means of actions tailored to individual cases.

* Sweden joined the UK and the Inter-American Development Bank in arranging a seminar where new initiatives were presented for public#private collaboration in mobilising resources for infrastructure development.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Decision in Monterrey on organisation to strengthen developing countries in WTO

The Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, will today join ministers from a range of countries including the UK, Switzerland, Angola and Zambia in signing a decision to establish an international organisation to give developing countries a stronger voice in the work of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

The new international organisation will provide advice and analytical support in WTO negotiations, adapted to fit the particular situation of individual countries. Special attention will be given to the poorest countries and to countries that lack representation at WTO headquarters in Geneva.

"By tailoring its efforts to individual needs, the organisation will fill a gap in the support offered by international organisations today. This will help enable developing countries to more effectively influence international trade regulations to their advantage", says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

Sweden is currently one of the largest donors of trade-related development assistance channelled via the WTO and the International Trade Centre (ITC) and of investment-promoting support channelled via the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), Sweden also provides support aimed at enhancing the trade policy competence of developing countries and promoting their export activities.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government communication on arms exports

The Government submitted to the Riksdag today a written communication on Swedish export control policy and the export of military equipment for 2001.

The value of actual Swedish military equipment exports fell from SEK 4.3 billion to SEK 3 billion during 2001.

The largest recipient countries were the United States, Norway, Denmark, Germany and Brazil. More than half of Swedish arms exports went to these countries.

The value of the permits granted for the future export of military equipment increased during 2001 from SEK 4.6 billion to SEK 23.9 billion. The dramatic increase can be attributed to export permits that were granted during the year for the export of JAS Gripen to South Africa and the export of Combat Vehicle 90 to Switzerland.

#The sale of JAS Gripen to South Africa means that Swedish arms exports will increase in the coming years,# says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky. #A deal of this magnitude is sufficient to increase exports many times over.#

In this year's communication, the Government has increased the amount of information provided about Sweden's exports of military equipment. In the communication, the value of the export permits granted per recipient country are reported for the first time. This provides a clear picture of the scope of the granting of permits to a certain country and is yet another step towards greater openness surrounding the export of military equipment.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh: "The international community must take decisive action against Zimbabwe"

"The fact that Tsvagirai is now being prosecuted for high treason shows how desperate Mugabe is", says Anna Lindh.

"If, after manipulating the elections, the Zimbabwean government continues to threaten the fundamental rights of the opposition, a very dangerous situation will arise. The international community must take decisive action to prevent this.

Against this background, Sweden welcomes the decision taken on behalf of the Commonwealth by Mbeki, Obasanjo and Howard, of a year's exclusion of Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe's people must soon be given a real chance to democratically elect their president.

Both the Commonwealth and the parliamentary election observers of the South African Development Community (SADC) have shown, through their critical reports of the presidential election, that Africa is taking its responsibility. A commitment to democracy and human rights is a central condition for the development initiatives taken by African leaders to succeed.

Sweden looks forward to a continuing close dialogue with the African leaders in the area. The European Council's decision to send a high level troika to the region is an important element here. Zimbabwe faces a humanitarian, social and economic crisis and it is important that Sweden and the international community continue to support Zimbabwe's people".

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to public financial administration in Africa

Unofficial translation

The Minister for Development Cooperation, Mr Jan O. Karlsson, signed together with the World Bank on Thursday in Monterrey, an agreement that means more than SEK 20 million in support for public financial administration in Africa.

#This is one way for us to support African governments in their endeavours to administer development assistance more effectively so that it reaches the very poorest people, those who are in the greatest need. It is part of Sweden's support for African development under African leadership. It is about helping countries to realise their poverty strategies, # Mr Karlsson says.

The support applies for three years and aims to help African countries make better use of public funds in the fight against poverty. The Swedish support combined with the World Bank's funds mark the beginning of a joint programme (Programme on Governance for Public Expenditure and Fiscal Accountability) for openness and reliability in handling public funds, both tax money and foreign assistance.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassador in Pyongyang

The Government today approved a decision to appoint Paul Beijer to the position of Ambassador in Pyongyang. Since September 2001 he has been chargé d'affaires at the embassy and has previously served, inter alia, at the embassies in Paris and Luanda.

The decision implies an upgrading of Sweden's diplomatic representation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Since the embassy in Pyongyang was opened in 1973 the Swedish Ambassador in Beijing has been dual accredited to Pyongyang while in practice the embassy has been superintended by an acting head of mission (chargé d'affaires). This upgrading means that Sweden will have the same level of diplomatic representation as two other EU states (Germany and the United Kingdom) which recently opened embassies in Pyongyang. It also indicates an emphasis on continued active Swedish engagement in North Korea, both bilaterally and within the framework of EU policy on Korea. Through the embassy, Sweden will continue its assignments as protecting power for, among others, the USA.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish Ambassador to Kabul

The Government decided today to appoint Peter Tejler as Ambassador to Kabul, Afghanistan. Mr Tejler will be concurrently accredited from Islamabad, Pakistan, where he has served as Sweden's Ambassador since 1999. Diplomatic relations between Sweden and Afghanistan have been dormant since the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

The appointment of Ambassador Tejler is intended as an expression of support for the interim administration that has been in place in Kabul since 22 December. It is also confirmation of Sweden's long-term commitment to Afghanistan and our undertaking to contribute to the reconstruction of the country.

Sweden has provided extensive humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan over the past 20 years. On 24 January, the Government adopted a new strategy for development cooperation with Afghanistan. The strategy, which covers a three-year period, has a proposed budget of SEK 750 million to SEK 1 billion.

In the course of the spring, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency will be opening a field office in Kabul.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to press briefing: Russian Minister of Economics

and Trade German Gref to visit Sweden

The Russian Minister of Economic Development and Trade, German Gref, will be visiting Stockholm on Friday 22 March at the invitation of Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky. Their talks are expected to focus on economic cooperation between Sweden and Russia, a Swedish initiative in St Petersburg in connection with the city's 300th anniversary celebrations and the upcoming accession of Russia to the WTO. In the course of the day, German Gref and Leif Pagrotsky will also take part in a seminar at the Stockholm School of Economics.

The press is invited to meet Leif Pagrotsky and German Gref after their talks.

Time: Friday 22 March at 11.45

Venue: The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1

If you plan to attend, please notify Press Assistant Marie Näslund, by tel. 08-405 56 40 or 0709-22 17 67,

or e-mail: marie.naslund@foreign.ministry.se,

not later than Thursday 21 March.

NB: Please have your press credentials with you.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Opposition from Zimbabwe to visit Stockholm

A delegation from the largest opposition party in Zimbabwe, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), is to visit Stockholm on Wednesday. The group will be led by the party member responsible for election issues, Member of Parliament Paul Themba Nyathi, who will be received by Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on Wednesday. The delegation will also meet representatives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Africa Department and Sida on Wednesday.

Message to the editorial desk:

Anna Lindh and Paul Themba Nyathi will answer questions from the press at approximately 15.00.

Please note:

Venue: Press Centre at Rosenbad.

Please bring press credentials!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky comments on the meeting of trade ministers of the Baltic Sea States in Moscow

Today, the ministers for trade and economic affairs of the Baltic Sea States met in Moscow to discuss how trade and economic growth could be improved in the region.

During the meeting, the importance of shortening times for border passage of goods was stressed. The ministers reiterated the target they had previously established of a maximum of two hours for the passage of goods across borders.

"This target has been achieved at an increasing number of border stations", said Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky after the conclusion of the meeting. "But much remains to be done before this serious obstacle is completely eliminated.

If we are to make use of the enormous economic potential represented by the Baltic Sea region, we must ensure that unnecessary border obstacles are removed. It is meaningless to invest billions in roads and railways to save a few minutes in transport times, if one then has to wait for over ten hours to cross borders between countries".

At the meeting Leif Pagrotsky also emphasised the importance of the Baltic Sea Region cooperating to improve its capacity to attract investments.

"It is important that the international community sees the region in its entirety, and I therefore urge investment promotion organisations in these countries to strengthen their mutual collaboration. This would enable a common Baltic Sea Joint Investment Area to be created. One of the preconditions for ensuring that the Baltic Sea region is seen as an attractive area for investment is that it becomes a region in which transparency, predictability and the rule of law prevail everywhere.

The potential of the Baltic Sea region and its significance for Sweden are demonstrated by the fact that Sweden's exports to the Baltic Sea States are increasing, despite the cooling of the international economy. Most impressive is the fact that our exports to Russia increased by 71 per cent last year".

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Leif Pagrotsky to participate in CBSS meeting in Moscow

Within the framework of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky will participate in a meeting of trade and economic ministers in Moscow on 19#20 March.

Discussions during the meeting will include the enabling conditions for improved trade and economic growth in and between the Baltic Sea States. The objective is to collectively create an area attractive for international investment in the Baltic Sea region.

The Minister for Trade will be available to speak to the media on Wednesday 20 March at 15.30 (local time) in the lobby of the President Hotel. The address is: 24 Bolshaya Yakimanka, Moscow. The contact during the Moscow visit is Mikael Magnusson, mobile: 0708-62 79 83.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-19

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden launches international commission for global

public goods

This evening, Sweden will take the initiative for an international commission for global public goods.

"The international community must shoulder its responsibility and take action to protect existing global public goods and create new ones. This is about our common responsibility, the air we breathe, our oceans, our financial stability and the fight against cross-border diseases such as HIV/Aids", says Jan O. Karlsson.

Sweden has advocated that the issue of global public goods be included higher up on the agenda of the important conference on financing for development that is taking place in Monterrey, Mexico this week.

This is why Sweden together with France are proposing tonight an international commission that will work on identifying global public goods and areas needing action acutely, and on reviewing ways in which global public goods can best be provided and financed for.

"We must find radical new ways of financing, protecting and providing for global public goods", says Jan O. Karlsson. "They concern our common survival. We need all the forces at our disposal, both development assistance, and new sources of financing as well. Sweden's contribution to Monterrey will be to create an international commission".

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

CHANGE IN TIME for press conference with José Ramos Horta

The press conference with Dr. José Ramos Horta, Minister for Foreign Affairs in East Timor will take place on

Tuesday 19 March, at 11.00

Venue: Press Centre at Rosenbad

Please have your press credentials with you.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish cooperation agreement with Ethiopia

Minister for Development Cooperation Jan O. Karlsson and Ethiopia's Minister for Finance Sufian Ahmed will sign an agreement in Addis Ababa today on bilateral cooperation and support for development initiatives in the Amhara region of north-western Ethiopia. Cooperation in Amhara will consist, inter alia, of support to agriculture, microcredits and road construction.

"Continuity and concrete measures are needed to strengthen and develop a poor province like Amhara, which is often seriously affected by drought and starvation. This agreement will enable us to concentrate on long-term development of the province", says Jan O. Karlsson.

The Development Minister's visit to Ethiopia will include talks on the future direction of Swedish development assistance to Ethiopia. The visit is also part of the preparations leading up to the international conference on financing for development, due to take place this week in Monterrey, Mexico.

Ethiopia is one of the world's poorest countries. It was one of the first recipient countries for Swedish development assistance and cooperation began as early as the 1950s. Today, development assistance focuses on poverty alleviation, and particularly on rural development. Efforts are also being made to promote human rights and Sweden is giving considerable humanitarian support to Ethiopia. Sida's country framework for Ethiopia in 2002 amounts to SEK 150 million.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-18

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

EU trade ministers discuss steel

Transatlantic relations were high on the agenda when the EU Ministers for Trade met in Toledo on Monday. The Spanish EU Presidency had prepared a discussion on the need for trade policy cooperation between the EU and the US, but attention was focused instead on the current dispute on steel.

#It is now a question of avoiding an escalation of the steel conflict,# said Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky. #Unlike the United States, the EU must comply with trade rules. It may be necessary to protect EU steel producers as a result of the United States# protective tariffs, but the EU must cooperate with other affected countries so that we do not pass on the problems. We will only do what is absolutely necessary and balance the interests of the steel producers against those of the importers and the consumers.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish-Rwandan agreement on cooperation

The Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, and the Finance Minister of Rwanda, Donald Kaberuka, today signed an agreement in Kigali on development cooperation for 2002. The agreement confirms and underlines the orientation of cooperation and the areas on which it will focus. These are democracy and human rights, institution-building to promote peaceful development and national unity and reconciliation, economic reforms and capacity-building in Rwandan society.

"It is pleasing to be able in this way to support and encourage Rwanda's long-term endeavours to achieve reconciliation and reconstruction and to combat poverty", comments Jan O. Karlsson. In the course of the year Sida will be conducting a review of the Swedish country strategy for development cooperation with Rwanda in a longer-term perspective.

This week Jan O. Karlsson is visiting Rwanda and Ethiopia, two developing countries that are important to Sweden. These visits are also an important part of preparations for participation in the conference on financing for development in Monterrey, Mexico.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Commitment to Swedish design abroad

The Government decided today to commit SEK 1.6 million to initiatives to promote Swedish design abroad in 2002.

"Swedish design is successful and has every prospect of continuing to grow as an export industry", says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky. "Design is becoming an increasingly important means for companies to compete. Swedish design helps to spread a positive image of Sweden in the world, which is pleasing and benefits our whole country."

The funds will be placed at the disposal of the Swedish Institute and are to be used to present Swedish design abroad and boost its international competitiveness.

The initiative is part of a strategy worked out by the Swedish Institute in association with the Swedish Trade Council, the Swedish Society of Crafts and Design, and other organisations. The focus will be on a number of exhibitions and seminars. In 2002 events are being carried out or planned in Finland, Spain, the USA, Russia, Italy and elsewhere.

Tomorrow (Friday 15 March) a joint Swedish-Finnish seminar on industrial design will be held in Helsinki. Participants will include Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky, the Finnish Minister for Culture Suvi Lindén, the Chief Executive of Electrolux Michael Treschow, Honorary Industrial Counsellor Krister Ahlström and designers from Finland and Sweden.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Assignment on strategy for humanitarian aid in Iraq

The Government decided today to give Sida the assignment of producing a strategy for Swedish humanitarian aid in Iraq for 2003 and 2004.

For a number of years now, Sweden has been providing extensive humanitarian aid to the people of Iraq. Sida will analyse the experience gained and produce a strategy containing proposals for the focus and extent of continued Swedish development assistance. Sida's proposals will be submitted to the Government by 30 September this year. The Government attaches great importance to Sweden's continued significant humanitarian aid to Iraq.

Sweden is one of the largest donors of humanitarian aid in Iraq. Over SEK 30 million was paid out last year. Aid was channelled via non-governmental organisations, UNICEF and the International Red Cross Committee. Support has gone to mine clearance, water and sanitation projects, among other things.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Election observers for presidential elections in East Timor

Unofficial translation

The Government decided today to commission Sida to recruit a maximum of four election observers to monitor the election of independent East Timor's first president. This is being organised by the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and is due to take place on 14 April. Independence is expected to be proclaimed on 20 May.

The Swedish election observers will be part of an observer mission of 30 people that the EU is sending to East Timor.

"The observer mission is a means for the world community to show its support for a democratic East Timor at an important point in its independence process and to ease the transition from UN administration to independence", says Minister for Development Cooperation Jan O. Karlsson. Up to now, Sweden has given East Timor development assistance amounting to over SEK 120 million and has contributed with civilian police, military observers and election monitors.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

East Timor's Minister for Foreign Affairs to visit Sweden

The Foreign Minister of East Timor, Dr José Ramos Horta, will visit Sweden on 18-20 March 2002 at the invitation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, to discuss the process towards its forthcoming independence and relations between Sweden and independent East Timor. During his visit, Dr Ramos Horta will also have talks with the Deputy Prime Minister, Lena Hjelm Wallén. The programme further includes meetings with, inter alia, the Director-General of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Bo Göransson, the Secretary-General of Save the Children, Ola Andersson, and the Secretary-General of International IDEA, Bengt Säve Söderbergh.

Dr José Ramos Horta was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1996 for his international work for East Timor's right to independence. Since 2001 he has been foreign minister in East Timor's transitional government. On 20 May East Timor will be declared an independent state and take over public administration from the interim UNTAET administration. Sweden supports East Timor's independence and has so far contributed over SEK 120 million in assistance. Also, Swedish civilian policemen and military observers are serving in East Timor.

To the editorial office:

A press conference with José Ramos Horta will take place

Time: Wednesday 20 March, 10,00 a.m.

Venue: Press Centre at Rosenbad

Please bring your press credentials!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Anna Lindh on the latest developments in the Middle East

"The Swedish Government welcomes last night's UN Security Council resolution on the situation in the Middle East. It shows that the international community stands united in its demand for an immediate stop to the violence and terror", comments Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

"It is gratifying that, for the first time, the Security Council confirms the vision of two states # Israel and Palestine # living side by side in peaceful coexistence, within secure and recognised boundaries. The Security Council has thus clearly indicated a direction for the continued peace process.

I fully concur with the strong statement of Kofi Annan in connection with the meeting of the Security Council. The Government shares his deep concern over the increasing violence and over Israeli use of heavy weapons in civilian areas. We also agree with his demand that Israel must stop its illegal occupation.

The Security Council action comes at a time when it is more important than ever to put out clear signals to the parties. It is a reflection of the terrible developments of recent weeks. The current violence is unacceptable and must cease immediately.

Of central importance is the enjoiner by the Security Council to ensure the protection of civilians and respect for international humanitarian law. In a letter to my Israeli colleague, Shimon Peres, I have therefore requested that Israel respects the Geneva Convention in full", says Anna Lindh.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson to visit Rwanda and Ethiopia - corrected version

The Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy, Jan O. Karlsson, will travel to Rwanda and Ethiopia on 14-18 March. The two countries were heavily marked by various wars in the 1990s and are major recipients of Swedish assistance.

In Kigali, Rwanda, on 15-16 March, Jan O. Karlsson will meet President Kagame, Minister of Finance Kaberuka and others. He will also meet representatives of Rwanda's unity and reconciliation commission and visit Nelson Mandela Village, which has a particular focus on reconciliation processes after the genocide in 1994.

This year Sweden is to draw up a new country strategy for development assistance in Ethiopia. As part of the preparations for this, Jan O. Karlsson will also be visiting Addis Ababa on 17-18 March. There he will meet representatives of the government of Ethiopia and the Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Unity, among others.

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Key word: 5198

PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Communication from the Government to the Riksdag concerning the future of Europe

On Wednesday the Government submitted a communication to the Riksdag concerning the European Convention on the future of Europe which is to prepare the next intergovernmental conference and the ongoing debate on the future of Europe.

At the meeting of the European Council in Laeken in December last year, a declaration on the future of the Union was adopted. It established that the Union must become more democratic, open and effective. The European Council agreed in the Declaration to convene a convention as part of the preparations for the next intergovernmental conference in 2004.

The communication gives an account of the organisation and timetable of the convention as well as some of the issues concerning the future of Europe that have so far been raised in the debate. The communication also gives a short account of the Government's current points of departure regarding some of these issues. However, it does not preclude any positions in the forthcoming intergovernmental conference.

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Key word: 5186

PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-13

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Anna Lindh in connection with the election result in Zimbabwe

#The presidential election in Zimbabwe on 9#10 March was neither free nor fair. Mr Mugabe has got the result he wanted but his election victory is not credible,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh in a comment.

#Zimbabwe has today a new president who cannot be regarded as popularly elected. What was at stake at the weekend was more than a choice between two presidential candidates,# continues Ms Lindh.

#Whilst millions of Zimbabweans put their faith in the election as a democratic means, the regime felt it had to use violence and manipulation to get its own way. The international community bears continued responsibility for Zimbabwe. People#s hopes of a better life cannot be shattered.

#Zimbabwe#s neighbouring countries must now shoulder their responsibility. They must stand up for the fundamental values represented by the democratic world. Zimbabwe will also be an issue for the EU summit which will take place in Barcelona at the weekend,# says Ms Lindh.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish-Russian Environment Days in St Petersburg

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has invited two hundred Russian decision-makers and experts to

participate in two environmental seminars in St Petersburg on 19-20 March. The seminars are being arranged by the Swedish Trade Council and SweHeat (the Swedish organisation for district heating).

The first seminar will be devoted to water supply and wastewater issues, the second to district heating. Swedish experts from some thirty companies and institutions will report on their experiences and share their know-how with participants.

"We would like to share our more than fifty years of experience of wastewater treatment and district heating with our Russian neighbours. This has been a period of intensive and successful development in both these fields, which has had profound welfare and environmental effects for our country", says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

"I hope that the Russians will be able to take advantage of some of these developments. I also hope that the two seminars will lead to stronger professional and commercial networks between our two countries", says the Minister for Trade.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden and Finland present proposals for the development of EAPC and PfP

Sweden and Finland have today presented a joint paper containing proposals for the future development of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) and the Partnership for Peace (PfP). The proposals will be handed over to NATO's Secretary-General Lord Robertson and the 46 EAPC countries in Brussels.

The Swedish-Finnish paper is a contribution to the review ongoing within EAPC which aims to adapt the partnership to developments in the security policy area in Europe, including NATO's planned enlargement, closer relations between NATO and Russia, the EU's evolving crisis management capability, the increasingly broader security concept and the need for cooperation to counter terrorism. The review will continue until the EAPC and NATO summits in Prague in November, although these issues are already expected to be discussed at the meeting of foreign ministers in Reykjavik in May.

The Swedish-Finnish proposals aim, inter alia, to strengthen the role of EAPC and PfP in practical cooperation in joint peace support efforts and to adapt the development of the common capability to

carry out crisis management missions to each country's contribution and needs. The proposals also include the further development of military and civil exercise activities for crisis management and rescue services. Furthermore, intensified cooperation is proposed in civil emergency preparedness issues and disaster relief missions to improve the ability to handle the consequences of natural disasters, accidents, acts of terrorism and other severe civil emergencies.

Like all other partnership countries, Sweden and Finland are taking part in the review and therefore have the opportunity to present ideas. In their capacity as non-participants in military alliances with active commitment to international peace efforts, Sweden and Finland have a special interest in contributing to the development of cooperation within the framework of EAPC and PfP. The planning dialogue and exercise operations carried on within the framework of PfP are of central importance for developing the capacity of participant countries to interwork in international crisis management, both within the framework of the NATO-led operation in the Balkans and in missions led by the EU and the UN.

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Key word: 5170

PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Global Water Partnership Organisation (GWPO) to be based in Stockholm

The Chairperson of the Global Water Partnership Organisation (GWPO), Margaret Catley-Carlson, and State Secretary Gun-Britt Andersson will today sign an agreement on immunity and privileges # a host country agreement # regarding the GWPO Secretariat in Stockholm. The Government and the City of Stockholm welcome the fact that the Secretariat is now making Stockholm its permanent headquarters.

This improvement in the organisation's practical arrangements has been made possible by strengthening the existing GWP network by establishing an intergovernmental organisation, the Global Water Partnership Organisation. Sweden, Denmark and the World Bank are the first three participants and a number of new members are expected to join shortly.

In a world that is characterised by an increasing shortage of freshwater, the organisation aims to promote wiser and fairer use of water resources.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Wednesday press breakfast before conference on development financing in Monterrey, Mexico

Minister for Finance Bosse Ringholm and Minister for Development Cooperation Jan O Karlsson invite you to a press breakfast tomorrow, Wednesday 13 March before the conference on development financing in Monterrey, Mexico, on 18-22 March.

The UN has taken the initiative for this conference, Financing for Development, together with other organisations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organisation. Taking part in the conference are representatives of the majority of the world's governments, NGOs and the business sector. Sweden's delegation will be led by Minister for Finance Bosse Ringholm and Minister for Development Cooperation Jan O Karlsson.

The purpose of the conference is to mobilise resources for achieving the UN millennium objective of halving poverty by 2015. An important aim is to create greater consensus between financial institutions and other actors. The links between trade and development assistance are other important issues to be discussed.

Time: 09.00-10.00

Venue: The New Conference Room, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1.

If you plan to attend, please notify Helena Gustavsson by mail:

helena.gustavsson@foreign.ministry.se

or by telephone +46 708-135682 preferably before 15.00 today.

Please have your press credentials with you.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to a Swedish-Finnish design seminar in Helsinki - reminder

Increasingly, design is becoming a competitive advantage. Internationally, Scandinavian design has long been a concept. Can Sweden and Finland develop a joint trademark within industrial design and is it necessary?

The importance of industrial design for companies and regions will be discussed at a seminar at the Embassy of Sweden in Helsinki on 15 March. The Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, and Finland's Minister for Culture, Suvi Lindén, will make opening speeches. The moderators will be Electrolux Group Managing Director Michael Treschow and Mining Inspector Krister Ahlström. Members of the panel from Sweden will include Tom Hedqvist, Beckmans School of Design, Peter Horbury, Volvo, Ingegerd Råman, Orrefors and Thomas Sandell, Sandell Sandberg. Participants from Finland will include Olavi Lindén, Fiskars, Eija Nieminen, College of Applied Arts, Pekka Toivanen, Muotohioimo and Anna Valtonen, Nokia.

In conjunction with the seminar, an exhibition will also be inaugurated at Artek in Helsinki, where leading contemporary Swedish design will be on display. The exhibition is a selection of products chosen by Eero Koivisto and Thomas Sandell, products that have given a profile to Sweden recently.

Programme

Thursday 14 March

15.00 Press showing of the design exhibition #Ruotsi # Finland#. Address: Artek, Södra Esplananden 18, Helsinki.

Friday 15 March

13.00 Seminar on industrial design. Address: Embassy of Sweden, Norra Esplanaden 7A, Helsinki.

14.45 Press meeting at the Embassy of Sweden.

16.00 Inauguration of the #Ruotsi-Finland# exhibition by Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky. Address: Artek, Södra Esplanaden 18, Helsinki.

If you wish to attend please notify Press Assistant Marie Näslund

08-405 56 40, e-mail marie.naslund@foreign.ministry.se not later than Wednesday, 13 March.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

North Korea's Minister for Foreign Trade to visit Sweden

As EU President, the Prime Minister, Göran Persson, led a delegation to the Korean peninsula in May 2001. During talks with the North Korean leader, Kim Jong-il, the Prime Minister invited a delegation to visit Europe to study how market economies function.

North Korea's Minister for Foreign Trade, Ri Gwang Gun, will lead a delegation comprising several senior officials which for two weeks will carry out a visit to Belgium, Italy, Sweden and the UK. The visit to Sweden will take place during the period 9-12 March 2002.

The programme in Sweden will include visits to the Stockholm School of Economics, the International Council of Swedish Industry, the Olof Palme International Center, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and Nordea. The Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, will host a lunch on Tuesday 12 March.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Funds to Västerbotten and Norrbotten for Barents cooperation

The Government took a decision today to appropriate SEK 10 million for the counties of Västerbotten and Norrbotten to further develop cooperation between companies in the Barents region.

The money will be taken from the Second Baltic Billion Fund, which is used to promote the development of trade and industry in the Baltic Sea region. The Counties of Västerbotten and Norrbotten were allocated SEK 10 million in fiscal year 2001 also.

"It is important that these counties are given an opportunity to continue to develop their cooperation in the Barents region," the Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky, says. "It contributes to strengthening the position of Swedish companies in the Barents region - a region of considerable natural wealth and with fantastic development potential."

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden extends budget support to cooperation partners

The Government today approved the allocation of SEK 240 million in budget support for 2002 to Burkina Faso, Honduras, Mali, Rwanda and Tanzania. In addition, the Government gave the go-ahead for support amounting to SEK 27 million to run over several years for capacity building in the field of debt management in poor and debt-burdened countries.

"These countries have all shown that they are serious about fighting poverty and taking long-term responsibility for their economic development," said Minister for Development Cooperation Jan O. Karlsson in a statement.

Swedish budget support is a form of direct assistance extended to poor countries that pursue sound, responsible economic policies with a clear poverty reduction orientation. The support is intended to speed up implementation of the countries' own prioritised poverty reduction policies, as set out in their poverty reduction strategies. It is intended to serve as a powerful complement to internally generated resources in poor countries that have, or will soon have, sustainable debts under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative introduced by the World Bank and the IMF.

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Key word: 5138

PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to hydropower in Lithuania

The Government decided today to donate SEK 5.9 million to a feasibility study on the modernisation of a large hydroelectric power station at Kaunas in Lithuania. The power station was built in the 1950s.

"It is important for Lithuania to get a power station that is more environmentally friendly, more modern and more efficient", says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

The money will come from the Baltic Billion Fund II, which was established to advance the position of Swedish enterprise in the Baltic Sea region.

The total investment programme for modernisation of the power station is estimated at between SEK 150 and 300 million.

"Swedish companies have substantial competence in the energy sector so we expect to have a good chance of getting involved in this project", says Leif Pagrotsky. "With the upcoming closure of the Ignalina nuclear power station, the modernisation of the energy sector in Lithuania is becoming a matter of increasing importance."

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Grant to Kalmar County for Baltic Sea cooperation

The Government decided today to allocate SEK 1 940 000 to the Regional Council in Kalmar County for skills development in public administration in Kaliningrad, the Liepaja district of Latvia and the Klaipeda region in Lithuania.

The project will be implemented together with Kronoberg and Blekinge Counties and aims at developing skills in local and regional public bodies. It is part of preparations for EU enlargement. Approximately 150 politicians, officials and experts from the three regions will be given training in the form of seminars.

The money will be taken from the Baltic Billion 1 fund, which is to be used for support to cooperation and development in the Baltic Sea region.

"The commitment of southern Sweden is an excellent example of how countries and regions surrounding the Baltic Sea can be linked more closely with each other", says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Director-General for Development Cooperation

The Government today appointed Ruth Jacoby Director-General for Development Cooperation. Ruth Jacoby currently holds the position of Ambassador at the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in New York, where she is responsible for preparations for the international conference on financing for development that is to take place in Mexico at the end of March. Ruth Jacoby has previously served as Nordic-Baltic Executive Director of the World Bank, and has held posts at the Swedish Delegation to the OECD in Paris and the Ministry of Finance, among other positions. She will take up her duties as Director-General at the beginning of May.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Yearbook on the EU 2001 has been published

Unofficial translation

Today the Government submitted to the Riksdag its annual communication about its work in the European Union.

From Sweden's point of view, the work during 2001 was characterised by the first Swedish presidency of the EU Council of Ministers. Swedish ministers chaired the meetings within the Council and represented the Union in its dealings with other institutions, third countries and in international organisations.

Success was achieved within the three main areas of priority # enlargement, employment and the environment # but the Presidency also brought success in other areas. During the second half of the year, the Union agenda was affected to a great extent by the terrorist attacks of 11 September. A declaration on the future of the Union was adopted at the Laeken summit in December. The communication gives a detailed report of the work carried out within all Union policy areas throughout the year.

The Government communication on its work in the EU during 2001 will serve as the basis for a parliamentary debate during the spring. The document will be available at libraries and on the website of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, www.ud.se. The Yearbook on the EU is also available in an abbreviated version which is being distributed to upper secondary schools, organisations and the mass media. An English version is also being compiled.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-06

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors

The following four Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 7 March:

The newly appointed Ambassador of Greece, Nicolaus Couninotis, was born in 1941. He graduated in political science in Athens and entered his country's foreign service in 1972. Ambassador

Couniniotis then served alternately at the foreign ministry in Athens and at missions abroad.

In recent years Ambassador Couniniotis has held the following posts:

1993 -

Head of Turkish Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (from 1994 as Minister)

1995 #

Head of the Protocol Department

1997 #

Permanent Representative at the Western European Union (from 1999 as Minister Plenipotentiary),
Brussels

2000 #

Permanent Representative at the EU Political and Security Committee (PSC), Brussels

Lesotho's newly appointed Ambassador Thekiso Khati, (concurrently accredited in Copenhagen) was born in 1947. He graduated with a BA in languages in 1980 from the University of Lesotho and an MA from the University of Texas in Austin in 1982 and in 1988 gained a PhD from the University of Essex in the UK.

Thekiso Khati has mainly been working with linguistics and language teaching, inter alia, at the University of Lesotho. Ambassador Khati has also held the following posts:

1994 # 2000

Member and vice-chairman of the national UNESCO committee in Lesotho

1999 # 2000

Chairman of UNISCO (Committee for the Culture of Peace)

2001 #

Ambassador in Copenhagen.

The newly appointed Ambassador of Mauritius, Mohunlall Goburdhun (concurrently accredited in London) was born in 1945. He is an economist with a BA from the University of Punjab and studies in diplomacy from Oxford University. Ambassador Goburdhun entered his country's foreign service in 1976.

In recent years Ambassador Goburdhun has held the following posts:

1993 # 1994

Head of the Protocol Department (from 1994 as Ambassador)

1994 # 1996

Ambassador in New Delhi with concurrent accreditation in Sri Lanka och Bangladesh

1997 # 1998

Post as State Secretary

Feb. 2001

Ambassador in London

Gabon's Ambassador Jean Moukongh (concurrently accredited in Libreville) was born in 1955. He has a diploma in town planning from the University of Paris. After one or two years in the Ministry of Planning, he has held the following posts:

1983 # 1990

Adviser to the Head of the Personal Resources Department at the Office of the President

1990 # 1991

Adviser to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and responsible for financial issues regarding Gabon's missions and consulates abroad

1991 # 1993

Adviser to the Minister for Foreign Affairs

1994 #

Ambassador (agr  ) Stockholm

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden establishes a Consulate-General in Kaliningrad

The Government took a decision today to establish a Consulate-General in Kaliningrad as of 1 October 2002.

The Consulate-General's sphere of activities will include promotion of regional and decentralised cooperation, development cooperation, trade and promotion of Sweden, and visa and migration matters.

It is important that Sweden is present in Kaliningrad in order to enhance our ability to utilise the opportunities Baltic Sea cooperation offers. Also, Sweden is politically committed as a representative of the EU to work for intensified cooperation, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms Anna Lindh, says.

Ms Lindh is visiting Kaliningrad today to participate in a meeting of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) and to meet the Russian Foreign Minister, Mr Ivanov.

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Key word: 5075

PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Crucial regional issues and development cooperation

Unofficial translation

How can effective cooperation be achieved in solving problems of international importance such as

environmental threats, epidemics and terrorism where individual countries take advantage of the efforts of others and market solutions are insufficient or impossible? This question has been given increasing attention as a theme in the debate on development and globalisation.

In order to discuss the matter, the Expert Group on Development Issues (EGDI) and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs are arranging a seminar on 6 March entitled Regional Public Goods:

Typologies, Provision, Financing and Development Assistance.

The basis for the discussion is a new study with the same name, which on the one hand discusses the problems at regional level in poor countries and, on the other, ways in which aid donors can contribute to good solutions. The seminar will be led by the chairman of EGDI, Ms Gun-Britt Andersson, State Secretary for Development Cooperation. The writers Todd Sandler (University of Southern California) and Daniel G. Arce M. (Rhodes College) will be participating as well as Inge Kaul from the United Nations Development Programme (Office of Development Studies). Other participants include representatives of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the Government Offices, NGOs and researchers.

To the editorial office:

The EGDI secretariat invites you to a press conference with the writers. The press conference will take place in connection with the concluding lunch.

Time: 13.30

Venue: Nordic Sea Hotel - Oceanen

Journalists who are interested may also take part in the seminar, which will be held in English.

Application to attend should be forwarded to .

For information contact Ingrid Widlund, UD-EGDI,

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Key word: 5074

PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Invitation to press breakfast with Anna Lindh, Leif Pagrotsky and Jan O Karlsson

Unofficial translation

How are the international agreements presented in the OECD guidelines for multinational enterprises and the UN Global Compact to be put into practice?

You are welcome to attend a press breakfast with Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh, Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky and Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O Karlsson.

The ministers will give a briefing on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs# programme to promote multinational enterprises# global responsibility.

Time: Tuesday 5 March at 09.00

Venue: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustav Adolfs Torg 1

If you wish to attend, please notify Press Assistant Marie Näslund before 15.00 on Monday 4

March, tel. 08-405 56 40,

e-mail:

Please bring your press credentials with you.

Welcome!

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh to take part in annual foreign ministers' meeting of the Council of the Baltic Sea States

Unofficial translation

On 5-6 March, Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh will take part in the annual foreign ministers' meeting of the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

The Council of the Baltic Sea States is a forum for cooperation between the governments of the five Nordic countries, the three Baltic countries, Russia, Germany, Poland and the European Commission.

The meeting, which will take place in Svetlogorsk on the Baltic coast of the Kaliningrad region in Russia, is being held ten years to the day after the establishment of the Council of the Baltic Sea States at a meeting of foreign ministers in Copenhagen in 1992. An anniversary declaration is to be adopted during the meeting.

"The Council of the Baltic Sea States will continue in future too to serve as a significant instrument for practical cooperation aimed at bringing the Baltic Sea states closer to one another. Cooperation

with north-west Russia, and not least with the Kaliningrad region, is an important issue for the Council", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

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Key word: 5069

PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New head of Stability Pact to visit Stockholm

Unofficial translation

The newly appointed Special Coordinator for the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, Dr. Erhard Busek, is due to visit Stockholm on Tuesday 5 March.

During his visit, he will meet, inter alia, Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh and Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

The Stability Pact was set up in 1999 at the initiative of the EU to promote regional cooperation in South Eastern Europe. Apart from the countries in South Eastern Europe, the EU, Russia and the USA are members of the partnership. Also participating are international organisations such as the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), NATO and the World Bank.

By building up and strengthening regional networks, the Stability Pact contributes to greater security in Europe. Director-General Per Sjögren from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is leading the work of justice and home affairs, including asylum and migration issues, trafficking in human beings and police cooperation.

For more information, please contact Marie-Louise Hallström, mobile +46 733-60 45 90 or Lars Wahlund, mobile +46 702-04 45 74.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish global development policy

Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson will today receive the final report of the Parliamentary Commission on Sweden's policy for global development (GLOBKOM). The Commission has conducted the first major review of Swedish development cooperation for 40 years and its task has been to present a strategy for a coherent Swedish global development policy. After handing over its report, GLOBKOM will hold a press conference at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Press Centre, Fredsgatan 4-6, at 12.00. The report will be available on the Commission's home page (www.globkom.net) and the Government Offices home page (www.regeringen.se) from 5 March onwards.

Tomorrow, on Tuesday 5 March, Jan O. Karlsson will take part in a public hearing held by the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs in connection with the publishing of the report.

Time: 10.00-14.00, Venue: The Riksdag Building, First Chamber Hall. If you plan to attend, please notify Per Arne Ströberg, tel: 08-7865035 or Joakim Claesson, tel: 08-7864214.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Anna Lindh concerning the situation in the Middle East:

Unofficial translation

#A very serious escalation of violence has occurred with Israeli army units now having forced their way into refugee camps on the West Bank,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

#We regard what has happened as yet another terrifying escalation. Hopes of positive political developments after the Saudi Arabian peace initiative have now been endangered. The security talks that have been resumed between Israelis and Palestinians are at risk once again. Knock-on effects that are difficult to control arise when violence increases.

#The Israeli government is assuming a heavy responsibility. International law demands that Israel does everything it can to avoid civilian victims. I appeal, therefore, to the government of Israel to consider its responsibility for peace and its humanitarian obligations by withdrawing immediately from the refugee camps,# says Ms Lindh.

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Key word: 5054

PRESS RELEASE

2002-03-01
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden ranked as the world's leading information society

Sweden ranked as the world's leading information society

Unofficial translation

For the third year running, Sweden tops the International Data Corporation Information Society Index. The IDC index which ranks 55 countries is headed by Sweden, before Norway, Switzerland, the USA, Denmark, the Netherlands, the UK and Finland.

"This demonstrates how strong Sweden remains internationally. That we are ranked, once gain, despite last year's setback, as the world's leading IT nation shows the extent of the Swedish information society and how well-placed we are for the future", says Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

"Contrary to prevailing views, employment in this sector has continued to increase in 2001, and PC sales have grown again. The IT industry is an industry of the future", says Leif Pagrotsky.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-28
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden contributes SEK 4 million to Global Compact

Unofficial translation

Sweden will contribute just over SEK 4 million to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's initiative, the Global Compact, according to a Government decision today. The Global Compact is a mutual partnership between the UN and private companies, in which companies commit themselves to following nine fundamental principles on human rights, working conditions and the environment. "This is an exciting and progressive cooperation that demonstrates which companies are actively interested in showing that they respect these important principles", says Minister for Development cooperation Jan O. Karlsson.

Participating companies promise, inter alia, that they do not take part in crimes against human rights, that they do not use child labour, that they safeguard freedom of association and the right to collective negotiation and that they take their environmental responsibilities seriously and encourage the use of environmentally friendly technologies.

The objective is for a thousand companies to have become members of the Global Compact within a three-year period. To date, over 500 companies have expressed an interest in taking part in this cooperation. Apart from Sweden, the UK, Germany, Denmark and Switzerland are contributing to the Global Compact.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Commission to improve reception of lone refugee children

Unofficial translation

The Government today decided to instruct the Swedish Migration Board and the National Board of Health and Welfare, jointly and in consultation with the Swedish Integration Board and the Children's Ombudsman, to improve reception of children from other countries who arrive in Sweden without an accompanying legal guardian (lone refugee children). The assignment should be carried out in collaboration with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities, the Federation of Swedish County Councils and other organisations concerned and should be completed not later than 31 May 2002.

The assignment comprises

* Mapping out and analysing the reasons why children come to Sweden unaccompanied, to what extent they do so and what preventive action can be taken.

* On the basis of the applicable legislation, improving collaboration between authorities in order that lone children who come to Sweden be given the same protection and support as Swedish

children and that the best interests of the child are always foremost.

* Carrying out an inquiry into the extent to which legislation is unclear. Amendments to laws should be proposed if necessary.

* Presenting proposals for ways of spreading information about the reception of lone refugee children.

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Key word: 5042

PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-28

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish civilian observers to Sri Lanka

Unofficial translation

The Government decided today to commission the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency to recruit a maximum of six civilian observers to send to Sri Lanka. They are to take part in a mission consisting of about 16 observers from several Nordic countries, who are to monitor compliance with the newly made ceasefire agreement. Along with representatives of the conflicting parties, they will have the additional task of facilitating mediation in conflicts at local level. The initiative for the observer mission comes from the parties involved in the conflict.

The observer mission is a joint Nordic undertaking led by Norway. Since 1998 the Norwegian government has served the government of Sri Lanka and the Tamil Tigers (LTTE) as a go-between in negotiations aimed at bringing about a cessation of hostilities. The ceasefire agreement is an important first step towards achieving a negotiated solution to the conflict and a permanent peace in Sri Lanka.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-26

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish-Finnish design seminar in Helsinki

Increasingly, design is becoming a competitive advantage. Internationally, Scandinavian design has long been a concept. Can Sweden and Finland develop a joint trademark within industrial design # and is it necessary?

The significance of industrial design for companies and regions is to be discussed at a seminar at Sweden's embassy in Helsinki on 15 March. Participants will include Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky, Chief Executive of Electrolux Michael Treschow, Finland's Minister for Culture Suvi Lindén, representatives of the Finnish business sector and designers from both countries.

In conjunction with the seminar, an exhibition will also be inaugurated at Artek in Helsinki, where leading contemporary Swedish design will be on display. The exhibition is a selection of products chosen by Eero Koivisto and Thomas Sandell, products that have given a profile to Sweden recently.

Programme

Thursday 14 March

15.00 Press showing of the design exhibition #Ruotsi # Finland#. Address: Artek, Södra Esplanaden 18, Helsinki.

Friday 15 March

13.00 Seminar on industrial design. Address: Embassy of Sweden, Norra Esplanaden 7A, Helsinki.

14.45 Press meeting at the Embassy of Sweden.

16.00 Inauguration of the #Ruotsi-Finland# exhibition by Minister for Trade Leif Pagrotsky.

Address: Artek, Södra Esplanaden 18, Helsinki.

The Project Managers for the event are Sweden's Ambassador Ulf Hjertonsson in Helsinki and in Stockholm Caroline Meimoun, Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

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2002-02-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to visit Stockholm

At the invitation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Goran Svilanovic is to visit Stockholm on 28 February.

An agreement on the mutual promotion and protection of investment and a double taxation agreement will be signed during the visit. In addition to discussions with Foreign Minister Anna Lindh and State Secretary Sven-Erik Söder, Foreign Minister Svilanovic will meet the first Deputy Speaker of Parliament, the Director-General of Sida and representatives of the Swedish business sector.

After the discussions, both Ministers for Foreign Affairs will make themselves available to the media. Assembly will be at the entrance to Gustav Adolfs Torg 1 at 13.30. Please have your press credentials with you.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Council of Europe adopts total death penalty ban

Unofficial translation

The Council of Europe, an organisation based in Strasbourg in France that has been operating since 1949 and now comprises 43 member states, today adopted a text completely banning the death penalty. The decision to adopt a new additional protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights was taken by the highest political organ of the Council of Europe, the Committee of Ministers. The new protocol # Additional Protocol No. 13 # supplements the existing ban on the use of the death penalty in peacetime. In those states that ratify the new additional protocol, capital punishment will also be prohibited in time of war or imminent danger of war.

Most Council of Europe member states have already abolished capital punishment in both peace and wartime. However, the proposal for a complete ban on the death penalty, which the Swedish

Government presented to the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers towards the end of 2000, makes it considerably more difficult to reintroduce capital punishment in countries where it has already been abolished. A further significant effect of the additional protocol that has just been adopted is that it sends a serious signal to other parts of the world that Europe is now determined to consign this inhumane punishment to history. The additional protocol can also be expected to enhance the protection given to asylum-seekers from areas at war. It has been welcomed by human rights organisations such as Amnesty International.

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Key word: 4993

PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-22

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Women's organisations to meet in Kabul this spring

Unofficial translation

Swedish and Afghan women's organisations will meet in Kabul later in the spring. This was the result of a meeting at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on Thursday between Minister for Development Cooperation Jan O. Karlsson and some 20 representatives of Swedish organisations. The meeting was held to discuss Swedish support to the women of Afghanistan.

"Swedish organisations have important experience that must be made use of in supporting the work of Afghan women. The women of Afghanistan have suffered from terrible oppression. But they refuse to see themselves as victims", says Jan O. Karlsson.

The Government and Sida are giving priority to gender equality work in the country strategy for development assistance to Afghanistan that was adopted in January. Thursday's meeting included discussions on the importance of microcredits directed at women, education and information on human rights, projects to improve maternity and child health care and support for women's participation at all levels of society.

"Today 16 000 women die every year because of deficient or non-existent maternity care. One in five children dies before the age of five. Opportunities for women to work and support themselves are minimal. Our work to promote the rights of women must start by dealing with the most basic issues", said Minister for Development Cooperation Jan O. Karlsson.

Taking part in the meeting were representatives of Sida, the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, the Forum for Cooperation of Women in Sweden (SAMS), the Church of Sweden, Kvinnoforum (Women's Forum), the International Women's Organisation for Peace and Freedom (IKFF), Doctors without Borders, Sveriges Kvinnoråd (the Swedish Women's Council), Centerkvinnorna (Centre Women), the Left Party, the Federation of Liberal Women, Moderatkvinnorna (Moderate Women), Kristdemokratiska kvinnoförbundet (Christian Democratic Women's Association), PMU InterLife, Save the Children and the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan.

"I have two strong images from Afghanistan. On the one hand, the enormous devastation. On the other, the forcefulness and determination to build up this country that I observed, primarily in

Afghan women", says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson. "Just now, this strength is Afghanistan's biggest asset".

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Less red tape surrounding work permits

The Government decided today to introduce exemptions from the requirement for work permits for certain foreign citizens. The Aliens Ordinance will be amended as from 1 April this year.

The exemptions apply for:

- a total of fourteen working days during a twelve-month period for a foreign artist and his or her technicians and other tour personnel, provided they have received an invitation from a promoter who is included on the Swedish Migration Board's list of established promoters;
- a total of three months during a twelve-month period for a foreigner who is a professional sportsman or sportswoman or official and who is visiting Sweden to take part in international competitions;
- a total period of time not exceeding one year for a foreigner who has specialist duties within an international concern and who is working temporarily in Sweden in this capacity.

"We would like to reduce red tape and this will cut down on the paperwork. Sportsmen and sportswomen and artists coming to Sweden to perform for the odd day should not need work permits", says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

"We are living in an increasingly globalised economy. Many of the major Swedish companies belong today to international concerns. By means of today's decision, we want foreigners with specialist duties within such international concerns to be able to undertake shorter assignments in Sweden without needing to go through the usual procedure of applying for a work permit", says Mr Karlsson.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government contributes to IT campaign in Bangkok

The Government decided today to contribute SEK 150 000 to the IT campaign "Networking Forum # Bridging the Digital Divide", which is to take place in Bangkok on 3-5 March. The aim of this event is to market Swedish IT know-how and the Swedish IT industry in Thailand.

This IT campaign is being undertaken jointly by the Embassy of Sweden in Bangkok, the Swedish Trade Council, the Swedish Chamber of Commerce in Bangkok, the Thai organisation National Electronics and Computer Technology Centre (NECTEC) and Swedish IT companies that intend to launch on to or expand in the southeast Asian market.

The Swedish delegation will be led by State Secretary Gun Eriksson, Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Their Majesties the King and Queen of Sweden to pay a state visit to the Slovak Republic

King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia will pay a state visit to the Slovak Republic on 3-5 April 2002 at the invitation of President Rudolf Schuster.

The Swedish Government will be represented by the Minister for Defence, Mr. Björn von Sydow. The programme includes visits to Bratislava, Trenčín and Košice.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

President of Chile Ricardo Lagos and Jan O. Karlsson to inaugurate partnership fund

On Friday 22 February, the President of Chile Ricardo Lagos and Minister for Development Cooperation Jan O. Karlsson will inaugurate the newly established partnership fund between the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the Chilean industrial agency CORFO/Agci.

The fund will mark a new stage in cooperation relations between Sweden and Chile and is one of a handful of its kind. It will be used to promote exchange and projects linking Chilean and Swedish enterprises and organisations, primarily in the areas of IT, environmental technology and forestry. To the editorial office:

There will be a photo opportunity on Friday 22 February between 15.00 and 15.30 at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Gustaf Adolfs torg 1. Assembly at the entrance at 14.50. If you plan to attend, please notify yvonne.westin@foreign.ministry.se (tel. 405 56 53)

Please bring your press credentials!

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Key word: 4957

PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-16

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs on Zimbabwe's expulsion of Pierre Schori

#Zimbabwe has today expelled Pierre Schori. This is conclusive evidence that Robert Mugabe has wanted to prevent the EU from observing the elections at any price. A number of conditions that

were difficult to accept had previously been made,# says Anna Lindh.

#International presence during the election campaign is extremely important in order to prevent violence and cheating getting totally out of hand. Other observers will now have an even more important role, and they have our full support.

#Pierre Schori will report to the EU foreign ministers who will be discussing the serious situation on Monday and they will decide on the necessary measures,# says the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-15

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson acts on behalf of women and homosexuals seeking asylum

Unofficial translation

The Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson had talks on Thursday and Friday with the Danish minister responsible for migration policy Bertel Haarder, EU Commissioner Antonio Vitorino and the British State Secretary for migration issues Angela Eagle, among others. The talks focused on the results that have been achieved so far in harmonising EU asylum and migration policies and on continued work in this area.

"Migration is an issue that transcends borders, which means that close cooperation between countries is essential. I regard the harmonisation of EU asylum and migration policies as a unique opportunity to build up a common policy in which human rights have pride of place. However, I can see that work on harmonisation is making slow progress. Some things have been done, but most of the work still remains to do. Consequently, in association with a number of other countries, I have begun to examine possible ways of speeding up the process", says Jan O. Karlsson.

Last autumn the EU Commission presented a proposal for legislation on the interpretation of the refugee concept, one of the implications of which is that women who are persecuted because of their sex and people who are persecuted for reason of their sexual orientation are to be eligible for refugee status.

"The proposal is good. But it will take far too long to carry it through at EU level. I therefore intend to get a head start and propose amendments to the Swedish Aliens Act so as to strengthen the legal position of women and homosexuals in the asylum process."

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Agreement with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

The Government decided today to conclude a cooperation agreement between Sweden and the UN refugee body, the UNHCR. Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Ruud Lubbers will sign the agreement on Monday 18 February in Geneva.

"To protect and assist the world's refugees it is vital that we give this strong support to the UNHCR", says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson.

Joint priorities in the UNHCR's important work for the world's refugees are described in the new agreement. The agreement also emphasises the flexibility involved in the Swedish contribution, which will be achieved by transferring the responsibility for distribution of Swedish funds to the UNHCR itself. The agreement covers humanitarian, development and migration issues and includes cooperation between the UNHCR and both the Swedish Government and Swedish agencies, such as Sida, the Swedish Migration Board and the Aliens Appeals Board.

Since 1999, Sweden has concluded annual agreements with the UNHCR on its support to and cooperation with the organisation. The new agreement will apply until further notice and has been drawn up on the basis of previous agreements. Sweden is the UNHCR's fourth largest donor. This year's contribution amounts to SEK 392 million.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-14

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministerial meeting on action plan to combat the smuggling of human beings

Unofficial translation

At an informal ministerial meeting in Santiago de Compostela today, the EU ministers responsible for migration discussed an action plan to combat the smuggling of human beings and illegal immigration. In his speech, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson emphasised that the fight against the smuggling of human beings must be characterised by a holistic approach which covers preventive measures as well as control measures. #The fight against the smuggling of human beings must begin early in the migration chain, with efforts to achieve peace, political stability, human rights and democracy. It must not become a one-sided concentration on control measures,# said Mr Karlsson, who also urged his colleagues to contribute more to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

#A strong UN High Commissioner for Refugees is the best guarantee for support and help to people in areas that have been hit by crisis.

#Women and children must be given priority when the EU implements its action plan to combat the smuggling of human beings and illegal immigration. The trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation continues to increase despite it having been designated a criminal offence and severe penalties imposed. Trafficking in children for the purpose of sexual exploitation is also extremely serious. It involves children from poor countries, it involves street children and those from children#s homes, children who are recruited into this trafficking that could almost be classified as slavery,# said Mr Karlsson.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-12

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Meeting of ministers responsible for migration policy in Spain on 13#15 February

Unofficial translation

Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O Karlsson will meet his European colleagues at a meeting of ministers responsible for justice and home affairs in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, on 13#15 February.

#The main topic for this meeting will be the fight against the smuggling of human beings and illegal immigration,# says Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O Karlsson.

Mr Karlsson will also hold separate meetings with the EU Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs Antonio Vitorino, and with the ministers responsible for home affairs and integration from Spain and Denmark, Mariano Rajoy and Bertel Haarder.

On 18#19 February Mr Karlsson will travel to Geneva where he will meet the representatives of a number of organisations, including the UN High Commissioner for Refugees UNHCR, the World Health Organisation WHO, the International Labour Organisation ILO and the World Trade Organisation WTO.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-11

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Inquiry into refusal-of-entry and return to a country other than the country of origin

The Government Offices have carried out a review in connection with information presented in the media about cases of refusal-of-entry to Sweden and the return of aliens to Ghana not having been dealt with correctly.

The Prosecutor, who has examined police actions in a number of cases of the return of aliens to Ghana, has discontinued preliminary inquiries. Neither has the Ministry for Foreign Affairs# preliminary review of the handling of the cases by the Swedish Migration Board and the consulate in Ghana given any cause for criticism.

At the same time, discussions surrounding the cases and the investigations have shown that there could be reason to review the Aliens Act in order to clarify situations in which a return of aliens to a country other than the country of origin may be possible.

#I will therefore be proposing that the Government appoints a commission to report on current

practice and to submit proposals to make the law clearer. A more detailed examination of existing routines will also be carried out,# says Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O Karlsson.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-08
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden opens embassy in the United Arab Emirates

On Saturday 9 February, Sweden is opening a new embassy in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates. The Ambassador will be Lars-Erik Grundell.

One of the principle tasks of the embassy will be to promote Swedish exports to the Gulf countries, where the Swedish business sector is well represented.

In 2000, Swedish exports to the United Arab Emirates were worth SEK 2.2 billion.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-07
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to give support to World Bank study

Unofficial translation

The Government decided today to allocate approximately SEK 1.8 million to the World Bank to carry out a global public opinion survey, the Global Public Opinion Poll. The study will be carried out in both developed and developing countries.

#The World Bank is an important actor in Sweden#s multilateral development work. It is important, therefore, to carry out a survey on how the Bank#s work around the world is perceived,# says Minister for Development Cooperation Jan O. Karlsson.

Some 400 interviews will be carried out with decision-makers and opinion-makers within central government administration, the media, non-governmental organisations, the business sector and universities. The results of the survey will be presented during 2002.

Switzerland will also donate a sum that corresponds to Sweden#s contribution. The remainder of the estimated costs for the study (approximately USD 260 000) will be paid by the World Bank. By making such a contribution, it will be possible for Sweden to influence how the study is carried out.

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Key word: 4884

PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Inquiry into EU enlargement and mobility in the labour market

Unofficial translation

The Government decided today to appoint a one-man committee on EU enlargement and mobility in the labour market.

How can employees from the new EU Member States have access to the Swedish labour market on the same terms as present EU citizens? How can employees from new Member States be encouraged to take up professions in Sweden where there is a shortage of manpower?

These are the most important issues facing the investigator. At the same time, the investigator is to submit proposals for measures to be taken should labour immigration from the new Member States entail a serious disruption of the Swedish labour market or major costs for the social protection systems.

The European Council decision in June on the free movement of manpower from the candidate countries upon entry into the Union is behind the initiative. The decision permits transition periods from two to seven years, but with the possibility of openness from the beginning. Sweden has chosen the latter.

#The future before us will demand greater openness and cross-border mobility. Demographic developments in Sweden, as in the rest of Europe, are characterised by reduced population growth and an ageing population. In the long term, therefore, we will need to open the door to labour immigration to Sweden,# says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O Karlsson.

#This will take place in an organised manner and without disruption to the Swedish labour market. The investigation will provide us with a solid foundation of material as to how we can make use of the asset of free movement in an enlarged EU. I also think it is important that third-country

nationals who are resident in an EU country should be included in this free movement. This is also part of the investigator's assignment," says Jan O Karlsson.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial Fund to receive SEK 5.4 million

Unofficial translation

The Government decided today to give SEK 5.4 million to the Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial Fund for 2002. Since the end of the 1980s, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has made contributions to the fund. The annual contribution previously came from Sida.

The Memorial Fund was established in 1962 and its aim is to organise and hold conferences and seminars on the social, cultural, economic and political problems experienced by developing countries.

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Key word: 4862

PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-05

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh to speak at disarmament conference in Geneva

Unofficial translation

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms Anna Lindh, will address the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva on Thursday 7 February. Ms Lindh will report on Sweden's current priority issues concerning disarmament and non-proliferation policies.

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) is at present made up of 66 member states and is the only multilateral negotiations forum for disarmament issues in the international community.

During her visit to Geneva Ms Lindh will also meet the UN High Commission for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, and the head of ILO, Juan Somavia.

Anna Lindh's speech will be available at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs website, address: www.ud.se

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-04

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh to participate in informal meeting of EU Ministers for Foreign Affairs in Spain

On Friday and Saturday, Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh will take part in the informal meeting of EU Ministers for Foreign Affairs in Cáceres, Spain. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs will discuss topics including EU enlargement, the position in the Middle East and the situation in the Western Balkans.

Cáceres is situated approximately 300 kilometres south-west of Madrid. The discussions will be held in #Complejo Cultural San Francisco#.

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An informal meeting of EU foreign ministers takes place during each EU presidency. These meetings are entitled #Gymnich# since the first informal meeting of foreign ministers took place at Gymnich Castle in Germany in 1974.

The idea behind the informal meetings is to provide an opportunity for the foreign ministers to engage in a freer and more forward-looking exchange of ideas on a number of current issues. No formal conclusions are adopted at these meetings.

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Key word: 4840

PRESS RELEASE

2002-02-01

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

China's Minister for Foreign Trade to visit Sweden

Unofficial translation

The Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation of the People's Republic of China will visit Sweden on 5-7 February at the invitation of the Minister for Trade, Leif Pagrotsky. During his visit, Shi Guangsheng will have talks with Leif Pagrotsky on bilateral trade relations and investment opportunities, cooperation within the framework of China's recently assumed membership of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the upcoming multilateral trade negotiations within WTO and economic cooperation between the EU and China.

The Foreign Trade Minister will also have talks with the Deputy Prime Minister, Lena Hjelm-Wallén, and meet the Minister for Industry, Employment and Communications, Björn Rosengren. Mr Shi, who will be accompanied by a sizeable delegation from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Trade, will also meet representatives of the Swedish business sector and cultural life.

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Key word: 4827

PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Continued Swedish support for the Palestinians

Unofficial translation

The Government decided today to authorise Sida to enter into a new cooperation agreement with the PLO for the Palestinian Authority for 2002. Similar agreements have been made since 1995.

There are special agreements for individual projects within the framework of the cooperation agreement. The total amount of development assistance is expected to rise this year to approximately SEK 165 million. Last year, it amounted to some SEK 140 million.

The purpose of this development assistance is to promote peaceful development, support the growth of an independent and democratic Palestinian state and to alleviate the effects of the current crisis on its population.

At the same time, at the request of the parties, the Government decided to prolong by a further three months Swedish participation in the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH), an international civilian observer group. The TIPH includes 91 persons, of whom ten are Swedish.

The meeting of EU foreign ministers in Brussels on 28 January emphasised the importance of supporting the Palestinian Authority as Israel's negotiating partner, both as regards efforts to prevent terrorism and to promote the peace process.

"The Government decision should be seen as one of many expressions of Swedish support for a continued peace process", says Minister for Development Cooperation Jan O Karlsson.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-31

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish support to defence cooperation with the Baltic countries

Unofficial translation

The Government decided today to allocate SEK 11.5 million to defence cooperation with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania for 2002.

The support will primarily be given in the form of training and advice for the armed forces of the Baltic countries. Baltic officers will undergo training at Swedish military colleges and instructors will be trained in their home countries. Total defence advice, the establishment of health and medical care divisions and medical training will also be offered.

"This Swedish support will play an important part in building up a democratic total defence system in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania", says State Secretary Sven-Eric Söder.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-30
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson on the winner of this year's Olof Palme Prize: #Fazle Hasan Abed has demonstrated that the impossible is

Unofficial translation

Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson is hosting a lunch today for the recipient of this year's Olof Palme Prize, Fazle Hasan Abed, founder of one of the world's biggest non-governmental organisations BRAC # the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee.

#Fazle Hasan Abed has demonstrated that the impossible is possible. The efforts he has made to strengthen the poor in Bangladesh have been groundbreaking,# says Jan O. Karlsson.

#By establishing small schools in more than 60 000 villages, he has dispelled the myth that the poor cannot afford to send their children to school. This has given 1.2 million children the opportunity to go to school,# says Mr Karlsson.

#BRAC and Fazle Hasan Abed have demonstrated what concrete progress can be made when people are given the chance to influence their own development. I cannot imagine a more worthy winner of the Olof Palme Prize,# says Mr Karlsson.

The Olof Palme Prize will be presented at the Stockholm Concert Hall at 16.00.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-29

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O. Karlsson's meetings in the United Kingdom

Unofficial translation

During his visit to the United Kingdom on Thursday and Friday, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson will meet Secretary of State for International Development Clare Short, Home Secretary David Blunkett and Nobel Laureates in Economics Amartya Sen and Joseph Stiglitz.

Topics for discussion with Clare Short will include donor countries' contributions to the #Financing for Development# conference in Mexico in March, the role of development cooperation in EU foreign policy and support to security and reconstruction in Afghanistan.

Jan O. Karlsson's discussions with Home Secretary David Blunkett will cover work in the EU and cooperation with the United Kingdom on a common asylum and migration policy, labour immigration and the UNHCR and global migration issues.

In individual meetings with Amartya Sen and Joseph Stiglitz, Jan O. Karlsson will discuss issues concerning the economic aspects of development.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-25

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Statement by Anna Lindh in connection with India's missile test

Unofficial translation

#I deeply regret that the Indian authorities have carried out a new missile test today. It could lead to further rearmament in the area, with subsequent negative consequences for security,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

#Once again, I urge India and Pakistan to implement all steps in the UN Security Council Resolution 1172/98 on nuclear disarmament. The resolution urges India and Pakistan, for example, to cease the development of weapon carriers for nuclear weapons.

#On account of the tense situation in the region, I also urge India and Pakistan to do everything in their power to solve the current crisis by diplomatic means and to resume the political dialogue as soon as possible. I hope that the measures initiated by Pakistan against terrorist groups operating in, and from, Pakistan territory will create the preconditions for such a dialogue.#

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Key word: 4764

PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New strategy for development cooperation with Afghanistan

Today the Government has decided on a new country strategy for development cooperation with Afghanistan over the period 2002-2004.

The situation in Afghanistan is critical. Twenty-three years of conflicts and recurring natural disasters have devastated the economy and social institutions. Considerable humanitarian assistance will be needed.

The aim of Swedish development cooperation with Afghanistan is to fight poverty in the country. The country strategy defines the objectives and guiding principles for all development assistance programmes in the country, the areas in which they will be implemented and channels to be used. The financial framework of total support will be SEK 750-1 000 million over the three-year period. Swedish development assistance will focus on education, health, mine clearance, food safety and the return of refugees. It will be primarily channelled through the UN, the Red Cross movement and Swedish NGOs, including the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan. Particularly vulnerable target groups such as women, children, persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities should be given special priority.

Sweden has for many years been one of the largest donors of development assistance to Afghanistan and through its Swedish and international cooperation partners, Sida has gained long and extensive experience of assistance to the country.

Minister for Development Cooperation Jan O Karlsson is to inform the Riksdag of his visit to Afghanistan and of the guidelines in the country strategy on Thursday 24 January at 15.00.

See also www.ud.se

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Ambassadors

The following four Ambassadors will present their letters of credence to HM The King on Thursday 24 January:

BANGLADESH's newly appointed Ambassador Mohammad-al-Haroon was born in 1947. He has a Master's Degree in history from Dhaka University. Ambassador Mohammad-al-Haroon entered his country's foreign service in 1974. Among other positions, he served as First Secretary at the Embassy of Bangladesh in Stockholm in 1985-1988.

In recent years Ambassador al-Haroon has held the following posts:

1996 - 1998 Consul-General in Los Angeles

1998 - 2001 Director-General at the Multilateral Economics Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dhaka

2001 - Director-General at the South and South-East Asia Department

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA's newly appointed Ambassador Mediha Filipoviæ was born in 1944. She has a doctorate in medicine from Sarajevo University, where she is a Professor at the Institute of Stomatology. She has taught in Croatia, Slovenia and the United States and has a number of scientific publications to her name.

As a politician in recent years she has held the following posts:

1996 - Deputy Party Chairman of SBiH (Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina)

1996 - 2001 Deputy Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs

CYPRUS's newly appointed Ambassador Costas A. Papademas was born in 1956. He is a lawyer with degrees from the Universities of Strasbourg and Athens and pursued a legal career before entering his country's foreign service in 1984.

In recent years Ambassador Papademas has held the following posts:

1996 - 1997 Counsellor in Rome

1997 - 2000 Ambassador in Kenya with concurrent accreditation in Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and the Seychelles; Permanent Representative to UNEP and UNCHS

2000 - Head of the Protocol Department and the Consular Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

ITALY's newly appointed Ambassador Giulio Cesare Vinci Gigliucci was born in 1938. He has a degree in economics and business from the University of Rome and entered his country's foreign service in 1965.

In recent years Ambassador Vinci Gigliucci has held the following posts:

1994 - 1998 Ambassador in Lima

1998 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome, Directorate-General of the Political Department

1999 - Deputy Chairman of the Interministerial Human Rights Committee

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Key word: 4741

PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-24

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to give economic assistance to countries that have recently emerged from armed conflict

Unofficial translation

The Government decided today to make a grant of just over SEK 10 million to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to subsidise the lending rate payable by poor countries that have recently emerged from conflict (Post-Conflict Emergency Assistance). The subsidy will be provided through a special account that will be administered by the IMF.

"The purpose of this support is to make it easier for poor countries to normalise their financial relations with the rest of the world so as to enable a more rapid resumption of efforts on their part to improve living conditions in the country. Sweden has earlier expressed its approval of this idea, most recently during the conference on the least developed countries that was held in Brussels in the summer of 2001.

"Now we're putting our words into action", says Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O. Karlsson in a comment on the Government decision.

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Key word: 4740

PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-22

Government requests revision of FN sanctions list

This Tuesday, the Government will request the Sanctions Committee of the UN Security Council to revise the list of people and organisations whose assets will be frozen. The request follows a recent Security Council decision on a new resolution calling for clear criteria on sanctions. The Sanctions Committee's first meeting for the purpose of drawing up new sanctions procedures will take place on Wednesday.

The Swedish Government welcomes the Security Council's decision, said the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh. It is our understanding that the list will only include people who fulfil criteria corresponding to those set out by the EU.

Last autumn's decision by Sanctions Committee for Afghanistan to the effect that all UN member countries should freeze the assets of certain people and organisations was taken at very short notice. One member country, the USA, presented the committee with a list which was then distributed to the other 14 committee members. No objections were raised and the list was adopted within 48 hours. Three of the people on it are Swedish citizens. No detailed information was given as to why these particular people had been placed on the list. Nor was the subject discussed by the committee either before or after the decision was taken. Regardless of what one thinks of this procedure, Sweden and all other member countries are duty-bound under international law to comply with the decisions of the Security Council and the Sanctions Committee.

In December, the Swedish UN delegation forwarded a letter from the three Swedish nationals to the Chair of the Sanctions Committee (Colombia) requesting that their names be struck from the list. Although the Chair asked the petitioners to produce additional background information, no such data has been forthcoming.

The Swedish Government has also undertaken to forward a request that an exemption be made in respect of such assets as were necessary for the Swedes' daily support. However, their legal representative has declined to forward such a request.

Last week (16 January) the Security Council adopted a new resolution (1390) on sanctions directed at Osama bin Laden, Al-Qaida and the Taliban, and any organisations or individuals who have or have had dealings with them. The resolution directed the Sanctions Committee to regularly update the list on the basis of relevant information from UN member states and other sources. The committee was also instructed to draw up without delay such guidelines and criteria as might be necessary to facilitate implementation of the resolution.

The Swedish Government welcomes the Security Council's decision, said the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh. If the sanctions are adopted with appropriate concern for the rule of law, this can only strengthen confidence in the UN system.

Now that the new resolution has been adopted, the Swedish Government will today request in its own name a review of the names on the sanctions list, including those of the three Swedes. In the Government's view only the names of people who fulfil the criteria previously adopted by the EU should appear on the list.

Following up on the Security Council's earlier resolution (1373), the EU decided in December to draw up its own list of people and organisations whose assets were to be frozen in EU countries. The EU system incorporates a number of fixed criteria which must be met before a person or organisation can be placed on a blocked accounts list.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-21

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Macedonia's Minister for Foreign Affairs to visit Sweden

Unofficial translation

Macedonia's new foreign minister, Slobodan Casule, will visit Stockholm on Tuesday 22 January as part of his tour of European capitals.

During his visit Mr Casule will meet the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, the Minister for Defence, Björn von Sydow and the third Deputy Speaker of the Riksdag, Rose-Marie Frebran.

Sweden has played an active role in building peace in Macedonia, not least during the Swedish EU presidency last spring when Macedonia was on the verge of civil war.

The discussions with Anna Lindh will therefore mainly focus on the peace agreement concluded on 13 January 2001 and its observance.

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Key word: 4716

PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-20

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish citizen among the prisoners at the Guantanamo base

Unofficial translation

A Swedish citizen was apprehended by the American authorities in Afghanistan suspected of being

a member of al-Qaida. He was taken from there to the American naval base Guantanamo Bay, Camp X-Ray, on Cuba. The Swede is one of a larger group of prisoners who according to the United States all constitute a continued threat to the United States and international peace and security.

In the US view, the people taken prisoner are not #legal combatants# and may therefore not be considered prisoners of war. However, the International Committee of the Red Cross considers they should be regarded as prisoners of war. It is the task of the ICRC to supervise that states apply the Geneva Conventions.

In view of the apprehension and transfer of the Swede to the American naval base, the Swedish Embassy in Washington has requested permission to visit him as soon as possible. An embassy official is prepared to travel to Cuba as soon as permission is granted. Contact has been made with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) which is already present in Guantanamo. Furthermore, the Swedish Embassy in Washington has been instructed to convey to the American authorities that the Swedish Government expects that all the requirements of the applicable statutory rights are being met.

Commenting on the matter, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mrs Anna Lindh, said that she presupposes the Swede will be treated humanely and in accordance with international treaties. Sweden must be kept continually informed of any prosecution against him and given an opportunity to give the Swede assistance. In the event of prosecution, all statutory rights under the third Geneva Convention and the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights must be fully upheld. #It goes without saying that terrorism calls for extraordinary measures. However, humanitarian law and human rights have been written for application in extraordinary circumstances also. It is absolutely necessary that the fight against terrorism is carried on with full respect for international law and human rights,# Mrs Lindh says.

The Swedish citizen should now be regarded as a consular assistance matter and his identity is thereby protected under the Secrecy Act. Nor do the American authorities intend to publish his identity

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-18
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Request for extradition of Alfredo Astiz delivered in Buenos Aires

Navy officer Alfredo Astiz has been apprehended and placed under arrest (on 28 December 2001) in Argentina, on the basis of the international warrant issued in connection with the detention order

against Astiz pronounced by Stockholm City Court. The charge is kidnapping.

The request for Astiz's extradition to Sweden comes from Chief District Prosecutor Tomas Lindstrand at the International Public Prosecution Office in Stockholm.

The Swedish Ambassador to Argentina, Madeleine Ströje-Wilkens, acting on behalf of the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, today, 18 January 2002, delivered the request for Astiz's extradition to Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Jorge Faurie and State Secretary Rogelio Pfirter.

The case will now be processed by the Argentine authorities.

Delivering the request, Ambassador Ströje-Wilkens emphasised the importance of clarifying the fate of Dagmar Hagelin. The Swedish Government has put this point to Argentine governments repeatedly over the years, ever since Dagmar Hagelin's disappearance in January 1977. In recent years the Prime Minister, Göran Persson, has personally taken up the case with both President Menem and President de la Rúa.

"The Ambassador also expressed Sweden's solidarity with the Argentine people and the hope that Argentina will be able to solve the serious crisis in which the country now finds itself # in political, economic, social and legal terms", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh in a comment.

"The Ambassador emphasised the hope of the Swedish Government that justice will be done and that the new Argentine Government under President Duhalde will take measures to strengthen the legal system and clear up outstanding human rights cases", adds Anna Lindh.

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Key word: 4704

PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-17

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New Director-General for Legal Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government decided today to appoint the Chairman of the Aliens Appeals Board, Judge of Appeal Carl-Henrik Ehrenkrona, to the position of Director-General for Legal Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Ehrenkrona was appointed as a Judge of Appeal and Deputy President of the Svea Court of Appeal in 1998 and became Chairman of the Aliens Appeals Board in 2000. He has previously served as Director at the Legal Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and as the Swedish

Government's legal representative in cases coming before the European Commission and the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

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Key word: 4691

PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-15
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Anna Lindh cautiously optimistic about developments in Colombia

Sweden welcomes the news that the peace process in Colombia between the Colombian government and the FARC guerrilla movement was saved from total breakdown at the final moment last night by active international participation. The UN Special Adviser on Colombia, James Lemoyne, and the so-called Facilitator Group succeeded in persuading the parties in the conflict to resume the peace dialogue that had been broken off.

The Facilitator Group comprises ten countries, including Sweden, with Ambassadors Michael Frühling and Olof Skoog. Within the next few days, the parties will now try to reach agreement on issues concerning a cease-fire and how the civilian population is to be saved in the armed conflict. #It is my hope that concrete results will be achieved in these negotiations,# says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

#The developments of the past twenty-four hours do not mean that the armed conflict in Colombia is over but they do give cause for cautious optimism,# states the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

#We support the international community's peace efforts actively and wholeheartedly,# says Ms Lindh.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Country strategy for development cooperation with Cambodia

Unofficial translation

The Government decided today on a new country strategy for development cooperation with Cambodia for the period 2002-2004.

The primary aim for Swedish development cooperation with Cambodia is to contribute to Cambodia's own efforts to fight poverty. This will be achieved by continuing focus on support to poverty-directed rural development, education and democracy and human rights. Gender equality issues, the environment and HIV/Aids will continue to be integrated into development assistance programmes. The greater part of this Swedish development assistance will be channelled via various UN bodies, other multilateral organisations and NGOs. Development assistance will amount to approximately SEK 330 million over the period 2002-2004.

After three decades of civil war and violence, the situation in Cambodia is now characterised by relative stability. However, the country is still at a level of development that is far below that of the majority of countries in South-East Asia, and is one of the world's poorest nations.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Swedish election observers to Cambodia

Unofficial translation

The Government decided today to commission the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to recruit a maximum of twelve election observers for the task of monitoring the local government election in Cambodia. The election is to take place on 3 February and it is the country's first free local government election. It is of major importance for Cambodia's democratic development. The election campaign which began recently has been characterised by violence. Election observation will take place under the auspices of the European Commission and will involve about 90 election observers.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-10

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Appeal to the parties in the Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo

At an informal meeting in Stockholm on 10 January, African and Nordic Foreign Ministers have discussed the link between security and poverty reduction in the context of the important initiative known as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). On that occasion, the participants agreed to launch a strong appeal to all sides in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo:

On the eve of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, due to be launched in South Africa next month, we call on all parties to show real statesmanship.

The conflict has gone on for far too long, with unspoken human suffering in its wake. We therefore welcome the efforts made to fully implement the Lusaka Agreement and we reaffirm our support for the process.

Peace is at last within reach, provided that all Congolese parties, as well as the countries exerting influence on them, are ready to strike the necessary compromises.

We also urge the international community, including the United Nations, to provide substantial support to peace building in the Great Lakes region, so that the peace process becomes irreversible and all parties feel encouraged to remain engaged.

Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Benin, Botswana, Denmark, Finland, Ghana, Iceland, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Norway, Senegal, South Africa, Sweden and the United Republic of Tanzania.

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Key word: 4646

PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Jan O Karlsson to visit Afghanistan

Unofficial translation

Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy Jan O Karlsson is due to travel to Afghanistan on Thursday afternoon.

" I want as quickly as possible to get a personal impression of the country's situation and development assistance operations in order to see how reconstruction in Afghanistan is to be effected," says Jan O Karlsson.

In Kabul he will meet representatives of the Afghanistan Government and UN and international development assistance organisations, including the Swedish Afghanistan Committee and Save the Children.

Sweden is one of the largest assistance donors to Afghanistan. Sweden contributed SEK 250 million in 2001. This support has been primarily used for health efforts, education, mine clearance, food supplies and support to refugees. Swedish development assistance has been distributed via the UN system, Swedish NGOs (mainly the Swedish Afghanistan Committee) and the International Red Cross movement.

Sida has presented a proposal for a country strategy for development assistance to Afghanistan over the next three years. The proposal entails a Swedish development assistance contribution of up to SEK 1 billion until the end of 2004. The Government is expected to make a decision on this strategy within the next few weeks.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-09

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Nine African foreign ministers to meet Nordic colleagues in Stockholm

Together with her Nordic colleagues, Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh has invited the ministers for foreign affairs of nine African states to an informal meeting in Stockholm on 10-11 January.

The ministers, who also met in Stockholm about a year ago, will continue their discussions on peace, security and conflict prevention in Africa. In addition, they will discuss the New Partnership

for Africa's Development (NEPAD). This programme, which has been developed by African leaders, aims to eliminate poverty in Africa and set the continent on a path of sustainable growth and development.

The NEPAD programme stresses the importance of democracy, human rights and good governance. It calls for a new partnership between Africa and the international community, aimed at ending the marginalisation of the African continent.

The ministers will participate in a public debate on NEPAD to be held at the Riksdag on Friday 11 January, which has been arranged by the Nordic Africa Institute and the Swedish Federation of Young Scientist Clubs. On Friday morning some of the ministers will also visit St. Botvid's Upper Secondary School in Botkyrka.

The African ministers represent democratic states with which the Nordic countries are engaged in ongoing cooperation projects. The following ministers will participate:

Erkki Tuomioja (Finland), Halldór Ásgrímsson (Iceland), Jan Petersen (Norway), Kolawolé A. Idji (Benin), Mompoti S. Meraphe (Botswana), Hackman Owusu-Agyemang (Ghana), Modibo Sidibé (Mali), Leonardo Santos Simão (Mozambique), Alhaji Sule Lamido (Nigeria), Nkosazana C. Dlamini Zuma (South Africa), and Cheikh Tidiane Gadio (Senegal). Tanzania will be represented by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Abdulkader Shareef and Denmark by Director-General Carsten Staur.

To the editorial desk: Press, radio and television representatives are welcome to follow the programme of the African ministers on Friday 11 January. The visit to St. Botvid's Upper Secondary school in Botkyrka will take place between 9.00 and 10.30. A discussion between the ministers and representatives of non-profit organisations will take place at the Riksdag (Upper House) between 11.00 and 12.45. There will also be an opportunity to interview the visiting ministers between 12.45 and 13.15 at the Riksdag (Committee Room of the Committee on Housing). Please e-mail notification of your intention to attend the different sessions of the programme to:

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-09
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden welcomes the Polisario's decision to release Moroccan prisoners

In the beginning of January, the Polisario (the West Saharan liberation movement) decided to free 115 Moroccan prisoners of war. The conflict on the West Sahara has now been under way for 26 years, with enormous human suffering as a result. There are over 150 000 West Saharan refugees in Algeria, living in great hardship. The Polisario is holding some 1 400 Moroccan prisoners of war in

Algeria, and West Saharans have "disappeared" in Morocco.

" I welcome the Polisario's decision to release 115 Moroccan prisoners of war. This is an important step that should lead to the release of the rest of the prisoners as well. The release of prisoners of war is an important humanitarian and confidence-building measure that will improve the climate and conditions for discussions that the UN is holding with the parties to this conflict. I appeal to the parties to continue to take measures to resolve the remaining humanitarian issues in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1359(2001) and humanitarian law", comments Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

It has not yet been possible to implement the UN peace plan and the referendum on the future status of West Sahara planned by the UN. The parties have not been able to agree on who should be entitled to vote in this election. Political talks are being held via UN envoy James Baker between the Polisario and Morocco.

"The Swedish Government supports the UN's efforts to reach a rapid and permanent solution to the conflict in West Sahara. The guiding principles for the Swedish Government are international law and people's rights to self-determination. The Swedish Government is working to achieve a solution to the humanitarian problems", continues Anna Lindh.

Sweden is one of the largest donors to West Saharan refugees. In addition to grants given via the EU and other international organisations, Sweden has given SEK 103 million in development assistance to West Saharan refugees since 1989.

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PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Foreign Minister of Spain to meet Anna Lindh

Unofficial translation

The Spanish Foreign Minister, Josep Piqué, will visit Sweden on 9 January for a meeting with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh. Spain took over the presidency of the EU Council of Ministers at the turn of the year and this visit is part of the tour of Member States which the incumbent presidency's foreign minister usually undertakes early in the term of presidency. The purpose of the visit of the Spanish Foreign Minister to Stockholm is to present the presidency programme and discuss current foreign policy issues. The Spanish presidency programme # #More

Europe# has six main priorities 1) the fight against terrorism, 2) the introduction of the euro, 3) the Lisbon process (#A prosperous dynamic Europe in the service of its citizens#), 4) enlargement, 5) external relations (#More Europe in the world#) and 6) the discussion on the future of Europe. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anna Lindh, wishes to raise the matter of the legal rights of individuals in the context of UN application of sanctions.

Message to the editorial desk: After the meeting between the foreign ministers a short doorstep press conference will be held at the entrance to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Assembly at the entrance on Wednesday 9 January at 15.45. Journalists and photographers should notify their intention to attend by e-mail to:

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Key word: 4624

PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-08

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden applies to join Open Skies

Sweden and Finland have applied to join the treaty on observation flights # the Open Skies Treaty # that entered into effect on 1 January 2002.

"We welcome the entry into force of the treaty. It brings a further strengthening of the pan-European, treaty-based security order that Sweden has sought to promote", says Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh.

"The increased transparency and predictability that this treaty brings in the military sphere makes it an important instrument for building confidence and security", comments Minister for Defence Björn von Sydow.

The treaty is legally binding and entails that states parties permit one another to conduct short-notice observation flights over all portions of their territories. Since 1999 Sweden has conducted several observation flights in the spirit of the treaty.

Twenty-seven countries have acceded to the treaty, which was signed in Helsinki in 1992. At that time participation was limited to members of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. It is now being opened up to all countries that are members of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Swedish accession requires the approval of the Riksdag, which is expected to discuss the issue during the spring. Sweden's application must also be accepted by all other participating countries before accession can take place. Sweden will be admitted to treaty participation in the autumn at the earliest.

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Key word: 4623

PRESS RELEASE

2002-01-07

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

To the editorial office: Jan O Karlsson takes over as Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy

Unofficial translation

Jan O Karlsson today takes office as Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy. Members of his political staff who also take up their duties today include:

- Gun-Britt Andersson, State Secretary for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy
Telephone: 08-405 10 00
 - Helena Gustavsson, Press Secretary. Telephone: 08-405 55 50, mobile 0708-13 56 82 (this week however: 0708-96 06 54)
 - Lisa Pelling, Political Adviser. Telephone: 08-405 56 87, mobile 0708-67 39 96
 - Barbro Holmberg, Political Adviser on migration and asylum policy issues. Telephone: 08-405 56 49, mobile 0708-26 94 85.
 - Lott Jansson, Political Adviser on development cooperation issues. Telephone: 08-405 31 77, mobile 0708-60 84 84
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Key word: 4615