



*(Unofficial translation)*

**Statement of Government Policy in the Parliamentary Debate on  
Foreign Affairs, Wednesday 13 February 2002**

Madam Speaker,

The world is richer than ever. Increased trade, new technology and scientific advances generate growth and new prosperity. At the same time, more than a billion people live in extreme poverty. Half of them are children.

The world holds more democracies than ever. At the same time, many people feel that political power has shifted to the global plane and become more difficult to influence.

The world is devoting greater attention to human rights than ever before. At the same time, all over the world people are oppressed for their political or religious affiliation, their sex or their ethnic origin.

Every day abuse and injustices occur. But, at the same time, globalisation makes such events visible and improves our chances of preventing and counteracting them. If we are to achieve results, international cooperation in all political areas is needed.

We want to help make the world a better place. Our demands for human rights, democracy and economic justice are based on the equal worth of all people.

*A more equitable world needs a strong UN*

The United Nations is the most important global actor for justice. The Nobel Peace Prize is testimony to the world organisation's credibility and growing strength.

The UN millennium development goals establish that poverty shall be halved by 2015.

This will require more development cooperation, fairer trade and reforms.

It will require increased resources. The UN, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and world business leaders will therefore meet in Monterrey in March to initiate new cooperation.

It will require stopping HIV/AIDS which continues to eliminate entire communities. The UN has a central role here, *inter alia* through UNAIDS where Sweden is a member of the board.

It will require a sustainable development through social, political, economic and ecological progress. World leaders will therefore meet in Johannesburg in September to jointly tackle the issues of the future.

And it will require an intensified dialogue between North and South. The Government has invited the political parties represented in the Riksdag and other actors concerned to contribute to this work. In March the parliamentary committee, Globkom, will present proposals for an overall Swedish policy for global development.

Sweden also acts through the European Union which is a powerful force in the work for global justice. The Union provides more than half of the world's development assistance, and the Government is now pressing for all member states to draw up timetables for achieving the UN goal of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for development cooperation.

Sweden is already one of the countries that invests most in development cooperation and assistance continues to grow towards the one per cent goal. Between 2000 and 2004 the volume will increase by 50 per cent, from SEK 14 to SEK 21 billion.

*A more equitable world is based on democracy and human rights*

The promotion of democracy and human rights is of central importance to Sweden and the EU. It is a matter of defending the equal worth of all people.

In an age of globalised economy, information and mobility, this task is more important than ever. Today's borderless market must be matched by values transcending borders, based on democracy and human rights.

Practically all countries support these values – on paper. But in practice we see how human dignity is violated and democracy set aside. In a number of countries half the population, the women, have no chance to make their voices heard.

This year Sweden will be a member of the UN Commission on Human Rights and we will have greater opportunities to work for democracy and freedom of religion and opinion. We will also defend the rights of

women, children and disabled people and combat the death penalty, torture, trafficking in human beings and racism.

Children are most vulnerable. The rights of the child are therefore a central aspect of the Government's work. We are making efforts to eradicate the abominable custom of female genital mutilation. Sweden proactively supports the UN children's summit in May, where the Government will give particular attention to children who live in war zones, displaced children, children afflicted by HIV/AIDS or exposed to sexual or other exploitation. We have successfully pressed for a ban on the coercive recruitment and hiring of children under 18 and their participation in armed conflicts. The Government will also submit a written communication to the Riksdag on ways of ensuring that the rights of the child are mainstreamed into development assistance.

Sweden is taking an active part in the fight against trafficking in human beings. The world's governments must work together to put a stop to this serious violation of people's dignity and rights. The Government will draw up a strategy for contributing to the struggle through our development assistance.

We want to improve protection for people in conflicts. This requires strong interaction between international humanitarian law, human rights and international refugee law. It also requires close cooperation between the humanitarian agencies.

The Government has taken the initiative for a total ban on the death penalty within the framework of the Council of Europe. We hope a decision will be taken this spring. An increasing number of countries are choosing to abolish the death penalty but, unfortunately, several states continue to apply this inhuman punishment. These include China, Saudi Arabia, the USA, Iran and Iraq. This is unacceptable. Capital punishment violates the right to life and has no place in a modern legal system.

Sweden will now further reinforce its efforts on behalf of human rights. The Government has adopted a national action plan and this spring the Government Offices are launching a website where we will present national and international information, and provide a forum for a debate on human rights.

*A fairer world is based on more open world trade*

World trade needs new, fair rules. Otherwise the strong will benefit at the expense of the weak. The EU has therefore decided to grant the world's 49 poorest countries exemption from customs duty on all goods except arms. We welcome the fact that the new WTO round will closely address the needs of developing countries in accordance with the agenda agreed on by all WTO states in the autumn. The developing countries are particularly dependent on a breakthrough in the agricultural and food sectors where their exports are restricted by high tariffs. The EU must contribute by reforming its agricultural policy.

The new WTO round benefits not only developing countries but also the EU internal market, the Baltic Sea region and Sweden. Freer trade flows, more investment, increased export opportunities and cheaper imports mean enhanced growth and higher employment rates here at home. The WTO round also increases our opportunities to manage globalisation, thanks to the fact that for the first time environmental issues will be included in trade negotiations.

The World Trade Organisation is growing fast. China's membership is particularly important and will hopefully contribute to increased openness in that country. The Government is making efforts to help enable Russia to become a member as soon as possible.

The business sector has an important role in efforts to achieve fair and sustainable development. The Government has therefore invited Swedish enterprises to take part in cooperation relating to the business community's social and ecological responsibilities. In this way we want to involve companies in a partnership for human rights and a sound environment.

*A more equitable world requires a stronger international legal order*

The appalling acts of terrorism on 11 September made it clear just how vulnerable the open society is and revealed the threats to which we are all exposed. It goes without saying that Sweden and the EU must take an active and vigorous part in the fight against international terrorism. This joint campaign demonstrates the power of coordinated action, but also shows up the shortcomings of our previous efforts.

The need to take swift action must not entail any infringement of individual legal rights. Sanctions against individuals must be based on hard evidence and must be open to review. Sweden has successfully pushed for increased guarantees for individual legal rights in connection with the implementation of sanctions by the EU and is now working for similar changes in the UN sanctions system. The Government has also taken the initiative for an international review of sanctions instruments aimed at generating proposals for ways of implementing and monitoring sanctions and ensuring that they respect legal rights.

Sweden welcomes the establishment of the International Criminal Court later this year. This will give us a permanent court that is able to break new ground in dealing with war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity.

The Government supports the UN courts for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia and hopes that the court in Sierra Leone can be established soon.

The fact that more countries are tackling their own past is a positive development. War crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity must be punished. This is essential to protect the rule of law, prevent new misdeeds and smooth the way for reconciliation.

*A more equitable world will be brought closer by a larger EU*

This year the European Union will take a historic step when enlargement negotiations with most of the candidate countries reach their conclusion. What enlargement is ultimately about is consolidating the foundation for peace and democracy, prosperity and free movement in Europe. At the same time, we must be on our watch against the xenophobic forces that are asserting themselves and that desire to shut Europe off from the rest of the world. The EU must stand for openness and solidarity. To this end we are striving for harmonisation of migration policies on the basis of the right of asylum and humanitarian principles.

Enlargement remains Sweden's foremost priority in our work in the EU. We support the efforts of the candidate countries to adapt to EU requirements and count on being able to welcome the first new members in 2004. This is one concrete result of Sweden's presidency and the summit meeting in Göteborg.

The European Union is in the process of transformation. In the space of a few years, the number of members will virtually double and the internal market will gain more than 100 million people. The euro is another major change. The Swedish people will take a position on monetary union in a referendum.

Enlargement increases the need for debate on the future development of the EU. We need to agree on what we want the Union to do and find ways of enabling the EU to function smoothly even with 25-30 members. Discussions will start with a "Convention", but must subsequently become much broader. The Government has appointed a parliamentary committee to stimulate debate in Sweden.

Sweden continues to build on the good cooperation with the candidate countries that we developed during our presidency. We have many common interests on which we can suitably act together in a larger Union.

Nordic cooperation continues to develop and has now been revitalised by the participation of the Baltic countries. The Nordic countries are also intensifying their cooperation in EU contexts.

We must also seek closer contacts with the EU's new neighbours. We have begun a new cooperation programme with central and eastern Europe and want to deepen the dialogue between the EU and Russia. One important factor here is to improve Russia's prospects of economic integration and trade by promoting harmonisation and reducing trade barriers. At the same time we must make demands. Russia must protect free public debate and respect human rights and humanitarian law – including in Chechnya.

As part of our cooperation with Russia, Sweden is establishing a consulate-general later this year in Kaliningrad, which is a region of great importance for the entire vicinity. Another vital region is north-western Russia, where we will help to improve nuclear safety as soon as the necessary agreement has been signed.

*Solidarity and cooperation foster security, for states and individuals*

Sweden considers it particularly important to enhance security and cooperation in our vicinity. We take an active part in Barents and Baltic Sea Cooperation, contribute to the EU's Northern Dimension and accord priority to integration between Nordic and Baltic countries, with strong commitment to the Öresund region. We support the aspiration of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to realise their security policy objectives and become members of the EU and NATO. We continue to promote the security of the Baltic Sea countries, in a broad sense of the term. Security-enhancing cooperation is a corner-stone of Sweden's Baltic Sea policy.

Along with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe, the EU and NATO constitute the foundations of Europe's security architecture. The United States' commitment to Europe will also remain a crucial factor.

The aims of Sweden's security policy are to preserve our country's peace and independence, contribute to stability and security in our vicinity and strengthen international peace and security.

Sweden pursues a policy of non-participation in military alliances. This security policy, making it possible for our country to remain neutral in the event of conflicts in our vicinity, has served us well.

Looking to the future, it is more apparent than ever that security is more than the absence of military conflict. Threats to peace and our security can best be averted by acting concertedly and in cooperation with other countries. The primary expression of this conviction at global level is our support for the United Nations. As a member of the European Union, we are part of a community based on solidarity, whose primary purpose is to prevent war on the European continent.

An adequate defence capability is a central component of Swedish security policy. Sweden is making active efforts to promote disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

When we held the EU presidency, the Government sought to promote increased coordination between the EU and the UN in conflict prevention and crisis management, and in tackling regional crises. The Union has great potential to contribute, not least in the area of prevention, where the EU can put its breadth to good use. Sweden will maintain its commitment to the work of conflict prevention. In the summer we will host an EU conference aimed at enhancing cooperation between the EU, the UN and other European actors in the field of conflict prevention.

The EU is now ready to undertake a certain amount of crisis management. This provides the Union with one more instrument for promoting peace and security. According to plan, in the course of the next year the EU will be able to make up to 60 000 military personnel and 5 000 police officers available for international missions. At the same time we are building up our capacity to provide crisis-hit countries with aid in the areas of civil administration, justice and rescue services.

The enhanced capacity of the EU increases the expectations of the international community that we will help prevent and solve conflicts. We have a political responsibility to try to meet these expectations. The EU should put its resources at the disposal of the UN. Among other things, the Union should be able to send troops to a trouble spot within 30 days and bridge the gap until a regular UN force is able to arrive. This would correspond to the rapid deployment capacity that Kofi Annan has called for.

*Global threats must be met by global solutions*

Our goal is a world without weapons of mass destruction. The agreements against biological weapons, chemical weapons and nuclear proliferation must be made stronger, compliance must be guaranteed and universal accession must be encouraged.

The nuclear weapon states have pledged to scrap their arsenals. A 13-step action plan for nuclear disarmament has been adopted. Now it must be implemented. This is one of the objectives Sweden will strive for this spring when we lead the UN negotiations on strengthening the treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Government also intends to draw on the support of the New Agenda Coalition to urge on this process.

Nuclear disarmament must be irreversible. The Government welcomes the announcement by US Secretary of State Colin Powell of a legally binding treaty on substantial cutbacks in US and Russian strategic nuclear weapons arsenals. A logical next step would be to reduce the number of tactical nuclear weapons.

It is regrettable that the USA has unilaterally withdrawn from the ABM Treaty and is moving ahead with its plans for a missile defence. This development risks leading to a new arms race. Having said that, it is unacceptable that China is using the US plans as an argument for modernising and rearming its nuclear arsenals and for blocking progress in the disarmament area. The United States must now continue consultations and strive to find a solution that makes a positive contribution to disarmament and non-proliferation.

India and Pakistan should comply with Security Council resolutions, discontinue missile tests and promptly sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty.

Every day people fall victim to light weapons, whether in armed conflicts or as a result of crime. Sweden and the EU are working for the collection and destruction of these weapons in particularly severely affected countries. The illegal trade in light weapons must be stopped.

Sweden continues to seek strict controls on trade involving military equipment and products that can be used in manufacturing weapons of mass destruction. This is a significant contribution to world security.

*Sweden's foreign policy is based on commitment and dialogue*

The fight against terrorism has brought the whole world together. At the same time, we are witnessing tensions between North and South, and between the West and the Muslim world.

In order to intensify the dialogue between Europe and the Muslim countries, Sweden and Spain want to increase cooperation between the EU and the partnership countries around the Mediterranean. The focus will lie on youth exchange, the media and information. An action plan will be adopted in April. The Swedish Institute in Alexandria and centre in Istanbul are making further contributions to Sweden's dialogue with the Mediterranean countries. In broader cooperation, both with the Middle East and Asia, the Government wants to intensify its contacts with Muslim women and women's groups. The Government also wants to stimulate a dialogue here in Sweden. During the spring, we will therefore be distributing a book to all upper secondary schools and youth organisations with a view to provoking discussion and encouraging reflection.

The peace process in the Middle East has come to a standstill. Once again we are witnessing how violence only breeds more violence. Israel destroys Palestinian homes, carries out extrajudicial executions and entrenches its occupation while Palestinian suicide bombers spread terror throughout Israeli society. Innocent lives are lost on both sides. Negotiations based on international law are the only way out of this chaos. The parties must resume their talks on the implementation of the Mitchell Report. The goal is an end to occupation, an end to acts of terrorism, the establishment of a democratic Palestinian state and peaceful coexistence between Israel and Palestine. The Palestinian Authority and its elected president are needed if a peaceful solution is to be possible. The EU and Sweden are prepared to give assistance.

Sweden is an active party to the extensive relief operations currently under way in Afghanistan. Now more than ever before, this country needs our help. This is why the Government will invest up to SEK 1 billion over the next three years. We give high priority to the women and children who have suffered most from the long conflict and oppression by the Taliban regime. The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan is making an invaluable contribution in this context. Sweden was also quick to join the international security force. Increasing security is a prerequisite for reconstruction of this war-torn country, and for enabling refugees to return home.

The many Swedes taking part in civilian and military efforts in Afghanistan, and in other parts of the world, perform important work for global peace and security, and indeed for Sweden.

Our commitment to the Western Balkans continues. We are helping with the reconstruction of all the countries in this region, we are involved in the work of the Stability Pact and we have contributed a battalion to the international force in Kosovo, and smaller units in Bosnia. With the support of the EU, the region is moving towards cooperation and

European integration but, nevertheless, ethnic tension continues to pose a threat. We support the dialogue for renewing the Yugoslav federation and increasing regional cooperation. To achieve long-term reconciliation, it is of fundamental importance that all countries fully cooperate with the UN International Criminal Tribunal.

We must continue to strengthen relations with Africa and support those states that are striving together for democracy, good governance and sustainable development. This is at the core of the continent's own initiative for the New Partnership for Africa's Development, NEPAD. These common basic values were the main theme when African and Nordic foreign ministers met in Stockholm in January. Developments in Zimbabwe are heading in the opposite direction. We must respond accordingly and support the forces that are working for democracy.

In Colombia, armed conflict continues to claim civilian victims. Sweden is taking part in efforts to keep the peace process alive. We hope that the talks between Colombia's government and the FARC guerrilla will result in a cease-fire later this spring.

Sweden and the EU support continued efforts to promote peace and reconciliation on the Korean peninsula.

On 20 May, East Timor will become the new millennium's first new independent state. This country's development towards democracy and independence is a success for the UN and shows that commitment produces results.

Sweden's work on a broad international front requires not only commitment, but also resources, and resources in the right place. In a constantly changing world the Swedish Foreign Service must always be prepared to adapt, within the agreed budgetary framework. In addition to opening a consulate-general in Kaliningrad, we are now preparing to

establish embassies in Slovakia and Belarus. Alongside this work, we are intensifying our efforts to promote Swedish economic interests, and thereby growth and employment in Sweden. Up to 2004, the Government will increase the appropriation for trade and investment promotion by SEK 150 million. As part of this initiative, we plan to open a consulate-general in Canton to be able to make special investments in the south Chinese market. The new creative Sweden is a powerful trademark.

Madam Speaker,

Our common responsibility for the future has never been more apparent. Globalisation makes the boundaries between domestic and foreign policies less distinct. Justice, human rights, democracy and sustainable development must also be globalised. We must work for the same values in Sweden, the EU and throughout the world.

This year we have many opportunities to intensify our work for global justice. We will make use of the world conferences, the new negotiations in the World Trade Organisation and our membership of the UN Commission on Human Rights.

Together, we can bring about change. Justice and development were corner-stones when building the welfare state of Sweden. Justice and development can also provide the foundation for a global welfare structure. Justice and development belong to all.