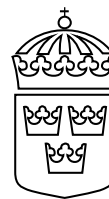


Government Communication

2019/20:17



Sweden's feminist foreign policy

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The Government presents this communication to the Riksdag.

Stockholm, 19 September 2019

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Main contents of the communication

In this communication, the Government outlines Sweden's feminist foreign policy. The communication recounts the background of the policy and describes tools and arenas available to Sweden for its actions. It also provides examples of results within the various thematic and geographical areas of foreign policy. In addition, the communication presents some of the priorities and ambitions for Sweden's continued effort for global gender equality and the full enjoyment of human rights for all women and girls. This is the first communication that presents an integrated overview of the work on gender equality and women's and girls' rights through the feminist foreign policy. Aspects of the efforts have, however, been described in statements of government policy on foreign affairs, budget bills and various other communications.

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1 Introduction

Sweden has a feminist government and gender equality is at the centre of its national and international work. In October 2014, Sweden became the first country in the world to launch a feminist foreign policy. When Sweden took the step to establish this policy, it was based on many years of efforts to promote gender equality and human rights nationally and internationally.

Sweden's feminist foreign policy is based on the conviction that sustainable peace, security and development can never be achieved if half the world's population is excluded. The policy is a response to the discrimination and systematic subordination that still characterises everyday life for countless women and girls all over the world.

The feminist foreign policy is an agenda for change and results to strengthen the rights, representation and resources of all women and girls. One of the cornerstones of the policy is that the work for sustainable peace and security must be representative and inclusive. The Swedish women's mediation network established in 2015 is an example of an initiative to support women's engagement in peace processes around the world.

The coherence between gender equality and positive social development is reflected in studies, research reports and international agreements. The Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the UN World Conference on Women in 1995, for example, establishes that a gender perspective must be mainstreamed into all policies and programmes. The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals adopted in 2015 clearly state that gender equality is both a goal and a means to achieve sustainable societies.

That notwithstanding, gender equality is treated as a special interest and a separate issue that is introduced at a later stage or is addressed in separate meetings. Sweden's feminist foreign policy has been able to raise the profile of the issues through stronger and wider integration of gender equality in all aspects of foreign policy. Sweden's work on the UN Security Council in 2017-2018 is one example, where Sweden consistently promoted the mainstreaming of gender equality into the work of the Council.

Many advances have been made in the area of gender equality, but structural gender discrimination persists. One explanation is that efforts for gender equality and the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls encounter both underlying and explicit opposition. The opposition has also increased in recent years. In addition, new challenges have arisen with a shrinking democratic space in many countries; with a worsening climate crisis, and with conflicts becoming more numerous, protracted and complex. These challenges have severe impact on the lives of many people, but especially on groups who are already discriminated against.

This global situation demands a more strategic and intensive effort for gender equality. This also demands that Sweden and like-minded countries and actors assume responsibility. In this context, Sweden's explicitly feminist foreign policy plays a key role as an opposing force. Sweden has also taken concrete initiatives to widen the like-minded alliance and bolster gender equality actors all over the world. The #SheDecides

campaign started in 2016 in support of the indisputable right of women and girls to decide over their own bodies is one example. Another example is the Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality in 2018 that brought together more than 700 participants from more than 100 countries for an exchange of methods and for collaboration across borders and sectors.

This Government Communication covers the work with the feminist foreign policy in all Swedish foreign policy areas, namely: foreign and security policy, international development cooperation, and trade and promotion policy.

2 An unequal world

From a global perspective, there have been many advances in gender equality and the opportunities of women and girls to enjoy human rights in recent decades. More girls have access to education, more women are represented in parliaments around the world, fewer women are dying in pregnancy and childbirth and fewer girls are the victims of female genital mutilation. But progress is often made from a poor starting point, varies a great deal between and within regions and is moving very slowly in some areas. The recurring pattern is still that women and girls are discriminated against and have fewer opportunities and poorer conditions than men and boys throughout the life cycle. In some countries, girls are given less food, care and health treatment than boys and are even at risk of being abandoned due to their gender. Girls are over-represented among children who receive no education and among those who are forced to leave school. Child marriage and female genital mutilation are still limiting the lives and opportunities of many girls and women. In addition, women and girls perform the majority of unpaid care and housework. Women's pay is also generally lower than men's. Older women's financial situations are often poorer than men's and they are more dependent upon their families for the necessities of life. In addition, laws are applied differently for women and men in several countries. There is also risk that these unequal conditions will be exacerbated by factors and grounds for discrimination other than gender and age, which can often reinforce the marginalisation.

The persistent lack of gender equality in the world has been confirmed by several studies. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report (2018), it will take 107 years to close the gender gap when it comes to political empowerment, while it is expected to take 202 years to close the gender gap when it comes to economic empowerment.

Moreover, the increased pushback and challenges of recent years imply a risk that hard-won progress on gender equality will be lost. The pushback is most apparent in matters related to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and is accentuated by conservative forces that promote gender stereotypical norms and attitudes. This trend coincides with, and is sometimes directly connected to, a shrinking democratic space that often undermines women's and girls' empowerment and agency as well as the opportunities of civil society organisations to act and contribute to accountability and social development.

A fundamental barrier to definitive progress on gender equality is discriminatory legislation. In many countries, women and girls do not have the same rights as men and boys in matters such as inheritance, property ownership and marriage, or protection under penal laws. Many women and girls are also discriminated against as regards political participation, social influence and access to paid work and high-quality lifelong education. Societies all over the world are also characterised by stereotypical gender roles that disadvantage women and girls, as well as men and boys, and which reproduce gender-discriminatory behaviour. In addition, many women and girls are denied the right to decide over their own bodies, sexuality and reproduction, and often lack access to health care and social protection systems.

Certain malconditions and forms of discrimination exist in every country. Gender-based violence occurs in all societies, regardless of their level of development. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that at least one in three women in the world have been subjected to physical or sexual violence. All forms of violence against women and girls affect both the individual and society at large and hinders gender equality and development.

Structural subordination and marginalisation often increase when other factors are added, and challenges worsen. For example, women and girls are often hit especially hard by poverty, climate change, greater pressure on land use, competition for natural resources and protracted conflicts. Women and girls are also especially vulnerable in humanitarian crises and encounter particular challenges as refugees, including the risk of becoming the victims of child marriage and forced marriage or human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Digitalisation is a transformative force that creates new opportunities to raise issues, cooperate and exert influence. The mobilisation of the #MeToo movement against sexual harassment and assault illustrates the power of digital media as a catalyst for accountability, strengthened political engagement and increased gender equality. But digital media have also brought new ways to control, threaten and oppress girls and women. The development has also created new channels for buying and selling sexual services. In addition, there is a great gender imbalance in the IT sector, which presents a risk of preserving the existence of stereotypical gender roles and affecting which values and cultural norms are spread.

In recent years, increasing attention has been brought to threats and hatred directed at women and girls in the public conversation. It is a gender equality problem that women politicians, journalists, activists and actors, are often doubly exposed. They are often the targets of hatred and harassment both on the basis of their occupation or involvement, and because they are women. Similarly, people who debate feminism, gender equality and racism are often the targets of threats and hatred, which often silence or affect them. This is a threat to the democratic conversation and, by extension, to democracy.

The persistently gender-unequal world of today is evidence of the need for a feminist perspective and for systematic gender equality efforts in order to break down the structural discrimination of women and girls all over the world.

The feminist foreign policy is based on binding commitments under international law and on international agreements such as European Union (EU) treaties and relevant action plans. The feminist foreign policy is also based on Sweden's national gender equality policy and an effort of many years to ensure that women and men must have the same power to shape society and their own lives.

The policy is an agenda for change and results to strengthen the rights, representation and resources of women and girls. The policy promotes gender equality and the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls, including by combating all forms of discrimination that restrict their freedom of action. The policy promotes women's representation and influence in decision processes at all levels and in all areas. The work with resources is aimed at ensuring that resources are distributed in such a way that gender equality is achieved. Work to ensure all women's and girls' full enjoyment of human rights is central.

Gender equality is an issue for the entire society and the work must therefore involve and consider both women and men and girls and boys. It is also necessary to have an intersectional perspective that acknowledges that women, girls, men and boys are not homogeneous groups; they have different identities, needs, influence and living conditions that are affected by factors and grounds for discrimination in addition to gender, such as ethnicity, disability, age, religion or other faith, sexual orientation or transgender identity or expression.

3.1 Swedish gender equality work over the years

The feminist foreign policy builds further on many years of Swedish efforts to promote gender equality and human rights and has entailed a further raising of ambitions.

Sweden put its name on the world map early on as a country with a progressive gender equality policy. The 1970s brought several comprehensive and critical reforms, including individual taxation, generous childcare benefits and shared and gender-neutral parental leave. The right to abortion, which was introduced in 1974, also helped to reinforce women's rights. The same applied to the Gender Equality Act which went into force in 1979 and was introduced to create a non-discriminatory and gender-equal labour market. Progress has been driven by several social actors, including a progressive women's movement. Issues previously considered 'women's issues' were put on the agenda for Swedish domestic policy and government inquiries supported and confirmed the effort. In parallel, Swedish gender research took off and became an established academic discipline.

Another key component in this systematic gender equality work was the introduction of gender mainstreaming as a working method. This occurred in the 1990s and has since been further developed and established.

Sweden is regularly placed at the top when the countries of the world are ranked on gender equality. This is evidence that Sweden's gender

equality policy has been successful in many ways. It is also clear that developments in the area of gender equality have had direct bearing on Sweden's strong economic growth. This does not mean, however, that great challenges do not remain.

In the light of these challenges, the Swedish Government issued a communication in 2016 'Power, goals and agency – a feminist policy for a gender-equal future' (Govt Comm. 2016/17:10). This communication presented the direction of gender equality policy, including an organisation for implementation, a monitoring system, a ten-year national strategy for preventing and combating men's violence against women, and a new structure for sub-goals.

The goal of Sweden's gender equality policy, adopted by the Riksdag, is that women and men shall have the same power to shape society and their own lives (Budget bill 2008/09:1, report 2008/09:AU1, Riksdag Comm. 2008/09:115). The six sub-goals of the gender equality policy are:

- Gender-equal division of power and influence
- Economic gender equality
- Gender-equal education
- Gender-equal distribution of unpaid housework and provision of care
- Gender-equal health
- Men's violence against women must stop

Gender mainstreaming is the Government's main strategy for achieving the gender equality policy goals, combined with specific measures.

The Government has reinforced the gender mainstreaming effort. The work is governed by a Government decision (S2016/04472/JÅM), which establishes that a gender perspective must be incorporated in all policies that affect people's rights, living conditions and opportunities, so that all women and men, girls and boys, will be able to lead gender-equal lives. In line with this, the work with gender budgeting has also been reinforced and oriented towards prioritisation, choices and resource allocation in the budget that promotes gender equality as far as possible. The Government has also expanded its Gender Mainstreaming in Government Agencies programme to 58 government agencies and the Swedish National Council of Adult Education. On 1 January 2018, the Government established the Swedish Gender Equality Agency to contribute towards the effective, structured and cohesive implementation of the gender equality policy.

As with domestic policy, Swedish foreign policy has been characterised by an active gender equality and human rights perspective for a long time. Sweden was, for example, one of the first countries in the world, following a parliamentary inquiry, the Committee on Sweden's Policy for Global Development (SOU 2001:96), to adopt a Policy for Global Development (Govt Bill 2002/03:122) that lays the foundation for work on policy coherence for sustainable development. In this policy, the rights perspective and gender equality are central tenets. Policy coherence for sustainable development is a key instrument in Sweden's implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

It is becoming increasingly clear that foreign and domestic policy dimensions are interrelated. To have a strong Swedish voice in the world,

Sweden must live up to its international commitments, which in turn depends upon a coherent and active national policy. Skr. 2019/20:17

3.2 International and EU frameworks

The feminist foreign policy is being pursued on the basis of binding commitments under international law and other agreements. These include declarations and action plans from the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing, the UN International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, UN review conferences, the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and subsequent resolutions and relevant UN conventions on human rights.

The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and its tool, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development, are central frameworks for sustainable global development. Within these frameworks, gender equality is considered a prerequisite for progress in all areas of society.

Other central documents are EU treaties, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul convention), the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the 1949 Geneva Convention on protection for the victims of war and the 1951 Refugee Convention.

The feminist foreign policy is also guided by the EU Global Strategy, the EU Action Plans on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment through EU External Relations and on Human Rights and Democracy and the EU's strategic approach to the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, as well as relevant guidelines, European Council conclusions and other documents.

4 Focus areas

Global gender equality challenges are outlined below, based on six focus areas. The focus areas concern all women's and girls':

- Full enjoyment of human rights
- Freedom from physical, psychological and sexual violence
- Participation in preventing and resolving conflicts, and post-conflict peacebuilding
- Political participation and influence in all areas of society
- Economic rights and empowerment
- Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)

4.1 Full enjoyment of human rights

Life has improved for more women and girls in recent decades. And yet no country in the world has achieved gender equality. Structural gender discrimination persists. In several countries in the world, this discrimination is expressed in ways including non-gender-equal legislation that, for example, prevents women from practising certain occupations, restricts women's rights to divorce or retain custody of their children, or does not consider marital rape a crime. In many places in the world, there are also parallel legal systems that significantly exacerbate the subordination of women and girls.

Discrimination against women and girls impacts their opportunity to fully enjoy all human rights, such as the right to education, work, political participation and control over their own bodies. Gender discrimination is also exacerbated by discrimination and marginalisation linked to other factors such as poverty, conflict, forced migration and climate impact. This is accompanied by the increased scepticism in recent years concerning issues related to gender equality, which risks undermining and impeding progress.

Sweden calls upon all states to fully implement their obligations to respect, protect and fulfil human rights for all, without discrimination. Sweden also calls upon countries that have not yet ratified fundamental human rights conventions to do so. Sweden further calls upon the countries that have made reservations that contravene the aims and purposes of a convention to withdraw them. Religion, culture, customs or traditions can never legitimise or relativise infringements of human rights.

4.2 Freedom from violence

Violence is the most extreme form of oppression. Domestic violence, where the partner is the perpetrator, is the leading cause of injuries to women. More than one hundred countries have legislated against domestic violence, but hundreds of millions of women live in countries where domestic violence is still not punishable. As a result of widespread violence, women and girls in all countries calculate the risk of being the victims of gender-related or sexual violence or harassment in public spaces, which seriously limits their freedom of movement. All forms of violence against women and girls affect both the individual and society at large and are a serious barrier to gender equality and development.

Conflict and post-conflict situations are often characterised by violence and assault of civilians. In these situations, more men and boys are killed by direct violence, while women and girls are more exposed to conflict-related sexual violence. In many conflicts, women and girls are direct targets of sexual and gender-based violence. The perpetrators are rarely punished.

Sweden is engaged in a very comprehensive effort to secure freedom from violence for all, strengthen accountability and combat impunity for violence against women and girls. One important aspect of preventing

violence is to combat negative and gender-stereotyped norms and attitudes, particularly toxic masculinity norms, attitudes and behaviours. Skr. 2019/20:17

4.3 Participation and influence in peace processes

War and crises result in societies being shattered, families being split up and development coming to a halt. The greater participation of women and girls in all aspects of peace processes is a matter of rights and gender equality, but also contributes to sustainable peace. Inclusive peace processes pave the way to additional potential solutions, more widespread support and more sustainable peace. Societies in which women are empowered, active participants in politics, economics, culture and society also tend to be less inclined to violence, more democratic and more respectful of human rights. This notwithstanding, women are almost entirely absent from most formal peace talks and decision-making in peace processes, which has consequences for the drafting and implementation of peace treaties. Sweden is acting to increase women's participation and influence at all levels and to ensure that the mandate and work of international peace initiatives must take into consideration the needs and perspectives of men, women, boys and girls and unconditionally respect everyone's human rights and psychological and bodily integrity.

Sexual and gender-based violence is often used as a weapon in conflicts and often increases in intimate relationships during a conflict. Rape in armed conflicts can be a war crime. Sweden is working to ensure that victims of crime receive redress and perpetrators are brought to justice. Impunity for conflict-related sexual violence makes reconciliation processes more difficult and undermines peacebuilding. Only a zero-tolerance approach can be accepted. Sweden is also encouraging the involvement of men and boys in the work to prevent conflict and combat gender-related and sexual violence.

4.4 Political participation and influence

Women in the world are under-represented on many levels – as voters, as active participants in political processes and civil participation between elections, as politicians, judges, leaders of organisations, in business and in academia, etc. It is important to address the underlying causes of women's under-representation in political processes and bodies, such as the main responsibility for unpaid housework and caring that is by tradition often put on women and girls. Another aggravating factor is that women leaders, politicians, journalists and defenders of human rights are often doubly exposed in that they challenge both hierarchies of power and gender stereotypes. This has been exacerbated by developments in recent years, with the shrinking of the democratic space and civil freedoms in many countries.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is creating new conditions for organisation and influencing gender equality policy and for girls' agency and women's political and economic empowerment,

provided that it is available and they have access to the technology, which is still not the case to the same extent as for men and boys. While ICT and social media can be used to challenge gender-stereotyped norms and attitudes, the same tools are also used for purposes including human trafficking and gender-based violence online.

Sweden is working to ensure that women and men have the same opportunities to be active citizens and to shape the conditions for decision-making. It is moreover essential that women's rights organisations and women human rights defenders and other actors have the opportunity to work and be protected against threats and violence and that girls are considered actors and are able to voice their opinions.

4.5 Economic rights and empowerment

There are still tremendous barriers to women's and girls' enjoyment of economic rights and empowerment on par with men. In many countries, women and girls lack economic rights, including the opportunity to inherit, to own and use land and natural resources and to be in paid employment. Gender stereotypical norms and attitudes are impeding change.

More girls now have access to education, but there are still more girls than boys who leave school prematurely or receive no education at all. Women are in paid employment to a lesser extent than men and often in low-paid jobs and under poor working conditions. Women's full-time wages are still considerably lower than men's and women work part-time more often. To a greater extent than men, women also often leave paid work to care for older relatives or look after children and grandchildren. Economic inequality limits the opportunities of women and girls to engage politically, rise from misery and influence decisions that affect them. Women not reaching their full economic potential also has significant negative impacts on the global economy.

Sweden is working to strengthen women's and girls' economic equality, empowerment and influence, the rights of women and girls to inherit, own property, get an education, work under good and fair conditions, organise in trades unions, have access to markets and financial services and have the opportunity to start and run businesses and receive equal pay for equal work. It is also important that women and men have equal opportunity to combine family life and gainful employment, which means unpaid housework and care must be shared equally between women and men. Girls' rights to an education are a prerequisite for achieving economic empowerment and development. Their control over their own bodies, sexuality and reproduction is also critical to economic empowerment.

4.6 Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) encompass the equal opportunities, rights and conditions of all human beings to decide, without coercion, violence or discrimination, over their own bodies, sexuality and

reproduction. SRHR are vital to achieving gender equality and the full potential of women and girls cannot be tapped without SRHR. SRHR thus have direct bearing on everything from level of education to economics. In spite of this, girls, women and LGBTI persons are still prevented from enjoying these rights. Forced sterilisation of girls and women with disabilities is still happening in many countries, and issues such as safe and legal abortion, comprehensive sexuality education, sexual orientation and gender identity are still controversial in many contexts. Recent years have brought heightened opposition in the area as traditional-values conservative forces are attempting to restrict everyone's enjoyment of SRHR. The issues are clearly becoming more polarised in both the EU and the UN, where previous agreements are being questioned.

Sweden has reinforced its international engagement in order to make normative progress where possible, preserve agreements in the area and prevent the undermining of SRHR. Effective financial support for the implementation of SRHR initiatives is required at the global, regional and country levels. This involves investing in maternal health, with access to safe labour and delivery, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and promoting the right and access to safe and legal abortion. It is also a matter of providing appropriate and greater access to advice, evidence-based information, non-discriminatory comprehensive sexuality education, family planning, modern contraception, HIV testing, etc. Preventative efforts and treatment of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases must also be part of the effort. Sweden is engaged in all of these issues and is working actively to involve men and boys in SRHR work.

5 Policy areas

Swedish foreign policy involves Sweden's connections with – and policy towards – countries and international organisations, and ultimately aims to promote peace, security and sustainable development. Swedish foreign policy is divided into three main policy areas: foreign and security policy, international development cooperation, and trade and promotion policy. Examples of the contributions of work with feminist foreign policy in the three policy areas are provided below.

5.1 Foreign and security policy

Swedish foreign and security policy is pursued via direct relations with other countries and through international organisations. The cooperation is based on international law. Preventing risks and threats and protecting Sweden's interests in its relationships with other countries are key components of the foreign and security policy. The feminist foreign policy has helped reinforce the gender perspective in Sweden's work and relationships with countries and organisations.

5.1.1 Peace and security

Gender equality and respect for international law, including human rights and international humanitarian law, are fundamental prerequisites for sustainable peace and security. One of the cornerstones of Sweden's feminist foreign policy is that the work for sustainable peace and security must be representative and inclusive. The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security and its subsequent resolutions are central mechanisms for achieving this. Together, the resolutions establish an agenda that promotes women's greater participation in peacebuilding, combats sexual and gender-based violence in conflicts and confirms the key role of gender equality in building peaceful societies. That the agenda should be an integral and natural part of all work for peace and security is a highly prioritised issue in the Swedish feminist foreign policy. It should characterise both day-to-day and long-term strategic work at the country level as well as within the UN, EU, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), NATO, the Council of Europe and in cooperation with the Nordic countries.

During the Swedish non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council in 2017–2018, Sweden consistently promoted the integration and promotion of a gender perspective in the day-to-day work of the Council, in all geographical and thematic contexts and in talks on resolutions and declarations. The membership offered an opportunity, based on the feminist foreign policy, to establish a more integrated working method in relation to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda and raising the profile of issues of sexual and gender-based violence and women's participation in peace processes.

Sweden's gender equality work in the UN is also manifested in support for the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the UN Team of Experts on Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict. Among other actions, Sweden has been the biggest donor to the UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict initiative, which has been working for more than ten years to improve coordination within the UN system, reinforce accountability and programming and support country efforts to prevent conflict-related sexual violence and respond effectively to the needs of survivors.

Sweden has also worked to ensure that gender equality aspects are taken into account in the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, and championed gender equality issues in relation to the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT).

Within the EU, Sweden's feminist foreign policy has generated systematic advocacy efforts in relation to the EU Common Security and Defence Policy. Sweden has, for instance, been a driving force behind a study of how the European External Action Service (EEAS) is integrating human rights and gender equality in planning and implementation of its foreign and security policy. One outcome of this baseline study is that the code of conduct for all crisis management missions has been updated with references to sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and gender-based violence. Sweden was also the driving force behind the establishment of a senior advisor in the EEAS in matters relating to gender equality and WPS

and has seconded an expert to the advisor's office. Sweden has also contributed to the Global Strategy for EU foreign and security policy reflecting a broad view on security that includes a rights and gender perspective rooted in the EU's common values. Furthermore, Sweden has championed undertakings in the gender equality area within the framework of the EU compact on civilian crisis management and has advocated reinforced gender equality expertise in both EU institutions and crisis management missions. In addition, Sweden has seconded gender equality advisers to missions, as well as to the headquarters in Brussels.

In the OSCE, Sweden has worked to strengthen gender mainstreaming and used its chairmanship of the OSCE politico-military body, the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC) to draw particular attention to the WPS agenda. Within its partnership with NATO, Sweden has worked to further develop and strengthen application by NATO and partner countries of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

Sweden has continued to broaden its national efforts for WPS, which includes the seconding of Swedish experts and training of both Swedish and international actors. This work is reflected in several ways, including the National Action Plan for WPS that was adopted in 2016, the third since 2006. Implementation of the plan involves the Government Offices and eleven national agencies and was drawn up in broad consultation with relevant actors in Sweden and with five conflict and post-conflict nations. For the first time, the action plan includes focus countries and targets women's influence and participation in peace processes, reinforced conflict prevention work, improved protection against violence and integrating gender perspectives into all peace and security work. The plan also reflects the Government's ambition to increase the representation of women in Sweden's contributions to international crisis management where appropriate. The percentage of women in civilian missions increased by four percent between 2017 and 2018, and Sweden's contributions often have a higher percentage of women than the mission's total percentage of women. The percentage of women in military contributions increased by one percent. Sweden has also contributed to the drafting and implementation of national action plans in other countries, such as Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iraq, Canada, Myanmar, Czech Republic and Sudan.

Sweden has also pursued a wide-ranging effort to make peace processes more inclusive. Sweden has, for example, contributed to increased involvement of women in peace efforts in countries including Colombia, Mali, Syria, Afghanistan, Myanmar and Somalia, through political, technical and financial support. Sweden has, among other things, contributed to Colombia's peace agreement featuring a clear gender perspective and thereby being able to serve as a model for others. As a further example, Sweden has supported Syrian women's involvement in political processes at local and international levels, as well as in the opposition's Women's Advisory Committee. Through its support of UN Women, the UN entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women, Sweden has also contributed to the monitoring of Mali's action plan for Resolution 1325 and supported women's participation in the implementation of the peace agreement.

The Women's Mediation Network is another important tool in Sweden's work. The network was established by the Minister for Foreign Affairs in 2015 and has come to support women's involvement in peacebuilding around the world. The work is followed up with technical support and advice to countries and actors wanting to establish equivalent mediation networks.

Sweden is working actively to raise the status of gender equality in the area of humanitarian law and has initiated and supported resolutions, side events and commitments that include a gender perspective at the recurring International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in Geneva. One example is the book *IHL and Gender - Swedish Experiences*, which was produced in partnership with the Swedish Red Cross and presented in 2015.

5.1.2 Human rights, democracy and the rule of law

An international legal system based on international law, including human rights, democracy, the rule of law and gender equality must be constantly protected. This is glaringly apparent in the light of the repressive and reactionary trend that has arisen in recent years. Stronger respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law would bring much greater freedom and higher status for women and girls. Nor is democracy possible if half the population does not participate and enjoy the same rights, representation and resources as the other half. The feminist foreign policy and work for human rights, democracy and the rule of law are therefore bound together.

The country-specific reports on the situation for human rights, democracy and the rule of law that Sweden produces and publishes are an important tool. The reports are produced and published for all regions roughly every two years. With the adoption of the feminist foreign policy, the reports have come to put significant focus on the situation concerning women's and girls' enjoyment of human rights.

In the work to ensure every person's enjoyment of human rights, it is essential to protect the individual as the bearer of rights and the universality of human rights. Accordingly, Sweden rejects attempts by certain actors, through narrow focus on family issues, to restrict the enjoyment of human rights by women, girls, or LGBTI persons or entrench stereotypical gender roles. Sweden repudiates allowing religion, culture, customs, or traditions to legitimise restrictions of women's and girls' enjoyment of human rights.

Sweden continuously raises the issue of gender equality and all women's and girls' full enjoyment of human rights in the dialogue with official representatives of states, the EU, multilateral and regional organisations and other relevant actors. The intensification of Sweden's dialogue has been made possible through the introduction of an Ambassador for Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, an Ambassador for Gender Equality and an Ambassador for Combating Trafficking in Persons. Sweden also participates actively in negotiations on human rights in forums including the UN General Assembly and its various committees, the UN Human Rights Council, the UN Commission on the Status of

Women and the boards of directors of UN funds and programmes. Sweden has contributed to an increased focus on women's and girls' rights and, as one aspect of this, on the importance of sex- and age-disaggregated data in both thematic and country-specific resolutions. Sweden is also one of the largest donors to the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Violence is a serious barrier to women's and girls' enjoyment of human rights. Sweden is engaged in intensive efforts to eliminate widespread gender-related and sexual violence. Sweden has championed the issue at the country level, regional level and global level, including on the UN Security Council. Through Swedish support to CSOs and other actors, such as UN Women, Sweden has been able to contribute to support centres and sheltered housing for victimised women, helplines, legal support for victims of intimate partner violence, work with perpetrators as well as political influence. Sweden has also cooperated directly with countries and legal institutions in their efforts against sexual and gender-based violence. Among else, Sweden has funnelled development support to the Prosecutor General in Guatemala and in so doing was assessed as having been able to contribute to accountability in a notorious case of sex slavery. In another example, Sweden has supported Georgia in the enactment of new legislation against gender-based violence.

Sweden has strengthened its commitment to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) as resistance to the issues has increased. Sweden's work is carried out by means including diplomacy and political mobilisation at the global, regional and country levels. Sweden has, for example, worked with alliance building, board positions, development cooperation and dialogue, and was one of the initiators of the global #SheDecides movement, which is working to protect women's and girls' rights to decide over their own bodies. Sweden is also working to safeguard EU agreements in international contexts and is encouraging the EU to be a progressive actor in the SRHR area. For example, Sweden has pressured the European Commission to take a stronger stand for SRHR and to include the issues in its annual reporting on the implementation of the EU's external gender equality work. Substantial effort is devoted to normative work to move the positions forward as much as possible and prevent the undermining of the issues. Globally, the so-called Mexico City Policy/Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance of the US has had serious consequences for the work with SRHR. Under this policy, funding is frozen for foreign CSOs and prohibits them and their partners from performing or promoting abortion if they receive family planning assistance or global health assistance from the US. By extension, the policy thus leads to reduced access to services and health services related to SRHR. Sweden's work for SRHR also includes collaboration with and support to various developing countries. At the country level, this work has, for example, contributed to more midwives and better access to comprehensive sexuality education, contraception and safe and legal abortion. In Mozambique, for example, Sweden was able to help with the effort to draft new national guidelines for abortion care and in Zambia, collaboration between Sweden and UNESCO has resulted in comprehensive sexuality education being added to the national curriculum, reaching almost two million pupils. Sweden has also funded

the training of midwives in countries including Afghanistan, Myanmar, South Sudan and Zambia and has contributed to the drafting of Somalia's first midwifery strategies at the national and regional levels.

Sweden has also acted to strengthen human rights for refugee and migrant women and girls by consistently emphasising that migration and forced migration entail greater risk of human trafficking, prostitution, sexual and gender-based violence, as well as lack of SRHR, health care and WASH. The results include that the issues have been incorporated in UN resolutions and the declaration of the UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants 2016, where Sweden's position is reflected in the commitment to promote women's and girls' full enjoyment of human rights and opportunity to participate in finding solutions. In the talks on the UN Global Compact for Migration, Sweden has advocated for clear statements concerning additional support offices along the major migration routes and in the main countries of transit so that migrants, particularly women and girls, will be able to access support and advice. Sweden has also prioritised the issue of safe workforce migration with decent conditions, particularly for women. In relation to the UN Global Compact for Migration, Sweden has worked to bring about an integrated gender-equality perspective and access to quality education for refugee girls and boys. Sweden provides funding to the UNHCR and the UN International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to ensure the provision of lifesaving support and assistance to refugees and migrants, especially women and girls.

In the work with democracy and the rule of law, Sweden supports the building of democratic governments, stronger political institutions and increased participation in political processes, not least by women and girls. At present, democracy is clearly being undermined in many places. In response to these developments, the Government has initiated a Drive for Democracy within the foreign policy. Sweden will, in all contexts, stand up for democratic principles and work to strengthen democracy. Sweden is striving for deeper dialogue on democracy with other countries and actors. As part of the action, the work to increase women's representation in political assemblies has also been stepped up. Sweden has long experience of working to promote democracy in the world as well as women's and girls' political participation. Sweden has, for example, contributed to reinforcing the electoral commissions of several countries and in that context contributed to a higher percentage of women working in polling places and in various positions. Support provided through organisations affiliated with Swedish political parties has created the conditions for increased political participation among women and young people. At the country level, Sweden has, for example, played a key role in women's participation in the Somalian election process and parliament through intensive cooperation with numerous actors, combined with dialogue, development cooperation and public diplomacy. The initiative is estimated to have contributed to the marked increase in the number of women MPs after the 2016 election. In Moldova, Swedish support to the Women in Politics programme has contributed to the enactment in Moldova of a law that stipulates at least 40 percent women in electable positions on party lists for parliamentary elections, in the cabinet, the parliamentary secretariat and other state institutions. Sweden has also supported GQUAL, an international campaign that advocates establishing

international and national guidelines to increase the proportion of women in leadership positions in international tribunals and judicial bodies.

A shrinking democratic space is having profound impact on CSOs, particularly women's rights organisations. Women human rights defenders are often doubly exposed in their capacity as women and as actors in the civil society. Against this background and in line with the feminist foreign policy, Sweden has contributed to improving the conditions of a large number of CSOs all over the world in their work to promote women's and girls' full enjoyment of human rights by means including knowledge exchange, raising awareness, networking, funding and dialogue. Dialogue and consultation with international, national and local women's rights organisations and other actors in civil society working for gender equality are essential and have helped Sweden compile better knowledge-based input for its actions, broader support and better outcomes for the work with human rights and gender equality.

Actors in the arts and culture sector can play a key role in democratisation processes by, for example, bringing new perspectives to the fore and giving more people a voice in social development. The arts and culture and its promotion can also contribute to independent relationship building, be a component of public democracy and create opportunities for dialogue. Sweden is therefore working actively with culture and the promotion of the arts and culture as an important platform for gender equality work, not least importantly at the country level.

Sweden has strengthened its global support for freedom of expression with particular focus on human rights online, digital security and net freedom. Sweden has promoted stronger protection for women journalists and other media actors, human rights defenders, environment defenders, politicians and arts and culture workers, as well as social actors who defend women's and girls' enjoyment of human rights. As one aspect of this work, the Minister for Foreign Affairs hosted an international seminar on hatred and threats against women journalists on the 250th anniversary of the Swedish Freedom of the Press Act. Swedish is providing support for the implementation of a pilot project that is identifying threats and hatred targeting online journalists, with a particular focus on women journalists. Sweden is also promoting efforts to create cities of refuge for persecuted journalists and artists and is currently home to the most cities of refuge in the world. This work is also being pursued in several international arenas. Within the Council of Europe, for example, Sweden is a member of the Steering Committee on Media and Information Society, aimed at increasing the safety of journalists, artists and other media actors. Within UNESCO, Sweden is one of the countries that is most actively championing freedom of expression and the safety of journalists. Sweden has also contributed specific support to the organisation's work for freedom of the press and freedom of expression in which gender equality issues are included.

5.1.3 Disarmament and non-proliferation

Sweden's work in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation is aimed at reducing and eliminating weapons of mass destruction, preventing the

use and proliferation of these weapons and controlling, and in some cases banning, conventional weapons as well. In line with the feminist foreign policy, Sweden has in recent years promoted gender mainstreaming in the area and carried out specific initiatives targeted at women and girls. This type of work is important because there is often a link between arsenals of small arms and light weapons and the occurrence of violence in a society, including sexual and gender-based violence, which includes domestic violence. Women are under-represented in contexts where disarmament and non-proliferation are discussed – at diplomatic and technical levels, as well as within academia and civil society organisations. The problem is intensified because women are sometimes represented, but still have no opportunity to participate on equal terms.

Against this background, Sweden has worked to increase women's representation and agency in disarmament and non-proliferation. To shed light on these problems, Sweden, along with Ireland, has provided support to the UN Institute for Disarmament Research, which has produced quantitative and qualitative data on gender representation, participation and attitudes in disarmament work. Within the framework of the project, checklists containing concrete proposals have been prepared that countries can use to increase gender balance in their delegations.

Sweden has also advocated for a gender perspective across all processes pertaining to international arms control and disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. This applies, for example to the work with the UN Programme of Action on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons UNPoA), the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the UN First Committee. Sweden has also promoted a gender perspective in processes on international weapons inspections and disarmament within the framework of the UN Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The ATT is an important tool in the work to combat illicit and irresponsible trading in conventional weapons. Sweden is advocating the application of the Arms Trade Treaty (article 7.4) and encouraging States Parties to consider the risk of exported materials being used for—or facilitating—gender-based violence or serious violence against women or children. In the work with UNPoA, Sweden was the driving force behind the inclusion in the final report of the third oversight conference of considerably stronger wording than previously on gender equality, representation, sex-disaggregated data and links to gender-based violence. Sweden has also contributed to bringing several different aspects of gender equality to the fore within the framework of NPT oversight. This has included the issue of representation and participation, the disproportionate biological and social impact on girls and women of the detonation and testing of nuclear weapons, and how the prevailing discourse can be analysed from a gender perspective.

Alliance-building and dialogue have been significant to achieving the breakthrough of the gender perspective in these issues, both multilaterally and bilaterally. Countries and organisations that were not previously active have been engaged. In the UN First Committee, Sweden joined a group of other countries and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom to examine the resolutions to enable joint action to promote the consideration of gender equality aspects. In the autumn of 2018, Sweden also took the initiative to a joint statement on applying a gender perspective in disarmament work – a statement that 58 states chose to

support. The work within the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is another example of alliance-building, where in 2017 Sweden joined the Group of Friends of Women in Nuclear, a new organisation whose purpose is to contribute to more gender-equal representation and policy within the IAEA.

Sweden has also worked to develop and disseminate knowledge about how access to and proliferation of weapons affects women, men, girls and boys differently, and about the various effects of the use and testing of nuclear weapons. As part of this knowledge production, Sweden has contributed to the development of sex-disaggregated data on the consequences of armed violence. Swedish support has also facilitated the drafting of policy documents within the field, for example through studies carried out by the Small Arms Survey, a think tank. This material has in turn been used for targeted initiatives in connection with international negotiations and processes on small arms and light weapons, and with international weapons inspections.

5.1.4 Export control

Under the feminist foreign policy, Sweden attaches great importance to preventing and counteracting gender-based and sexual violence around the world, in both conflict and peacetime. One important aspect of this work is the strict control exercised over the export of military equipment from Sweden. This takes place, for example, through Sweden applying article 7.4 of the ATT. The article was included in the treaty with the strong support of countries including Sweden, and requires States Parties to take into account the risk of exported military equipment being used to commit – or facilitate – serious gender-based violence or serious violence against women and children. The Swedish Inspectorate of Strategic Products is continuously strengthening its expertise in order to apply article 7.4 of the ATT and include risks of gender-based violence in assessments relating to human rights and international humanitarian rights. The proposals in a bill on more stringent export controls of military equipment (Govt Bill 2017/18:23) came into force in 2018, resulting in stricter regulations. The new regulations imply that the democratic status of the receiving country shall be a critical condition for assessing whether or not to grant an export licence. There is a close connection here to respect for human rights and the principle that all citizens must be able to assert these rights on equal terms. It implies, for example, that serious hardships for people including women and children or members of minority groups must be considered in the assessment. The assessment should also consider the impact of the export on fair and sustainable development in the receiving country. This also means that whether the export will affect the situation for men and boys and for women and girls in significantly different ways can also be considered.

5.2 International development cooperation and humanitarian aid

The objective of Swedish international development cooperation is to create preconditions for better living conditions for people living in poverty and under oppression. Humanitarian aid is aimed at saving lives, alleviating suffering and upholding human dignity.

Sweden has long been a global leader when it comes to prioritising human rights and gender equality in international development cooperation. The feminist foreign and development policy have meant a further raising of ambitions. The Policy Framework for Swedish Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (Govt Comm. 2016/17:60) establishes that Sweden will do more than globally agreed in the areas of human rights and gender equality. The policy framework also makes it clear that a gender perspective shall permeate all Swedish development cooperation and that gender equality is one of the main thematic areas for development cooperation. The feminist foreign and development policy have also had impact on the management of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) through stronger statements on gender equality in the ordinance governing the agency and in various strategies that govern development cooperation. Gender equality goals are included in more than half of the Swedish country strategies for bilateral development cooperation. In addition, women and girls are a special target group in almost all strategies. Moreover, the Government has, for the first time, adopted a dedicated strategy for Swedish development cooperation for global gender equality and the rights of women and girls for the period of 2018–2022.

5.2.1 International development cooperation

Greater gender equality contributes to more sustainable development and poverty reduction. This well-established connection is even more relevant in an era of challenges in the form of wider economic gaps, a shrinking democratic space, more protracted conflicts and a worsening climate crisis. Nevertheless, gender equality is a low priority from the global perspective for the allocation of resources within international development cooperation. Only four percent of all global development assistance is allocated specifically to gender equality, according to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and development (OECD). The percentage is even lower – and declining – in the economic and productive sectors, where only one percent of funding goes directly to gender equality. And on the global level, a small fraction of the development assistance is allocated to women's rights organisations, even though such organisations are often essential to reinforcing gender equality work.

Sweden has prioritised gender equality in development cooperation for a long time and the effort has been further reinforced by the advent of the feminist foreign and development policy. The percentage of Sweden's bilateral development cooperation aimed at gender equality has successively increased and was 23 percent in 2018, while 66 percent was

gender mainstreamed according to OECD-DAC. In the peer review of Sweden's development cooperation carried out by OECD-DAC in the spring of 2019, the organisation confirmed that the feminist foreign policy have underpinned a systematic and successful methodology and confirmed Sweden's role as a global leader on gender equality.

Sida has participated in the Government's expanded Gender Mainstreaming in Government Agencies (JiM) development programme. Sida has worked to increase the percentage of actions where gender equality is the main objective, including in productive sectors like market development, agriculture, energy, the environment and climate. Sida has also developed a toolbox that provides knowledge, and guidance on how the gender perspective can be strengthened in Swedish development cooperation. The 'Sida Gender Toolbox' was developed to support Sida and other actors and is available on the agency's website. The Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) is also involved in the JiM programme and has strengthened the gender perspective in its activities and has expanded its work with WPS in various conflict and post-conflict nations.

To further develop gender equality work in line with the feminist foreign and development policy, the Government initiated a new thematic strategy in 2017 for Sweden's development cooperation for global gender equality and women's and girls' rights. The strategy applies to the period of 2018–2022 and has a total volume of SEK 1 billion. The new strategy is aimed at strengthening global gender equality work and contributing to change for gender equality. The strategy's objective areas involve strengthened global and regional normative work for gender equality and combating discrimination and gender stereotypical norms and all forms of gender-based violence and harmful practices. Another objective area of the strategy is to work for increased access to and use of sex-disaggregated data and gender equality research. The strategy also has a particular focus on strengthening the conditions for women's rights organisations, feminist movements and women human rights defenders to carry out their work and be protected. The new strategy does not replace the parts of Swedish development cooperation that are already aimed at gender equality and instead contributes to reinforcing the work.

Development cooperation initiatives are carried out in all focus areas of the Swedish feminist foreign policy. This applies, for example, to work on the full enjoyment of human rights for all women and girls, to combatting gender-based violence and to strengthening the role of women in peace processes. Sweden also supports women's and girls' participation and influence in political processes. As gender equality work in productive sectors becomes stronger, Swedish development cooperation has also been able to contribute to strengthening women's and girls' economic empowerment and rights. This includes work on women's entrepreneurship and access to loans, and financing and land rights in several African partner countries.

Sweden is engaged in comprehensive development cooperation in the area of SRHR. One quarter of Sweden's bilateral strategies include health targets oriented towards robust health care systems, SRHR and improved child and maternal health. One of many examples applies to Afghanistan, where Swedish support has been allocated to improving maternal health. Access to WASH in health care and other sectors is a vital component of

SRHR work. One out of three girls in the world does not have access to clean water and schools often lack facilities for menstrual hygiene and many girls leave school as a result. From a global perspective, WASH in schools remains underfunded. Sweden is working to improve girls' access to toilets and clean water and to change the stigma and attitudes surrounding young women and menstruation through information and education initiatives. Sweden is also supporting initiatives for appropriate health care with access to WASH.

Sweden has acted vigorously against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment within development cooperation, multilaterally, within the EU and bilaterally. Sweden has a policy of zero tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. Ongoing dialogue is also taking place with multilateral partner organisations and funds on how they can meet Sweden's demands for a zero-tolerance approach in relation to Swedish multi-year core support. Sida and FBA have also worked actively to counteract sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. Sweden has also promoted adoption by the OECD-DAC of a recommendation on the work of donor countries to end sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment in development cooperation and is engaged in active dialogue on these issues in the donor community.

5.2.2 Humanitarian aid

Swedish humanitarian aid is intended to save lives, alleviate suffering and uphold human dignity for people in need who are victims of or threatened by armed conflict, natural disaster or other catastrophic conditions.

The feminist foreign policy has resulted in a stronger gender perspective in Sweden's work with humanitarian aid. The Policy Framework for Swedish Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (Govt Comm. 2016/17:60) states that humanitarian aid is to contribute towards strengthening women's and girls' rights to protection in humanitarian crises and strengthen their opportunity to play an active role in response to humanitarian crises. This is a guiding principle for Swedish humanitarian aid, including through multilateral organisations such as the UN Refugee Agency (UNCHR), the UN Food Programme, the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), UN Humanitarian Funds and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Sweden is also taking action to integrate SRHR in humanitarian aid missions.

In the context of EU humanitarian aid programmes, Sweden has promoted the safeguarding of humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law, including a gender perspective and efforts to combat gender-based violence. Within the framework of the Grand Bargain adopted at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul and its monitoring, Sweden is working for more effective and flexible humanitarian aid with greater transparency and integration of a gender perspective. Sweden is also working to combat all types of violence against civilians in humanitarian contexts.

Gender analyses can be critical to saving lives and alleviating suffering, as the challenges and needs may be different for women and men, boys

and girls. For example, dramatic increases in gender-based violence, child marriage and teenage pregnancy have been demonstrated in disaster situations. Sweden is working actively towards an integrated gender perspective in needs assessments and response plans in the international system. For example, Sweden is urging an increase in the percentage of strategic gender analyses in UN response plans from around 40 percent at present to 100 percent, and has also advocated improved sex-disaggregated data and systematic use of gender equality markers.

Sweden has undertaken concrete efforts to integrate measures against sexual and gender-based violence into humanitarian aid efforts and the humanitarian reform process. Sweden has also committed to work aimed at giving people affected by crises greater influence over humanitarian work and has committed to support only humanitarian actors whose work is based on a gender analysis and sex- and age-disaggregated data. These issues are pursued and monitored in various ways, including through the framework of the global initiative Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergences launched by the UK and Sweden. Sweden also contributes to the Gender Standby Capacity Project, which deploys Gender Capacity Advisers to support UN Humanitarian Country Teams. These initiatives are contributing to increasing the competence of humanitarian actors to integrate a gender perspective in their work, including in matters of gender-based violence. Women's and girls' participation in humanitarian response and preventative efforts is also promoted. Sweden has consistently emphasised the importance of a gender perspective in international humanitarian law in contexts including the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul.

Sweden is also striving towards a 'triple nexus' approach, which involves greater interlinkages between humanitarian support, development cooperation and peace initiatives. A triple nexus approach needs to be context-specific and develop joint analysis, planning and objectives, which also includes a gender perspective.

5.2.3 Climate, the environment and gender equality

Sweden sees a clear link between climate, the environment and gender equality work. This link is garnering increasing attention, not least importantly in the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. It is clear that women's and girls' limited access to political, economic and material resources has a negative impact on their vulnerability to, and ability to adapt to, climate change. This applies particularly in relation to agriculture and food security, where women often bear the main responsibility. Women and girls are, however, also critical actors and agents for change in the work to counteract climate change.

Sweden was the driving force behind the inclusion of a gender perspective in the Paris Agreement and contributed to enabling women from all over the world to make their voices heard in connection with the negotiations. Within the major multilateral environmental and climate funds, Sweden has contributed to linking the climate and gender perspective. In funds such as the Global Environment Fund (GEF), the World Bank Climate Investment Funds (CIF), the Adaptation Fund and

the Green Climate Fund (GCF), Sweden has successfully championed the drafting of new and ambitious gender equality policies with concrete plans of action for implementation. Sweden has also worked actively for strategic recruitments to strengthen gender equality work in secretariats of environmental and climate funds.

Sweden has stepped up efforts to integrate the environmental and climate perspective with the gender perspective in Swedish development cooperation. Sweden is working actively with women's and girls' participation in bilateral, regional and global partnerships within natural resources programmes in agriculture, forestry, rural development, marine and other aquatic resources, where climate and biodiversity are critical. Sweden has also provided support to government agencies in developing countries in the development and implementation of climate and gender equality plans through the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

Sweden has also urged increased focus on gender equality with the Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL) initiative, including in its strategic plan for 2016–2021, and supports the SEforALL hub Energia, which advocates gender mainstreaming in energy policy and practice. Within the framework of international cooperation in the energy field, Sweden has joined Canada and Italy to relaunch Clean Energy Education and Empowerment (C3E). The partnership within C3E is one of the first international initiatives in the energy field and focuses on skill provision and strengthening women's leadership and participation in clean energy professions. Sweden is also involved in Equal by 30, a campaign within C3E in which public and private actors in the energy sector make commitments in relation to several general principles, which are that the actors will have balanced leadership, equal pay and equal opportunity for women and men by 2030.

Sweden has also contributed to a strengthened gender perspective in the work with ocean issues, including through the Friends of Ocean Action initiative. In line with this, the work within the initiative will be analysed and carried out in a manner that ensures that women and men have the same access to all actions taken to create healthy and sustainable oceans.

5.3 Trade and promotion including sustainable business

Swedish trade and promotion policy aims to promote Swedish economic interests and Sweden's image abroad, which in turn facilitates exports and imports and enables a mutual exchange of trade with other countries. Swedish trade policy and sustainable business have a strong redistributive effect and a clear gender perspective. The feminist foreign policy and the feminist trade policy have further raised the ambitions in pursuing and promoting a free, sustainable and fair trade policy that increases women's economic equality and empowerment. Active gender equality work is also ongoing in promotion efforts, which are oriented towards promoting both Sweden and Swedish exports. Reporting on the feminist trade and

promotion policy is also provided in other ways, such as within the framework of the strategies and action plans at the Government's disposal.

Skr. 2019/20:17

5.3.1 Trade

Globalisation has accelerated global trade and lifted people out of extreme poverty. Trade has played a critical role in this development. But the positive effects of trade – more jobs, increased growth, or cheaper products – currently benefit more men than women. For example, customs duties have been reduced more for products that are consumed by men than for products consumed by women. Nor do women participate in international trade to the same extent as men. Fewer women than men are employed by companies that participate in global trade, and women also confront more barriers than men in the establishment of companies and as entrepreneurs within international trade. In addition, fewer woman-owned companies in developing countries participate in the formal economy. However, international trade has tremendous potential to contribute to economic equality and women's economic empowerment through positive effects for women as employees, entrepreneurs, or consumers through, for example, higher employment or cheaper products.

Sweden's trade policy interests are pursued primarily through EU cooperation. Sweden is one of the countries that is most vigorously promoting the integration of and focus on gender equality in EU trade agreements as well as within the OECD and the World Trade Organization (WTO). The feminist trade policy implies that Sweden wants to see trade agreements that promote the interests of women, for example by contributing to job growth for women. Companies owned by women or sectors in which many women work must be prioritised in EU trade negotiations. In line with this, Sweden is encouraging the EU to identify how trade agreements can be expected to affect women and gender equality in the consequence assessments that precede trade policy negotiations.

Sweden is also working towards a stronger gender perspective in the WTO. Accordingly, Sweden and like-minded countries pushed through a declaration on gender equality and trade at the WTO Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires in 2017. The declaration was the first of its kind, was widely supported and has since worked as a platform for efforts going forward.

Sweden has also worked with the UN's trade body UNCTAD to produce a 'Trade and Gender Toolbox' containing methods for assessing the effects of trade policy initiatives on women and gender equality. The toolbox aims to contribute to trade playing a greater role as a tool for inclusive development and women's economic empowerment.

International standards are becoming more important, particularly in the effort to eliminate barriers for companies in global markets. It is therefore important that standards are not based solely on men's interests and are not designed using men as the norm. The gender perspective must become a natural part of international standardisation. In line with this, Sweden supports cooperation between the UN/WTO organisation International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Swedish Standards Institute (SIS) aimed at

developing a standard for woman-owned businesses. Sweden also supports other work within the ITC that supports small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries in engaging in trade and has a strong leadership role in relation to trade and gender equality and women's entrepreneurship. Initiatives launched by the ITC include the #SheTrades initiative which aims to connect a million women entrepreneurs to the market by 2020. The initiative identifies seven global actions in which governments, the private sector and civil society can make concrete pledges to eliminate barriers hampering women-owned businesses.

Another key issue for Sweden is to contribute to improving knowledge about unequal conditions in international trade and trade policy through the use of data and analysis. Accurate information is critical to progress in gender equality work. It is also important to Sweden that relevant organisations produce sex-disaggregated data and analyses within trade policy. Within the OECD, Sweden has pushed to strengthen gender analyses in the trade policy area and for the European Commission to seek gender analyses in connection with new legislative proposals for the internal market.

The Swedish National Board of Trade is the Government's expert agency for foreign trade, the EU internal market and EU trade policy. In line with the Government's feminist foreign policy and feminist trade policy, the National Board of Trade presented a study in 2019 on the links between international trade and gender equality aimed partly at increasing knowledge in the field and partly at presenting proposals for action. The National Board of Trade previously presented a study of trade, social sustainability and gender equality, and has held several seminars on gender equality and trade under the Global Review of Aid for Trade.

5.3.2 Promotion

Swedish export promotion is aimed at strengthening the capacity of businesses, especially small and medium sized enterprises, to export. The Government is carrying out initiatives within the enterprise and industrial policy to promote women's entrepreneurship in particular. Export and investment promotion is carried out largely through Sweden's export and investment council, Business Sweden. The Swedish Export Credits Guarantee Board and Svensk Exportkredit (SEK) are other key actors, whose financing offers can be critical to doing business in otherwise risky markets. In developing countries that have limited opportunities to provide financing, these agencies contribute financial resources to strengthen infrastructure investments in expanding public transportation, for example. Properly designed, this contributes especially to strengthening women's empowerment by giving them a chance to get to workplaces and markets that would otherwise be out of reach.

Sweden is supporting young women social entrepreneurs in countries including Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia through the Swedish Institute's (SI) She Entrepreneurs (SHE) leadership programme. SI has also been running the SHE-Leads leadership programme since 2017. SHE-Leads is aimed at strengthening established

women leaders and entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia, in part by creating networks between participants and contacts at Swedish companies.

The state-owned enterprise Swedfund has contributed as a development finance institution (DFI) to strengthening women's economic empowerment in ways including the Women4Growth talent programme, through which Swedfund supports portfolio companies in their efforts to identify barriers to women's advancement in business. Along with fifteen DFIs, Swedfund is part of and plays a leading role in the Gender Finance Collaborative, which is working to improve knowledge and increase capacity to make gender-smart investments. In May 2019, Swedfund signed the '2X Challenge' initiated by the G7 countries, whose aim is to mobilise capital to increase the economic empowerment of women. The Challenge entails a number of investment criteria and measurement criteria to determine whether investments are contributing to directing capital, goods and services to women or generating more jobs for women.

Various delegate missions are carried out with the participation of several Swedish companies within the framework of export promotion. The Government is taking action to ensure that these delegations are representative of Swedish society and Swedish business and therefore include both women and men. The same applies to panels at seminars and the like within promotion and in the selection and appointment of trade secretaries. For the promotion delegations to be more gender equal, sex-disaggregated data must also be produced with regard to corporate representation on business delegations that are funded by the Government. In addition, a promotion trip with only women delegates will also be carried out to focus on areas of business in which women are particularly active.

Gender equality and rights issues also have a prominent position in the work with promotion of Sweden, which involves promoting Swedish values and spreading the image of Sweden around the world. There is high demand for information and knowledge about Sweden's feminist foreign policy and national gender equality policy. In order to answer questions and spread information, Swedish missions abroad often use the toolboxes developed by SI that contain several gender equality-related tools and informational materials, including the photo exhibition *Swedish Dads* as well as a presentation of the feminist foreign policy.

Promotion of the arts and culture is another important tool in gender equality work. The drama *Seven* is a successful example. The play consists of seven narratives by women's rights activists from Afghanistan, Guatemala, Cambodia, Nigeria, Northern Ireland, Pakistan and Russia. The play has been performed in around 30 different counties and in almost as many languages, and is always staged as a collaboration involving local partners and the local Swedish Embassy. *Seven* is usually performed as readings by seven well-known personalities in the country, such as politicians, performing artists, athletes, journalists, musicians or individuals with lived experience of marginalisation. In this way, *Seven* has successfully communicated issues relating to women's rights and paved the way to meetings and discussions among various social actors.

5.3.3 Sustainable business and decent work

Sweden is pursuing an active sustainable business policy and considers this an important aspect of the effort to strengthen women's and girls' human rights in Sweden and internationally. As defined by the Government, sustainable business encompasses human rights, decent working conditions and gender equality. The feminist Government, feminist foreign policy and feminist trade policy have further reinforced the gender perspective.

As an owner, the state has a high level of ambition for sustainable business, which is a central aspect of the Government's corporate governance. The State Ownership Policy communicates that it is particularly important that state-owned enterprises are role models in relation to gender equality efforts and work actively with gender equality issues in every aspect of their operations. By this means, the Swedish state probably has one of the most gender-equal company portfolios in the world and is one of the countries in the EU with the highest percentage of women on the boards of directors of listed companies.

State-owned enterprises devote considerable effort to gender equality in accordance with guidelines and conventions, which is important to skill provision and attractiveness as an employer. The enterprises can also act as good role models in other countries through gender-equal distribution of power and influence and gender-equal pay. Moreover, Business Sweden has been tasked with supporting companies and Swedish missions abroad in relation to sustainable business. One of the results is an information package on sustainable business aimed at companies that participate in promotional trips abroad. The support materials make it clear that sustainable business, including human rights and gender equality, must be addressed in connection with promotion initiatives and trips for corporate delegations. Business Sweden's support to Swedish missions abroad include making it easier for them to assist Swedish companies in matters pertaining to sustainable business. An online training module on sustainable business has been produced as one aspect of this.

Sweden also supports and highlights women's entrepreneurship and women's business networks and contributes to things such as the drafting of an international framework intended to strengthen and smooth the way for woman-owned businesses. Through development cooperation, Sweden supports the OECD's Middle East and North Africa programme, which has focused on gender mainstreamed enterprise and has contributed to the establishment of a Women's Economic Empowerment Forum to improve women's economic opportunities in the region. Another example is the networks of local support centres for women that have been developed in recent years in accordance with the Swedish model (WINNET), in areas including the Interreg Baltic Sea Region, and which build upon cooperation between civil society, the state, the private sector and academia. These centres have created skill development opportunities and jobs for disadvantaged women, enabling them to empower themselves, resulting in increased self-confidence and more interest in political engagement and participation.

Effective labour market relationships and decent jobs contribute to greater equity and gender equality. In this area, it is essential to work for

gender equal distribution of unpaid home and caring work and improved working conditions for domestic workers. Sweden is therefore working towards the implementation of the core conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in all countries and to giving social dialogue a more prominent role. The core conventions regarding discrimination in employment and occupation and equal pay for men and women for equal work are particularly important to promoting gender equality in working life and ensuring that women can freely choose their occupations. At the International Labour Conference in June 2019, the ILO adopted a convention and recommendation concerning the elimination of violence and harassment in the workplace, which is a response to the #MeToo movement's demands for action to prevent sexual harassment. Sweden also launched the Global Deal initiative in 2016 in partnership with the ILO and the OECD to carry out a global initiative for social dialogue and better conditions in the labour market. The aim of the Global Deal is to improve dialogue with labour market actors and national governments to improve terms of employment and productivity. Under the Global Deal, Sweden has for example signed a cooperation agreement with Bangladesh to contribute to better dialogue between employers and employees in the country's female-dominated textiles industry. The OECD now hosts the Global Deal support unit jointly with the ILO. Sweden is the chair of the Global Deal Steering Committee, which is co-chaired by the ILO and the OECD. At the country level, Sweden is working to strengthen the role and rights of women in the labour market in countries including Iran, Cambodia, Croatia, Nigeria, Poland and Turkey. This work has often taken place in cooperation with Swedish companies, trade unions and government agencies.

6 Tools

The feminist foreign policy is being pursued in relation to a large number of countries and organisations and in various contexts and settings. This demands systematic methods and a range of different tools. Analysis and knowledge-gathering are prerequisites for understanding and shedding light on the situation of women and girls in various contexts. Influence can be strengthened by using agency, alliances, platforms, networks and international oversight and follow-up mechanisms. Communication and public diplomacy are other central tools. Consular work also plays an important role in contributing to the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls worldwide.

6.1 Analysis and knowledge

Analysis and knowledge are prerequisites for understanding, explaining and confronting lack of gender equality and barriers to all women's and girls' full enjoyment of human rights. In line with this, gender analyses and knowledge-gathering are used regularly in the work with the feminist

foreign policy, including through the gathering of existing knowledge and analysis within the Foreign Service and other Swedish agencies, as well as within the EU and multilateral organisations. Accordingly, Sweden also seeks and encourages gender analyses and sex- and age-disaggregated data if it is not available from bilateral and multilateral actors and CSOs.

There has been progress at the global level regarding gender equality statistics, including through the adoption of joint gender equality indicators for monitoring the 2030 Agenda. Many countries, however, still have limited capacity to define, collect, analyse and report data and statistics. Sweden's development cooperation is therefore contributing support to improve gender equality statistics, research and method development, which is expected to contribute to improving the implementation and monitoring of gender equality within the framework of the 2030 Agenda.

Research and the collection of data on the importance of gender equality in foreign policy-related areas is growing in Sweden and internationally. Evidence-based advocacy can be reinforced by harnessing and providing Swedish support to research that sheds light on gender inequality and power structures. Such advocacy is central to contributing to changing gender stereotypical norms and attitudes. Research in the area of WPS, which is supported by FBA and conducted at the Swedish Defence University, where Sweden's first Anna Lindh Professor in Gender, Peace and Security was appointed in 2019, is one example. Another is the data collection carried out in the legislative arena and that was discussed at a workshop on gender-discriminatory legislation and practices hosted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs in autumn 2016. The meeting brought together the World Bank, ICC, EU and other actors. One of the results was that Sweden allocated targeted support to the World Bank's work on the Women, Business and the Law (WBL) initiative. The initiative examines the law in 189 economies based on a gender perspective and the impact on women's opportunities for economic participation. The results are published in a database and regular reports that have evolved into very important tools for knowledge and advocacy.

Consultation and interaction with various social actors are another knowledge-gathering tool. In Ethiopia, for example, Sweden has established a gender equality network that can assist the embassy in the analysis and understanding of developments in gender equality and women's and girls' rights in the country. The network also contributes to the planning of various events and activities presented by the embassy. Participants in the network represent various segments of Ethiopian society, including the public and private sectors, academia, civil society and the media. Likewise, Sweden has broadened and deepened its exchange of knowledge with various social actors around the world, particularly women's rights organisations and CSOs that work for gender equality and human rights.

The feminist foreign policy has created a distinct platform for dialogue and agency that has made it possible to further elevate Sweden's profile in the work for global gender equality and women's and girls' rights, representation and resources. In turn, this has given Sweden the credibility to claim and take on specialised roles in highly prioritised sub-areas.

Sweden's membership in the UN Security Council 2017–2018 was a manifestation of agency that made it possible to push for the WPS agenda. The Swedish approach was to consistently integrate the WPS agenda in the Council's day-to-day work with resolutions and statements. Sweden also urged stronger, wider reporting on the situation of women and girls in various conflicts discussed by the Council and an improved gender perspective in the UN's work in the field. Sweden ensured, for example, that all UN missions subject to negotiations included a mandate to work with the WPS agenda. Sweden also achieved stronger statements about WPS in other texts, such as presidential statements on crisis situations and a presidential statement on protection of civilians. Sweden put strong emphasis on women's participation in peace processes, but also urged the UN and the Security Council to strengthen their commitment to combat sexual and gender-based violence in conflicts. As an aspect of this, Sweden took the initiative to make sexual and gender-based violence a separate listing criterion in the UN sanctions regimes for a number of countries. Sweden also followed up the work in the Security Council with field trips to observe how mandates and intentions were being put into practice on the ground. Based on this in-depth work, Sweden wrote recommendations as to how the UN can further develop its work with WPS. The recommendations were sent to the Secretary-General of the UN ahead of the annual open debate in the UN Security Council on WPS in 2018. At that time, Sweden launched a new meeting format, a multi-actor forum in which women's rights organisations and members of the Security Council were given the opportunity to meet and discuss in connection with the open debate. Sweden also contributed to an increased number of representatives of civil society, especially women's rights organisations, being able to inform the Security Council in its formal sessions. During its temporary membership, Sweden joined Uruguay (2017) and Peru (2018) in the Security Council's informal expert group on WPS and worked to make the group even more effective in supporting the Council with information and recommendations for stronger implementation in the field. The assessment is that the Swedish approach clearly contributed to strengthening the work of the Security Council with WPS. This assessment was made by actors including the CSO Working Group for WPS, which continuously monitors the work of the Security Council.

Contributing to women's and girls' freedom from physical, psychological and sexual violence is one of the focus areas of the feminist foreign policy. According to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), sexual violence can be an element of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Sweden supports the ICC and is committed to upholding the independence of the ICC and the Chief Prosecutor. Sweden supports the work to prevent the incidence of and impunity for gender-based and sexual violence in conflicts. The work has

encompassed cooperation with countries and national legal institutions and other bilateral actors and has often involved increasing national capacity to investigate and prosecute violent crimes. In 2014–2016, Sweden took on additional agency, in partnership with Botswana, by facilitating exchanges of experience concerning the investigation and prosecution of breaches of ICC statutes. The work in 2016 included facilitating contacts between actors at the regional, national and international levels. This effort contributed, for example, to drawing the attention of a large number of actors to the need to combat stigma, strengthen protection for victims of crime and witnesses and acknowledge the important role of CSOs in the effort. Sweden also works within the EU to support the ICC and discourage withdrawal from the Rome Statute. The High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy has made several statements in support of the ICC and the EU has also encouraged the implementation of changes in the national legislation of States Parties that are necessary to comply with the provisions of the Rome Statute.

Another example of agency applied to the initiative Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies, where Sweden took on the role of Global Lead during 2016–2017. The aim of the initiative is to prevent and increase protection from gender-based violence in humanitarian crises and drive change in relation to the issue. The work is carried out by fostering accountability among actors in the humanitarian system for including the issue of gender-based violence in their work. Sweden met its objective to increase membership and the network now includes more than 80 partners, including states, bilateral donors, multilateral organisations and CSOs. During Sweden's term as Global Lead, the partners made more than 360 commitments in relation to the Call to Action Roadmap. Some of the results achieved include OECD-DAC improving its data collection and that the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has committed to establishing a gender perspective in all projects that receive funding from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund. Sweden has also led the work of the steering committee and driven advocacy work in relevant forums, both in the field and at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul.

Combating human trafficking is a prioritised issue for Sweden. The current national action plan was adopted in 2018. The number of victims of human trafficking worldwide has increased in recent years. This could be because more victims are being discovered, but most likely also entails an increase in absolute numbers, in part due to the large migration and refugee flows in recent years. Sweden is a strong driver of efforts to combat human trafficking for sexual exploitation and on International Women's Day, 8 March 2019, took a joint diplomatic initiative with France aimed at eliminating human trafficking for sexual exploitation and prostitution. It is clear to Sweden that there is a connection between allowing prostitution and the occurrence of human trafficking for sexual exploitation. Sweden emphasises the importance of not creating legal markets for human trafficking and prostitution. The issue of how human trafficking for sexual exploitation can be combated is contentious in certain respects as views on prostitution may vary. Sweden's stance on this matter is clear. On the first of January 1999, Sweden was the first country

in the world to criminalise the purchase, but not the sale, of sex. The criminal focus and guilt are thereby shifted from the exploited to the exploiter. Sweden is working actively to encourage more countries to consider the same type of legislation and there is great interest internationally. Several countries have taken action according to the Swedish model, including Canada, Norway and Iceland, followed in recent years by Northern Ireland, France and Israel. Nevertheless, Sweden often stands alone in driving the issue within the EU and globally. This imposes demands on Sweden for persistent and robust commitment and agency.

6.3 Alliances, platforms and networks

Networks, alliance-building and multilateral cooperation are becoming increasingly important to pursuing effective efforts for gender equality and all women's and girls' full enjoyment of human rights. It is also fundamental to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In some cases, these partnerships may involve gathering and mobilising alliances on matters that are not making progress or are being challenged, such as SRHR. In other cases, it may involve unpacking and correcting structural deficiencies, such as the absence of women in peace brokering, by the international community. A few examples follow of alliances, platforms and networks that Sweden has initiated or participated in within the framework of implementing the feminist foreign policy.

The Swedish Women's Mediation Network was initiated in 2015 in response to the significant under-representation of women in international mediation and peace processes. The aim of the network is to promote peaceful conflict resolution and actively support women's meaningful participation in peace processes before, during and after conflicts. The mediation network is a flexible resource that works strategically and can engage at short notice in different conflict contexts. There is great demand, and the network has had to be expanded from nine to fifteen members. The members, who come from both civil society and the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, possess both thematic and geographic fields of expert knowledge. Thus far, they have carried out initiatives in countries including Afghanistan, Burundi, Colombia, Georgia, Somalia, Ukraine and Zimbabwe. These efforts have taken place at different levels, and have included strategic support for women at the local level as well as contributions to peace negotiations at the highest level. The Swedish Women's Mediation Network is part of a Nordic mediation network, and works closely with UN, the EU, the AU and OSCE, as well as several similar regional and national networks that have been developed since Sweden took its original initiative.

In 2015, Sweden was involved in launching the International Gender Champions (IGC), a network that brings together decision-makers to commit to challenging structures and barriers to gender equality. The network was established in Geneva, but has since grown to become a much broader network of more than 200 leaders from a large number of countries and a wide range of institutions including public administrations, the UN, the EU, academia and civil society. All members have signed the IGC

Panel Parity Pledge, committing to no longer sit on single-sex panels. Each member also sets their own gender equality objectives, involving anything from overall operational targets to their own leadership. In this way, the network is helping to reveal structures that impede gender equality and helping leaders accept personal accountability for gender equality issues. The network also takes the initiative in urgent matters and was, for example, the driving force behind the declaration on gender equality and trade presented at the WTO Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires in 2017. The Nordic group within the network has set the joint objective of promoting a work-family life balance through 1) early information and advance notice of meetings to enhance predictability and planning, and 2) avoiding calling meetings that will take place during evenings, weekends and public holidays.

The #HeForShe campaign is raising awareness of men's roles and responsibilities in the fight for gender equality. The global movement was initiated by UN Women and is aimed at engaging people of all genders to stand in solidarity with women for gender equality. The campaign has spread widely since the launch in 2014 and has created a platform where representatives of governments, civil society, academia and schools can work together. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven was named a HeForShe Champion in 2015 at the World Economic Forum in Davos, where the PM and the goodwill ambassador for the initiative, actor Emma Watson, jointly emphasised the importance of everyone working together for increased gender equality. The PM highlighted subjects including efforts against all forms of violence against women and girls and Swedish work with SRHR. Sweden has also committed to working for more gender equal employment, health and representation between men and women.

#She Decides was launched in March 2017 at a conference in Brussels, organised by Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. The initiative was a reaction to reduced support for SRHR and marked the start of a broad new movement that has since mobilised both financial and political support from CSOs, UN bodies, countries and other actors to support all women's and girls' rights to decide over their own bodies. #SheDecides illustrates the importance of alliance building and the energy that resides in quickly creating a platform and mobilising widespread support in connection with a particularly burning issue. More than 120,000 Friends of SheDecides have joined the initiatives and since 2017, more than USD 450 million has been mobilised all over the world in support of SRHR (donors' total support for SRHR in development assistance).

The Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality was arranged by Sweden in April 2018. The aim was to create a global platform for mobilisation and exchange of methods to achieve gender equality. The forum brought together more than 700 participants from more than 100 different countries. The participants included politicians, civil servants, representatives from international organisations, activists, debaters, academics, industry actors and representatives from civil society. The key word for the conference was 'co-creation'. In this spirit, conference participants were asked to contribute to the content and structure of the programme. This resulted in a dynamic meeting on highly topical issues, such as women's economic empowerment, SRHR and women's role in

peace work. Several new reports and initiatives were launched, including the World Bank's latest Women, Business and the Law report and a Call to Action for Women Human Rights Defenders presented by the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, together with a number of partners, as well as several new initiatives and partnerships initiated by meeting participants. During the week of the conference, #GenderEqualWorld reached almost three million people worldwide and through a specially developed toolbox, SI has made it possible for Swedish embassies and other stakeholders to continue spreading information about the conference and its results. In connection with the forum, the first Feminist Think Space, an informal platform for in-depth discussions of current gender equality challenges, was arranged in cooperation with UN Women.

As a follow-up on the conference in Stockholm, the Tunis Forum on Gender Equality was organised in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Women, with support from Sweden, and was held 24–26 April 2019. The aim of the Tunis Forum was to follow up the discussions in Stockholm and contribute to and discuss 1) monitoring of the commitments in the Beijing Platform for Action ahead of its 25th anniversary in 2020, 2) the WPS agenda, 3) women's political representation at the local level and 4) innovation and technology. As in Stockholm, the Tunis Forum drew hundreds of CSO actors and human rights activists from all over the world. A unique feature of the Tunis Forum was the goal that half of the participants would be aged 35 or younger, which provided tremendous scope for young people in the forum's panels and discussions. Presenters gathered materials during the forum that were distilled into recommendations for the follow-up to the Beijing Platform. This effort is continuing, and France and Mexico will be partnering with UN Women to arrange a global forum for gender equality in 2020.

6.4 International oversight and monitoring

An active effort to encourage and monitor commitments is essential to advancing global gender equality work. In this area, Sweden uses its collaborative efforts, such as board membership, part ownership, membership, partnership and other tools to create impact.

As one aspect of this, Sweden works directly with the operational parts of the EU and multilateral organisations to ensure the existence of policies for work on behalf of gender equality and human rights and institutional compliance with these regulations. Sweden's work with and support for the UN reform effort, where Sweden is advocating for a stronger gender perspective, is one example. Another is that Sweden is demanding that the outcomes frameworks of international environmental and climate funds include indicators relevant to gender equality. This enables monitoring of the funds' outcomes in the gender equality area, including women's participation in project design and implementation, and the inclusion of gender equality criteria for accrediting implementation organisations. Sweden is also a driving force in the gender equality work of multilateral development banks and their preparation of gender equality strategies.

Oversight and monitoring mechanisms for human rights conventions are also important tools. Sweden advocates full implementation of international commitments to human rights, encourages more countries to ratify various conventions and urges countries that have made reservations to conventions to withdraw those that conflict with the aims and purposes of the conventions.

Sweden participates actively in the Universal Periodic Review, an oversight mechanism in which all UN Member States give each other recommendations pertaining to fulfilling human rights. Sweden regularly draws attention to urgent issues pertaining to human rights in the countries that are reviewed and particularly those pertinent to women's and girls' enjoyment of human rights.

The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is a central convention covering non-discrimination and women's and girls' enjoyment of human rights. CEDAW was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979 and is one of the most widely ratified conventions, but also the one that the most countries have made reservations against. Countries that have ratified the convention are required to submit regular reports to the CEDAW Committee. The process provides opportunities for dialogue on gender equality with the UN, Member States and CSOs, which often produce shadow reports to the national reports.

The World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which is still one of the most progressive international documents pertaining to gender equality and women's and girls' enjoyment of human rights. The Platform for Action states that gender equal conditions should be achieved through work with gender mainstreaming combined with special actions in twelve central areas:

- Women and poverty
- Education and training of women
- Women and health
- Violence against women
- Women and armed conflict
- Women and the economy
- Women in power and decision-making
- Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
- Human rights of women
- Women and the media
- Women and the environment
- The girl child

The goals of the Beijing Platform were meant to be achieved by 2000. But a great deal of work will still remain to be done in 2020, the 25th anniversary of the platform. Ahead of this event, a global review and appraisal of the implementation of the Platform for Action will be carried out to identify outstanding challenges. The review will be preceded by national consultations and review reports in which numerous actors are expected to participate from civil society, academia and the private sector. Regional review reports will be prepared by the UN regional commissions

on the basis of the national reports. Further, France and Mexico are partnering with UN Women to arrange the Generation Equality Forum, a global gathering for gender equality in 2020, after which the anniversary will also be marked at the UN General Assembly. Sweden supports the global process of following up the Beijing Platform and the reviews being done in various countries, especially developing countries. The global review of the Platform for Action is also closely connected to the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda and the Global Goals for Sustainable Development.

The UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is a functional commission of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) that follows up the Beijing Platform with annual discussions and declarations on the theme linked to the twelve critical areas of concern. The global review of the Beijing Platform will be presented at CSW in 2020 to mark the anniversary. CSW is a central platform for the promotion and advancement of global gender equality work. Sweden is one of the strongest advocates for the issues that are the target of the most – and rising – opposition, such as SRHR, scope and protection for human rights organisations and issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity. Initiatives from Sweden and like-minded countries in the context of CSW negotiations have often been important to gaining support for statements on subjects including sexual and reproductive health.

The UN Commission on Population and Development (CPD) is another functional commission under ECOSOC, which each year follows up the Programme of Action that resulted from the UN International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in 1994. The Programme of Action from the conference, which also guides the work of the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), includes goals related to reduction of maternal mortality and infant and child mortality, access to reproductive and sexual health services, including family planning, which includes prevention of unwanted pregnancy and access to post-abortion care, as well as education about sexual health. These issues were and remain controversial. CPD is a platform for progressing gender equality issues, and not least so in relation to SRHR. Due to the strong opposition in the area, CPD has been unable to adopt any substantial resolutions in recent years, but Sweden and like-minded countries are driving forces for implementation. Accomplishments include a brief political declaration at the CPD session held in the spring of 2019, 25 years after the conference.

The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, known as the Istanbul Convention, was adopted in 2011 and was the first legally binding regional instrument on violence against women in Europe. The Convention condemns all forms of violence and describes violence against women as a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between women and men. Unlike other definitions of violence against women, the Istanbul Convention also includes economic suffering. Implementation of the Istanbul Convention is monitored by an expert group called GREVIO. Based on the Istanbul Convention, Sweden is working to bring about an effective, comprehensive and coordinated policy to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence. Sweden has developed a ten-year national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women, including honour-related violence and

oppression. A plan of action is linked to the strategy. Consultations with civil society also occur. Further, Sweden is working very actively to encourage both the EU and additional states to ratify and implement the Istanbul Convention and to strengthen accountability and combat legal impunity for violence against women and girls.

6.5 Communication and public diplomacy

The feminist foreign policy aims to bring about change. This requires strategic communication and public diplomacy that reach new target groups and can contribute to normative impact. Social media messages have proven to be a successful way of reaching out, even in countries with relatively little internet access. A website called Swedish Foreign Policy Stories is another important tool. There are additional examples under #EqualityMakesSense.

The hashtag #Morewomenmorepeace was launched to mark the 15th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security in 2015 and aims to underline the importance of strengthening the role of women in peacebuilding and peace talks. It has been used in a number of contexts since then, such as when Swedish missions abroad arrange events to raise awareness of the resolution or when targeted initiatives are taken to increase women's participation in peace work, such as when the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) worked closely alongside the Swedish Embassy in Kabul to train around 30 women from different provinces in Afghanistan in dialogue and mediation. The hashtag has also been used in a series of articles about women peace actors, which is available on the website, Swedish Foreign Policy Stories.

In 2015, Sweden launched the #Midwives4all initiative with the aim of highlighting the central role of midwives and mobilising support for the profession using methods such as digital diplomacy. The campaign has had a wide reach. In Uganda alone, around 4.5 million people have been reached via social media, radio and newspapers, and through famous Ugandans being named champions of the initiative. Sweden also supports the training of midwives in Uganda and takes part in an annual award ceremony that recognises outstanding skill within the profession. This cooperation has strengthened Ugandan women's and girls' access to safe maternity care, which in turn has led to reductions in maternal mortality and premature births.

One of the targeted initiatives and hashtags that has had the greatest impact is #WikiGap. Wikipedia is the world's biggest online and user-generated encyclopaedia. The content provided influences users' understanding of the world. However, there is profound imbalance. Ninety per cent of the content has been created by men, and there are four times more articles about men than about women. To help bring about change, Sweden, in partnership with Wikimedia and a number of local partners in various countries, launched an initiative called #WikiGap to add information about women to Wikipedia. The initiative began on International Women's Day, 8 March 2018, and was carried out in the form of parallel edit-a-thons in almost 50 countries, from Sweden to

Indonesia, Egypt and Colombia. More than 1,600 people took part, writing articles in over 30 languages. During the first three months of the campaign alone, participants wrote almost 4,000 new articles that were read over five million times, and more articles are continuing to stream in. To support this initiative, a toolbox was produced containing a step-by-step guide to organising #WikiGap events, including logos, communication materials and suggestions for those wishing to take the project further. A special #WikiGap film has also been produced.

Swedish Dads is a photo exhibition featuring portraits of fathers who have chosen to take at least six months of parental leave, by photographer Johan Bävman. The aim of the exhibition is to show the effects of more gender equal parenting at the individual and societal levels. Another aim is to focus on universal loving aspects of parenting, regardless of whether this involves fathers or mothers. The exhibition is provided through SI and has evolved into an important tool in the work of the feminist foreign policy to bring about new attitudes and values. The photographs have been shown at Swedish embassies in around 70 countries, and more exhibitions are planned. The *Swedish Dads* exhibition has generated discussion in many countries, and has acted as a useful springboard for further dialogue and events relating to gender roles and gender equality. Swedish embassies have arranged local photo competitions in which fathers can participate in several countries, including China, Uganda, Thailand, Tunisia and Switzerland. In other cases, the exhibition has been augmented with discussions of parental insurance, socially engaged photography, the role of fathers and norms of masculinity. The exhibition has taken different forms and has been shown in different places within society, including in the Shanghai Metro and at the OECD in Paris. Employees at some embassies have also further developed aspects of the campaign by adopting the term ‘Embassy Dads’ and using social media to talk about their own experiences as dads and equal partners. A collection of photographs from the local exhibitions all over the world has also been created under the title *Global Dads*.

Events connected to International Women's Day, International Human Rights Day, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, International Day of the Girl and other international days have been used to spread messages of gender equality and women's and girls' rights in panel discussions, speeches, articles, radio programmes and social media posts. Sweden is also actively involved in the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence campaign, which is held every year and runs from 25 November, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, to 10 December, which is International Human Rights Day.

Swedish and local holidays also offer opportunities to discuss gender equality and women's and girls' rights. The Swedish Embassy in Tanzania, for example, used the Lucia reception in 2017 to reach out with the message about girls' rights. The event was broadcast on one of the biggest local TV channels, ensuring a wide reach for the message.

6.6 Consular work

Swedish embassies and consulates are being contacted more frequently by people in need who are resident in Sweden, but who have been victims of family-related violence while travelling abroad, often combined with being prevented from returning to Sweden. Those who are affected risk being subjected to forced marriage or female genital mutilation, experiencing threats, coercion or violence from their families, or being forced to stay abroad against their will. This group of people in need, made up overwhelmingly of women and girls, is prioritised from the consular perspective because they are being held against their will by their families in a context where legislation and the norm system in the country often prevent assistance from local authorities. The usual consular toolbox – customary prudence and help to self-help and so on – is thus generally unavailable.

In response to this development, the Government has reinforced and streamlined consular assistance to these individuals in need. This has been accomplished by means including expanded cooperation with relevant actors in Sweden and the countries concerned and by building a knowledge base pertaining to laws in the countries relevant to the initiative. These actions are in turn aimed at strengthened preventative efforts in Sweden, which improves opportunities to reach the people at risk so that they know where they can turn for help while they are still in Sweden.

7 Arenas, actors and channels

The feminist foreign policy will be implemented through and in cooperation with the EU, multilateral organisations and other actors of which Sweden is a member or partner, or where it acts through the EU. These organisations and actors include the UN, multilateral development banks and trade-related organisations. Sweden cooperates with these actors and uses board assignments, ownership, memberships, partnerships and other tools to urge normative and operational work to promote gender equality and the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls.

7.1 The United Nations and other multilateral actors

The UN is a central body for the normative work in support of global gender equality and all women's and girls' full enjoyment of human rights. Sweden participates actively in negotiations on human rights and gender equality in forums including the UN General Assembly and its various committees, the UN Human Rights Council and the UN Commission on the Status of Women. Sweden is also working to reinforce the UN's operational role and initiatives related to gender equality. With Swedish support, the UN Secretary-General has continued to reform the UN

development system, peace and security architecture and internal administration, and has increased the number of women in managerial positions. Sweden is a driving force behind making gender equality and women's and girls' rights, representation and resources one of the fundamental premises of the entire reform process. Sweden is working for example to increase the number of gender equality experts and for their placement at higher levels within the system. Sweden is moreover seeking to reinforce capacity for gender analysis, including gender and conflict analysis, which requires sex-disaggregated data and increased gender equality reporting from the field. Further, Sweden is urging gender budgeting across the board. Sweden is also taking powerful action against sexual exploitation and sexual harassment within the UN system.

Sweden's membership of the UN Security Council in 2017–2018 was founded on respect for international law and human rights, as well as on work for gender equality. This included systematic and continuous efforts for the WPS agenda. For example, Sweden promoted gender analyses of conflict situations and increased usage of sex-disaggregated data. When Sweden was the president of the Council in July 2018, gender balance among the individuals who informed the Security Council was also ensured, for the first time ever.

The main mission of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) is to promote and protect human rights around the world. The HRC is the foremost intergovernmental, normative body for human rights. Sweden is working actively within the EU and along with other states to advance the positions and resist attempts to undermine, weaken and relativise human rights and their universality. This includes consistently urging the inclusion of the full enjoyment of human rights of women and girls in resolutions, statements and other initiatives. Sweden also supports the opportunity of civil society to participate in the work of the HRC and is working actively against the trend of limiting this participation.

Through its support to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Sweden has, as one of the largest donors, contributed to strengthening international instruments for human rights, combating impunity for violations, promoting gender equality, combating discrimination and strengthening accountability and the rule of law.

Sweden is one of the largest donors to several UN agencies, funds and programmes, providing ample opportunities to influence the work of the organisations and outcomes for gender equality and women's and girls' rights. The feminist foreign policy has elevated the profile of Sweden's efforts for women's and girls' rights and empowerment through, for example, initiatives within the framework of multilateral development cooperation. In addition to Sweden's core support, Sida contributes to thematic programme activities in the bodies that put strong emphasis on human rights and gender equality. This is combined with Sweden's work in the context of board representation and Swedish missions abroad to encourage UN organisations to step up their gender equality work and, as needed, to put pressure on governments. Sweden was also one of the countries that urged a gender perspective with gender equality targets and indicators that are now integrated in the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development.

The UN Development Programme (UNDP) works with development issues on a broad front in line with the 2030 Agenda and other initiatives, whose mission is to eradicate all forms of poverty based on a multidimensional perspective on poverty. Sweden supports the UNDP in various ways, including its comprehensive work for legal system reform, human security and human rights. Promoting a gender perspective across all of the organisation's activities is an important aspect of Sweden's ongoing dialogue with the UNDP.

The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) has a global mandate to contribute to the realisation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda. Its activities are based without exception on a rights and gender perspective and the main target group is disadvantaged and marginalised women and children. Girls' rights are key. Sweden is a major donor to UNICEF and drives Sweden's priorities through active board work and cooperation in the field. The work of UNICEF has, for example, contributed to reaching millions of women and children with supportive initiatives to combat gender-based violence. The fund has also contributed to the development of national plans or strategies to prevent child marriage. Sweden is also active within the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, which was launched in July 2016 and is a joint initiative of several governments, UNICEF, WHO and other organisations. In 2018, Sweden, in cooperation with the Global Partnership, hosted a Solutions Summit that gathered about 400 participants from 67 countries. Several new global initiatives in the work to prevent and end violence against children were presented at the summit.

Within the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Sweden has worked on behalf of the safety of women journalists in both traditional and digital media worldwide. Sweden has also contributed to the global UNESCO campaign for comprehensive sexuality education, which has had substantial impact.

Gender equality has also been a Swedish priority in contexts including the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the ILO, as well as within the UN Office on Drugs and crime (UNODC). As an example, Sweden has financed a coordination function for gender equality that has been attached to the staff of the Executive Director of UNODC and has achieved concrete results, including a gender equality strategy that is now being implemented.

UN Women, the UN's entity dedicated to gender equality and women's empowerment has a tripartite mandate: a normative mandate pertaining to gender equality and women's empowerment, an operational mandate to provide support to UN Member States in the implementation of the normative framework, and a coordinating mandate to lead, coordinate and follow up gender equality work in the UN system. Sweden has been among the organisation's largest donors, in terms of core support and total support, since its inception in 2011. Sweden has been particularly vigilant in protecting the normative aspect of UN Women's activities as well as the rights and gender perspective that characterises the organisation's work. Other prioritised areas have been the WPS agenda, women's participation in all types of decision processes and women's economic empowerment and access to economic resources. Sweden's achievements through UN Women include contributing to the strengthening of legislation on

violence against women and girls in numerous countries. The organisation cooperates with other actors including religious leaders and men's groups to change norms and prevent violence against women. Sweden has also contributed to strengthening UN Women as the coordinator of the work with gender equality and women's empowerment within the framework of the 2030 Agenda. UN Women also has a key role in augmenting and supporting the work of the UNFPA for SRHR, with special emphasis on rights issues, and in relation to its wider gender equality mandate.

The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) is engaged in SRHR work. The goals of the UNFPA are universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, the promotion of gender equality and reproductive rights and reduction of maternal and child mortality. The focus areas include initiatives to combat violence against women, female genital mutilation, unwanted and unplanned pregnancies including teenage pregnancy, child marriage, the spread of HIV and AIDS and maternal mortality. Initiatives include the promotion of comprehensive sexuality education, contraception advice and distribution and midwife training. In recent years, the UNFPA has expanded its work in humanitarian contexts, with focus on initiatives to support women's and girls' access to SRHR and combat gender-based violence. The organisation also works to increase knowledge about population issues. Activities are aimed especially at women, girls and young people, with focus on disadvantaged and excluded groups. Swedish priorities within UNFPA are to strengthen normative and operational rights work, with focus on gender equality and sexual and reproductive rights. Sweden is also intent on strengthening the work of the UNFPA for gender equality and SRHR in humanitarian crises and on stepping up efforts to reduce maternal mortality and teenage pregnancies. Sweden underlines the importance of the UNFPA working for its full mandate and agenda in all countries in which the organisation is active.

Sweden has also continued to be a global actor and advocate for SRHR throughout the UN system. SRHR has, for example, been a central element of global Swedish efforts within the UN Programme on HIV and AIDS, WHO, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation.

In the environmental and climate area, Sweden is a major donor to the large multilateral environmental and climate funds, such as GEF, GCE, climate investment funds and UN environmental programmes. In this context, Sweden has worked to integrate the environmental and climate perspective with the gender perspective. Sweden's proactive approach and boots on the ground to promote gender equality have contributed to concrete results in the form of new gender equality policies, strategies and action plans, as well as e-learning courses that are used internally and distributed externally.

The multilateral development banks (the World Bank Group and the regional development banks) work to support economic growth and sustainable development through loans on favourable terms, donations and advice. They are financed mainly through partner capital and voluntary contributions negotiated at regular replenishment talks. Gender equality is a clear priority in Sweden's cooperation with the World Bank Group, with focus on issues including women's economic agency and implementing the World Bank Group's gender equality strategy. As implementation of

the bank's gender equality strategy in partner countries is uneven, Sweden has worked to ensure consistent implementation and follow-up. As an active member of the board of directors of the World Bank Group, Sweden has contributed to gender equality becoming one of five prioritised areas for the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA), a fund that supports the world's poorest countries. As such, IDA is a key instrument in contributing to women's economic empowerment, infrastructure, private sector development and agriculture. This entails commitments to use sex-disaggregated data to improve financial inclusion, analyse segregation in the labour market, enhance knowledge about gender differences and increase access to maternity care and reproductive health care. Sweden also champions the gender equality work of the regional development banks by being an active donor and board member. One example is Sweden's active work on the board of the Asian Development Bank, which has contributed to the inclusion of ambitious gender equality targets in the bank's long-term organisational strategy. Sweden has also played a prominent role in the drafting of gender equality strategies in the African Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank and the Council of Europe Development Bank. Within the Council of Europe Development Bank, Sweden has also contributed to designing gender equality indicators on which the bank's assessment of the need for project investments are based. Through support to the EBRD's Women in Business Programme, women entrepreneurs in Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans have been provided capacity development and advice as well as loans on favourable terms from local banks.

Sweden has pursued the feminist foreign policy and feminist trade policy in its work within trade-related international organisations. The World Trade Organization (WTO) supports the capacity of developing countries to benefit from trade, opportunities to participate in accession talks, align with and implement WTO agreements and harness the rights and advantages of membership. Sweden is urging a stronger gender perspective within the WTO and is working towards this through the EU, for example. The results of Sweden's work include that the WTO work programme Aid for Trade now has a gender perspective. Further, Sweden has encouraged relevant trade organisations to collect statistics and include the gender perspective in their analyses in order to ensure that international trade and trade policy strengthen women's economic equality and empowerment.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) works for global economic integration, rule-based international cooperation and sustainable trade. OECD publications include reports, recommendations and reviews. Sweden has been able to contribute to ensuring that the work is more extensively based on sex-disaggregated data, which has made OECD reports more comprehensive and able to serve as an even better point of reference and source of knowledge than before. In its ongoing arguments in favour of increased gender equality, Sweden has made very good use of, for example, an OECD report that shows how gender equality in the labour market has encouraged growth in the Nordic countries. Sweden has also created a gender equality group within the OECD, called The Friends of Gender Equality. This group

meets regularly, discussing topics such as gender budgeting and the importance of gathering and analysing sex-disaggregated data. Skr. 2019/20:17

7.2 The European Union

The EU is Sweden's most important foreign policy platform and the feminist foreign policy is a clear profile issue for Sweden's work in the EU. Sweden is encouraging the EU to work for gender equality in all foreign policy activities and for gender mainstreaming in accordance with the treaties. Through systematic and continuous work for women's and girls' rights, representation and resources, Sweden has developed profound credibility as a global gender equality actor within the EU.

The EU has several instruments and platforms at its disposal in the work for gender equality in external relations. The Global Strategy for EU's foreign and security policy states that human rights and gender equality shall be systematically integrated in various policy areas and within EU institutions. Greater awareness and expertise on such matters within EEAS and the European Commission will be required to achieve this. Sweden is working for the promotion of gender equality in the implementation of the Global Strategy, not least in conflict situations.

Sweden is promoting the role of women in EU peace work and pushes for all EU crisis management missions to have specific and well-trained gender equality advisers. Sweden played a critical role in the adoption of the EU Civilian CSDP Compact for civilian crisis management and is pushing for the implementation and follow-up of the gender components of the framework. Sweden was also actively involved in drafting the EU's new strategy and action plan for WPS.

Sweden worked actively to expand the EU's Gender Action Plan (GAP), which formerly applied only to EU development cooperation, to cover all EU external work as of 2016. This change entailed a significant raising of ambitions and is paving the way for more coordinated action. An important focus of the plan is the need for an institutional culture shift in order to more effectively deliver on EU commitments to gender equality. The emphasis is on leadership, accountability and adequate resources for gender equality. The three other thematic pillars of the GAP involve ensuring girls' and women's physical and psychological integrity, promoting the social and economic rights and empowerment of girls and women, and strengthening girls' and women's voices and participation. Sweden pushes for the full implementation of the GAP in all EU external relations and for better coordination and synergies between the implementation of GAP and the EU Action Plan for WPS. Furthermore, Sweden is a driving force behind SRHR work within the EU.

In the process of drafting the European Consensus for Development, adopted in 2017, Sweden pushed for a stronger rights and gender perspective and for SRHR. Sweden also worked to ensure that the principles of policy coherence for sustainable development should characterise the policy. The European Consensus is a response to the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and includes principles for cooperation with developing countries.

The negotiations on the EU's multiannual financial framework 2021–2027 is ongoing. In line with the feminist foreign policy and the EU's gender equality ambitions, Sweden is working to ensure that gender equality is integrated in the EU's external funding instruments and that targeted gender equality initiatives are made possible. In the negotiations, Sweden has been a powerful advocate on gender equality issues, including SRHR.

The EU's external trade has great potential for influencing global gender equality. Within the EU's common trade policy, Sweden is a strong advocate for free and fair trade, including the integration of a gender perspective in free trade agreements. Sweden has also been a driving force behind gender equality aspects within the EU's work with Aid for Trade.

7.3 Regional platforms

Sweden's work with the feminist foreign policy encompasses cooperation with, and action through, numerous regional platforms and organisations. Close and trusting dialogues based on the mandates and regulations of various regional organisations are often key to driving issues such as human rights and gender equality.

Sweden is an active member of the Nordic Council of Ministers, which is the official cooperative body of the Nordic governments. The cooperation is aimed at promoting an innovative and outward-looking Nordic region without borders with a focus on sustainable development and greater regional integration. Much of the work involves exchanges, network building and knowledge transfer. The Nordic countries' views on gender equality are very similar and they often cooperate to drive issues internationally through joint speeches and initiatives, such as the Nordic Women's Mediation Network. The Nordic Council of Ministers carries out annual activities at CSW and works closely with UN bodies, especially UN Women, as well as UNFPA. The five Nordic prime ministers launched the Nordic Solutions to Global Challenges initiative in 2017, in which one of the six flagship projects is The Nordic Gender Effect at Work. Within this project, the Nordic Council of Ministers partnered with the OECD to launch a much-noted report that sheds light on how gender equality reforms and Nordic initiatives to establish gender equality at work have had and can continue having a positive impact on economic growth in the Nordic countries. Sweden used its presidency of the Nordic Council in 2018 to raise the profile of gender mainstreaming, men and gender equality, and to initiate a Nordic follow-up of the #MeToo movement, with particular focus on gender equality at work. Sweden also focused on the establishment of newly arrived migrant women in working life. The Nordic prime ministers agreed in August 2019 on a new strategic prioritisation to promote an inclusive, gender equal and cohesive region.

Sweden held the chairmanship of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) in 2017–2019 and the Council of the Baltic Sea States in 2017–2018 and was responsible for coordinating the Nordic-Baltic foreign policy cooperation format, NB8, in 2018. Gender equality issues have been brought to the fore as a result of the feminist foreign policy and the

overall goal has been to contribute to dialogue and cooperation on these matters in the Baltic Sea Region. Within the Council of the Baltic Sea States, Sweden used its presidency to encourage stronger emphasis on issues of gender equality, human trafficking, sexual exploitation and disadvantaged children. On the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, Sweden has urged respect for human rights and gender equality while continuing to support gender equality work within the framework of the Arctic Council as well.

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is a cooperative security policy body with 57 participating states. OSCE activities are based on a comprehensive approach to security and the organisation clearly states that respect for human rights is a fundamental prerequisite for sustainable peace and security. All participating OSCE States have committed to complying with fundamental rights and freedoms and combating discrimination. The OSCE also works with central issues including freedom of expression and freedom of the media, in which the safety of journalists is included, including safety from the specific threats that women journalists are subjected to online. Sweden supports the work of the OSCE financially and politically, including by actively defending the organisation against current attempts to weaken it and challenge the comprehensive approach to security. In line with the feminist foreign policy, Sweden is a consistent driving force for gender equality aspects in the work of the OSCE. For example, Sweden brought particular attention to the WPS agenda during its chairmanship of the OSCE's politico-military body, the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC) in 2018. Since then, a Swedish-supported and OSCE-led study of women's security and violence against women has received widespread distribution and concrete follow-up. Sweden has also engaged in dialogue with the OSCE on the network of women mediators who have urged the OSCE to introduce training on gender equality and WPS. One of the results is gender equality training for the top leadership at OSCE based on the Swedish model. In the light of the increasingly challenging climate for civil society in parts of the OSCE region, Sweden is also urging the participation of representatives of civil society, including women's rights organisations, in the work of the OSCE.

The main mission of the Council of Europe is to protect individual rights and contribute to peace, stability and security in Europe. The European Convention on Human Rights constitutes a clear statement of shared values and a legally binding normative basis for cooperation within the organisation. This is augmented by the unique role of the European Court of Justice (ECJ), in that it monitors the fulfilment of commitments by the Member States under the convention and has the authority to render legally binding judgments. This represents one of the most effective regional systems for protecting human rights in the world. Nevertheless, cause remains for Sweden to work actively to strengthen the ECJ and increase respect for its judgments by the Member States. The Council of Europe and the EU share fundamental values and have signed a Memorandum of Understanding. Sweden supports reformist endeavours within the Council of Europe and prioritises the Council's core values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. In accordance with the feminist foreign policy, Sweden has provided targeted support for the work to promote

gender equality and women's and girls' full enjoyment of human rights, in part through support for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. Sweden has also worked for Nordic representation in the GREVIO expert group, which is tasked with monitoring the Istanbul Convention. Further, Sweden has driven the issues in the Council of Europe through its work on the Gender Equality Commission, sharing Swedish lessons learnt with Member States that have implemented the Council of Europe's gender equality strategy and has contributed to the secretariat receiving training in gender mainstreaming provided by a Swedish expert. A Swedish expert has also been elected to the Council of Europe's GRETA expert group, which monitors compliance with the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

In Europe and the surrounding area, Sweden is working to promote human rights and contribute to strengthening the capacity of agents for change and civil society. The feminist foreign policy has increased focus on gender equality. Sweden has, for example, seconded two national experts to the European Commission Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations to promote improving knowledge about and prioritisation of gender equality in its work. In EU work with the Eastern Partnership, Sweden emphasises the key role of values issues in the reform efforts of the Partner States, including higher priority for gender equality issues. Sweden has, for example, successfully driven the inclusion of gender equality as a horizontal deliverable in the central plans and goals of the Partnership. The European Neighbourhood Policy is also a central tool for the EU in the region and Sweden is working to give matters of values, such as human rights and gender equality, a central place in reform efforts. Further, Sweden has encouraged and engaged in dialogue on the establishment of women's networks in peace processes, similar to those in Sweden, in the Mediterranean Region and Eastern Europe.

Sweden stresses the importance of human rights and gender equality in the Middle East and North Africa, in part through the EU. Here, Sweden has focused on the influence and meaningful participation of women and civil society in peace processes and implementation of other parts of the WPS agenda. These issues have, for example, been brought to the fore in the peace processes in which Sweden has been active. Sweden also works with the UN and other international organisations to contribute to greater gender equality and capacity in both public institutions and women's rights organisations in the region. Support is also provided to regional organisations such as the Arab League, the Union for the Mediterranean and the United Nations Alliance of Civilisations, where gender equality work is a Swedish priority.

In Africa today, there is a relatively well-developed structure of regional norms and institutions, particularly for human rights, but also gender equality. Several important agreements have been adopted by the AU. One of these is the Maputo Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Banjul Charter). The Protocol entered into force in 2005 and guarantees comprehensive rights to women including the right to take part in the political process, to social and political equality with men, improved autonomy in their reproductive health decisions and an end to female

genital mutilation. The African Governance Architecture is a key structure for linking existing mechanisms, institutions and initiatives within the AU. The Africa-EU Partnership is another important platform, where Sweden and the EU are encouraging all AU Member States to ratify and implement existing commitments and agreements found in both regional tools such as the Maputo Protocol and international mechanisms. Sweden focuses on issues including implementation of the WPS agenda, women's involvement in conflict mediation and the influence and meaningful participation in peace processes of women and civil society. Further, Sweden has encouraged and engaged in dialogue on the establishment of women's networks in peace processes in the AU, similar to those in Sweden. Sweden has also been a driving force behind the gender equality work and drafting of gender equality strategies in the African Development Bank.

Conditions for regional cooperation related to greater gender equality vary across the region in Asia and Oceania. The status of women and their participation in society, for example, is considerably more advanced in Southeast Asia than in South Asia and Oceania. There are no strong regional institutions for human rights, nor any regional mechanism for protecting the same. Consequently, national institutions for human rights play an important role in the region, but their quality and ability to act independently vary. Swedish support to the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions contributes to strengthening the capacity of national institutions and there was particular focus on gender equality in 2017–2018. Sweden also works with several UN organisations on a regional level, such as the UNDP in the Greater Mekong Subregion, to improve accountability in cases of human trafficking and more broadly in Asia with LGBTI issues. A new partnership was initiated in 2018 with UN Women and UN Environment aimed at strengthening women's participation in environmental and climate negotiations as well as women's empowerment and resilience in the face of natural disasters.

As a regional institution, the Organization of American States (OAS) plays a key role in North America, Latin America and the Caribbean through its regional human rights system, particularly in Latin America. The OAS Inter-American Commission on Human Rights is a well-established and important regional system that monitors the fulfilment of the obligations of Member States established in the American Convention on Human Rights. Sweden supports the work to promote human rights and gender equality and has, for example, contributed financially to the Commission's rapporteur for freedom of expression.

7.4 Country level

The feminist foreign policy has had profound impact on Sweden's working methods and opportunities to exert influence at the country level. The following examples illustrate how Sweden's missions abroad – about 100 Swedish embassies, delegations, representations and general consulates – have been working with the feminist foreign policy.

Many Swedish missions abroad confirm that the policy has given them a platform for coordination of various tools and policy areas leading to a more, effective and systematic effort. The political dialogue of Swedish missions abroad has been able to be more message-oriented. The cooperation with various partners has had a broader and more integrated approach. In addition, the feminist foreign policy has contributed to a more distinct external communication. The policy has also been able to amplify the voice and reach of certain groups, such as women's rights activists. This has, for example, been done by Sweden inviting organisations and activists to international conferences and information meetings at the embassies and by drawing attention to their work in various ways, including on social media. Many Swedish missions abroad also confirm that the feminist foreign policy has given Sweden access to new arenas and target groups. This includes stronger interaction on gender equality issues with other Swedish actors at country level, such as Swedish companies. The overall assessment by Swedish missions abroad is that they have more impact and greater demand for dialogue and policy advice on gender equality issues than before, including at higher level and in strategic processes.

In several areas, the feminist foreign policy has contributed to processes for change. The Swedish policy has, for example, inspired Canada, France and Luxembourg in their efforts to incorporate an explicitly feminist perspective in their policies and diplomacy. Other countries like Spain and the United Kingdom have also shown great interest in Sweden's efforts when they have reviewed and intensified their gender equality work and have appointed gender equality ambassadors. Switzerland has prepared a gender equality strategy in foreign policy, which to a great extent is based on Sweden's feminist foreign policy. In the legislative arena, countries including France and Ireland have adopted the same type of legislation against the purchase of sex as Sweden. Furthermore, Sweden and France signed a joint declaration on 7 June 2019, in which the countries committed to working together to promote gender equality bilaterally, regionally, within the EU and globally.

The work of Swedish missions abroad against gender-based violence is pursued in several different ways. In countries including Tunisia and Albania, Sweden has contributed in the effort to enact stricter laws against gender-based violence. In Cyprus, Sweden has facilitated a unique joint statement of the religious leaders of Cyprus condemning all forms of violence against women and girls. In the Philippines, Sweden joined with various partners in achieving a year-long, country-wide campaign against gender-based violence. The campaign has garnered tremendous interest and has contributed to a change in legislation that has strengthened protection for women and LGBTI persons. In Honduras, Sweden has contributed to the development of a mobile app that can be used by women who are victims of violence, which includes a direct line to the police and support groups. In Pakistan, Sweden worked with local partners in to stage the documentary play *Seven* about violence against women and created debate on the subject. Several of the most well-known personalities and leading gender equality actors in Pakistan were involved and, through an information campaign in social and traditional media, the play is estimated to have reached millions of Pakistanis. In so doing, it has been possible to

spread fundamental information and guidance on how women can get legal assistance when they have been victims of violence. *Seven* has been staged in several other countries, including Azerbaijan, Georgia and Belarus.

SRHR and the issue of abortion is a prioritised area of Swedish missions' bilateral dialogue and development cooperation. Sweden is working actively in Central America, for example, where several countries have very restrictive abortion laws. When the Salvadoran woman Teodora del Carmen Vásquez, who was jailed after a late miscarriage, received the Swedish Per Anger Prize in November 2018, the issue was widely covered in Sweden and in El Salvador. In the US, Sweden has coordinated the statements of like-minded countries to the administration on the consequences of the country's Mexico City Policy/Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance policy on SRHR.

Swedish engagement at country level include work against sexual or other exploitation of children, for example by supporting organisations such as UNICEF and by dialogue with the tourism industry. Targeted initiatives have also been initiated to work against abuse of children by Swedes in other countries, primarily in Southeast Asia. One example is that the reopened embassy in the Philippines has been allocated resources to combat abuse of children by Nordic citizens in the country.

Swedish missions abroad are also working to promote women's political participation and influence, in countries including Moldova, Armenia, Zimbabwe, Syria, Afghanistan, Albania and Somalia. Sweden is also working to increase the participation of women and girls in peace work in various conflict and post-conflict nations. In Iraq, Sweden has participated actively in the dialogue on the WPS agenda and has contributed to its implementation by supporting local CSOs and by urging UN bodies in the country to uphold gender equality commitments.

At country level, the feminist foreign policy has also contributed to platforms for discussions and promotion of gender equality. The Swedish Embassy in Liberia, for example, has made their premises available to women's rights organisations and women's forums for meetings and discussions. This has facilitated joint actions on gender equality issues. In Liberia, Sweden has also arranged meetings and dialogues with women journalists and women's rights organisations in order to reinforce their participation in social debate and politics. In Saudi Arabia, Sweden has established a leadership programme for women leaders and entrepreneurs in partnership with SI. In Switzerland, Sweden has arranged seminars on feminist foreign policy, with focus on women's representation in business and politics. In Latvia, Sweden joined Norway and the Swedish and Norwegian chambers of commerce to arrange networking meetings for women in business. Since 2017, Sweden and the UN in India has been engaged in a project that aims to strengthen women's rights and social and economic status. This project (*Kraftsamla*) engages the private sector with the aim of increasing their gender equality perspective in human resources work, value chains and codes of conduct. This initiative has also contributed to training for women in non-traditional industrial jobs. In Bangladesh, Sweden has arranged round table discussions on women's career opportunities in the textile industry, in partnership with SI and the other Nordic countries.

Several Swedish missions abroad have also confirmed that the feminist foreign policy has facilitated the participation in gender equality debate in various countries. Concrete examples include the work with #WikiGap and *Swedish Dads*, and local equivalents. #WikiGap has led to discussions on the visibility of women in society and has resulted in thousands of new articles about female profiles. The concept is now also used by other organisations including UNESCO. In Cyprus, #WikiGap was implemented with the involvement of both Greek and Turkish Cypriots, which made it possible to combine the promotion of gender equality with peacebuilding. The *Swedish Dads* exhibition has been able to stimulate discussions of gender roles and gender equality. The Swedish Embassy in Vietnam arranged two photography competitions, *Vietnamese Dads* and *Equal Families*. Similar work has been done in many other countries, including Armenia, China, Uganda, Thailand, Tunisia, Lebanon, Jordan, Iran, Israel and Switzerland. In some cases, the exhibition has been combined with discussions on parental insurance, the role of fathers and norms of masculinity. Swedish embassies in many countries have also participated actively in the wider discussion of gender equality by, for example, publishing articles in the newspapers and social media.

The work of Swedish missions abroad with the feminist foreign policy has also encompassed activities in the arts and culture sector. In Greece, for example, Sweden has initiated events focusing on women's role in film making and the role of film for gender equality. The wide-range of topics in the discussions that followed included parental leave and other actions significant to creating a gender equal society. Sweden's contributions in Mexico include the use of music to reach persons in particularly challenging environments. Sweden has also cooperated with festivals and organisers to strengthen the role of women in traditionally male-dominated areas, such as electronic music. Through Sweden's work, organisers who reported that they only knew of male performers were able to get in touch with women musicians in Sweden and Mexico. This has had significant impact in the media and the local music sphere and has contributed to a discussion of gender roles and women's representation.

Work with gender stereotypical norms is a central tenet of the feminist foreign policy. This is exemplified in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where the embassy has used the foreign policy, arts and culture promotion, and development cooperation to contribute to efforts related to norms of masculinity. Sweden works with boys' and young men's image of masculinity and has also funded a study of masculinity together with UN Women. Other initiatives include holding essay competitions for young students on the theme of boys' and men's roles in gender equality work, organising a photo competition on the theme of *un vrai homme* ('a real man'), holding round-table discussions on masculinity and sharing regular messages on social media, including interviews with men's networks and activists. Through a Swedish CSO working with men and gender equality (MÄN), Sweden has supported the development of fathers' groups in Belarus. These groups discuss issues like norms of masculinity. In Russia, Sweden has used development cooperation to strengthen local actors that work in various ways to combat intimate partner violence, including work with perpetrators. The Swedish Embassy in Bolivia has achieved great impact with its wide-ranging initiative on issues of masculinity that which

include long-term processes for change, as well as targeted initiatives and communications in the media. Skr. 2019/20:17

The feminist foreign policy has consolidated and strengthened Sweden's role as a champion for gender equality. Dialogue and exchanges of lessons learnt on gender equality are used on an ongoing basis and at high-level visits. Swedish expertise and Swedish experiences are in frequent demand. This include demand from CSOs engaged in advocacy work in difficult contexts, as well as civil servants and politicians in countries seeking to strengthen their gender equality efforts. When Armenia raised its level of ambition after the Velvet Revolution, the Government turned to Sweden for dialogue and support in the effort. This included support to the Armenian chairmanship of the CSW in 2020.

Sweden's outreach efforts and strategic communication on gender equality at the country level have benefited from the interest the feminist foreign policy has generated. The feminist foreign policy and the work on women's and girls' rights, representation and resources has created a platform for discussion and communication about the profoundly important issues of gender equality and human rights.

In accordance with the gender mainstreaming policy at the Government Offices and the feminist foreign policy, Swedish missions abroad are also working internally to strengthen expertise on gender equality and women's and girls' rights in order to improve working methods and tools.

8 Reflections and the road ahead

The first years of the feminist foreign policy show that it is making a difference. The impact has been confirmed by national and international gender equality actors, who also attest to the importance of a country leading the way and pursuing an explicitly feminist foreign policy. Other countries and organisations have been inspired to work in ways similar to Sweden, which also illustrates the impact. In a peer review of Swedish development cooperation, the OECD finds that the feminist foreign policy has confirmed the importance of having a gender perspective of development cooperation, as well as diplomacy, security and trade policy. The feminist foreign policy has also underlined Sweden's leadership in the area of gender equality.

The feminist foreign policy has created a cohesive platform and direction for Sweden's international gender equality work. Many Swedish missions abroad note that the very concept of 'feminist foreign policy' functions as an effective tool for communication and dialogue. Missions abroad report, for example, that Sweden has been used increasingly as a dialogue partner on gender equality issues in various countries and contexts and is being invited to participate in policy discussions at a higher level than before. Swedish missions abroad also report increased demand for appearances in the media and various types of gender equality events and initiatives. The impact has also been strengthened through deeper and wider dialogue with gender equality actors around the world.

Recurring feedback from national and international actors is that Sweden's feminist foreign policy is a powerful force in an era when norms and agreements are being undermined and challenged, in areas such as gender equality, democracy and human rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Against this backdrop, the Swedish Government intends to implement, further develop and deepen the feminist foreign policy. This will be accomplished in coherence with Sweden's national gender policy work, and through and in partnership with international organisations and like-minded countries and actors. Dialogue and exchange with organisations and countries that do not share Sweden's views is also important.

The foundation of the work with the feminist foreign policy is a knowledge-based, alliance-building and systematic approach. This will continue, with an even clearer orientation towards identifying, unpacking and breaking down structures and patterns that uphold and exacerbate discrimination. The legislative arena is central, as are efforts against destructive gender stereotypical norms and attitudes. Identifying and developing strategic partnerships is key, including with religious leaders and actors who can represent women's and girls' rights on their platforms.

To achieve progress, it is essential to continue strengthening women's and girls' economic and social conditions. This includes efforts against all forms of gender-based violence and harmful practices, not least child marriage, early marriage and forced marriage, as well as honour-related violence and oppression. The combat against prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes will go on, including within the framework of a joint diplomatic initiative by Sweden and France. Furthermore, it is essential to work for women's and girls' access to quality education and to further intensify efforts to ensure that trade, business and development cooperation generate positive effects for gender equality and women's and girls' opportunities. Sweden's feminist trade policy focus on that women should benefit equally to men from trade agreements, for example through more women getting jobs. Sweden will work to ensure that sectors, products and services that have positive gender equality effects are prioritised in trade negotiations. Sweden will continue to promote gender analyses and sex-disaggregated data in trade, especially within the EU, OECD and WTO. Sweden will also work for gender analyses of proposed legislation in the EU internal market. The gender perspective must also become a natural part of international standardisation. The Swedish National Board of Trade's report on trade and gender equality will be a basis for future efforts.

SRHR is another area that requires persistent and intensive work, especially in light of increasing resistance to women's and girls' inarguable rights to control their own bodies. Sweden will pursue SRHR with an active policy, a clear profile, alliance-building and wide support.

It is moreover essential to follow up and further reinforce Sweden's concerted efforts on the WPS agenda, not least within the UN Security Council. Efforts will, for example, focus on strengthening women's participation in peace processes through work in the UN, EU and OSCE, but also on initiatives by the Swedish Women's Mediation Network. Strengthening exchange and developing links between formal and informal peace work is another important area. Work with disarmament

and non-proliferation also plays a key role. In line with this, Sweden continues to work for the implementation and compliance with international commitments on disarmament and non-proliferation. Sweden also pushes for women's representation and participation in the work, as well as for bringing attention to the effects that proliferation and use of weapons have on women, men, girls and boys.

The feminist foreign policy and the Swedish Drive for Democracy act as a communicative vessel. Democracy is not possible if half the population does not participate and enjoy the same rights, representation and resources as the other half. Stronger respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law also contribute to increased freedom for and empowerment of women and girls. The interplay is mutually reinforcing.

The coherence between the feminist foreign policy and Sweden's active work on sustainable development within the framework of the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement is central. The 2030 Agenda principle of 'leaving no one behind' is a clear stance against all forms of discrimination and underlines the importance of work for human rights, equity and gender equality to achieve sustainable development.

The Beijing Platform for Action will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2020. The document is as topical today as it was in 1995, with its focus on central gender equality issues like education, health, violence, conflict, economic opportunity, influence and the situation of the girl child. Along with other central agreements, the Beijing Platform imposes clear demands for action for gender equality and women's and girls' full enjoyment of human rights. Sweden will form more and new alliances and platforms to strengthen the implementation of existing commitments. As part of that work, Sweden works with UN Women to follow up the Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality in 2018 and the Tunis Forum in 2019 with additional forums dedicated to exchange of methods, mobilisation and outcomes for gender equality.

Together with like-minded countries, Sweden is intensifying efforts to develop the EU as a global actor for gender equality. Gender equality is deeply rooted in EU treaties, but the work and implementation need to be more coordinated, reinforced and intensified.

Civil society, including women's rights movements, is essential to gender equality work in all countries. Sweden will continue to support, strengthen and put the spotlight on women's rights organisations, feminist movements and women human rights defenders as key agents of change. It is important to engage men and boys for more gender equal societies and to focus on girls' agency and empowerment.

The increased resistance to gender equality and women's and girls' rights of recent years is troubling and demands counter measures. "We must push back against the pushback against women's rights", as UN Secretary-General António Guterres has declared. Sweden is ready to contribute with a feminist foreign policy. With broad alliances and knowledge-based, strategic and systematic efforts, the pushback can be pushed back.

Acronyms

ATT	Arms Trade Treaty
AU	African Union
C3E	Clean Energy Education and Empowerment
CEDAW	The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CPD	Commission on Population and Development
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EEAS	European External Action Service
EU	European Union
FBA	Folke Bernadotte Academy
FSC	Forum for Security Cooperation
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDA	International Development Association
IGC	International Gender Champions
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
ILO	International Labour Organization

ITC	International Trade Centre
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
OAS	Organization of American States
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECD-DAC	OECD Development Assistance Cooperation
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
SEforALL	Sustainable Energy for All
SHE	She Entrepreneurs
SI	The Swedish Institute
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
UN	The United Nations
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Populations Fund
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNPoA	United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons

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Appendix

WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WBL	Women, Business and the Law
WHO	World Health Organization
WPS	Women, Peace and Security
WTO	World Trade Organization

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Extract from the minutes of the Government Meeting on den 19 September 2019

Present: Prime Minister Löfven, chair, and Ministers Lövin, Johansson, Baylan, Hultqvist, Andersson, Bolund, Damberg, Shekarabi, Ygeman, Linde, Ekström, Eneroth, Dahlgren, Nilsson, Ernkran, Lindhagen, Hallberg, Nordmark.

Presenter: Minister for Foreign Affairs Linde

The Government adopts the Government Communication Sveriges feministiska utrikespolitik