



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech by Minister for Justice and Home Affairs Morgan Johansson at conference on criminal justice cooperation in the EU

20 years of progress in criminal justice cooperation within the European Union – digital conference, 18 February 2022, hosted by the French Presidency in the EU Check against delivery.

I would like to begin by thanking the French presidency for hosting this important conference. And a special thanks to Éric Dupond-Moretti for inviting me to speak.

Twenty years ago, the European Union took its first steps towards a completely new way of cooperating in criminal matters.

The topics of this conference, Eurojust and the European Arrest Warrant, have proved to be very important tools in the fight against serious and cross-border crime.

Eurojust's valuable work and support to law enforcement agencies cannot be overestimated.

And the European Arrest Warrant has paved the way for cooperation based on the principle of mutual recognition. Over the years, we have adopted several legal acts based on this principle. Some are applied frequently, while others could need a bit more attention.

Cooperation based on this principle is of the utmost importance in the fight against serious and cross-border crime, as well as when it comes to enforcing final decisions and judgments, such as custodial sentences, fines and confiscation orders.

For a well-functioning judicial cooperation, I would like to highlight three aspects that are particularly important.

Firstly, our courts and competent authorities need to be made more aware of the opportunities in this field of cooperation. They must become more familiar with the obligations arising from these legal acts and the case law from the European Court of Justice. This could be done by more information and training.

Secondly, cooperation must be simple and effective. Deadlines must be respected. Language barriers should be removed as far as possible. Standardized procedures and certificates should be developed. Complicated procedures and language barriers can be a reason why certain instruments are applied less than other. We have reached far, but we can do more.

The last, and crucial, aspect is that cooperation presupposes mutual trust. We must respect each other's differences. But all Member States must also respect the fundamental principles that are the foundation of the European Union. The principles of the rule of law are obviously one of them. And the freedoms and rights of individuals should never be set aside. Every time a decision or a judgment is questioned by an executing authority with reference to fundamental principles, for instance in the EU Charter, is basically a failure. Our aim should be that these questions never arise.

In the last 20 years, a great deal of work has been done. And we should be proud of what we have achieved together. However, we need to continue. A lot of work remains.

For example, we have to expand the field of cooperation. Cyberspace is one such area. Our law enforcement agencies need for electronic evidence cannot be underestimated. Another field is transfer of proceedings. A clear legal framework for such cooperation would give our law enforcement authorities another important tool.

There are many challenges ahead of us. However, I promise that Sweden will contribute to this work in all possible ways, not least through our upcoming presidency.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to address this conference and its important topics.

Published 21 February 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech by Mr Morgan Johansson at the seminar on the topic of the relationship between the European Court of Human Rights and the National Courts

Stockholm, 28 October 2021 Check against delivery.

Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, let me say that I think we are all truly happy to be able to gather like this again! It was a long time ago, and I think we have all looked forward to gatherings like this. And to start up with a seminar on human rights, it can't be better!

On behalf of the Swedish Government, it is a great pleasure for me to welcome the President of the European Court of Human Rights, President Robert Spano, and the Swedish judge at the Court, Judge Erik Wennerström, to Sweden and to this seminar.

Also, a special welcome to the other panellist members, the President of the Swedish Supreme Court, Justice Anders Eka, and the President of the Swedish Supreme Administrative Court – and also the former Swedish judge at the European Court of Human Rights – Justice Helena Jäderblom.

The seminar today is organised by the Government Offices, Department of Foreign Affairs, on the occasion of the visit from the European Court of Human Rights. It will focus on the topic of the interplay, or dialogue, between the European Court of Human Rights and the national courts.

It is a topic that is both interesting and indeed very important to reflect upon. I'm going to do a few introductory remarks on that.

It goes without saying that human rights, and the respect for rule of law, are of greatest importance in any democracy, and protecting these fundamental values and ideas are becoming increasingly more important when human rights are challenged. And there are challenges to these concepts today.

Thirty years ago, Europe was rejoicing over the fall of the Berlin Wall. The symbol of oppression had fallen apart, opening new horizons and hopes not only for Germany but also for the whole of Europe. To many, this event appeared to be the unchallenged victory of democracy.

Also for me. I was 19 then, and I remember very well how I and some friends in the summer of 1990 went down to Berlin to see with our own eyes what was happening. The wall was still there, it hadn't been demolished yet, but we did our part in that, in tearing it down. We carved out each of us a part of the wall, a part of a brick, to keep as a memory, and I think I still have mine stored away somewhere.

The fall of the Berlin Wall was the biggest political event in our youth, yes perhaps in our lives. It marked an important step in the ending of the Cold War, and the rise of strong democratic movement in many states in Europe. Several of the states in Eastern Europe became parties to the convention soon thereafter.

But, as remarked so often and by so many, democracy is not something that is conquered in a nation, once and for all, by its people. It has to be vigorously protected, it has to be fought for, and it has to be re-conquered by every generation.

Today, it is obvious to most of us that democracy in Europe is facing many difficult challenges. The threats to the full enjoyment of fundamental rights seem to have become more present than they have been for a very long time. The negative development in the respect for the rule of law and fundamental rights is worrying. One could for example mention, measures against the independency of the judiciary, as well as the independent media, attacks against LGBT communities and other minorities. We've seen it in countries like Russia and Turkey for a long time, but now, in recent years, we also see problematic developments in EU-countries like Poland and Hungary.

Yesterday, I heard that the European Court of Justice has ordered Poland to pay the European Commission a daily penalty payment in an amount of 1 million euros, because Poland has, as they say: failed to comply with the measures ordered by the Court to avoid serious and unrepairable harm to the

legal order of the European Union.

It is a dramatic decision and dramatic words, but I think it is important to take a firm stand. The European Union has to put its house in order, when it comes to rule of law.

And in this context, the value of the European Convention on Human Rights cannot be over-emphasised, and the important work of the European Court of Human Rights cannot be highlighted enough.

But, of course, upholding human rights and the rule of law is not only the duty of the Strasbourg Court. It is also an important task of the national legislature, the executive and the national courts.

Sweden has a long history of a strong commitment to democracy, human rights and the rule of law. We are also a strong supporter of the convention system and frequently advocate these ideals and values in the international debate.

Sweden was one of the founding states of the Council of Europe and one of the first states to ratify the European Convention on Human Rights in 1952. The Convention has also formed part of Swedish domestic law since 1995, and according to a provision in our Constitution – enacted in 1995 – no law or other regulation may be adopted which contravenes Sweden's undertakings under the European Convention on Human Rights.

As mentioned before, our efforts to protect human rights and the rule of law is an ongoing project. Partly because of the worrying development in some states in Europe, the Swedish Government appointed a cross party commission of inquiry in 2020 with the task to consider the need to strengthen the protection of democratic structures and the judiciary and long-term independence of judges. This commission will, for example, examine if the Constitution ought to be amended with new provisions regarding the age of retirement for Justices of our supreme courts. It will also consider if it is necessary to make it more difficult to amend the Constitution, for instance in parts that are essential to the protection of our democratic ideals.

The commission will present its report in the beginning of 2023, and I'm glad to say that the chairman of this commission is the president of the Swedish Supreme Court, Justice Anders Eka.

One cannot overstate the importance that the European Court of Human Rights plays in protecting fundamental rights. Its interpretation of the Convention is of great importance to maintain and to promote the ideals and values of democratic societies in Europe. The Court oversees that human rights are upheld for the 800 million Europeans in the 47 Contracting States. Last year, the 47 judges delivered just over nineteen hundred judgments and more than thirty-seven thousand decisions. It is a staggering number of decisions that shows the enormous amount of important work that the Court is doing.

I would strongly argue that the European Court of Human rights is probably the most effective international human rights court in the world. And I welcome this opportunity to reaffirm Sweden's deep commitment to the European Convention on Human Rights and the Strasbourg Court.

That said, we also must acknowledge that there are circumstances challenging the Court's possibilities to reach its full potential in terms of efficiency. One of the greatest challenges is the Court's caseload.

A small number of States are responsible for a very large amount of the total cases in the Court's backlog, and for the influx of new cases. Last year, the Court also saw an influx in applications and an increase in applications requiring examination by the Chamber. The number of applications pending also increased. Today the pending cases at the Court is around 65 500. Many cases are so called repetitive cases; that is cases with the same underlying problem that has already been adjudicated by the Court. This is not acceptable.

To tackle that underlying problems with the heavy caseload, the Contracting Parties need to focus more on national measures to avoid and to remedy potential breaches of the convention, that is to focus on

- implementation of the Convention at national level,
- the full, effective and prompt execution of the Court's judgments, and
- establishing and improving domestic remedies.

And here the interplay, or dialogue, between the European Court of Human Rights and the national courts is of importance. The dialogue has the potential to enhance the effectiveness of the enjoyment of the rights under the Convention by contributing to the effective implementation of the principle of subsidiarity.

It is, as stated before, the States that have the primary responsibility to secure human rights protection and to provide remedies when that protection breaks down. This primary responsibility is always subject to the Court's supervision. This lies at the very heart of the principle of subsidiarity, which now also is highlighted in Protocol No. 15, which recently came into force.

This means that the result of the application of the principle of subsidiarity may never be that human rights protection is weaker in some States than in others.

In this context, I would also like to mention Protocol No. 16. This protocol enables the highest national courts and tribunals to request the Strasbourg Court to give advisory opinions on questions of principles relating to the interpretation or application of the rights and freedoms defined in the Convention or the Protocols. This protocol aims to strengthen the dialogue between the Court and the highest national courts. Sweden has not yet acceded to that protocol, but work is currently under way within the Ministry of Justice to consider the question of accession.

Having said this, if Contracting Parties fail to fulfil their responsibilities, it will clearly affect the role of the Court and the extent of its supervision.

At last, I hope that this seminar will further enlighten us and provide us with more perspectives on the relationship between the Strasbourg Court and the national courts.

With this I like to wish you all fruitful discussions and a pleasant day in Stockholm.

I hereby give the floor to the Director-General for Legal Affairs Carl Magnus Nesser.

Thank you!

Published 01 November 2021



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech by Mr Morgan Johansson at The Commission's Digital Justice Ministerial Forum

On-line event, 12 October 2021 Check against delivery.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,

I am happy to be part of this Ministerial Forum on Digital Justice.

In times of innovation and globalisation, it is our responsibility as Justice ministers to ensure that the judiciary develops as society does. I would like to thank the Commission for organising this event. This Forum gives us an opportunity to exchange experiences and to shape a common vision for the future.

For the Swedish Government, sustainability is key to successful development. The green and digital transitions are interconnected and form the basis for Europe's economic recovery after the Corona crisis.

Individuals, companies, and organisations use digital communication in their everyday lives. They expect communication with courts and prosecutors to be as smooth as communication with for example travel agencies or insurance companies.

What will the consequences be, if business transitions in the EU are considered more cumbersome, and therefore less profitable, than in other parts of the world?

Or, turning to criminal law, how do we uphold the trust and credibility of European justice, if criminals have better access to digital communication than prosecutors do? There is a clear need for interoperability for making justice faster.

As the 2021 EU Justice Scoreboard shows, the effectiveness of EU justice

systems has once again improved in a large majority of Member States. At the same time, upholding the rule of law requires constant improvement, because there is always a risk of backsliding. Trust is fragile.

Digitalisation can improve transparency and effectiveness. In that way it can strengthen the trust in our national legal systems. And reversely, digitalisation implemented wrongly will jeopardize its legitimacy. That is why, information- and cybersecurity aspects require our full attention and need to be addressed early on and as an integrated part in all initiatives. It is also important that the use of digital technologies does not diminish procedural safeguards for people not benefiting from such technologies.

Ladies and gentlemen let me give you an example from digitalisation in the Swedish courts. Last year, despite the corona pandemic, the Swedish courts decided on more cases than ever before, 496 000 cases. In comparison to the year before, this was an increase of court decisions by seven percent, due in part to an increased use of video conferencing. Parties and legal representatives could participate in hearings from their home or from the office. Another recent digital improvement is that written submissions may be presented in electronic form to a greater extent than before. More efficiency gains will follow.

Work on improving information management in the judicial system is a long-term undertaking, involving not just the development of IT solutions but also changes in working methods and culture. Together, we must lead the way for modern and sustainable European judiciaries.

Thank you!

Published 12 October 2021



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech by Mr Morgan Johansson at the Stockholm Criminology Symposium 2021

Speech given at the Prize Ceremony Check against
delivery

Thank you, Anne.

Your Majesty, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

As Sweden's Minister for Justice and Migration, it is a great honour to
welcome you all to the Stockholm Prize in Criminology Award Ceremony.

I am particularly delighted to welcome Her Majesty The Queen.

Your Majesty, your presence here today is a clear demonstration of your
support for crime prevention efforts around the world, and for this
symposium and the Prize.

I would like to thank all of you who have contributed to making – and who
continue to make – the Stockholm Criminology Symposium an
internationally recognised and inspiring meeting place. In particular, I would
like to express my appreciation to the Swedish National Council for Crime
Prevention, which has organised every Symposium since its inception in
2006.

This year, I would also like to extend a special thank you to the Torsten
Söderberg Foundation, co-founder of the Stockholm Prize in Criminology
Foundation and generous donor.

For many of us – myself included – this year's symposium is especially long-
awaited, as last year's conference was cancelled due to the COVID-19
pandemic.

And despite the digital format, I am certain that many rewarding meetings and discussions have taken place today. And that tomorrow will be equally inspiring.

Today, we honour two individuals who have shed light on the ever-present issue of gun violence. Around the world, societies face the challenge of gun violence and its devastating effects. Sweden is no exception.

Gun violence takes many different forms: domestic violence, mass shootings, terrorist attacks, disputes between criminals but also accidents and suicides.

Regardless of context, we must not forget that behind each statistic is a human life cut short, and family and friends left to deal with the tragedy and their loss. Countering gun violence is one of our most crucial challenges.

The research conducted by Professor Philip J. Cook and Professor Franklin E Zimring – the 2020 Stockholm Criminology Laureates – has considerably improved our ability to counter global gun violence.

For more than five decades, their evidence-based approach has shed light on the effects of gun policy and stimulated policy initiatives to curb gun violence.

Although Professor Cook is an economist and Professor Zimring is a lawyer, they have both been influential in developing and applying the science of criminology.

Professor Cook has created a standard measure for predicting variation in lethal gun violence based on gun density. This measure is now widely used by many other researchers to study a range of phenomena, including rates of lethal police shootings.

Professor Zimring and his colleagues first demonstrated that rates of death per attack differed significantly depending on the type of weapon used. As he continued his research, he compiled data from across the United States to show that murder rates varied more in relation to gun availability than in relation to crime rates.

Through diligent research, Professor Cook and Professor Zimring have falsified the claim that gun availability is irrelevant to the level of gun injuries.

Their work has paved the way for more gun violence research, and

strengthened the evidence base for policy interventions and more effective action to reduce the suffering caused by guns.

Professor Philip J. Cook and Professor Franklin E. Zimring – my warmest congratulations to you. Thank you for your valuable contributions. I wish you both well.

Published 16 June 2021



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech by Mr Morgan Johansson on Twenty years of Regulation 1049/2001 on public access to EU documents

Webinar 28 May 2021, organised by the Academy of Finland project 'Transparency in the EU – From Reaction to Manifesto' (TrUE), Erik Castrén Institute of International Law and Human Rights and in cooperation with the Open Government in the EU Blog Check against delivery

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me commence by thanking

- the Academy of Finland, and
- the Erik Castrén Institute of International Law and Human Rights in cooperation with the Open Government in the EU Blog

for organizing this webinar, reminding us of the importance of transparency by creating public access to documents as a contribution to democracy and transparency. Today's discussions have, I am sure, provided necessary food for thought regarding a few of the important challenges that need to be addressed when taking stock and looking ahead regarding Regulation 1049/2001 on public access to EU documents.

I don't need to go into any particular detail before this audience – and in this country – why public access to documents is important. It is a question of the right to know and the possibility to scrutinize – one fundamental right and one essential possibility.

In a democracy, the public power proceeds from the people and require the

trust of people. Public powers must be exercised in such a way that citizens keep their faith. That applies not only for politicians, but is also true when it comes to fundamental institutions and civil servants. People's faith and respect for those who exercise public power is a necessary condition for legitimacy, a cornerstone in any well-functioning society.

The citizen's right to ask for, and receive, information is – to my mind – absolutely crucial in this respect. Public access enables the citizens to exercise control over the administration, without being dependent on personal connections or private economical resources. If not, we will rapidly undermine citizens trust and confidence, and open the doors for undemocratic ideas and powers. There is also a clear link between a high degree of transparency and a low level of corruption, as it increases the detection rate of corrupt practices. The Finnish Presidency put this issue on the agenda in an exemplary manner. It is something we could be inspired by.

To achieve trust is truly a challenge for a union with approximately 450 million citizens in 27 Member States. With that said, I truly believe that access to information is the key to a true democracy. Again, for that we need proper and functional tools for democracy: openness, transparency, public access to documents.

It has now been twenty years since the first Swedish Presidency. Sweden and Finland had joined the union only a few years earlier. We are still very proud that the negotiations on Regulation 1049 went well. It was not an easy task for Helena Jäderblom, nowadays Justice and President of the Supreme Administrative Court of Sweden, with colleagues. Since then, I dare say that there has been somewhat of a climate change – of a positive kind – within the EU institutions when it comes to openness towards the citizens and public access to documents.

In our opinion, Regulation 1049 is absolutely central to the citizens' opportunity to receive information about what the EU is doing and to actively participate in the democratic process. We can easily state that the regulation has contributed to a significantly more open EU.

It could be argued, overall, that Regulation 1049 has worked remarkably well. Currently, a complete overhaul does not seem necessary. It is important to note that possible amendments of the Regulation may go in both directions. If there is no majority for transparency, amendments risk leading to reduced transparency. Such solutions would entail an unacceptable loss of transparency!

It is worrying that there are forces that seemingly want to reduce transparency. The Lisbon Treaty clearly demands more transparency in the EU, and especially so in legislative procedures. It seems urgent to make the uncontroversial amendments due to the Lisbon Treaty. Those adjustments, which would make the transparency regulation applicable to all EU organs, would increase both transparency and legal clarity.

In a modern democracy, proposals that undermine transparency lead in the wrong direction. Any change of the Regulation must follow simple and obvious rules: increased openness, transparency and access – better outreach, understanding and legitimacy. That is what citizens have the right to demand and what the EU has a duty to deliver.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am looking forward to the years to come, and to see what can be accomplished when EU Member States work together. We always benefit from discussions and openness. And with "we" I mean both institutions and citizens. So this webinar is tremendously important – and I agree with minister Anna-Maja Henriksson that it is an excellent example of Nordic co-operation!

It is more crucial than ever that we do not lose momentum but that we continue to strive to ensure that the right to know and the possibility to scrutinize is not restricted, applied incorrectly or falls into oblivion. We want a Union which is truly transparent and accessible. Public access to official documents is one of our most important tools to achieve that. Regulation 1049 has definitely proven its value.

Transparency in the EU is a very important issue for Sweden. I feel optimistic knowing that everyone's openness-oriented work has an impact.

I hope that the coming years will prove to be an inspiring and encouraging journey, for us as persons, as policy makers or practitioners, and for the EU.

Thank you.

Published 10 June 2021



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement by Mr Morgan Johansson on challenges and measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation

Special session of the General Assembly, United Nations, New York, 2–4 June 2021 Check against delivery

Mr President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, let me express my gratitude to the UNODC and the Conference of the States Parties for their efforts in preparing and organizing this special session, despite the challenges of a global pandemic.

Sweden welcomes the declaration and theme of this special session. They mark our common determination to combat corruption. We welcome the declarations strong focus on the role that civil society, academia, private sector and media play to identify, detect and report on cases of corruption.

Sweden supports the statement made on behalf of the European Union

There is a number of key elements that could be further emphasized in our common efforts to prevent and combat corruption. Let me point out a few.

First of all, I am proud to say that Sweden in most international evaluations comes out as one of the countries in the world with the lowest prevalence of corruption. And when you ask me why, I have one word, and that is transparency.

Transparency is crucial. Transparency helps us to expose corruption, but it is not enough. Real transparency in its turn relies on access to information and

official documents. To expose corruption, we also need freedom of the media and strong legislation to protect the whistle-blowers.

I speak from experience. Transparency and freedom of the media have on several occasions made it possible to reveal misconducts. Empowered and protected by constitutional rights to access official documents, the Swedish media has made exposures that has given my government and previous governments the opportunity to act forcefully.

The right to get access to official information makes it possible to detect corruption. But it can also prevent corruption. Compelling officials to think twice if they consider taking advantage of their position, for instance.

Transparency also relies on the citizens legal freedom to communicate with the media without fear of penal consequences. It is equally important that authorities and other public bodies are legally prohibited to investigate and to undertake any negative measures against the citizens when using their legal freedom.

The rights to access official documents and protection of the anonymity of sources are vital rights in a modern democracy.

To expose corruption, employees also need the right to report misconduct. This is important for the individual worker and an important part of a free and democratic society. No one should be afraid of being terminated from work for being a whistle-blower.

So, there we have the key elements: transparency, freedom of the media and protection of the whistle-blowers and the right for public officials to speak to media anonymously without being afraid of losing their jobs, guaranteed in the constitution: that's why corruption levels in Sweden are low. But to prevent and combat corruption on a global scale, we need to combine all our efforts working together at all levels.

Therefore, international cooperation and coordination between the EU, GRECO, the OECD and UN play an important role in our collective efforts against corruption.

Last, let me point out that one of the biggest obstacles to sustainable development is corruption, and that is putting the whole 2030 Agenda at risk. Sweden has therefore made anti-corruption an explicit goal in our strategies for development cooperation. Countries that we work with in development

cooperation must take corruption very serious, and that is a very clear signal from us.

Let me also stress that women and girls are disproportionately affected by corruption. The commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women that we make in the declaration is a welcome first step in addressing the gender-differentiated impact of corruption.

Sweden looks forward to the possibility to participate in the discussions these coming days. And therefore, let us work together to achieve tangible results in the fight against corruption.

Thank you!

Published 03 June 2021



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech by Morgan Johansson "Emerging Global Migration and Mobility, Trends and Issues: A Swedish Perspective"

Dhaka, Bangladesh 11 May 2016 Check against
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Thank you so much Your Excellency for welcoming me to Dhaka. Let me say how glad I am to be here and to be able to address all of you together with Your Excellency.

Let me also congratulate you on taking on the very important task of chairing the Global Forum for Migration and Development or "GFMD". I know that you are making tremendous progress as chair and that you are steering this process forward in an impressive manner.

Sweden will continue to be strongly committed to the GFMD-process. The GFMD dialogue has succeeded in creating greater trust between countries: countries of destination, transit and origin.

Throughout the years, Sweden and Bangladesh have had a close and fruitful partnership within the GFMD process. Our countries have become and remain true partners and allies in the field of global migration and development. This is true not only within the GFMD-context. Together, we have achieved a lot.

Migration and Development, 2030 Agenda

I am especially proud that Sweden and Bangladesh, together with a few other main advocates, succeeded in including migration in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Together we have created a framework that can help us foster the positive effects of migration on development.

We now need to deliver on the commitments we have made. We also need to ensure that these development effects are harnessed for the benefit of all. That means countries of origin, countries of destination and the migrants and their families. In order to attain these development effects, we need to ensure that migrants migrate out of choice and not out of necessity.

In SDG 10.7 of the 2030 Agenda, we have committed to "facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies". This means that we shall reform our migration policies and other policies in order for them to contribute to global development.

I see four areas that we need to focus on in particular in order to increase the development effects of migration:

First, remittances: Migrants send back approximately 440 billion US dollars a year to low- and middle income countries. These remittances constitute more than three times the volume of official development aid going to the same countries. These flows are of course private funds, but still make important contributions to development. This is true not just for the recipients. It is also true for societies as remittances increase investments in education and health care, as well as stimulate consumption.

However, further efforts are needed. Many countries have a long way to go to reach the SDG of less than 3 percent transfer costs of remittances. Sweden is one of these countries. To reduce the transfer costs of remittances, the Swedish Government launched a website - Money from Sweden –in December last year. It aims at putting pressure on reducing the transfer costs by comparing prices for transfers.

Other areas we need to focus on are financial literacy, including gender-sensitive financial literacy, and enhancing access to financial services.

Second, let me move on to labour migration. Labour migration offers opportunities for economic development and acquisition of knowledge and skills. However, this is only possible if migrants receive fair terms of employment, including equal pay. Labour migration can be a complement to domestic labor shortages in certain sectors and can compensate for an ageing population. Furthermore, all countries prosper economically from diversity among the population, which evolves into business diversity and thus economic resilience.

We should facilitate so-called "circular migration". By this I mean that people can move legally back and forth between countries. Through facilitating circular migration, migrants can become empowered as agents of development by being able to utilize their acquired knowledge, skills and networks in both countries of origin and destination.

Third, let us focus on the empowerment of migrants. Migrant empowerment is built on the twin pillars of rights and opportunity. You need a legal framework that safeguards migrants' human rights. You also need a policy framework that allows migrants to claim their rights and to access opportunities. Together, these aspects form the foundation upon which empowerment and positive development outcomes can be realized. However, putting these frameworks in place are not enough; we need to ensure the implementation of these frameworks. This includes providing possibilities for access as well as resources to migrants.

We need to prevent labor exploitation and discrimination of migrants, both nationally and globally. We also need to lower the wage gaps between migrants and nationals. In the 2030 Agenda, we have committed to protecting the rights of migrants, including migrant workers' rights. My Government takes these responsibilities very seriously. We have, for example, recently appointed a commission of inquiry to propose measures to strengthen labor migrants' rights in the labor market.

Fourth, this leads us to look at the recruitment process for migrant workers. Low-skilled workers sometimes end up paying a third of their foreign earnings in recruitment costs. Recruitment costs often lead to indebtedness. I believe we need to step up our efforts to address the issue of corrupt and unethical recruitment practices, including excessive fees. We need partnerships with the private sector. For these reasons, my Government is supporting the development of the International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS). IRIS will be a global and voluntary certification system for recruitment agencies in accordance with a Code of Conduct.

Lastly, governments can play an important role in supporting development initiatives by the diaspora. Members of diaspora communities contribute to skills transfers and transfers of social norms, ideas and behaviors. They also make investments and promote trade between countries of origin and destination.

Succeeding in all of this, we will make enormous progress toward protecting the rights of migrants and enhancing their development impact.

Global processes

We know that migration is a driver of human progress and development. It is one of the defining phenomena of our time. People have migrated throughout history to seek a better future for themselves and their families. These are also among the driving forces behind the large migration and refugee flows we now see around the world.

Today's large migration and refugee flows show the need for improved cooperation and coordination between countries. This is a global issue, and we need to act in partnership – between countries, regions and organisations, with civil society and with the people affected. There is an urgent need to find common and long-term solutions.

Sweden therefore welcomes the intensified work at the global level on migration and refugee related issues leading up to the High Level meeting in New York on September 19. Sweden is proud to co-chair the recently established Group of Friends of Migration in New York together with Bangladesh as well as Benin and Mexico. This Group will support the preparation for the UN Summit.

In order to create a strong and stable system, we need a migration organization with a broad and global mandate with corresponding resources for stability. This is why Sweden supports the inclusion of IOM in the UN system.

It is critical that we plan proactively for broad solutions, including resettlement. We need to support and show solidarity with refugees as well as host countries. Let me give a current example from the situation in Syria: It stands clear that countries neighboring Syria cannot alone take responsibility for all refugees and have become overburdened. I saw this myself when I visited Jordan and Lebanon last year. It is important to improve the sharing of responsibility between countries.

We all bring different perspectives and experiences to the global discussion. Sweden is approaching the global dialogue as a major humanitarian and development donor. We are a country that has received 160 000 asylum seekers last year and over 24 per cent of our population is born abroad or has at least one parent who is. We think we might have ideas to share, for example from our new regional Syria strategy that lends support also to neighbouring countries to the conflict. We need to ensure a fruitful collaboration between development actors and private sector. Trade is an

important element in addressing the root causes of economic migration. It creates economic opportunities to meet the growing needs by providing market places where both locals and migrants can participate. And we approach this complexity of challenges and opportunities with a sincere sense of humility and as so many other countries have far more serious first hand experiences of this unprecedented refugee crisis that we are in the midst of.

Finding sustainable solutions to large migration and refugee flows is a huge responsibility that we all share, not only a few countries. We need true partnerships between governments. We must act on immediate emergencies but not shy away from the long-term perspective. We must embrace and foster the benefits of migration for sustainable development as well as reduce vulnerabilities.

Both Bangladesh and Sweden have great experience of migration. Our long-term engagement has yielded long-term results. The immigration to Sweden has been a key to Sweden's globalization and prosperity, including our strong economic growth and reduction in unemployment.

The close collaboration between Sweden and Bangladesh in the area of migration is an excellent example of a true partnership. Together we have managed to bring essential issues to the global agenda in order to identify immediate as well as long-term solutions. I look forward to continuing our close collaboration to improve the global governance of migration. Let me also wish you success for the rest of your chairmanship of the GFMD, including a fruitful GFMD-Summit here in Dhaka in December.

Thank you!

Published 13 May 2016



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech by Morgan Johansson at UNHCR High-level meeting on global responsibility sharing through pathways for admission of Syrian refugees

Geneva 30 March 2016. Check against delivery.

Secretary-General, Mr High Commissioner, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

It is with mixed feelings that I am back in Geneva for the second time participating in a High-level meeting on resettlement and other forms of responsibility sharing for Syrian refugees. I am of course happy to see the strong interest and high level of attendance at this meeting. At the same time I am saddened, as this is a stark reminder of the continued outflow of desperate people from Syria that we have witnessed since we last meet here in Geneva in December 2014, and that the need for solidarity and responsibility sharing with Syrian refugees is today greater than ever before.

The quantum leap in terms of the number of people in need of protection that we have witnessed over the past decade is a global responsibility that requires a more coordinated and cohesive approach. Responsibility sharing is indeed at the heart of the matter. We have to show solidarity with the millions of people who have been forced to flee their homes and the countries carrying the brunt of the responsibility for hosting the refugees. This is why we all here today.

Mr Chair,

Let me first echo the calls for a political solution of the devastating war in Syria. We give our full support to the UN Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura in his endeavours to this end. It goes without saying that only an end to the

conflict in Syria can ultimately restore safety and dignity to the Syrian people.

While waiting for peace and reconstruction of Syria, we must provide support and protection to those fleeing the conflict in a comprehensive and multifaceted way. Our conference today is part of these broader efforts, building on the success of the London-conference to support Syria and the most affected countries in the region, as well as contributing to relevant discussions in the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in May and the High-level meeting in the General Assembly in September.

Sweden welcomes the increased global attention on the Syria refugee situation as well as refugee and migration more broadly this year. We must ensure adequate synergies and coordination between these meetings, we must strive for concrete and tangible outcomes of these meetings and we must deliver on our commitments – starting with the pledges that were made at the London conference.

At the international donors' conference in London in February, Sweden pledged an additional 350 million SEK in humanitarian assistance to those affected by the war in Syria during 2016. Sweden also pledged to provide 1,7 billion SEK over five years in development cooperation through our new Syria crisis strategy. The aim of this strategy is to contribute to strengthening the resilience of the Syrian population and of vulnerable groups in Syria's neighboring countries that are being severely affected by the conflict. Sweden is the first country to adopt a long-term strategy for the Syria crisis of this kind.

In addition to our financial support to people in need in Syria and its neighboring countries, Sweden has continued to provide a safe haven for people fleeing the war and persecution in Syria, as well as other parts of the world. Last year over 163 000 people, 51 000 of those from Syria, applied for asylum in our country - the highest number per capita in all of Europe. Since 2011, 108 000 Syrians have applied for asylum in Sweden, 57 000 of those have so far been granted asylum and with 20 000 family reunifications, over 77 000 Syrians have to date been granted protection in Sweden and many are still awaiting a decision.

While this has undoubtedly put some pressure on the national reception system and local municipalities, Sweden has at the same time stood firm on its commitment on resettlement with our yearly refugee quota of 1 900 people. One-third of our quota is earmarked for refugees in Syria's

neighbouring countries. I am pleased to announce that the Swedish Government has decided to gradually increase the number of resettlement places to 5 000 by the end of 2018.

Sweden will continue to work closely with UNHCR and other members in the Core Group on Resettlement for Syrian refugees. You can count on Sweden's continued commitment and support to this important work, including by sharing best practices and by welcoming additional countries to join the resettlement efforts.

Mr Chair,

As have been said many times – no one country alone can solve or take responsibility for the Syrian refugee crisis. In that spirit, Sweden is working hard with other EU member states to develop our common EU policy on resettlement and humanitarian admission. Although EU plays a very important role and should absolutely do their part, what we now face is a global challenge that calls for a global response. Some countries far away from the crisis have shown commendable leadership and have welcomed large number of Syrian refugees in their countries. We urge other states to follow this example. If we all do our part and work together, we CAN manage this.

While dealing with the immediate needs of the desperate people that we see on the images from Greece, Turkey, inside Syria and elsewhere, we must also be able to look beyond short-term crisis management and look more broadly on how to improve human mobility and offer more legal pathways for migration in order to meet today's realities and needs.

Sweden therefore welcomes the UN High-level meeting in the General Assembly in September which offers a unique opportunity to look at both short term needs and more long term strategies to strengthen international cooperation and responsibility sharing to deal with both forced displacement and increased human mobility. Sweden will remain very active in the preparation of this Summit and look forward to working closely with other member states and stakeholders in this important process.

Thank you!

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Government Offices of Sweden

Statement by H.E. Mr Morgan Johansson at a lunch seminar hosted by the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the UN and UNHCR

New York 27 april 2015 "The regional impact of the Syrian refugee crisis: What more can be done to save human lives and support the neighbouring countries?" -
As delivered -

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Guests,

I am honoured to speak today together with the High Commissioner and I would like to especially thank him and his organisation for the fantastic work that they are doing in order to tackle the world-wide growing refugee crisis. Without you, and your dedicated staff, our common responsibility would be so much harder to shoulder.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As in the Security Council yesterday, I would like to start with a few words about the terrible tragedy that took place in the Mediterranean this past week-end.

On the night between Saturday and Sunday up to 900 people drowned in the Mediterranean. We do not know who these people were. These boats do not carry passenger lists. But we know that the boat was heavily overcrowded. And I have heard that the few people that were rescued were all men. So if there were women and children on the boat, they have probably been under deck, maybe locked in. It is terrible to imagine the scenes when all these people were dragged down into the depth of the sea, in the dark, late at night.

Who were they? Probably many from Africa. Eritrea. Somalia. Probably many from the Middle East - Syria, Iraq and Palestine. Maybe we will never know who were on that boat. But we should make sure that they are not forgotten. The disaster must be a turning point for the international community. We must act. We cannot turn a blind eye to what is now happening.

And the time is short. Up to one million people are said to be waiting in Libya to try to cross the sea. We are just in the beginning of the spring and so far up to 1.800 people have drowned, just outside European borders. They died on the doorstep to Europe.

In Europe, the European Council met yesterday because of the disaster. EU leaders said that we must increase our efforts to save lives at sea, we must fight the traffickers who are sending people to their death on these boats. On that we all agree. But I say that it is not enough. We must as Europeans take a joint responsibility for the migrant situation, based on the principle that applying for asylum is a human right. But to be frank, on that issue it is harder to reach a consensus within the European Union. On the contrary, many EU member states are not prepared to take their share. That is, ladies and gentlemen, a sad fact.

But not only the EU is failing. So is the UN. The United Nations' task is to uphold international peace and security. Right now we are not doing a very good job. There are 50 million refugees and internally displaced people in the world. It is the highest number since the Second World War. We must address the root of the problem. The international community must increase its efforts to end the war in Syria and, more important than ever, to stabilise Libya. If that is not done, thousands and thousands of people, many of them Syrians, will die in the Mediterranean this year. The European Union has a responsibility, but so has the UN, in trying to prevent this from happening.

Ladies and gentlemen, we may never know how many died this week-end and who they were. But they were men, women and children dreaming about a better future, dreaming about safety, happiness and human dignity. They must never be forgotten.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Syrians is by now the largest refugee population under UNHCR's mandate.

Neighbouring countries continue to carry the heaviest burden. As we have heard in the Security Council today, the question we discuss here is important in so many different ways. For the countries affected, for the region, for countries assisting refugees coming to them, but most of all for the people in the midst of the crisis and those fleeing from it. More than four million people - and there are more coming every day! It puts a heavy strain on neighbouring countries and on the international community. But still, the heaviest strain is on the refugees themselves.

This is why we need to do more. This is our collective responsibility. We must offer refugees the chance of realizing their full potential. It is therefore critical that we are proactive in planning for broad and long-term solutions, including resettlement and other forms of admission.

Resettlement is and has been a priority for Sweden for many years. The Swedish chairmanship in 2014 of the UNHCR global Core Group on resettlement for refugees from Syria confirms our strong commitment. During our chairmanship, this group managed to mobilise almost 100.000 places for resettlement of refugees from Syria. This is of course positive, but we need to convince more states to commit themselves to refugee resettlement and pledge their fair share! At least all countries in Europe should contribute!

Sweden is, and will continue to be, committed to a humane refugee policy and a place of refuge for people fleeing persecution and oppression. Together with Germany we are the main country of destination in Europe of asylum seekers from Syria. Asylum seekers originating from Syria are given a permanent residence permit, and have the right to family reunification. During the time their applications are being processed they have wide-ranging rights in terms of access to the labour market, housing, health and medical care and financial support.

Since the conflict started over 70.000 people fleeing the violence in Syria have sought protection in Sweden. And according to the latest forecast approximately 40.000 more will apply for asylum this year. This means that Sweden by the end of this year would have received well over 100.000 people fleeing the violence in Syria.

The record number of refugees that we see globally requires that we keep the solidarity issue high on the agenda and put pressure on states to do more to protect those in need. However we must not forget the potential of the people fleeing. They bring knowledge and skills and carry the potential of

becoming agents of development.

Europe must shift its perspective. In many countries refugees are just seen as a burden. And I do not deny that it costs money to take care of people in need, to give them education and health care. But I am convinced that done right, a country benefits from migration. Europe must stop looking upon people as costs. Europe must look upon people as human beings, who can be a part of building our continent - if they are provided with the right tools. That should be the European approach.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We must remember that the neighbouring countries are hosting the vast majority of Syrian refugees. Their generosity - and I want to highlight Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey in particular - should be recognised and applauded. The need to maintain that generosity is crucial to alleviate the suffering of millions of people.

The international community must come together to share this burden. We need to continue our support to the host communities. Sweden has committed 11.5 million USD directly for this purpose to Lebanon and Jordan. But we also support UNHCR and other organisations in their work assisting refugees in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey.

Ever since the conflict started in 2011, Sweden has contributed more than 213 million USD in humanitarian aid for Syria. In 2014 alone, the amount was 68 million USD. Recently, during the Kuwait III conference (and I thank Kuwait for hosting it), we pledged 40 million USD. In addition to this, we have provided significant un-earmarked core budget support to the main UN humanitarian actors.

But we also need to support development and to build long term resilience, in particular in countries like Jordan and Lebanon. Recognising this, Sweden is in the process of preparing a new Syria Crisis Development Strategy to strengthen e.g. basic social services and health systems, education, water and electricity supply people in neighbouring countries. I will visit Jordan and Lebanon in two weeks, to see with my own eyes what the situation is.

What I have outlined, ladies and gentlemen, is just a contribution towards alleviating the worst suffering among refugees. So much more is needed.

And most of all we need a political solution to the conflict in Syria. I therefore urge the international community to support the efforts of UN Special Envoy Mr Staffan de Mistura. In the meantime I appeal to all to contribute and to contribute more - in supporting the host communities, the international organisations fighting for human lives and dignity, and - last but not least - the refugees who are the very reason that we stand here today.

Thank you for your attention!

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Government Offices of Sweden

Nordic Statement by H.E. Mr Morgan Johansson at the UN Security Council Open Debate on the Role of Youth in Countering Violent Extremism and Promoting Peace

United Nations, New York 23 april 2015 - As delivered -

Mister President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries; Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and my own country Sweden.

Let me thank the Jordanian Presidency for taking the initiative to this timely high-level debate and H.R.H. Crown Prince Hussein, Secretary-General Ban as well as Professor Peter Neumann and Dr Scott Atran for their remarks earlier.

Mister President,

Let me first say a few words about the terrible tragedy that took place in the Mediterranean this week-end. On the night between Saturday and Sunday 900 people, many of them in their youth, drowned. Up to one million people are said to be waiting in Libya to try to cross the sea. I bring this up because I think this is closely linked to what we are talking about today.

Dr Scott Atran said that we must offer young people a positive personal dream, with a concrete chance of realisation. Or else, some will turn to radical religious or political movements. And others will desperately try to go

to other parts of the world, searching for a better life - even if it means risking their lives. So these issues have common roots, in more ways than one. War and poverty lead to the migrant situation that we now see, but war and poverty also lead to political and religious radicalisation.

In Europe, the European Council is meeting today because of the disaster. We must increase our efforts to save lives at sea, we must fight the traffickers who are sending people to their death on these boats, but we must also take a joint responsibility for the migrant situation, based on the principle that applying for asylum is a human right. And the international community must increase its efforts to end the war in Syria and, more important than ever, to stabilise Libya. If that is not done, thousands and thousands of people, many of them young, will die in the Mediterranean this year. The European Union has a responsibility, but so has the UN, in trying to prevent this from happening.

Mister President,

To prevent radicalisation, we must stress the importance of peace, but also the importance of economic and social development. H.R.H. Crown Prince Hussein pointed out how many young people there are today. Today's youth, sometimes called "the millennials" make up 25 percent of the world's population. Many have faced the harsh realities of terrorist attacks, wars, economic crises and ensuing unemployment. Millions of young people are lone migrants, refugees or internally displaced -uprooted from their homes and families.

Not content with being subjects without a voice, the politically aware will strive for civil rights and for citizenship, as during the Arab spring, which appears to have been a youth-driven movement. But if the search for identity and belonging - existential needs for every human person - is not satisfied by inclusion in a democratic society, frustrated youth may look for recognition elsewhere. Not invited to take part in building a peaceful social environment, active youth will find a context, search for a role where they are allowed to perform - sometimes it takes destructive forms.

In a context of spiralling violent extremism and instability, it is therefore more important than ever to strengthen the role of youth. Facing violence and conflict, young people can participate as agents of positive and constructive change. Given the right educational tools, youth can be agents

of peace.

Last year, the UN Alliance of Civilizations and Education First once again brought together 75 young persons - a whopping 75 000 had applied - for an international Summer School. They learnt about the UN and discussed areas where the UN can better collaborate with youth organisations to advance peace and security around the world.

Mister President,

It is clear that we need to safeguard our democracy and make our societies more resistant against radicalisation to violent extremism. This requires local efforts on a global scale. We support the Secretary-General's initiative for a UN Plan of Action for preventing violent extremism.

Against this background, it is important to acknowledge that many young people actually already play a role. With courage and dignity, they act as community leaders in peacebuilding, reconciliation and post conflict reconstruction. However, this is often unseen or simply overlooked. We need to do more to highlight their actual contribution to peace.

Peacebuilding is a corner-stone in the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Youth and the youth dimension needs to be corner-stone of the UN Plan of Action for preventing violent extremism.

We must recognise young women, as their male contemporaries, as key stakeholders in countering violent extremism. They have unique knowledge, experiences and resources that is vital to our efforts. We must understand the different roles that women have in conflict - both as fighters and peacemakers. This means that both young women and men must be included in analysis of extremism, otherwise we will lose important findings that can contribute to countering extremism and promoting conflict resolution.

Mister President,

The very phenomenon of violent extremism has served as a reminder to all of us, on all continents: exclusion can breed fanaticism among both majority and minority groups. We see Islamophobia and anti-Semitism as well as discrimination against Christians.

Youth from many different countries, including from some of the Nordic countries, have for various reasons been attracted by terrorist propaganda, radicalized and turned into foreign terrorist fighters. This is a serious problem. We need to strengthen the legislation, for instance by criminalising to travel to fight for terrorist groups, as this Council has called upon all Member States to do. But that is not enough.

The Nordic countries believe that our strongest counter-narrative is our firm commitment to democracy, human rights and equality as the most effective tools to prevent radicalisation into terrorism. In addition, we emphasise that economic growth and resolute efforts to manage rapid population growth to alleviate extreme poverty that threaten global peace and prosperity.

The White House CVE Summit established an ambitious framework for our efforts against violent extremism and the Nordic countries take active part in the follow-up efforts.

We share a common interest in embracing and enhancing the role of our youth in countering violent extremism and promoting peace. Let me conclude by quoting a young, second generation Swede who previously harboured sympathies with radical groups but who has today renounced these views:

"From wanting to bring terror and chaos to society, I now want to help others finding themselves in the same situation as I was. I have lots of experience. I know the circumstances. And it is my duty to give something back to our society."

Thank you for your attention

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