



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# A new sustainable export initiative throughout the country

Published 10 May 2019

Making the entire Nordic region the first integrated 5G zone and getting Swedish companies to export more. Listen to Minister for Foreign Trade with responsibility for Nordic affairs Ann Linde talk about some of her priorities during this electoral period.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# A digital Team Sweden on Sweden Abroad

Published 06 May 2019

Swedish trade with the rest of the world is constantly increasing. Today, three quarters of Sweden's goods exports go to Europe. We export most to Germany, followed by Norway, Finland, Denmark, the United States and the Netherlands. We want to help Swedish businesses find new trading partners, businesses and markets to increase their global sales. At the same time, we also want to help foreign businesses and individuals who want to do business with Sweden find the right entry points.

To make it easier for all actors around the world that are interested in forging trade links with Swedish businesses, we have gathered all information in a single place on Sweden Abroad (our website for our missions abroad) called 'Doing Business with Sweden – the sky is the limit'. It will be launched on 6 May. This is a step on the road to providing comprehensive, easily accessible digital information to those who want to export from Sweden, import Swedish products or invest in Sweden.

Here is a link to the page: <https://www.swedenabroad.se/businesswithsweden>

Sweden's exports increased during the previous electoral period. The Government launched an export strategy that included a number of initiatives to strengthen the business sector's internationalisation and our economic relations with the rest of the world. The strategy will now be further developed with a focus on economic, social and ecological sustainability for more jobs throughout the country. 'Doing Business with

Sweden – the sky is the limit’ is part of this work.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Nominations for the 2018 Music Export Prize

Published 22 February 2019

The Government's Music Export Prize is awarded every year to an artist who has been internationally successful during the preceding year and has contributed to Swedish musical export success and to a positive image of Sweden. The winner will be announced by Minister for Foreign Trade, with responsibility for Nordic affairs, Ann Linde at a ceremony at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on Wednesday 6 March at 14.30.

In addition to the Music Export Prize, the Government also awards an Honorary Prize for long-standing contributions to Swedish music exports, and a Commendation for achievements of particular importance to the internationalisation of Swedish music. The winners are announced at the prize ceremony.

With the Music Export Prize, the Government wants to draw attention to Swedish performers and practitioners in the music industry who contribute to increased export success for Swedish music and put Sweden in the spotlight.

“We are very pleased and proud today to present the nominees for the Government's 2018 Music Export Prize. They are all major and important music practitioners who export world-class music and show the breadth of what Sweden is achieving in the international arena,” says Minister for Foreign Trade, with responsibility for Nordic affairs, Ann Linde.

The nominees for the Government's 2018 Music Export Prize are:

## Malin Byström

Passion and a lifelong love of classical music have created yet another Swedish superstar in the opera firmament. Add to that a voice that has audiences and critics making the pilgrimage to the major opera houses in London, Paris and New York. Two decades have passed since her stage debut in Vadstena, and during this time Malin Byström has become one of the most popular sopranos of our time. Whether she's playing young girls in Mozart or the most desperate women of opera, such as Elektra or Medea, she always fills her characters with life. And she does so without ever losing control of her voice. In 2018, Malin Byström was awarded the title of Swedish Court Singer and she also won a prestigious International Opera Award (the Oscars of the opera world) in the category Female Singer of the Year. Sweden continues to deliver world-class singers.

## Ludwig Göransson

From Linköping to Los Angeles. From playing the drums so much to Metallica as an eight-year-old that he injured his thumb to being turned down by the Cheiron Studios elite and now basking in the limelight of pop music and popular culture. This composer and producer found his way early on to film music because it was full of opportunities. Because it was possible to mix and experiment so boundlessly with styles and rhythms – as he did last year on cinema screens across the world in 'Black Panther', 'Creed II' and 'Venom'. The same thing happens in his music. The incredible song 'This is America', which combines hiphop, gospel, trap, afrobeat and more, took almost three years for him and his old friend Childish Gambino to complete. It also became the most important and acclaimed hit of 2018, with an accompanying music video addressing contemporary issues such as violence, weapons and racism in the United States. In musical terms, it is an excellent declaration of who this boundless musician from Östra Götaland really is. He is certainly worthy of his nominations for an Oscar and a Golden Globe. As well as the three (of four possible) Grammys he won.

## Mohombi

Since the 1990s, the Swedish-Congolese artist and songwriter Mohombi has performed more than a thousand times on stages in over 48 countries – thanks to his talent, hard work and a non-stop process. With a genre he calls afropop, Mohombi has released music over the years together with artists such as Pitbull, Shaggy, Nicole Scherzinger (Pussycat Dolls) and Akon. In

2018, Mohombi won two Grammys as a songwriter on reggaeton artist J. Balvin's album (Vibras) and a BMI Award for the international hit 'Mi Gente' with Beyonce on the remix. He was co-producer and songwriter for Jennifer Lopez's song 'Dinero' with Cardi B and DJ Khaled, which won an MTV Video Music Award. With his background, Mohombi has been bringing together Sweden, Latin America and Africa for decades, to rhythms originating in these parts of the world and now present all over the world. He is often called the 'Afro-Viking' – by both himself and others – in a true ambassadorial spirit.

## Robyn

Robyn, a previous winner of the Government's Music Export Prize, made a comeback in autumn 2018 with her first studio album since 2010. In terms of its impact, it was like nothing had happened in the meantime – in a positive sense. The new album 'Honey' – her eighth album in total – was received around the world as an offering from a trendsetting and established star. Both broad and niche media presented the album as a major work – and along with the single 'Missing U', it was soon ranking on the year's bestseller lists in the United States and the United Kingdom, for example. This is the status Robin Carlsson has achieved 23 years on from her breakthrough – a timeless artist, a modern entrepreneur and now a highly creative producer.

## Ilya Salmanzadeh

For over ten years now, Ilya Salmanzadeh has been working as a songwriter and producer. His career took off when Max Martin took him under his wing, and Ilya has developed his talent through the production collective Wolf Cousins. Over the years he has worked with world artists such as Ellie Goulding, Taylor Swift, Fifth Harmony, Jennifer Lopez and Ariana Grande. In 2018, Ilya's success with Ariana Grande took him to new levels – in the autumn, the singer had three hits written by the Swedish hitmaker simultaneously on the US billboard charts.

The jury for the Music Export Prize is made up of:

Mikaela Fredriksen Tollin, acting Director-General of the Swedish Institute

Ametist Azordegan, author and freelance journalist

Anna-Karin Larsson, Editor-in-chief, SR Musik, Swedish Radio P2

Elin Norquist, Head of Musikplattformen, Swedish Performing Arts Agency

Elisabet Widlund, CEO of Musikförläggarna

Jesper Thorsson, CEO of Export Music Sweden

Lars Nylin, Editor-in-chief and publisher of Musikindustrin

Linda Portnoff, CEO of Riteband

Ludvig Werner, CEO of IFPI Sverige

Per Sinding-Larsen, music journalist, Swedish Television

Robert Sehlberg, Head of Music at MTG Radio

Coordinators of the Music Export Prize are Gabriella Augustsson and Kristina Lindberg at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Department for Promotion of Sweden, Trade and CSR.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality - Hosts' summary and reflections

Published 20 June 2018

The Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality was held on 15–17 April 2018 and gathered more than 700 participants from over 100 countries and a multitude of sectors and functions. The discussions covered a broad range of areas and focused on concrete methods and tools to enhance gender equality and the full enjoyment of rights, representation and resources for all women and girls.

The hallmark of the Forum was co-creation. This included:

- A broad nomination process in which CSOs and other partners joined the Swedish Foreign Service, the Swedish Institute, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) in suggesting participants.
- A co-owned agenda inspired by the participants themselves and what they reported as being the greatest challenges to gender equality.
- A collaborative process in which partners, collaborators and participants developed and organised seminars together and in close dialogue with the Swedish Institute.

## Results

- A unique Forum constituting a global and vibrant manifestation and mobilisation for gender equality and the full enjoyment of human rights



by all women and girls.

- A powerhouse of inspiration co-created by, and further invigorating, a multitude of gender champions from all over the world.
- A total of 29 interactive seminars and roundtable discussions that were co-organised with participants and – thus – contributed to substance, methods and partnerships.
- A platform for non-stop sharing of experiences and best practices, both within and across sectors, policy areas and regions.
- A wealth of new and further developed initiatives, commitments and partnerships focused on areas such as creating awareness, legislative change and capacity building, involving countries from all over the world.
- A number of launches of new tools, such as a 'Women, Business and the Law' report from the World Bank Group.
- A Call to Action to counter the shrinking space and to increase support for women human rights defenders, drafted and presented by the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation with partners and other women's rights activists.
- A broad communicative reach. During the week of the Forum alone the hashtag #GenderEqualWorld reached almost 3 million people, trending in countries such as Australia, India, the US and the UK, and also achieving huge reach in countries such as Brazil, Canada, China, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, France, Iraq, Poland and Turkey.
- A wide range of articles and news broadcasts in traditional media around the globe.
- A distinct contribution and push for the efforts to implement the SDGs as well as CEDAW and other relevant conventions, resolutions and agreements.
- A starting point for discussions in new constellations, including in the form of a first cross-sectoral Feminist Think Space held back-to-back with the Forum and co-hosted by UN Women and the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and cofacilitated by UN Women and Sida.

## Next steps

- Building on the momentum and capitalising on the results of the Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality, Tunisia will host the conference Tunis Forum on Gender Equality in 2019.
- Participants are pursuing a number of other initiatives linked to and/or inspired by the Forum.
- Participants can continue to register initiatives, commitments and partnerships resulting from or connected to the Forum on the Forum

website: <http://genderequalworld.com/initiatives/>.

- The Swedish Institute will post documentation from all the seminars and roundtables on the website. Together with other outcomes of the Forum, the documentation will serve as a library of best practices and a platform for continued networking.
- The Swedish Institute will develop a tool kit so that Swedish embassies and other stakeholders can take the Forum and its outcomes further in their respective context.
- Sweden commits to implementing the 2018 action plan for feminist foreign policy and launching a handbook on how to conduct a feminist foreign policy. Sida will operationalise the new global development cooperation strategy for gender equality.
- Sweden will present the documentation and results of the Forum to UN Women, as well as cooperate with UN Women and other partners on following up the Forum, including by disseminating and drawing on the best practices and experiences shared.
- Sweden will continue the dialogue with partners interested in arranging events inspired by and following up the Forum.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Joining forces to strengthen global gender equality efforts

Published 23 April 2018

More than 700 gender equality advocates from more than 100 countries gathered at the Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality to exchange experiences and mobilise efforts for global gender equality. The participants included key figures from civil society organisations, business, academia and politics. They all have the same goal: a gender-equal world.

The Forum took place at a decisive point in time. While gender equality is progressing in many places, many of the participants highlighted the fact that gender inequality and discrimination of women and girls are among the greatest human rights challenges of our time. Efforts to promote women's and girls' rights, representation and access to resources therefore require concerted action. It requires cooperation between gender equality advocates and decision-makers, and between men and women.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström began her speech with a special welcome to the men, stressing that gender equality is not a women's issue – it concerns peace, security, development and democracy. To illustrate the path to gender equality, she quoted Mahatma Gandhi:

"First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win. I sense that we are winning," she said.

## **More statistics needed**

To tackle the issue of gender equality, the right conditions are required. Isabella Lövin, Minister for International Development Cooperation and

Climate and Deputy Prime Minister, highlighted identifying gender inequality as an area requiring considerable improvement.

"What you don't know about, you don't care about. We need more statistics on gender equality in the world to move forward. That will give even better opportunities to work for increased gender equality," she said.

### **"Gender equality is smart economics"**

Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde made the point that gender equality is not only wise and right, it is also smart economics.

"Women who participate in the labour market have more power over their own lives. This strengthens the whole of society. Shutting women out of economic activity is probably the world's greatest waste of opportunity and talent," said Ms Linde.

The Forum delegates are now urged to submit concrete examples of commitments, initiatives and cooperation to continue supporting and inspiring each other in their efforts to increase gender equality.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# A secure EU in a secure world

Published 02 March 2018 Updated 02 March 2018

As part of the EU's global strategy for foreign and security policy its common policy is being developed to contribute to security both in and outside the EU. The European security order is still being challenged by Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Important progress has been made to lay the foundation for inclusive and ambitiously structured defence cooperation (PESCO), and work is continuing to highlight this broad view of security.

An active neighbourhood policy is the best guarantee for democracy, welfare and stability in our neighbouring region. Within the framework of the EU's new development policy the overall objective of EU development cooperation is still poverty reduction, but the policy also points the way to how EU development cooperation will contribute to the sustainability goals of the 2030 Agenda.

The Government will work to ensure that:

- Both the civilian and the military priorities of the EU's global strategy are implemented, including the permanent structured cooperation, PESCO, and the further development of civilian crisis management;
- The EU's dialogue with Russia is clear and principled, and that support for Ukraine and the other countries in the Eastern Partnership is strong; The EU's sanctions against Russia are upheld for as long as the reasons for their introduction remain;
- The EU contributes to conflict prevention, crisis management and conflict resolution in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, in close cooperation with the UN and regional actors;

- The EU integration processes for the Western Balkans are maintained based on the qualification of each country.

## The EU's internal security

Responding to the threats from terrorism, IT crime and other cross-border criminal activity requires preventive action based on close and effective cooperation. We see how, in addition to its many advantages and possibilities, an ever more digitised world also leads to vulnerabilities and security challenges. The threats to the EU's internal security are often linked to conditions beyond the borders of the EU and the most effective measures for the EU's internal security may therefore be operations outside the EU, for example the EU's civilian and military crisis management operations.

The Government will work to ensure that:

- The control of the EU's external borders is strengthened, thereby improving the possibilities of detecting and preventing crime and the import of illegal goods. This is essential for a secure and well-functioning Schengen area.
- Law enforcement agencies' access to information and possibilities of exchanging information match up to what is essential for effective and legally certain cooperation to combat threats including those from terrorism;
- EU cooperation in the area of cybersecurity is promoted, particularly within the framework of the Information Security Directive and the Framework for a Joint EU Diplomatic Response to Malicious Cyber Activities.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# A social Europe for jobs and inclusive growth

Published 02 March 2018 Updated 02 March 2018

Even though the economic situation in the EU has improved, we see high long-term unemployment, growing gaps and unacceptably high youth unemployment in many parts of Europe. Well managed public finances at both national and EU level lays the foundation for greater confidence in the policy being pursued and stable economic growth shared by everyone.

## A modern long-term budget

In spring 2018 the Commission will propose a new long-term budget for the period after 2020. The Government will work intensively to influence that proposal as much as possible, mainly along with other like-minded Member States. Negotiations on the new proposal are expected to start in mid-2018.

When the UK leaves the EU, a large contribution to the EU budget will disappear, as will an important ally for Sweden in the budget negotiations.

The Government will work to ensure that:

- The total expenditure in the EU's multiannual financial framework does not exceed 1 per cent of the EU's GNI, that the Swedish contribution is kept down and that the use of EU funds is controlled more effectively.
- The EU has a modern budget with refocused priorities benefitting security, migration, competitiveness, research and actions against climate change. This means less funding for agricultural support and

structural funds. At the same time the Government will protect the relative return of funds to Sweden.

- All Member States stand up for our common values and decisions made. EU membership brings both rights and obligations. There must be a cost for not taking responsibility.

Inclusive growth through open trade and a competitive Single Market  
More than 70 per cent of Swedish exports go to the Single Market and our export industry employs more than 1.4 million people in Sweden. In the past twenty years over 80 per cent of all the new jobs have been created in the services sector. Disproportionate barriers to trade must be removed to facilitate the development of the services sector. Market surveillance of goods on the Single Market also needs to be modernised to enable consumers to feel secure that products are safe and environmentally sustainable and to enable companies to compete on equal terms.

The EU needs to increase its ability to generate and attract highly qualified activities in global value chains. The innovative capacity of European industry needs to be enhanced.

The Government will work to ensure that:

- Disproportionate barriers to the movement of goods and services disappear, especially through the implementation of the Single Market Strategy for goods and services;
- An ambitious free trade agenda with more free trade agreements between the EU and other parties;
- Action in the EU's coming framework programme for research and innovation makes more of a contribution to increased competitiveness and more jobs.

## A digitalised Europe

Digitalisation is driving the development of society, promoting competitiveness and creating new jobs. If the EU is to be able to retain a leading position in the digital economy, investment is needed in infrastructure, education and skills development.

One important step on that path is to complete the Digital Single Market strategy. Since most businesses depend on free, cross-border flows of data in their activities, the development of the Digital Single Market must support the free movement of data across national borders both within and beyond



the EU.

The Government will work to ensure that:

- The proposals in the EU's Digital Single Market strategy are implemented in 2018.
- The proposal concerning free flows of data is adopted speedily and the flows of data to and from third countries are facilitated, for example by international agreements.

**Fair jobs and working conditions**

Conditions in the European labour market must be fair and decent. To protect workers' conditions, companies' competitiveness and the legitimacy of free movement, cross-border work must be combined with the principle of equal pay for equal work and conducted in line with good working conditions and a good work environment. The Government's starting point continues to be that the competence of Member States; national labour market models and the autonomy of social partners; and the standing of collective agreements must be respected.

The Government will work to ensure that:

- The revision of the Posting of Workers Directive is completed so as to confirm the principle of equal pay for equal work in posting situations.
- The coordination of social security systems is developed and promotes the dialogue between Member States and mobility for persons in the EU, especially workers.
- Clear rules and fair competition for a well-functioning Single Market steer legislation in the area of transport and lead to better working conditions in the whole of the EU as well as that the protection of social rights is strengthened.

## **Stronger gender equality and flexibility**

A Europe for jobs and inclusive growth builds on a synergy between growth, competitiveness and social progress. The implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights will make a positive contribution to women's and men's quality of life at the same time as the division of competence between the EU and its Member States is retained.

Stronger gender equality is both a rights issue and needed to increase Europe's growth and global competitiveness. When women are outside the

labour market, potential for growth goes to waste.

Access to life-long education contributes to a flexible labour market. The need for further education throughout life is increasing, especially as a result of the digitisation and robotisation of society. People's skills need to develop in pace with the technological development and to be matched to new types of jobs.

The Government will work to ensure that:

- The principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights are monitored in a structured way within the European Semester;
- The Directive on Work-Life Balance is designed in a way that contributes to a more gender equal working life and enables high labour force participation among both women and men irrespective of their family situation.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

# Future of the EU: An inclusive discussion on the white paper on the future of Europe

Published 31 January 2018

A necessary and valuable debate on the future has started in the EU. Although much works well at EU level, there is reason for soul-searching. The more people who are involved in the discussions on the future of Europe, the better the prospects of strengthening our citizens' trust in the European project.

As a part of the discussions on the future of Europe, in the spring of 2017 the Commission presented a white paper outlining different scenarios for future EU cooperation, and five reflection papers on key issues: the social dimension, harnessing globalisation, the deepening of the economic and monetary union, the future of European defence and the future of EU finances. On this basis, the Commission wanted to initiate a comprehensive debate on the future of Europe with civil society and other social actors, to promote participation in the shaping of EU policies.

In 2017, the Government held EU thematic consultation forums on all five reflection papers, informed the Riksdag (Swedish parliament) via explanatory memorandums, and held discussions with many parliamentary committees. The Government plans to hold one more EU thematic consultation forum on the future of the EU in the spring of 2018 ahead of Europe Day on 9 May.

In December 2017, the Government informed the European Commission and the Presidency of the Council of the European Union about its work. The Government's letter and reports from the EU thematic consultation forums

are available on this web page.



Article

# EU and Japan – agreement on free trade deal\_

Published 18 July 2017

The EU and Japan have reached an agreement in principle on both an Economic Partnership Agreement and a political Strategic Partnership Agreement, which both regions say represents an ‘economic landmark’. “Two of the world’s largest economies have agreed to conclude a free trade agreement at a time when protectionist winds are blowing around the world. This sends an important signal to the rest of the world,” says Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde.

Two thirds of the Swedish companies currently exporting to Japan are small, and the Japanese market is particularly important for counties such as Uppsala, Dalarna, Västernorrland, Stockholm and Jämtland. "This is extremely positive," says Ms Linde, who believes the agreement will boost trade for both small and large companies.

"There is a lot of Swedish technology of interest to Japan, not least in the fields of health and climate change. Smart cities and sustainable transport are two examples; waste management is another," says Ms Linde.

Japan will abandon customs duties on 97 per cent of all goods once the agreement is implemented, making it the most ambitious agreement the country has ever reached. The EU will abandon 99 per cent of its customs duties. The agreement also contains simpler regulations facilitating trade.

Japan has previously had its own very distinct regulations in the automotive sector. From 2019 onwards, Japan will follow international UN regulations.

"This is good news for Swedish car manufacturers," says Ms Linde.

The agreement was preceded by four years of negotiations. Besides duties, it contains provisions on market access for both goods and services, and public procurement.

It also contains proposals for deeper cooperation in a number of other areas, including intellectual property law, competition, sustainability, and animal and plant health, and this will be the first time an agreement includes a specific commitment on the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement.

It is important to note that some details in the agreement still need to be ironed out. Negotiations on investment protection, regulatory cooperation and some technical issues have not yet been completed and are expected to continue in the autumn. The hope is that all remaining issues will be resolved before the end of the year. This will be followed by a process in the European Council and Parliament to conclude and sign the agreement.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Ann Linde launches the Government's EU priorities

Published 15 March 2017

On 15 March, Ann Linde launched the Government's EU priorities for 2017 in the Riksdag. Jobs and growth, environment and climate, and a solidarity-based refugee and migration policy remain priority EU issues for the Government.

## **Why did the Government draw up overarching priorities for EU work?**

"In order for us, as a medium-sized EU country, to make a difference in the EU, we must be able to prioritise. The EU must focus on the issues that create the greatest value for citizens and that cannot be managed at national level alone," says Ms Linde.

## **What are the Government's overarching EU priorities?**

"The short answer is decent jobs, environment and climate, and migration and security. The Government will focus on ensuring fair working conditions in both the Swedish and European labour markets. At the same time, the EU must show leadership in the battle against climate change and in implementing the Paris Agreement. And even if some progress has been made in the area of migration, a new functioning asylum system remains to be put in place, in which all EU countries take responsibility for receiving refugees.

## **Is there any issue of particular importance to you?**

"I think that all three priority areas are important. They are decisive issues, not only for the EU but also so that our citizens can live good lives. This is why I want to initiate more extensive discussions on EU issues among

ordinary Swedes. Over the course of the year I will continue to work to strengthen participation in the Government's EU work."

**How are you, as Minister for EU Affairs, moving these issues forward?**

"I make use of the EU priorities almost every day. Regardless of whether I'm at a ministerial meeting or if I'm speaking about the future of the EU, I rely on our common priorities," says Ms Linde.





Article from Prime Minister's Office

# Prime Minister Stefan Löfven today received Jin Liqun, President of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

Published 12 September 2016 Updated 12 September 2016

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) was established in January this year, and Sweden became a member at its first Annual Meeting in June. Mr Löfven and Mr Jin discussed the bank's strategic focus for the future.

Mr Löfven expressed the hope that the AIIB will be an institution with a clear focus on environmental and climate-resilient investments. Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde also took part in the meeting. During his visit to Sweden, Mr Jin will also meet Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson, representatives of Swedish companies at Business Sweden, and take part in a seminar at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde met French and German EU ministers

Published 13 July 2016 Updated 13 July 2016

On 11 July, Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde met the French and German EU ministers in Berlin to discuss how these Member States can pursue a common policy now that Sweden's closest partner in the EU, the United Kingdom, has voted to leave the EU. It is important for Sweden to find new strong partners to enable it to take part in shaping the future of the EU.

The ministers discussed the following issues: growth and employment, how the EU can increase its ambition to create more jobs that ensure fair and equitable pay, stepping up the important climate commitments we made in Paris, the migration crisis and the EU countries' share of responsibility based on solidarity, and protecting EU values. Other issues included gender equality and how to get more young people to see the direct benefits to them of EU membership. The discussions resulted in a joint statement, which the countries together will now push forward in the EU.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# TTIP dialogue in Stockholm

Published 08 June 2016 Updated 08 June 2016

A unique event organised by the Government Offices together with the Swedish Trade Union Confederation and the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise brought together representatives of business, civil society, the EU and the United States for a full-day dialogue on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde, the United States Trade Representative, Ambassador Michael Froman, and EU Commissioner for Trade Cecilia Malmström took part in debates and gave speeches during the day.

"For an open and trade-dependent country such as Sweden, it has never been an option to say no to trade, and the TTIP negotiations are a historic opportunity to contribute to Sweden's and the EU's prosperity," said Ms Linde.

In smaller groups, representatives of environmental organisations, the business sector and trade unions in Sweden and around the world discussed various aspects of TTIP and the ongoing negotiations. Together with Ms Malmström and Mr Froman, Ms Linde visited a Swedish company to discuss trade and the opportunities of TTIP. Negotiations on TTIP also took place at the Swedish Trade Union Confederation headquarters.

"There is a consensus in our country on the importance of trade and openness, which is clearly manifested in this dialogue meeting. Continued openness and transparency, and engaging stakeholder organisations and citizens are important as negotiations continue," said Ms Linde.

The event was webcast live.





Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Stockholm hosting high-level dialogue on TTIP

Published 30 May 2016 Updated 30 May 2016

On 31 May, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs – together with the Swedish Trade Union Confederation and the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise – is hosting a high-level dialogue on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, TTIP. Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde will take part, together with EU Commissioner for Trade Cecilia Malmström and the United States Trade Representative, Ambassador Michael Froman.

The two chief negotiators for TTIP, Ignacio Garcia Bercero (EU) and Dan Mullaney (US) will also be there, as will President of the Swedish Trade Union Confederation Karl-Petter Thorwaldsson and Director-General of the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise Carola Lemne.

During the dialogue, issues such as market access, sustainability, rights and protectionism will be discussed. The participants invited include representatives of environmental organisations, the business sector and trade unions.

"The dialogue will be a unique opportunity to discuss the advantages and challenges of TTIP. It will be an opportunity for various groups to have their voices heard and raise the issues that concern them. Transparency and openness are and should be the watchwords when the two largest markets in the world negotiate a free trade agreement. The Stockholm dialogue is a concrete expression of openness and transparency in free trade negotiations," says Ms Linde, who will deliver one of the main addresses

during the dialogue.



Government Offices of Sweden

Opinion piece from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Sweden makes it easier for developing countries to export

Published 01 August 2019

Opinion piece by Ann Linde, Minister for Foreign Trade, published in Svenska Dagbladet on 25 July 2019.

Large wooden barrels were loaded onto ships, barrel after barrel. They were lined up in rows and stacked on top of each other. The contents smelled slightly rank, but they were nonetheless valuable. Three hundred years ago, herring was more than something we ate at midsummer or Christmas. In the 18th century, herring was in fact one of Sweden's largest exports. Sweden has long been dependent on exports, and exports have become increasingly important to us. By selling everything from fish, wood and iron to 5G equipment, medicines and climate-smart buses, we can create jobs and build a stronger society.

We want more countries to be given the opportunity to trade with other countries. For this reason, the Government is now bolstering the capacity for our partner countries to be able to trade with Sweden through an initiative by Open Trade Gate Sweden (OTGS), which provides export-related information and support to developing countries. The aim is for more companies from developing countries to successfully export goods to Sweden and thus create more jobs and fight poverty.

Inclusive growth is crucial to creating economic, social and environmental sustainability – and to meeting the goals of the 2030 Agenda. Developing countries' trade is far too low, especially that of the least developed countries, whose share of world trade is below 1 per cent.

By linking our trade policy with our international development cooperation policy, we can achieve more. In many of our partner countries, our development assistance helps to increase growth and create more productive

sectors. One example is in Ethiopia. Through our bilateral strategy, Sweden is working to increase productivity in the agricultural sector. Due to the country's heavy dependence on agriculture and its low productivity, the rural population in particular is vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters. By increasing productivity, we make people less vulnerable to climate change and create opportunities for increased exports.

But increased productivity must go hand in hand with sustainable development. During this electoral period, the Government will enhance its action for biodiversity in international development cooperation. By helping our partner countries to produce more environmentally sustainable products, we can meet an increased demand for organic products and, at the same time, help more countries make the sustainability transition.

But lower customs duties are not enough to increase the participation of developing countries in global trade. Many developing countries lack the necessary capacity and technology. This is also why support is needed to be able to reap the benefits of trade. The Government is therefore working to promote free and fair trade through development cooperation as well. Since Sweden knows that economic development and development cooperation are linked, we also contribute financing to trade-related aid initiatives. More countries should be able to become financially independent and grow stronger. Last year, we contributed USD 3.7 billion to Aid for Trade, a WTO initiative that helps developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, to build their trade capacity and benefit from trade.

We now want to take another step to make it easier for developing countries to export to Sweden. The National Board of Trade's OTGS currently provides information and training on customs duties, charges, rules and requirements to facilitate trade and increase exports from developing countries to Sweden and the EU. The Government has tasked the National Board of Trade with broadening the scope of OTGS activities to better connect exporters with the Swedish market. There is a great demand for information and initiatives that increase exporters' knowledge of and access to the Swedish market. The Government is making it easier for developing countries to find counterparts in Sweden with a demand for their products so that deals are actually struck.

This will also strengthen and streamline our development cooperation initiatives in other areas. It also fits in well with the work of building broader relationships with developing countries by finding synergies between different policy areas. And this is something that our partner countries often



ask for.

The Government's initiative is good for our partner countries – and it is good for Sweden. It shows that we stand up for free and fair trade and for the integration of developing countries into the global trading system.

Ann Linde, Minister for Foreign Trade



Opinion piece from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Let us work together, with courage and patience, to make the world more gender-equal

Published 15 April 2018

Today sees the opening of the Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality – a global conference with 600 participants from over 100 countries. The Forum will bring together activists, academics, politicians and entrepreneurs who put their energies into making the world more gender-equal.

If we want to achieve change, we must strive for it every day – through active and patient efforts. The women's movement showed the way, standing on the barricades and fighting for gender equality at both national and international level. Thanks to their fight, we have been able to launch, as the first government in the world, the feminist foreign policy. Sweden has received attention from all over the world, and several countries have followed suit with their own policies. Last autumn, the #MeToo movement gave international momentum to the gender equality issue.

But at the same time, we have also seen how the forces working actively against women and girls have gained in strength. This is a trend that is spreading, and all the while political leaders are reducing their global responsibility. This is dangerous and it means that those people who want a more gender-equal world need to come together even more than before. The Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality is thus taking place at a particularly important time.

Policy must lead to concrete results to be relevant. For us, therefore, it has been a priority to pursue a feminist foreign policy based on action and real

change. Let us point to a few examples:

We are investing SEK 1 billion in a global strategy for gender equality and women's and girls' rights. Activists and women's organisations working for gender equality often face strong opposition in their fight for human rights. The possibilities of working independently are reduced when financing and democratic space shrink.

We have started a network of women mediators who are active in countries such as Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine. We will continue our work to ensure women are involved in peace processes at all levels.

Thanks to the WikiGap campaign, which the Ministry for Foreign Affairs conducted together with Wikimedia on International Women's Day this year, Wikipedia now has over 2 500 more articles on women: an important contribution to the encyclopaedia, in which four in five of the articles about people are about men.

Through Sweden's engagement, the UN Security Council has considered the situation of women to a greater extent – a concrete example is that since Sweden took up a place on the Council, all of the Council's statements have mentioned women, peace and security.

Swedish support has enabled the UN body UNCTAD to produce a 'trade and gender toolbox' to help ensure that trade policy has a gender equality perspective. In addition, almost 100 Swedish embassies are now giving priority to raising and promoting gender equality issues in various ways.

The full list is much longer – and is a reason to be proud. It shows that it is possible to make a difference through determined and patient work.

Now that the Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality is getting under way, we want to reach out a hand to all of the forces in Sweden and the world that are working for gender equality: let us work together, with courage and patience, to make the world more gender-equal. The Forum is a launchpad for this. We cannot afford anything less.

Margot Wallström  
Minister for Foreign Affairs

Isabella Lövin  
Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate, and  
Deputy Prime Minister

Ann Linde  
Minister for EU Affairs and Trade



Opinion piece from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Swedish trade minister highlights importance of free trade

Published 05 October 2016 Updated 05 October 2016

Sweden's Minister of EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde will be accompanied by the largest ever business delegation during her upcoming official visit to Vietnam from October 4-6. This article was published in Vietnam Plus ahead of the visit.

Vietnam and Sweden enjoy a long standing diplomatic and unique relationship. Over the last decades, we have moved from development cooperation into a new phase of partnership, not least as trading partners. While our countries are far apart geographically, we share the conviction that good governance, respect for human rights, the rule of law and adherence to the international rule-based system are determining factors for development. Vietnam has achieved major success in its economic development and has rapidly been moving up the development ladder. Today, Vietnam is a country and a market with significant potential.

In 2015, Vietnam and EU signed a Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The agreement is one of the most ambitious and comprehensive FTAs that the EU has ever concluded with a developing country. It shows Vietnam's dynamic approach in pursuing international integration for the good of its citizens. It will help Vietnam to integrate successfully as a market economy into the global economy.

Like Vietnam, Sweden is a staunch supporter of free trade. The economic and social wellbeing of our respective nations depends on a transparent, rules based and open global trade regime. For us, free trade is the only way going forward.

But while free trade may be indisputable in Vietnam and Sweden, it is increasingly being criticized elsewhere. Today we see a trend in which more people are demanding that the doors we have fought for decades to open, now be closed to both people and trade with the rest of the world. Some people feel that their jobs are being destroyed by global competition and technological developments – and therefore that their life situations are under threat.

The Swedish Government understands that frustration. Essentially, it is about increased inequalities, a lack of security and inadequate welfare. Stagnating or even declining real wages are a reality for many employees in large parts of the EU and the US. At the same time, the safety nets for those who lose their job are often too weak.

But directing anger at trade and development is not only the wrong approach – it is a dangerous approach. The Swedish model shows that development and security goes hand in hand. Secure people are not afraid of progress. In Sweden, the labour movement acknowledges that structural transformation of the labour market is good for workers. Workers compete on the basis of knowledge and skills, which means that globally competitive businesses are needed. Without free trade, Sweden risks missing out on jobs, and losing out to global competition. In the long term, inefficient and unprofitable operations are devastating for wage earners and for our society.

The structural transformation that Sweden has undergone in recent decades has made us one of the world's leading innovation and industrial nations. Since 2014, 120,000 new jobs have been created in Sweden. Today, 1.3 million Swedes are directly or indirectly employed thanks to our exports - a third of the Swedish work force.

The Swedish government has adopted an ambitious export strategy aiming at increasing trade and boost participation of Swedish companies in the global economy. Bilateral trade and investments in Southeast Asia, the growth engine of the world, forms an important part of this aim. By having the second biggest growth rate in the world, Vietnam has a key role to play in the region. With the implementation of the progressive Free Trade Agreement, Swedish trade with Vietnam, and Swedish companies investing in the country, would certainly grow.

More trade would benefit Vietnam and Sweden, as well as the whole of Southeast Asia, by creating new jobs and more prosperous societies. Sweden supports the earliest possible implementation of the EU-Vietnam Free Trade

Agreement, not least as the agreement forms an important building block towards the possibility of a future region-to-region EU-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement. In this regard, Vietnam is leading the way in the region. Our strengthened partnership will allow us to better address future challenges on the road towards prosperous, democratic and just societies.

I am therefore very happy to visit Vietnam for three days in October, leading the largest delegation of Swedish companies that has ever visited your country, to learn more about Vietnam, discuss innovation and sustainability and explore how Sweden and Vietnam can work together for more open and free trade, for the benefit of both our countries.

Sweden firmly believes that we must push for more open and free trade through a progressive free trade agenda that not only aligns with, but also supports the implementation of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. For us it is a given that in trade policy we must stand up for human rights, our environment, people's health and our democratic space. Based on this approach, more free trade means more prosperity for all.

Ann Linde, Minister of EU Affairs and Trade



Opinion piece from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Trade requires rules

Published 20 September 2016 Updated 20 September 2016

Opinion piece Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 17 Sept. 2016 by German Minister of State for Europe Michael Roth and Sweden's Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde.

Globalisation is not a destiny to which we must yield without question. It can be shaped – in a social, democratic and sustainable way. Globalisation is an opportunity. We are aware of this especially in Sweden and Germany. As members of the EU, we take advantage of open borders, exchange and trade. Our prosperity and a large number of our jobs depend on this. Highly qualified employees in both of our countries produce excellent, innovative products, which we sell not only at home and in the EU, but around the world. And yet, globalisation and free trade are coming increasingly under fire, and particularly in countries that – and this is borne out by all the indicators – benefit tremendously from this trend. This is demonstrated at the moment by the trade agreements between the EU and the US and Canada in particular.

For many people, TTIP and CETA are a symbol of unfettered market radicalism. They fear that the social welfare state will be dismantled, standards watered down and that jobs are under threat. We Social Democrats have to acknowledge this fear. But we, who believe in the possibilities of free trade, have obviously not done enough to explain how the development that comes with trade and welfare actually goes hand in hand. The answer is not to close the door on the rest of the world and stop developing. The solution is to be part of the development and to offer a strong safety net and an active labour market policy. Welfare and an active labour market policy with social insurance schemes can build bridges between old and new jobs. People with secure jobs are not afraid of progress. While the conservatives have nothing bad to say about unfettered



markets, nationalists want to build new walls and pull up the drawbridge, and left-wing radicals are quick to reject the agreements. Social Democrats have every reason to be self-assured. We are of the view that free trade and globalisation require clear, binding and predictable rules. And as long as there is no world trade regime that is internationally binding for all of the world's countries, the EU's agreements with other states represent a great opportunity. There are good reasons why responsibility for trade policy lies with the EU and not with the member states. This has been the case for decades.

In a globalised world, national rules are not fit for the future – neither for Sweden, nor for Germany. The EU institutions shoulder a particular responsibility. The European Commission negotiates while the Council and the Parliament take decisions. This calls for the greatest amount of transparency and inclusion, however. Only in this way can trust develop. Secrecy is a breeding ground for conspiracy theories. After all, many people are afraid of a globalised world. While there is certainly plenty of scope for improvement here, it is also clear that the repatriation of responsibility to the national level is not a convincing response. Europe has every reason to conduct negotiations in a self-confident manner. We can set standards around the world in environmental, social and consumer protection policy.

CETA shows just how much is possible. Thanks to Canada's cooperative new left-wing liberal Government, the final stages of the difficult negotiations have been imbued with a fresh dynamism and openness. Open, clear and stable conditions for international investment are important for growth and jobs on both side of the Atlantic. The investment protection in CETA confirms Governments' right to regulate and include a new reformed system for resolving disputes between investors and States. A public Investment Court System with two instances will be set up. National interventions are still allowed for, and there are definite safeguards against arbitrary decisions. Public services are protected and culture is exempted from the regulations, while water supplies are not at risk of being privatised and public healthcare will not have to face any restrictions. Moreover, genetic engineering will not be smuggled through the back door under the CETA regime. Consumer and environmental standards will not be eroded, despite the fact that the EU, with its strict precautionary principle, has a different legal tradition than Canada or the US. In its negotiations with the United States, the EU has, unfortunately, yet to achieve a genuine breakthrough.

We intend to press on; indeed we have an obligation do so. Trade

agreements such as CETA and TTIP are a necessary intermediate step, although they are not all that is needed. Trade policy must aspire to reduce social division. After all, fairness and justice are principles that apply not only to us, but also to coffee-growers in Africa and to seamstresses in Bangladesh. A forward-looking European Union trade policy must help not only to safeguard standards for EU citizens, but also to improve them in a tangible way for people outside Europe. This will involve quite a bit of legwork on our part. Progressive politics need not fear CETA and TTIP. On the contrary, shaping globalisation remains one of the key tasks for European social democracy.

Ann Linde, Swedish Minister for EU Affairs and Trade

Michael Roth, German Minister of State for Europe



Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# The time has come for the EU to deliver

Published 10 September 2016 Updated 10 September 2016

Opinion piece in Svenska Dagbladet 10 September 2016 by Stefan Löfven and Ann Linde. Europe is currently facing what may be the greatest challenges since the European project emerged out of the ruins of two devastating world wars. The refugee crisis, the widening gaps and the unemployment that have characterised the last few years have also mobilised powers for less cooperation and more isolationism.

We share the frustration that many feel. Not everyone has benefited from the increasing globalisation and world trade that have lifted many people out of poverty and increased prosperity around the world. Far too many people link globalisation with widening gaps and increased vulnerability.

But we do not share the conclusion that less cooperation is the solution. On the contrary. More and more of our social challenges are of a cross-border nature and can only be solved by means of cross-border cooperation. One clear and frightening example is the fight against terrorist organisations, which move between countries and continents and which no single country can fight on its own.

The European project also provides opportunities that are vital to Sweden's prosperity. The opportunity that, together, we can be a strong voice in all decisions that affect us in international forums. The opportunity to ensure healthier air, cleaner water and joint efforts against climate change. The opportunity for you, as a citizen, to study, work or run a company in any EU country you wish.

On Friday, the heads of state and government of the 27 Member States will meet in Bratislava to discuss how the EU will manage the British exit.

The Government is ready to begin negotiations with the UK and has set up a group at the Government Offices with special responsibility for monitoring Swedish interests. We want to see close cooperation even after the UK leaves the EU. At the same time, it is important to make clear that access to the single market entails rights as well as obligations. Cherry-picking must not be allowed, such as by implementing the free movement of services but not of people.

The meeting in Bratislava also has an even more important agenda item: defining the path the EU will take in the future. Sweden's position is that this path does not go through major new projects that require amendments to the Treaties. On the other hand, it is high time that the Member States actually implement the decisions taken by common accord. In this work, the Swedish Government will give priority to three areas: more and better jobs, a more ambitious environment and climate policy, and a long-term, sustainable migration policy that safeguards the right of asylum.

## 1. More and better jobs

It is time to create a more far-reaching and fairer single market. The single market stimulates competition and trade, enhances quality, increases the supply of goods and services – and represents 70 per cent of Swedish exports. We must therefore continue to remove unnecessary barriers to trade and deepen the digital single market so that more Swedish companies can increase their exports and employ more people.

Economic and social developments must also keep pace so as to be sustainable. Social issues, such as the way welfare is designed, are usually national in nature and must remain so. But considering that different countries have different social systems, we need to identify bottlenecks and find solutions that can, for example, make the step between education and the labour market easier to navigate, make it easier for parents to combine work with family life, and increase women's access to the labour market. The Swedish Government is also very active in efforts to improve the Posting of Workers Directive and to ensure that the principle of equal pay for equal work applies regardless of where you come from.

This means that it is of the utmost importance to further develop the European Pillar of Social Rights that was launched by the European

Commission. The Government will therefore organise an EU summit on social issues in Sweden in 2017 to move this work forward and put these issues on the agenda.

## 2. Ambitious environment and climate policy

Climate is a global issue – and the EU is a pivotal actor in ensuring that we succeed in the transition. We are convinced that there would not have been a globally binding climate agreement in Paris without influence from the EU.

We want to continue our leadership in this momentous issue. The Government will work actively to ensure that the climate agreement is ratified by the entire EU as quickly as possible. We will push for a high level of ambition in the proposals now being negotiated in the EU and which form the basis of the EU's implementation of the agreement. We will also be a strong driving force in the EU for cleaner air and the reduced use of hazardous chemicals.

## 3. All countries must take their responsibility in the refugee crisis

The Government wants to see a Union that provides security for its citizens and takes responsibility for refugees. It is positive that progress is being made in the negotiations on reinforcing the EU's external borders and that the EU is now placing greater focus on how we can make use of the common foreign, trade and aid policies to improve efforts aimed at stopping people being forced to flee.

But to prevent the EU from again becoming as paralysed as it was during the most acute stage of the refugee crisis last year, it is also necessary for more countries to be involved and contribute.

Sweden has been one of the most proactive Member States for a more even distribution of asylum seekers in the EU, and we will continue working for a more uniform asylum system in the EU, where all the Member States take their share of the responsibility for the reception of asylum seekers. One prerequisite for this is that all Member States have reception systems with sufficient capacity, a legally secure asylum process, an equivalent assessment of the need for protection and certain basic rights linked to the need for protection.

The time has come for the EU to deliver. The Government will also encourage increased participation in EU issues at home in Sweden. By doing so we not only create increased legitimacy for EU decisions that are taken, we also get suggestions as to what the EU could do better.

Europe's citizens have every right to be horrified over terror, war and oppression, and angered over poverty, widening gaps and climate threats. But there is one thing that Europe's history has taught us: solving these problems requires more cooperation – not less.

Stefan Löfven  
Prime Minister

Ann Linde  
Minister for EU Affairs and Trade



Opinion piece from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Sweden needs TTIP for jobs

Published 05 September 2016 Updated 05 September 2016

Opinion piece in Aftonbladet 2 September 2016 by Ann Linde and Karl-Petter Thorwaldsson. A free trade agreement with the United States is important if we are to create a greater number of competitive jobs in Sweden. Neither the Government nor the Swedish Trade Union Confederation subscribes to the view that the negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership – TTIP – between the EU and the US have failed or should be abandoned. There are few tools that can genuinely increase the number of jobs – new progressive and comprehensive trade agreements are one such tool.

In the negotiations the Government is standing up for the interests of wage earners, for the environment, and for human and animal health. Neither the Government nor the Swedish Trade Union Confederation will accept an agreement that reduces protection of the climate, environment or health, or that threatens democratic decision-making. For us, this is a fundamental premise of a new free trade agreement, and the Government will undertake scrupulous impact analyses to ensure that this is the case when the agreement is ready. Commitment to improving the agreement has also had an effect. The EU is negotiating the TTIP based on a mandate approved by all of the Member States. The negotiations have largely conformed to our demands. These complex negotiations are not a hundred-metre sprint: they are more like a marathon. Just because they are difficult does not mean there is any reason to give up.

The political winds blowing against free trade in both Europe and the US are

born of serious frustration among people who feel that development is failing them. If your experience of free trade and increased global competition is that they are likely to leave you unemployed, your family high and dry, and jeopardise your children's future, then it is not surprising that you want to put a stop to this trend.

We understand that frustration. Essentially, it is about increased inequalities, a lack of security and inadequate welfare. Stagnating or even declining real wages are a reality for many employees in large parts of the EU and the US. At the same time, the safety nets for those who lose their job are often too weak.

But directing anger at trade and development is not only the wrong approach – it is a dangerous approach. The Swedish model shows that development and security go hand in hand. In Sweden, the labour movement has realised that structural transformation of the labour market is good for workers. Here, workers compete on the basis of knowledge and skills, which means that globally competitive businesses are needed. Without a free trade agreement, Sweden risks missing out on jobs, and losing out to global competition. In the long term, inefficient and unprofitable operations are devastating for wage earners and for our society.

But unemployment insurance that provides secure income protection, and an education system and labour market policy that can offer those who lose their job another chance in the labour market are also prerequisites. Secure people are not afraid of progress.

Sweden is an export-dependent country and a strong supporter of free trade. The structural transformation that Sweden has undergone in recent decades has made us one of the world's leading innovation and industrial nations. Since 2014, 120 000 new jobs have been created in Sweden. Today, 1.3 million Swedes are directly or indirectly employed thanks to our exports. Volvo Cars recently announced that it is to take on 400 new employees in Sweden. This is gratifying news. With a free trade agreement such as the TTIP, exports could grow – and the number of jobs along with them.

Swedish businesses would find it easier to penetrate the US market with their products, and would be able to employ more people. The TTIP can help cut through red tape and overlapping bureaucracy. At the heart of the negotiations is the fact that the US and the EU have different regulatory frameworks, which should not have to mean unnecessary restrictions on trade. A free trade agreement would also increase investment between the



EU and the US, which is an important factor if businesses are to grow and develop.

Those who now want to halt efforts to reach a free trade agreement between two of the world's largest economies, the EU and the US, need to answer one question: how are we to create a greater number of competitive jobs without increased trade?

Ann Linde, Minister for EU Affairs and Trade

Karl-Petter Thorwaldsson, President of the Swedish Trade Union Confederation



Opinion piece from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Free trade does not widen the gaps

Published 23 August 2016 Updated 23 August 2016

Opinion piece in Dagens industri, 22 August 2016 More and more criticism of globalisation and free trade is being voiced around the world. The solution is to be part of development and to offer a strong safety net and an active labour market policy, writes Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde.

Things are going well for Sweden and this is no coincidence. Unemployment is falling and growth is high. The number of people in employment has risen by 120 000 since 2014. We have the lowest level of youth unemployment for 13 years. This is very positive. But we must not rest on our laurels. Even more people need a job to go to.

More trade is necessary if we are to continue creating new jobs in Sweden. This is why the Swedish Government is pushing for a greater number of progressive free trade agreements. To be successful in this, it is necessary for people to understand the political conditions.

Widening gaps and a lack of security have created a sense of frustration that is targeted towards openness and trade in many countries. More people have to realise that development and security must go hand in hand.

Today we see a trend in which more people are demanding that the doors we have fought for centuries to open now be closed to both people and trade with the rest of the world.

Many people feel that change does not mean improvement. On the contrary, many people feel that change makes things worse. People feel that their jobs

are being destroyed by global competition and technological developments – and therefore that their life situations are under threat.

We must understand that this frustration exists. That it is strong. And that it is, unfortunately, well-founded in many places. In both the EU and the United States, there has been a trend towards widening gaps, with wage earners – and in particular those in less qualified professions – receiving an ever smaller piece of a growing pie.

This frustration is expressed in various ways. People cannot vote on globalisation and technological developments, but they can vote against the EU, migration and trade policy. In the United Kingdom this resulted in Brexit. The people of the Netherlands voted against the trade agreement between the EU and Ukraine. In the United States, it is migration and trade policy that are the focus.

But the solution is not to close the door on the rest of the world and stop developing. The solution is to be part of development and to offer a strong safety net and an active labour market policy. The Swedish Government knows this. And we are good at it.

During the shipyard, textile and steel crises of the 1970s, hundreds of thousands of jobs disappeared. Many people lost their jobs during the crisis of the 1990s. During the latest financial crisis, a large number of people were also let go when the order books were not as full as they had been.

This structural transformation has resulted in Sweden becoming one of the world's leading innovation and industrial nations. Old jobs have disappeared and new ones have emerged. What was outdated and inefficient has been replaced by modern and efficient. Many people have had the opportunity to enter further education or training and have benefited a great deal from this development.

The Swedish Government knows that development and security go hand in hand. New jobs emerge through free and open trade. An active labour market policy with collective agreements and social insurance schemes can build bridges between old and new.

It is people that should be protected, not inefficient businesses. Our Swedish model creates secure people. And secure people believe in development.

Because what would Swedish society have looked like if we had retained

outdated shipyards at Lindholmen in Gothenburg, instead of building a large campus and a science park?

We must push for more open and free trade. But for the Government it is a given that in trade policy we must stand up for workers' rights, our environment, people's health and our democratic space. We must therefore ensure that our trade agreements protect our own scope for decision-making, and our opportunities to tighten environmental requirements and also to continue protecting people's and animals' health.

I am pleased that negotiations over CETA, the trade agreement between the EU and Canada, have been completed. For this is a broad and deep trade agreement that is based on modern trade patterns. Approximately 99 per cent of the tariffs between the EU and Canada will be removed, opening the way for trade and more jobs.

The Government previously gave the National Board of Trade the task of conducting an impact assessment of CETA. This has now been completed and the Board's overwhelming assessment is that CETA protects the parties' future scope for regulation.

I am now looking forward to CETA beginning to apply, and to more people realising that the Swedish model of development and security is the way forward.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Minister for Foreign Trade Ann Linde to discuss feminist trade policy at Fashion Week Trade

Published 15 August 2019

On 15 August at Fashion Week Trade, Minister for Foreign Trade Ann Linde will be taking part in a round-table discussion on feminist trade policy and its relevance for the fashion industry. With more than 700 footwear, clothing, underwear, accessories and childrenswear collections, Fashion Week Trade is Sweden's largest fashion event, including for fashion buyers.

At the event, Ms Linde will meet with representatives of the fashion industry, the media, government agencies, organisations and academia. She will be speaking about internationalisation, exports and Sweden's new feminist trade policy.

“It should not be more expensive for women to buy clothes due to unfair tariffs. It should be just as easy to export in areas where women's entrepreneurship is common, as it is for men to export. New trade agreements will contribute to creating decent work for women too. But the fact is that today, trade policy benefits men more than women,” says Ms Linde.

The fashion industry is one of the fastest growing export industries in Sweden and, by international standards, the global interest in Swedish fashion is growing. According to Swedish fashion industry statistics, exports increased by a total of 5.8 per cent in 2018, and small and medium-sized

enterprises increased their exports by as much as 20 per cent. Since statistics were first compiled seven years ago, the fashion industry as a whole has grown by just over 60 per cent and exports have risen by almost 90 per cent.

An ongoing study by the National Board of Trade highlights significant differences in US tariffs on certain womenswear and menswear items; for example, the tariff on silk shirts for women is six times the tariff on silk shirts for men. Furthermore, the effective tariff on sportswear designed for women is 21 per cent; for sportswear designed for men, it is 7 per cent. For underwear, the figures are 13 per cent and 7 per cent respectively.

“Generally speaking, as consumers, exporters and employees, men benefit more than women. It goes without saying that as a feminist, I will always work to promote economic development that benefits both women and men. That’s why I am stepping up our feminist trade policy efforts,” says Ms Linde.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Ludwig Göransson receives the Government's Music Export Prize 2018

Published 06 March 2019

The Government's prize for extraordinary services to Swedish music exports in 2018 has been awarded to composer and producer Ludwig Göransson. The Government's 2018 Special Prize for long-standing contributions to Swedish music exports has been awarded this year to Thomas Johansson, Live Nation. The commendation for achievements of particular importance to the internationalisation of Swedish music has been awarded to Musikmakarna and Ulla Sjöström.

The winner of the Government's Music Export Prize was presented during a ceremony at the International Press Centre. The prize is awarded each year to Swedish music creators who have contributed to export success and to spreading a modern and positive image of Sweden abroad.

“This year's recipient of the Music Export Prize, Ludwig Göransson, is a clear example of how the Swedish music industry has created opportunities for people to boundlessly experiment and develop their talent and musicality to reach the absolute top world elite as music practitioners,” says Minister for Foreign Trade Ann Linde.

Ludwig Göransson became the 22nd winner of the Music Export Prize with the following citation:

“From Linköping to Los Angeles. From playing the drums so much to

Metallica as an eight-year-old that he injured his thumb to basking in the limelight of pop music and popular culture. This composer and producer found his way early on to film music because it was full of opportunities. Because it was possible to mix and experiment so boundlessly with styles and rhythms – as he did last year on cinema screens across the world in ‘Black Panther’, ‘Creed II’ and ‘Venom’. The same thing happens in his music. The incredible song ‘This is America’, which combines hip-hop, gospel, trap, afrobeat and more, took almost three years to complete with Childish Gambino. It is an important and much discussed song about today’s United States. In musical terms, it is an excellent declaration of who this boundless musician from Östra Götaland really is. He is certainly worthy of his nominations for an Oscar and a Golden Globe. As well as the three Grammys he won.”

Sweden had several major and important musical ambassadors in 2018, but no one shone as brightly and clearly as this year’s Music Export Prize winner – Ludwig Göransson.

The Special Prize for long-standing contributions to Swedish music exports went to Thomas Johansson, Live Nation, with the following citation:

“This year’s winner of the Special Prize has had a key position in Swedish music exports ever since he founded the concert company EMA Telstar in 1969. The fact that right from its inception EMA Telstar brought foreign superstars and undertakings to Sweden opened international doors that gave him a leading role in export contexts as well. In the early 1970s, he and EMA had primary responsibility for ABBA’s tours when they became global stars, and since then he has been directly and indirectly involved when leading Swedish artists have been exported to the world’s stages. He fully managed the world tours of Europe and Roxette. With the title Chairman International/Nordics in the company that is now called Live Nation Sweden, he has also regularly worked behind the scenes in recent decades for contemporary Swedish export artists such as the Cardigans, Peter Dinklage and Zara Larsson. Fifty years after that first global endeavour, Thomas Johansson is still an essential part of building Swedish music exports.”

The commendation for achievements of particular importance to the internationalisation of Swedish music was awarded to Musikmakarna with the following citation:

“In recent years, the Swedish and international music industry has been on pilgrimage to Örnsköldsvik where, under the slogan ‘It all starts with a great



song', a community songwriter programme has been fostering tomorrow's songwriters for 20 years and created a well-deserved reputation as a nursery for unique talents. Hitmakers such as LÉON, Agrin Rahmani, Joy & Linnea Deb, SKOTT, SHY Martin & SHY Nodi, and many more, have received the tools they needed to create brilliant careers as music creators.

Tireless work led by real enthusiasts with a passion for music, and Head Teacher Ulla Sjöström who never compromises her vision, have given Sweden not only its first songwriter programme but also major international musical success. In addition to raising an entire occupational category to unimaginable heights, the school has also made a major contribution to gender equality in the Swedish music industry.”



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release

# The ministers' press contacts

Published 22 January 2019

Here are the contact details for the ministers' press secretaries.

## Prime Minister's Office

Press secretaries to Prime Minister Stefan Löfven

**Ingela Nilsson**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 551 41 16

**Jonatan Holst**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 227 85 35

Press Secretary to Minister for EU Affairs Hans Dahlgren

**Dan Lundqvist Dahlin**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 553 66 29

## Ministry of Employment

Press Secretary to Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson

**Natalie Sial**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 520 54 49

Press Secretary to Minister for Gender Equality, with responsibility for anti-discrimination and anti-segregation, Åsa Lindhagen

**Martin Kling**

Mobile telephone: +46 70 539 57 29

## Ministry of Finance

Press Secretary to Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson

**Gösta Brunnander**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 544 28 66

Press Secretary to Minister for Financial Markets and Housing, Deputy Minister for Finance, Per Bolund

**Hanna Hessling**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 557 38 01

Press Secretary to Minister for Public Administration Ardalan Shekarabi

**Matilda Malmqvist Glas**

Mobile telephone: +46 70 367 03 64

## Ministry of Defence

Press Secretary to Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist

**Maja Zachrisson**

Mobile telephone: +46 70 219 81 64

## Ministry of Infrastructure

Press Secretary to Minister for Infrastructure Tomas Eneroth

**Karin Röding Boman**

Mobile telephone: +46 76 116 65 62

Press Secretary to Minister for Energy and Digital

## Development Anders Ygeman

**Fredrik Persson**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 454 55 09

## Ministry of Justice

Press Secretary to Minister for Justice Morgan Johansson

**Sofie Rudh**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 545 74 21

Press Secretary to Minister for Home Affairs Mikael  
Damberg

**Miriam Abu Eid**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 216 95 65

## Ministry of Culture

Press Secretary to Minister for Culture and Democracy, with  
responsibility for sport, Amanda Lind

**Anna Söderström**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 532 17 13

## Ministry of the Environment

Press secretaries to Minister for Environment and Climate,  
and Deputy Prime Minister, Isabella Lövin

**Jakob Lundgren**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 206 08 92

**Kristoffer Talltorp**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 542 80 32

## Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

Press Secretary to Minister for Enterprise and Innovation  
Ibrahim Baylan

**Sami Mashial**

Mobile telephone: +46 76 144 17 03

Press Secretary to Minister for Rural Affairs Jennie Nilsson

**Maria Soläng**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 206 19 47

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Press Secretary to Minister for Health and Social Affairs  
Lena Hallengren

**Jens Petersen**

Mobile telephone: +46 70 293 69 35

Press Secretary to Minister for Social Security Annika  
Strandhäll

**Victor Harju**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 504 36 70

Ministry of Education and Research

Press secretaries to Minister for Education Anna Ekström

**Natalie Sial**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 520 54 49

**Tora Heckscher**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 233 84 39

Press Secretary to Minister for Higher Education and  
Research Matilda Ernkrans

**Daniel Ferreira**

Mobile telephone: +46 76 135 56 92

## Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Press Secretary to Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström

### **Isabel Lundin**

Mobile telephone: +46 76 296 46 38

Press Secretary to Minister for International Development Cooperation Peter Eriksson

### **Hanna Hessling**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 55 738 07

Press Secretary to Minister for Foreign Trade, with responsibility for Nordic affairs, Ann Linde

### **Joanna Abrahamsson**

Mobile telephone: +46 72 543 84 89



**Government Offices of Sweden**

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Finance, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Government Offices

# New state secretaries at the Government Offices

Published 22 January 2019

The Government today appointed 31 state secretaries at the Government Offices. Former state secretaries have been dismissed from their positions. Most of the state secretaries have previously held corresponding positions at the Government Offices.

## Prime Minister's Office

The Government has appointed Nils Vikmång as the Prime Minister's State Secretary. The Government has also appointed Madeleine Harby Samuelsson and Karin Wallensteen as state secretaries to Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The Government has appointed Paula Carvalho Olovsson as State Secretary to Minister for EU Affairs Hans Dahlgren.

The Government has appointed Mats Andersson and Maria Ferm as state secretaries in the coordinating committee at the Prime Minister's Office.

## Ministry of Employment

The Government has appointed Annika Dahl as State Secretary to Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson.

The Government has appointed Karin Strandås as State Secretary to Minister

for Gender Equality, with responsibility for anti-discrimination and anti-segregation, Åsa Lindhagen.

## Ministry of Finance

The Government has appointed Max Elger and Leif Jacobsson as state secretaries to Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson.

The Government has appointed Ulf Holm and Elin Olsson as state secretaries to Minister for Financial Markets and Housing, Deputy Minister for Finance, Per Bolund.

The Government has appointed Alejandro Firpo as State Secretary to Minister for Public Administration Ardan Shekarabi.

## Ministry of Defence

The Government has appointed Jan-Olof Lind as State Secretary to Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist.

## Ministry of Infrastructure

The Government has appointed Mattias Landgren as State Secretary to Minister for Infrastructure Tomas Eneroth.

The Government has appointed Sebastian De Toro as State Secretary to Minister for Energy and Digital Development Anders Ygeman.

## Ministry of Justice

The Government has appointed Catharina Espmark and Lars Westbratt as state secretaries to Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson.

The Government has appointed Elisabeth Backteman as State Secretary to Minister for Home Affairs Mikael Damberg.

## Ministry of Culture

The Government has appointed Helene Öberg as State Secretary to Minister for Culture and Democracy, with responsibility for sport, Amanda Lind.



## Ministry of the Environment

The Government has appointed Eva Svedling and Gunvor Ericson as state secretaries to Minister for Environment and Climate, and Deputy Prime Minister, Isabella Lövin.

## Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

The Government has appointed Stina Billinger and Emil Högberg as state secretaries to Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Ibrahim Baylan.

The Government has appointed Per Callenberg as State Secretary to Minister for Rural Affairs Jennie Nilsson.

## Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

The Government has appointed Maja Fjaestad as State Secretary to Minister for Health and Social Affairs Lena Hallengren.

## Ministry of Education and Research

The Government has appointed Erik Nilsson as State Secretary to Minister for Education Anna Ekström.

The Government has appointed Malin Cederfeldt Östberg as State Secretary to Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans.

## Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government has appointed Annika Söder as State Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström.

The Government has appointed Per Olsson Fridh as State Secretary to Minister for International Development Cooperation Peter Eriksson.

The Government has appointed Niklas Johansson as State Secretary to Minister for Foreign Trade, with responsibility for Nordic affairs, Ann Linde.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Ann Linde presented the Government's Music Export Prize for 2017

Published 01 June 2018

The Government's prize for extraordinary services to Swedish music exports in 2017 was awarded to the artist and songwriter Noonie Bao. The Government's 2017 Special Prize for long-standing contributions to Swedish music exports was awarded to the world-class conductor Herbert Blomstedt.

"Sweden continues its tradition of delivering world-class songwriters. I'm especially pleased to see Noonie Bao breaking new ground and helping to spread a positive image of Sweden as a gender-equal, creative and innovative country," says Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde.

Today, 1 June, Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde awarded the Government's Music Export Prize for 2017. The prize aims to draw attention to an artist who, during the preceding year, has contributed to Swedish music export successes and to a positive image of Sweden.

Noonie Bao received the 2017 prize with the following citation:

When Jonnali Parmenius debuted six years ago, we heard a singular kind of pop music. Under the artist name Noonie Bao, she performed enchanting tracks that seemed both immense and intimate in the same breath. They encapsulated not only the immediate but also colour, feeling and intimacy. But her own career is small compared with the music she has made for other artists. What started as collaborations with Avicii, Tove Styrke and others grew over the years into something that became pure dynamite in 2017. As

one of the composers of 'Stay' by Zedd and featuring Alessia Cara, she not only topped the US radio charts but also other charts around the world. It has – together with other hits from the same year that she was involved in creating, such as 'Final Song' with MØ and 'Alone' for Alan Walker – been streamed more than one billion times. This year's Music Export Prize goes to one of the biggest Swedish hit-makers of today – Jonnali Parmenius – or as she styles herself, Noonie Bao.

"I'm touched. Thank you so much! I'm lost for words. It's about being true to yourself and carrying on doing what you believe in and what you like," said Noonie Bao.

The other nominees were: Zara Larsson, Amon Amarth, Ali Payami and Yung Lean.

The 2017 Special Prize is awarded to Herbert Blomstedt for his long-standing commitment to spreading Swedish music abroad. The motivation was as follows:

With his calm charisma, his insightful interpretations and his dedication to classical music, Herbert Blomstedt enchants both audiences and musicians. For more than half a century he has spread Swedish and Nordic orchestra music beyond the country's borders. The most renowned orchestras in Berlin, Paris, London, Tokyo and San Francisco have queued up to perform Stenhammar, Berwald, Nielsen and Sibelius together with the world-class conductor from Sweden. The fact that he celebrated his 90th birthday last summer is no hindrance. Conductor Herbert Blomstedt loves and lives for music and continues to tour throughout the world. For this untiring and unending love, Herbert Blomstedt is awarded the Government's 2017 Special Prize for achievements of particular importance to the internationalisation of Swedish music.

The award ceremony was followed by a panel debate with representatives of the music industry on the theme of Swedish music innovations and with musical entertainment by the duo VAZ.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Acne Studios winner of the 2017 Cultural and Creative Industries Export Prize

Published 25 May 2018

On 24 May, Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde presented the Government's 2017 Cultural and Creative Industries Export Prize. The newly established prize was awarded to the Swedish fashion company Acne Studios.

"With their combination of creativity, entrepreneurship and high-quality products, Acne Studios have created a global, growing business that is profitable and helps to spread the image of a modern and innovative Sweden," says Ms Linde.

The prize aims to highlight successes across the whole spectrum of the cultural and creative industries and strengthen their internationalisation. The sectors included in the prize are architecture, computer games, design, film and television production, photography, art, literature, media and marketing communications, fashion and the performing arts.

Acne Studios received this year's prize with the following citation:

The winner of the Government's 2017 Cultural and Creative Industries Export Prize is not just a winner, but rather an example to the entire Swedish fashion industry. They have contributed in an exemplary way to the development of Swedish fashion and international trade, and their successful global ventures have in no small measure helped put Sweden on the map – not least in 2017, with strengthened eCommerce, the opening of new stores, primarily in Asia, and a global turnover reaching SEK 1.5 billion. The

combination of creativity, social engagement, entrepreneurship and a strong focus on business processes has created an exciting, innovative company operating in a global arena.

"I am totally convinced that cultural depth and cultural breadth are increasingly important factors in companies' attractiveness, and it feels like the Government has come to the same conclusion," said Mattias Magnusson, CEO of Acne Studios, at the ceremony.

The other nominees were: Nordisk Film Production Sweden for the film 'Sami Blood', Frida Kjellman, Stugan and String Furniture AB.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# King and Queen on official visit to Japan

Published 30 March 2018

The King and Queen will visit Japan on 22–25 April 2018 on the invitation of the Japanese Government. The Swedish Government will be represented by Minister for Policy Coordination and Energy Ibrahim Baylan and Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde. Business issues will be the focus of the visit, during which Sweden and Japan will celebrate 150 years of diplomatic relations.

The free trade agreement between the EU and Japan is expected to stimulate more trade and investments for both Sweden and Japan. A large Swedish business delegation will join the visit to attend the Japan-Sweden Business Summit – the largest ever meeting between the Swedish and Japanese business sectors. Business Sweden is also organising a large number of seminars and meetings aimed at strengthening trade relations between the two countries.

Innovation, research and sustainability will be highlighted. In addition, societal issues such as ageing and violence against children will be raised.

During their stay in Japan, Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress will invite Their Majesties the King and Queen to a dinner. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan and Mrs. Abe will hold a meeting with Their Majesties the King and Queen and host a dinner in their honor

The three-day visit will take place in Tokyo and Kamakura.

A more detailed programme for the visit will be published separately.

## To editorial offices

Swedish media representatives will need special accreditation from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to cover the visit. The deadline to apply for accreditation is Tuesday 17 April 2018.

Accreditation application



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality to bring together top names from more than 100 countries

Published 28 March 2018

Award-winning author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Executive Director of UN Women Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner and human rights counsellor Colin Gonsalves are some of the 500 gender equality actors who will participate in the Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality on 15–17 April. The global forum is about strengthening women's and girls' rights, representation and access to resources.

The Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality will bring together just over 500 participants from more than 100 countries, from grassroots to ministerial level. They include politicians and representatives of academia, the business world and civil society. Representatives of international organisations will also participate, including the heads of several UN bodies, commissioners from the European Union and African Union, and the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. The purpose of the forum is to mobilise the work on global gender equality through alliance-building and exchange of methods and results.

The Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality is being organised by the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Swedish Institute, in collaboration with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA). Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot



Wallström, Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate and Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin, Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde and Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Lena Hallengren will represent the Swedish Government. The ministers will share their experiences of working on the Government's feminist foreign policy.

The programme has been developed in cooperation with a number of Swedish and international gender equality actors and covers a wide range of topics. These include methods to increase the participation of women and girls in peace processes, the importance of gender equality for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, how we are to ensure the right of women and girls to decide over their own bodies, and how various actors can pave the way for women's economic empowerment. The participants will also hear witness accounts from Colombia about the work on what is sometimes called the world's most gender equal peace agreement, and be able to hold interactive discussions about threats and hatred against women on the internet.

The full programme and detailed press and accreditation information is available at [www.genderequalworld.com](http://www.genderequalworld.com).

**Contact at the Swedish Institute:**

Ulrika Horn af Rantzien  
[ulrika.hornafrantzien@si.se](mailto:ulrika.hornafrantzien@si.se)  
+4684537889  
+46733368933



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Sweden to host global gender equality conference 15–17 April

Published 14 February 2018

Leaders from all over the world will gather in Stockholm to intensify international efforts for gender equality. The Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality brings together close to 500 key representatives from civil society organisations, governments, business, and academia. The aim is to find solutions, take new initiatives, and strengthen co-operation in the international fight for gender equality.

Sweden's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms Margot Wallström, Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate, Ms Isabella Lövin, and Minister for EU Affairs and Trade, Ms Ann Linde, as well as the Director-General of the Swedish Institute, Ms Annika Rembe, will host the forum, which is organised by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Swedish Institute.

The conference is taking place at a decisive moment. Despite some progress, inequality and discrimination of girls and women remains one of the greatest human rights challenges in our time. The forum mobilises forces to achieve the global goals under Agenda 2030 and will focus on critical issues related to women's and girls' rights, representation, and access to resources.

"More rights, representation, and resources for women and girls means more peace, security, and prosperity for the world. A feminist foreign policy is the way forward. With this conference, we create a possibility for grassroots and high-level participants from all over the globe to meet, share knowledge, and inspire political leaders," says Margot Wallström, Minister for Foreign

## Affairs

"When we empower women and girls we empower nations and eradicate poverty. It starts with giving every woman and girl the right over her own body," says Isabella Lövin, Minister International Development Cooperation and Climate.

"Gender equality contributes to growth in all countries, regardless of the level of development. This has to guide all economic policy-making, including trade," says Minister for EU Affairs and Trade, Ms Ann Linde.

"We see successes but also movements that seek to limit women's and girls' rights and range. That's why the forum is so important. We need to gather forces, share experiences, and disseminate breakthroughs that make a difference for the individual as well as for society at large," says Annika Rembe, Director-General of the Swedish Institute.

Approximately 500 participants are expected from around the world. During the forum, participants will identify the biggest challenges, as well as possible solutions, for the fight for gender equality today. They will share experiences and good examples as well as build networks. Results as well as new initiatives will be brought into local contexts.

**Date:** 15–17 April

**Location:** Stockholm City Conference Centre, Stockholm, Sweden

For further information and media accreditation, please visit:

[genderequalworld.com](http://genderequalworld.com)

#GenderEqualWorld

#StockholmGenderForum

**Contact person at the Swedish Institute:**

Anna Knutsson

Press Secretary at the Swedish Institute

+46 73-336 89 47

[Anna.knutsson@si.se](mailto:Anna.knutsson@si.se)



Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde leads Team Sweden delegation to Palestine

Published 20 November 2017

On 21–22 November, Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde will travel to Palestine. Ms Linde will lead a Team Sweden delegation of around 10 companies and representatives of four government agencies. It will be the first time the Government conducts a Team Sweden trip to Palestine.

During the visit, Ms Linde will meet Palestinian counterparts to discuss economic and political developments in Palestine, including the possibilities of trade and the exchange of experience between Palestine and Sweden in the economic area

This visit aims to contribute to positive economic development in Palestine.

"It is essential to increase Palestine's opportunities for economic exchanges with the rest of the world. Sweden can both contribute with business solutions and examples of good practice, even if Palestinian companies must operate in a challenging environment," says Ms Linde.

Team Sweden is the Government's concept for integrated trade promotion and promotion of Sweden and was created as part of the Government's export strategy. Issues including corporate social responsibility and gender equality will also be raised during the trip. All companies in the delegation have signed Business Sweden's 'new undertakings document', which is a result of the Government's focus on corporate social responsibility.

"I particularly look forward to meeting women Palestinian entrepreneurs for discussions on women's participation on the labour market and other important issues, including corporate social responsibility," says Ms Linde.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

# Eight Swedish cabinet ministers to the Social Summit in Gothenburg

Published 15 November 2017

The Prime Minister, together with the EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker has invited to a social summit focusing on the promotion of Fair Jobs and growth, in Gothenburg on Friday 17 November. Heads of State and heads of Governments together with other EU-member ministers will be in place.

Apart from the Prime minister the Swedish Government participates are:

- **Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson**
- **Minister for Health and Social Affairs Annika Strandhäll**
- **Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin**
- **Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde**
- **Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg**
- **Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér**
- **Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Anna Ekström**

All government ministers will be available for media during the summit, contact respective press secretaries. In addition to the Swedish government, representatives from the EU Commission and EU countries, more than 30 different organizations and actors will attend the Summit on Fair Conditions and Growth in Göteborg, November 17, 2017.

The summit will bring together EU leaders, the social partners and other key stakeholders to discuss how to promote fair jobs and growth.





Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Ann Linde to host Digital 9 ministerial meeting

Published 17 October 2017

On Wednesday 18 October, Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde will host a ministerial meeting of the Digital 9 group (D9), focusing on the EU's digital single market. The aim of the D9 is to continue to push the EU's digital agenda forward.

The group works to jointly identify and hasten the implementation of concrete digitalisation measures, which in turn can help strengthen Europe's competitiveness and increase employment. It also aims to foster closer dialogue with the business sector to hear their policy recommendations for future legislative proposals in the digital area.

"Developments linked to digital transformation affect value chains for all businesses and alter trade patterns.

This is why it is important that more businesses, but particularly traditional manufacturing companies, also reflect on the potential of automation and digital transformation. Startups and digital operators are already ahead when it comes to digital transformation," says Ms Linde.

During the meeting, McKinsey will present a study on the effects of digital transformation on employment, broken down in terms of which countries and sectors are most advanced when it comes to technology.

"It is clear that previous technological developments have boosted productivity, and as such it will be exciting to see what effect future technological developments will bring," says Ms Linde.

The legislative proposal on data flows, which has already been presented,



will be discussed at the meeting. The D9 was actively involved in advancing this proposal. Another matter for discussion is the role of platforms in the digital economy and cross-border trade. There will also be an opportunity to report on the D9 round-table discussions that have been held in the Member States, which are another way to create platforms for dialogue with the business sector.

**Time and place:**

Ericsson Studio  
Grönlandsgatan 8  
Kista, Stockholm

**16.00–16.30** Media are welcome to take photographs. The ministers will receive a guided tour of the Ericsson Studio demonstration centre.

**16.30–17.00** Press conference with D9 ministers. The press conference will be conducted in English.

Please notify your attendance to Darina Agha no later than Wednesday 18 October, and bring your press credentials.



Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

# The Swedish Government strongly criticizes the Commission's EMA assessment in a letter today

Published 13 October 2017

The Minister for Health and Social Affairs Annika Strandhäll and the Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde criticize the assessment in a letter today to the Commission with clarifying comments on the Swedish bid. The ministers conclude that this has not been a serious part of the process.

– We strongly disagree to the non-objective criteria within the EMA-bid process. This process has to have one objective and nothing else; patient safety for more than 500 million people living in the EU. That has to be the standards for the EU assessment and the vote of the member states and nothing else, says minister Strandhäll.

In short, the technical assessment states that the Swedish bid "does not meet EMA requirements", but Sweden more than meets all the specified criteria.

The bid states that Sweden offers the EMA a choice of secure premises in Stockholm, giving the EMA the opportunity to influence the design of the building such that it suits the requirements and needs of the Agency and that detailed plans for the whole relocation process will be drawn up in close cooperation with the EMA.

– This is the first common decision for EU 27 after the British referendum on the exit from the EU. It is therefore important that both the process and decisions are fair and objective, says Ann Linde, Minister for EU Affairs and

Trade.

It is the Swedish Government's sincere hope and expectation that the Commission will continue to work for a transparent process based on objective criteria, and to this end acknowledge the correct and verifiable facts provided in the Swedish bid.

**Facts:**

On 30 September, the Commission published its assessment, including a technical assessment performed by the agency itself, of the bids submitted for the relocation of the European Medicines Agency (EMA). The Commission's general assessment summary of Sweden's bid is correct; however, the technical assessment conducted by the EMA omits and misinterprets some of the information Sweden have provided.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit China

Published 12 June 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will be in China on 26–28 June. He will be joined on the trip by several ministers and a business delegation with a focus on green innovation and sustainability. Mr Löfven will also have talks with China's Premier Li Keqiang and speak at the World Economic Forum.

China is one of the world's largest economies and accounts for a large proportion of global growth. There is also a great deal of demand in China for green innovation to move society in a more sustainable direction.

Sweden is a world leader in this area, and Mr Löfven is therefore heading a delegation within the framework of the Government's Team Sweden initiative, with companies and agencies that have the expertise in demand in China. Mr Löfven will also be accompanied by Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg, Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde and Minister for the Environment Karolina Skog.

Mr Löfven has also been invited to speak at the World Economic Forum in Dalian and will have talks with China's Premier Li Keqiang. In addition, Mr Löfven will meet Chinese business representatives and civil society actors.

A press briefing will be held ahead of the visit. The date and a more detailed programme will be published later.

Questions about visas should be put to the Swedish Embassy in Beijing.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Prime Minister to welcome Aung San Suu Kyi to Stockholm

Published 09 June 2017

On Monday 12 June, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will welcome Myanmar's State Counsellor, Aung San Suu Kyi, to Rosenbad. They will meet to discuss bilateral relations between Sweden and Myanmar.

During her two-day visit to Sweden, Ms Aung San Suu Kyi will have bilateral talks with Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström, Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde and Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin. She will also give a speech in the Riksdag at the invitation of Speaker of the Riksdag Urban Ahlin.

## Programme points

### **Monday 12 June**

Morning Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström receives Ms Aung San Suu Kyi at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Initial talks are followed by a working lunch. Photo opportunity on arrival.

Early afternoon Prime Minister Stefan Löfven receives Ms Aung San Suu Kyi at Rosenbad. Photo opportunity at the entrance to Rosenbad. Photo pool at the start of the meeting. Joint press conference.

Late afternoon Meeting with Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, followed by a meeting with Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate and Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin.

## **Tuesday 13 June**

Morning Ms Aung San Suu Kyi gives a speech in the Riksdag. Photo opportunity on arrival. Media representatives with Riksdag accreditation have the opportunity to be present during the speech.

### **Advance registration**

Media representatives must register and/or apply for a place in the photo pool. Please register/apply via the International Press Centre at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs no later than 15.00 on Sunday 11 June. More detailed information about times and venues will be sent to media representatives concerned.

Advance registration/application for place in photo pool



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Swede Lars Karlsson is EU candidate in election of new WCO Secretary General

Published 29 March 2017

The EU Member States today selected Lars Karlsson as their joint candidate for the election of a new Secretary General of the World Customs Organisation (WCO). The WCO brings together 180 of the world's customs administrations and has the primary task of facilitation trade and customs procedures for its members.

The election of Lars Karlsson means that Sweden, together with the European Commission and the other Member States, will now work to ensure that Lars Karlsson is elected to the position of WCO Secretary General.

"The selection of Lars Karlsson as the EU candidate is important for several reasons. Firstly, it is the Government's strategy to get more Swedes into senior positions in international organisations. Secondly, one of Lars Karlsson's top priorities is the introduction of more trade facilitation in global trade. This is important at a time when free trade is being challenged," says Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde.

One of the most important tasks for the WCO in the coming years is the implementation of the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement. This agreement, which will modernise and automate developing countries' customs administrations, is expected to reduce the cost of trading with these countries by up to 15 per cent. This will further integrate developing countries in global trade, leading to increased trade and good chances of reducing poverty.

This year and last year, the Government worked actively to get Lars Karlsson selected as the EU candidate for this election. Among other things, Sweden's EU ambassadors have approached the governments in the other EU countries to guarantee their support in the selection process.

Lars Karlsson has a background in Swedish Customs and has many years' experience of international work in this area, including as Director at the WCO. The new Secretary General will be elected at the WCO Council Meeting in summer 2018.





Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Ann Linde presents Government's Music Export Prize

Published 21 February 2017 Updated 21 February 2017

The Government's 2016 Music Export Prize for extraordinary services to Swedish music exports is awarded to artist and songwriter Zara Larsson. The Government's 2016 Special Prize for long-standing contributions to Swedish music exports is awarded to opera singer Nina Stemme. The Government continues in 2017 to grant the organization Export Music Sweden business support to increase their initiatives to launch Swedish songwriters, artists and music industry businesses in strategically important markets.

"Sweden continues to export world-class music. It is particularly exciting that the prizes in the two categories this year go to two women who have not only put Sweden on the map with their voices and artistry, but also helped spread a positive image of Sweden as a gender-equal, creative and innovative country," says Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde.

On 21 February, Ms Linde presented the Government's Music Export Prize – the 20th consecutive year it has been awarded. The prize goes to Swedish music creators who have contributed to export success and to spreading a modern and positive image of Sweden abroad.

Zara Larsson was awarded the 20th Music Export Prize, with the following motivation:

With her irresistible pop music, colourful artistry and strong personality, she has captivated the entire world. Her songs have charted in a number of

countries around the world and have been streamed an incredible one billion times. Over the past year she has begun experimenting and developing her own songwriting, has featured in international media, appeared on major talk shows, inaugurated Euro 2016 and played sold-out concerts in Europe and the United States. She has made a big impression, and TIME magazine has named her one of the world's most influential individuals under 30. Her strong voice as a singer, but also as a spokesperson for women's rights, makes her a great role model for modern Sweden. The Government's Music Export Prize for 2016 is awarded to songwriter and artist Zara Larsson.

The other nominees were: Galantis, Ghost and Yung Lean & Sad Boys.

The Special Prize is awarded to opera singer Nina Stemme, a figure in the music industry who has made a long-standing contribution to spreading Swedish music abroad, thus helping to promote a positive image of Sweden.

The motivation was as follows:

Her roles over the years span the entire soprano repertoire, from Mozart and Webern, via Mimi in Puccini's *La Bohème* to the most demanding and technically difficult roles in works such as Richard Wagner's *The Ring* cycle and *Tristan and Isolde*, or as the unremittingly vengeful Elektra in the opera of the same name by Richard Strauss. She performs at the Metropolitan in New York, La Scala in Milan, the Wiener Staatsoper in Vienna, the Opera Bastille in Paris and the Royal Opera House in London, and also makes regular guest appearances at opera houses in Zurich, Munich, Barcelona and elsewhere, as well as both the Stockholm and Gothenburg operas in Sweden.

It is the interplay between her warm, rich tones and unerring instinct for finely honed characters that make her a singer out of the ordinary, beloved of both audiences and critics. Sweden has a long history of producing world-class singers, and she is one of the very best. Celebrated and adored, she has the opera world at her feet.

The award ceremony was followed by a panel discussion on Swedish talent in the global music market featuring the prize winners, representatives of the music industry and politicians.

In her introductory address, Ann Linde announced that the Government intends to grant Export Music Sweden additional business support in 2017 to increase their initiatives to launch Swedish songwriters, artists and music industry businesses in strategically important markets.





Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Employment,  
Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

# Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President Jean-Claude Juncker to host Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth

Published 23 January 2017 Updated 23 January 2017

Together with President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will host a Social Summit in Gothenburg on 17 November 2017, focusing on promoting fair jobs and growth.

The Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth will gather heads of state and government, the social partners and other key players to work together to promote fair jobs and growth. Well-functioning and fair European labour markets, effective and sustainable social protection systems and the promotion of social dialogue at all levels will be at the heart of these discussions.

In spite of recent improvements in economic conditions, the legacy of the worst economic and social crisis in recent times has been far-reaching. The world of work and our societies are changing fast, with new opportunities and new challenges arising from globalisation, the digital revolution, changing work patterns and demographic developments. We share a responsibility and an interest in working for a more prosperous and 'future-proof' Europe, where economic and social developments go hand-in-hand.

The Summit will be an opportunity for key stakeholders to discuss the policy priorities and initiatives set at European level and to see how the European

Union, the Member States and social partners at all levels can deliver on their shared economic and social priorities.

President Jean-Claude Juncker said: “Since the start of my mandate, I have made clear that I wanted a more social Europe. We have taken important first steps to achieve that. This year will be crucial. Following the broad public consultation, it is time to establish the European Pillar of Social Rights. The Social Summit in Sweden will help us to deliver the momentum and put social priorities where they belong: at the top of Europe's agenda.”

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven said: “In these challenging times, we need to show that we can deliver results in peoples’ everyday lives. A more social Europe, with fair working conditions, effective labour markets and a strong social dialogue, should be a priority for all of us. I trust we can take important steps towards this goal at the Social Summit in November.”



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit Iran

Published 16 January 2017 Updated 16 January 2017

On 11–12 February, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will visit Iran at the invitation of President Hassan Rouhani. Discussions will primarily concern bilateral cooperation, trade issues and developments in the region, with a focusing on Syria.

Iran is an important political and economic actor with a key role in the region. Developments in the Middle East increasingly affect both Europe and Sweden. The Prime Minister has therefore travelled extensively in the region and spoken with the major stakeholders. Good relations are particularly important now that Sweden has taken its seat on the United Nations Security Council. Sweden and Iran have close ties, not least because of the large Iranian diaspora in Sweden.

A business delegation, including representatives of a large number of Swedish companies and government agencies, will also be travelling to Iran. The delegation, led by Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde, is part of the Government's Team Sweden initiative and export strategy to promote increased Swedish presence in growth markets. Historically, Iran has been one of Sweden's most important export markets in the Middle East and several Swedish companies have long had a presence in the country.



Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

# Swedish campaign for relocation of the European Medicines Agency from the UK to Sweden

Published 08 December 2016 Updated 08 December 2016

Today, Thursday, the Swedish Government decided to actively work for the relocation of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) to Sweden, and to the Stockholm-Uppsala region. The process leading up to the decision by the Government was started after the British people's decision to leave the EU.

- With one of Europe's top national medicines agencies, an excellent climate for research and life science as well as good conditions for an efficient relocation, Sweden is a good future home for the EMA, says Gabriel Wikström, Minister for Health Care.

The Government will now establish a special secretariat tasked with planning and organizing Sweden's candidacy for locating the EMA to Sweden. Their mission will be to actively seek dialogue with other Member States.

- As a consequence of Brexit, operations will move from the UK. The Government will try to attract the EMA, the European Medicines Agency, to be located in Sweden. It would create many jobs and attract more investments, says Ann Linde, Minister for EU Affairs and Trade.

Overall reasons for the Government to believe that Sweden is best suited as host country for the EMA:

- Swedish Medical Products Agency is one of the main regulatory

authorities in the EU and one of the national authorities that the EMA usually hires.

- Sweden has distinguished education and research within this area as well as a good climate for the life science sector. We have a long tradition in pharmaceutical development, production and a well-established cooperation between industry and academics.
- Sweden is recognized to be transparent and effective in the way we work with agencies and organizations. The relocation needs to be done while maintaining operations within the Agency.
- Sweden has experience of locating a European agency. We will use the experience gained from locating the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, ECDC.





Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Government takes European Commission to court over lead chromates decision

Published 28 November 2016 Updated 28 November 2016

The Swedish Government considers that the European Commission broke the rules when it authorised the continued use of lead chromates in the EU. The decision is bad for people's health and distorts competition for responsible businesses that have stopped using these hazardous substances. The Government therefore decided today to refer the Commission's decision to the Court of Justice of the European Union for a preliminary ruling.

In September, the European Commission decided to authorise a business to sell pigments containing lead chromates for use within the EU, despite the fact that adequate alternatives are available. By referring the Commission to the Court, the Government is defending common EU regulations, people's health and those businesses that live up to their environmental responsibilities.

Because lead pigments are often cheaper than the alternatives, businesses that choose to sell these paints will gain a competitive advantage over businesses that have chosen to remove hazardous lead chromates. The Commission's decision thus sends a signal that it is not worthwhile for businesses to phase out particularly hazardous substances. By referring the decision for a preliminary ruling, the Government is also standing up for healthy competition in the European Single Market.

Lead is one of the most poisonous substances known to humankind. The chemicals regulations in the EU clearly state that authorisations for this kind of hazardous substances may only be granted where there are no available alternatives. Such alternatives are available in the case of lead chromates, a fact demonstrated by Swedish businesses and others that have phased out their use.



Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Ann Linde takes initiative at EU level for a 'Digital 9' group

Published 05 September 2016 Updated 05 September 2016

At the initiative of Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde, the Government today welcomed a number of European ministerial colleagues to Stockholm to form a 'Digital 9' group (D9). The aim is to begin a new collaboration and, in doing so, take on a leading role in the EU when it comes to pushing forward the agenda on digitalisation issues and creating a digital single market within the EU.

"There is currently a need for renewed efforts focusing on what the EU is able to achieve and contribute. Sweden, together with the Baltic and the Benelux countries, can be considered digital frontrunners in Europe. We have made considerable progress on digital matters and also have the most to gain from the reforms proposed by the European Commission actually being implemented. Together, we are a strong voice when it comes to influencing the EU in the right direction," says Ms Linde.



Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Sweden, France and Germany in future initiative for the EU

Published 12 July 2016 Updated 12 July 2016

On Monday 11 July, Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde is meeting the French and German EU ministers in Berlin to jointly raise the level of ambition for EU job creation efforts and to step up the important climate efforts that the world has undertaken since Paris. Together, they will sign a declaration that shows a higher level of ambition and strengthened cooperation on a few specific issues.

– The world is facing major challenges, in which cooperation and solidarity are essential for our shared success. Climate change, the refugee crisis and unemployment are just a few examples of challenges that must be solved together, across national borders. The European Union was formed with the aim of a more peaceful and stronger Europe, and its most important tasks lie ahead of it, says Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin.

– Brexit does not mean a pause for European cooperation – quite the reverse – political engagement for a united, democratic and open Europe must be strengthened. Sweden also needs to find new partnerships, as we will lose an important partner – the UK – in EU cooperation, says Ms Linde.

Monday's meeting is about creating new jobs, transitioning to a fossil-free Europe and integrating millions of new people in our societies. It is also about standing up for values that have characterised post-war European cooperation, such as gender equality, openness and diversity, at a time when these values are being challenged from many different quarters. It is more

important than ever for European politicians to act responsibly and work for a Europe that is able to meet the challenges of the future instead of creating more division.

As a leader, Sweden plays, and will increasingly play, a key role in the EU. Today we already have more influence than many other Member States of equivalent size. We will work actively to ensure that the EU is better at solving the issues that people expect – contributing to people's daily lives. It is particularly important that the EU focuses, through trade, on creating conditions for more jobs with decent conditions and is able to realise the goals that were adopted at the climate change conference in Paris. If the EU succeeds in this, people will see results in their daily lives and thus the EU's legitimacy will also increase.



Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Sweden working for more efficient global trade

Published 31 May 2016 Updated 31 May 2016

This week, Sweden is hosting an international meeting on how we can simplify trade in our important eastern neighbourhood. Participants from more than 40 countries are coming to Stockholm to exchange experiences and learn from each other about how to best simplify trade and customs procedures.

"It is extremely important for Swedish exports that not just we, but also our trade partners, have efficient trade procedures," says Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde. "For this reason, it is natural for us to support these efforts, not just as part of our export strategy, but also as part of our endeavour to help poorer countries develop through trade."

The background is the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) new Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA). The TFA has been the greatest success in recent years of WTO negotiations, and is the agreement in the WTO expected to have the greatest economic impact, mainly for poorer countries. Under the TFA, unnecessary document requirements will be removed and modern technology will be applied, which will reduce processing times at border crossings and the risk of corruption, facilitating trade between the countries now implementing the agreement. As far as the EU is concerned, new and modernised customs legislation that meets the new requirements of the TFA has been in place since May 2016. The role of Sweden and the EU at the meeting in Stockholm is to support countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia implement the agreement.

"Sweden has an important role to play both for the transfer of expertise in the customs area and in the discussions on development aid that will be

important in the meeting," says Director-General for Trade Eva Walder. "Sweden is seen as a leader with regard to simple customs procedures, and many of the customs simplifications in the WTO agreement were produced by Swedish Customs. Sweden is also one of the largest donors of development aid to help countries implement the WTO agreement."

The meeting will take place in Stockholm on 1–3 June. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Swedish Customs and the National Board of Trade will host the meeting in Sweden, which is being organised together with the European Commission. The participants at the meeting come from the World Customs Organisation's Europe region, which consists of 52 countries, from Russia in the north to Israel in the south.



Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Ann Linde new Minister for EU Affairs and Trade at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Published 27 May 2016 Updated 27 May 2016

In connection with the government reshuffle on 25 May 2016, Ann Linde took up her new office as Minister for EU Affairs and Trade at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Ms Linde has had an extensive career, both internationally and at the Government Offices. Most recently she served as State Secretary to Minister for Home Affairs Anders Ygeman at the Ministry of Justice.

"I was delighted and honoured by the appointment as Minister for EU Affairs and Trade, with responsibility for two areas I have been very committed to for a long time," says Ms Linde. The EU is facing major challenges considering the British referendum and the ongoing refugee crisis, and it is important that Sweden takes part in the debate on the future of the EU, both in Europe and at home.

"Increased trade in Europe and in other important markets is highly prioritised by the Government in its efforts to reduce unemployment and increase growth. I am looking forward to working with Team Sweden to make this a reality using the export strategy that was recently adopted," says Ms Linde.

Oscar Stenström will assume the post of State Secretary to the Minister for EU Affairs and Trade. Mr Stenström most recently served at the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, where he was State Secretary to Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Michael Damberg.





Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Speech by Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde at the WTO Ministerial Conference

Published 13 December 2017

Buenos Aires, Argentina, 12 December 2017. Check against delivery.

Fellow ministers, director-general, excellencies, distinguished delegates,

I would like to start by expressing my warm appreciation to Argentina and to chair Susanna Malcorra for hosting this conference.

I will tell you why this gathering is important for me, representing Sweden.

For a trade-oriented country the WTO is the foundation of the multilateral trading system.

A strong, rules-based, transparent and predictable multilateral trading system is a precondition for growth and jobs.

150 years ago, Sweden was one of the poorest countries in Europe. Since then - industrialisation, innovation, a sound legal political framework and free trade - have brought Sweden to the top of many international rankings.

With a population of 10 million, we have always looked abroad to seek new markets and partners. Whether it is about iron ore, cars, trucks, music or services – the world is our arena and it is crucial that it remains open for trade.

To co-create with our fellow partners for a more sustainable future, we need a robust, rules-based and transparent environment.

The small and poor countries are those who need an open, multilateral

predictable trading system the most. It was true for Sweden and is still true for many today.

All members have a responsibility to increase the least developed countries involvement in the WTO and their share of global trade.

To promote LDC participation the Swedish government has contributed with 56 000 USD to the LDC Trust Fund.

In 2018 Sweden will allocate 2.1 million USD to the WTO Global Trust Fund, to provide negotiation support to developing countries.

Since 1995, the WTO has provided us with a legal framework. Although you don't see it or think of it every day, the WTO is the oxygen and the "bloodstream" of international trade. Therefore we must handle our common artery, the WTO, with great care.

Globalisation and trade do not only create winners. That is why the Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven launched "The Global Deal" initiative. Global Deal is about promoting dialogue. Sound labour relations and decent working conditions contribute to greater equality, increased productivity and inclusive economic development. A win-win-win situation for workers, companies and societies.

Since my first ministerial meeting in 1996, the WTO has taken many steps forward. However, trade and gender equality is an area where I would like to see further work and development. WTO must also address new issues such as e-commerce.

Getting more women into business and trade is sound economic policy. Gender equality contributes to growth in all countries, regardless of the level of development. This is important for me, Sweden and the EU.

In conclusion, we must:

- stand up for a modern, predictable, robust, rules-based multilateral and inclusive trading system
- improve the dialogue between social partners
- further gender integration and
- provide better access for developing countries to the world trading system.

Thank you very much.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

# Speech by Ann Linde to the Riksdag on the European Commission work programme

Published 23 March 2017

The Riksdag, Stockholm, 15 March 2017. Check against delivery.

## **Introduction**

Mr/Madam Speaker,

I would like to start by saying that I feel very excited to be here and to have the opportunity to discuss the EU. I will briefly talk about the Commission Work Programme and about increasing inequalities, and for the first time ever I will present the Government's EU priorities for 2017.

I will conclude by also saying a few words about the Commission's White Paper on the Future of Europe, the Swedish Government's work on participation, and Brexit.

## **The Commission Work Programme**

I am pleased that, judging by the statement given by the Committee on Foreign Affairs, there appears to be a broad political consensus on the Commission Work Programme. It is essentially in line with the EU priorities that the Government is presenting today – where issues concerning jobs, climate change, migration and security are in focus. I will return to these issues in a moment, but let me first put all of this in a larger context.

## **Increased inequalities and the need for an EU that delivers**

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Globalisation and trade have lifted many people out of poverty, but many are also worried about growing gaps and increased vulnerability. A wave of nationalism and protectionism has swept over the world and Europe. This of

course also affects the EU.

Many people currently feel that change does not mean improvement. On the contrary, very many people feel that change is making things worse. People are seeing their jobs disappear due to global competition and technological development – and thus how their life situation is under threat.

We must understand that this frustration exists. That it is strong. And that it is, unfortunately, well-founded in many places.

In many ways I think that the populist and nationalist wave has come about because both national governments and the EU have not succeeded in delivering enough – and above all not quickly enough.

Not everyone has benefited from increased growth; instead, the gaps have widened. When people feel that their situation is worsening, they look for alternatives and quick answers.

The most important thing is that the EU can deliver results, both overall and in people's everyday lives. And that it can show that the EU creates value for all citizens.

There is a great deal that can be done here and now. It is important that the EU can deliver results that have a real impact.

This is why the Government is prioritising three areas in its EU work for 2017:

1. a Europe for jobs and inclusive growth;
2. an ambitious climate, energy and environment policy; and
3. a solidarity-based refugee and migration policy and a secure world.

Let me say a few words about why we have chosen these specific areas.

### **The Government's EU priorities - Jobs**

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Since Sweden joined the EU, trade has grown and our real earnings have increased. Over 1.4 million Swedes go to work each day thanks to Swedish exports – and more than 70 per cent of those exports go to the EU.

Trade and the internal market are crucial for Sweden. There is great potential in a more ambitious trade in services and digitalisation. So that even more Swedes can go to work, the Government is pursuing these issues at EU level.

While the internal market must be deepened even further in order for trade to increase, we also need to ensure that there are decent conditions for those working in the internal market – and that we do not end up with wage dumping or deteriorating conditions.

The economic crisis has shown that the EU Member States are affected by each other's economic and social development. When the gaps widen, confidence in cooperation and political solutions is undermined. Instead, fear of globalisation and mobility grows, which risks creating a breeding ground for xenophobia and extremism. The Government is determined to address these problems.

On 17 November, the Prime Minister will co-host with Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker a summit in Sweden on fair jobs and growth. By exchanging experiences with Member States, the social partners and other key actors at the highest level, we can learn from each other how to tackle common challenges.

### **Climate change**

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Our cooperation within the EU is important not least in the area of climate, energy and the environment. Together we can continue to be a strong and proactive global force. Despite the fact that levels of carbon dioxide emissions have fallen over the past three years, a great deal remains to be done.

The Government continues to pursue an ambitious climate, energy and environment policy. We are doing this by working to ensure that the EU honours the Paris Agreement and its implementation. In February 2017, we proposed the introduction of a Climate Act, a historic decision with the ambition to make Sweden one of the world's first fossil-free nations.

Environmental problems are borderless. Environmental destruction occurs locally, but the impact of environmental destruction does not respect national borders. Air pollution is one example where the EU is helping to tackle problems that individual countries cannot solve by themselves. In 2016, the EU adopted new legislation that is expected to help halve the number of premature deaths caused by air pollution in the EU.

### **Migration and security**

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Migration to Europe is a challenge for the EU Member States and solutions

must build on everyone taking responsibility. We must of course work with a long-term approach to counter the root causes of involuntary migration and at the same time ensure that the EU has control over its external border. This is a prerequisite if freedom of movement within the Schengen area is to work.

Despite the challenges, things are nonetheless moving in the right direction. The EU is already doing a lot of positive things in efforts to combat human smuggling, and the Member States are working to quickly agree on a new asylum system. For the Government, it is important that such a system enables a more even distribution of people seeking protection in the EU and that more legal routes to protection in the EU are created. In addition, we must ensure that asylum investigations are legally certain and that those who have their applications rejected return in an efficient manner.

We know that human rights, democracy and the rule of law are being challenged around the world. These fundamental values cannot be taken for granted. They must be continuously defended and promoted, both within the Member States and in the EU's external relations.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine and the awful terrorist attacks over the past few years demonstrate the need for stronger and more coherent EU action. We must build our security together with others, and the EU is more important than ever in this regard.

With the implementation of its Global Strategy, the EU will develop a common security and defence policy that includes effective civilian and military crisis management capacity. The EU's capacity to manage both external and internal security is crucial for maintaining the security order in Europe.

### **The EU's future – the White Paper and Rome**

Mr/Madam Speaker,

I have now talked about the Government's priorities in its EU work for 2017, so let me now say a few words about the future of the EU.

On 1 March, the European Commission presented a White Paper on the Future of Europe. The report does not contain any distinct conclusions; instead, it contains scenarios aimed at highlighting the consequences of various choices for the EU's development up to 2025.

A number of working papers on key policy areas will be presented over the

coming months. The purpose of these is said to be to encourage debate by presenting alternative developments without drawing ready conclusions.

We must analyse what the consequences of the various choices may be for both the EU and Sweden.

Debates on 'The Future of Europe' will be held in all Member States. I am very pleased about this step towards greater participation in the design of EU policy.

### **Participation**

Because increasing participation in EU work is an issue close to my heart.

With the 'EU handshake' for increased participation with various actors and partners, I am trying to strengthen knowledge and encourage debate on EU issues.

In December, I initiated the first EU handshake for increased participation with the social partners. Just over a month ago, I completed another EU handshake in Skellefteå. This year, I will be undertaking more handshakes – because I really do believe we can make a difference.

As part of efforts to increase participation, the Government has committed to implementing 'EU expertise consultations'. So far, two have been held. In connection with the Commission's White Paper, I will convene a new EU expertise consultation focusing on the future of the EU.

### **Brexit**

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Let me say something about the imminent divorce between the United Kingdom and the EU. It is important that we remaining members of the EU stick together and that we put in place a functioning free trade agreement with the UK.

The Government's priority is to maintain Sweden's good relations with the UK, and we will do everything to ensure that the negotiations are as positive and constructive as possible. I have met the UK minister responsible for Brexit, David Davis, on two occasions this year. We have had good talks. However, we know that the UK's decision to leave the EU will have consequences – for us Swedes, but perhaps above all for the British themselves.

We have an opportunity to make a constructive and forward-looking

contribution here – and we will.

**Conclusion**

Mr/Madam Speaker,

With these words, I would like to say thank you. I look forward to a constructive and energetic debate.