

## European Security – Sweden’s Defence Summary of a report by the Swedish Defence Commission

On 30 September 1999 the Defence Commission – which is a vehicle for the Government’s consultations on defence policy with the political parties of Parliament – presented a report to the Minister of Defence, Dr von Sydow. The Commission is being chaired by State Secretary Lars Danielsson in the Prime Minister’s Office.

In its report the Defence Commission analyses the security policy developments in 1999 and draws conclusions for Sweden’s security and defence policies. The Commission also presents its view on important questions in preparation for the planned autumn 1999 Bill on the defence structure. The point of departure for the Defence Commission’s evaluations and proposals in this report is the spring 1999 Parliamentary decision on the focus of the defence policy and on the guidelines for the economy of the Swedish total defence.

### **International developments**

The conflict between Belgrade and the Kosovo Albanians, which worsened successively throughout the 1990s, resulted in spring 1999 in a military intervention by NATO to force the Milosevic regime to a settlement. With frightening clarity the war showed

that the international community still lacks a sufficient capability to intervene at an early stage in a conflict. The problems in Kosovo have had extensive political, military and humanitarian consequences for the situation in the Balkans. They have also influenced international relations and security cooperation between many countries far beyond the current area of conflict.

The positive climate of cooperation that developed in the past decade has appeared to be under threat. The fact that the conditions for cooperation have not been completely undermined by the strains of the Kosovo conflict shows that there is still a basis for continued cooperation. NATO, which despite tensions managed to hold together during the conflict, has consolidated its role as the central instrument for military crisis management in Europe. The importance of continued US involvement in the security of Europe and the significance of Russian participation were also borne out.

The experience of the Kosovo conflict has strengthened the efforts by European countries to develop the capability to prevent conflicts and carry out international operations to manage crises. Important concrete steps on the road to a strengthened European crisis management capability include those taken at the meeting of the European Council in Cologne, where the EU member states undertook to develop more efficient European military resources for crisis management.

Russia's social institutions are still fragile and there are many conflicting interests within the country. Domestic political developments therefore remain uncertain. This has consequences mainly for Russia itself, but it can also entail complications and put strains on the country's international relations. Despite the risk of setbacks, however, there is much to indicate that the democratic development will continue to be strengthened and that Russia will strive for continued cooperation with Western Europe and the United States.

The economic crisis in Russia continues. There is limited scope for maintaining or reforming the military capacity. Inadequate social controls, the continuing disintegration of the armed forces, widespread organised crime and terrorism can also put

considerable strains on the security of neighbouring countries. The risk of armed conflicts in the federation continues, particularly in the unsettled Caucasus area.

At the same time as it is important to pay attention to the risks that can be associated with uncertainty about developments in Russia it is important to build on the positive changes that are also taking place. A stable, democratic and prosperous Russia is of decisive importance for lasting peace on the continent.

### **Sweden's security policy**

The Defence Commission states that Sweden's security policy is becoming increasingly interwoven in broad international security cooperation in Europe. This broad cooperation is of fundamental importance for the major improvements that have occurred in our security situation since the end of the cold war. An invasion attempt aiming at the occupation of Sweden does not seem feasible in the coming 10 years, provided we have a basic defence capability.

The focus of Sweden's security is no longer on the risk of being drawn into a war between two power blocs. The focus is now on the risks associated with regional and local conflicts and on the risks of authoritarian regimes or disintegration and inadequate social control in certain countries. Actors that could be thought to act against Sweden and threaten our security are not primarily great powers with overwhelming military resources but rather small states or organisations and groups, perhaps geographically far from Sweden, that might want to exert an influence on us by means of threats and pressure, violence and damage.

International developments in recent years give no reason to change the threat assessment made by the Government and Parliament in the spring 1999 security policy review. Despite the more limited threats compared with those of the cold war we must nevertheless continue our security policy efforts. To a greater extent these must now be based on a widened view of security,

and it is vital for Sweden's security that the development of broad international security cooperation continues. High priority is therefore attached to a Swedish contribution to this cooperation. At the same time we must be able to deal with the threats and risks that can also be directed at the country in the present day situation, and we must be capable of adapting our resources to the changes that can take place in the world in the future. This requires an overall view of the whole scale of operations from conflict prevention via crisis management to defence against an armed attack and a common view on our national and international security initiatives.

The Defence Commission has found no reason to reconsider the security policy goals as most recently expressed in the spring 1999 security policy review. An increased Swedish contribution to activities promoting common security and crisis management is fully compatible with Sweden's policy of military non-alignment since the cooperation does not include mutual defence guarantees in the event of an armed attack.

### **Defence policy**

For Swedish defence policy the most important conclusion of the international developments of the past year is the need to strengthen Sweden's capability to contribute to European crisis management. The proposal in the spring 1999 security policy review involved such a strengthening, but its rapid implementation now appears even more important. Our international capability should be strengthened in such a way as to improve our ability to cooperate with EU member states in crisis management. Using among other things the cooperation between the Nordic countries in Kosovo as a starting point the possibilities of a cooperation within the framework of a Nordic brigade should be further investigated.

Within the framework of the resources that can be detailed to defence purposes it is urgent to bring forward the increase in operational capability for peace making. In order to do this priority

should be given to measures that can enhance our international capabilities, while measures that are only of importance for developing the national defence capability will have to wait. It might therefore be necessary to refrain from certain measures that aim within a five-year period to be able to adapt the capability to face a more extensive armed attack. The Defence Commission considers that a decision on which concrete measures should be implemented requires further information.

Planning for an increase of defence capabilities is a continuously ongoing process and an important part of the principle of adaptation. The elaboration of this planning is essential while at the same time it must not lead to the preservation of untimely systems.

The experience gained from the Balkan conflict must also lead to the development of Sweden's capability to participate in an international operation rapidly and with the right resources. This requires continued internationalisation and a reduction in the time that elapses between the need arising and a deployment being made.

Regarding the risk of a more limited armed threat to Sweden or the appearance of other international tensions, events in 1999 give no reason to alter earlier judgements.

The judgement of the spring 1999 security policy review that the resources to defend Sweden against armed attack and maintain our territorial integrity can be reduced in relation to the 1996 Defence Programme still holds when it comes to the number of units, military preparedness, etc. But Sweden has to have a preparedness that will enable it to deal with armed threats that can affect Sweden directly in the event of a crisis emerging from the current international situation. Sweden also has to be able to handle other difficult situations that could arise aside from armed attacks from another state. It must also be possible to adapt our defence capabilities to any new threats.

Good economy could be achieved through a comprehensive view on how the integrated resources could be used for the different tasks, as well for preventive purposes as for handling of

emergencies in both peace and war. The resources shall be able to handle all of the four major missions of the total defence.

### **The military forces**

The Defence Commission has examined the proposals on a future structure delivered by the Swedish Armed Forces on 19 May and 15 June 1999. The Defence Commission considers that the proposals of the Swedish Armed Forces meet the demands of international developments and Sweden's security policy goals, and comply with the focus of the defence policy and operational requirements decided in the security policy review. The report of the Armed Forces on a proposal for a future structure also essentially meets all the demands for coherent planning and for possibilities to follow the effects of operational requirements.

The main part of the Swedish Armed Forces' proposal can provide a basis for continued work, but it must be supplemented to some extent in the light of conclusions from developments during the past year.

The ability to face more extensive armed attacks can be ensured by adaptability, renewal and flexibility. In practice the short-term demands on the ability to face an armed attack are included in our basic defence capability and within the framework for the demands on the ability to maintain our territorial integrity.

The Defence Commission considers that the changes in government demands for operational capabilities proposed by the Armed Forces give a better picture of the task and, moreover, improve the possibilities for following up the development of each capability. The proposal of the Swedish Armed Forces means that demands on the ability to contribute to peace and security in the world be made precise as regards command and control and interoperability, for example. It also expresses an openness to gradually expanding the capability of several different types of unit to participate in peace support operations.

The Defence Commission also wants the possibilities to be examined and the costs estimated of encreasing the capability earlier in the case of international contributions of the size and costs proposed by the Armed Forces (two battalions for a longer period of time). The resources that are to be available should reflect the need for flexibility and should thereby consist of different types of units and special skills.

The operational task forces should be successively developed to be able to take part in international operations. The Defence Commission considers that in principle it should be possible to use all operational task forces in international operations but that the operational capability should be developed gradually. The pace of development is decided by the availability of the resources to achieve the operational capability as well as by the areas from which a big demand can be expected and the areas in which Sweden is well equipped to make a contribution.

The Defence Commission considers that the task of strengthening Swedish society in peacetime should influence the resources available to the Armed Forces. Accordingly, in the case of equally valuable military and economic alternatives the solution should be chosen that best enables the Armed Forces to support society via rescue services, to give support in the case of severe emergencies in peacetime and to support other authorities in accordance with current regulations. Better use should be made of possibilities for the joint use of military and civil government resources. One example is the need for increased coordination between the Swedish Coast Guard and the Armed Forces.

The Defence Commission also presents its view of the collected knowledge and skills needed for the Swedish Armed Forces to perform their functions both in the present day and in a changed international situation. Access to the necessary knowledge and skills is the most important precondition to ensure the long-term ability for adaptation. It is important to follow the very rapid military and civil technical developments that are now taking place and that will probably accelerate still further. The areas of essential qualifications must be identified bit by bit. It is

just as important to be able to phase out outdated qualifications as to be able to introduce new ones.

The task force organisation and basic organisation combined shall comprise the main human resource pool of knowledge and skills, in which the ability of the staff to carry out armed action is maintained and developed with the aim of being able to defend the entire country. Depending on the prevailing world situation, by maintaining this capability the preparedness and availability of the fighting forces can be adapted to national and international needs at the same time as their continual professional development is made possible.

The Defence Commission considers that a development towards a task force organisation of the kind proposed by the Swedish Armed Forces is an important part of the structural renewal of the military forces. It is essential that the shape and preparedness of the task force organisation be adapted to the relatively low demands placed on defence against armed attack in the short term so that a sufficiently large capacity can be created for long-term adaptability and renewal, and for increasing the international capability.

It is the understanding of the Defence Commission that the proposal of the Swedish Armed Forces expresses what is in many respects new thinking on personnel issues and that it seeks to emphasise the importance of making a review as a basis for a decision on an integrated system for personnel support, not later than in connection with the next defence programme in the year 2001.

The guidelines for the planning of the Swedish Armed Forces and for the renegotiations conducted with the defence industries concerned have aimed at an increased renewal of matériel. The Defence Commission considers it important that this work for change and renewal continues.

The Defence Commission considers that the work of the authorities now provides a basis for deciding on certain changes in the command organisation, including a reduction of the number of regional command levels. It also provides a basis for necessary proposals in the bill and for the continued work of developing



command organisations so that an integrated decision can be reached in the year 2001 in connection with the next defence programme.

### **Civil defence**

In accordance with the security policy review the guidelines for civil defence should remain. Events in the Balkans have illustrated the strategic importance of infrastructure in a war with no invasion attempt as well as the need for efforts to promote civil security. The strains on Balkan societies have been considerable, both in countries directly affected by acts of war and in the neighbouring countries.

The European Council decided in Cologne to expand and better coordinate the non-military crisis management instruments of the EU and the member states. The possibilities of creating an EU preparedness consisting of national civil resources and expertise should be considered.

### **Threats against the information society**

The Defence Commission emphasises the need for continued and deeper work on issues concerning protection against information operations and IT-security. Society's vulnerability in this respect is of great importance to security policy. An attack could be undertaken, for example, by a criminal actor, some individual or organisation with political motives or by a state or an actor supported by a state, something which makes the question even more difficult of who should handle an acute threat. An integrated grasp of this new area is needed and responsibility at authority level must be defined and established very soon.