

*Speech by General Göranson, Supreme Commander of the Swedish Armed Forces at the National Defense University, Peking, 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2012*

Almost two years ago, on July 1st 2010, Sweden closed a 109 years old chapter in its history. Since that date national conscription is idle. Instead we are creating a rapid reaction task force which is based on voluntary recruitment, an all-volunteer force.

What made the Swedish parliament and government come to the conclusion that it was time to make this change? The overarching answer is: The world of today is changing and globalization means that society faces ever-new challenges. Events can occur and change very fast. And there are fewer purely military threats today. Given the complex nature of the new challenges, I dare to say no one can meet or solve them alone. They have to be dealt with together with others.

This changing world of course also affects the Swedish Armed Forces.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century a massive anti-invasion force based on conscription, demobilized in peace time, matched the threats at that time. But today we need versatile, usable forces with increased operational effectiveness and flexibility that can solve tasks at home, in our vicinity and further away. This type of new force has to be able to interact with different players, inside as well as outside Sweden.

This slide shows the transformation of the Swedish Armed Forces since the year of 2000. The process is still ongoing. Our journey can be described in three different phases:

**Phase 1: 2000-2004**

During this phase, the Armed Forces went through a force reduction, given that the force structure still was mainly fitted to meet the situation before 1989. The force reductions during this period took into account the need to adapt the structure to a new situation. The main vehicle for this transformation was the NATO PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP). The result of the force reduction was a reduction of the Army with 70 percent, the Navy with 50 percent and the Air Force 25 percent.

**Phase 2: 2005-2009**

During these years, focus was on multinational operations and territorial over watch. The vehicle for this transformation was the EU Battlegroup concept. Sweden was the framework nation for the Nordic Battlegroup 2008 in which also Finland, Norway, Estonia and Ireland participated. The Swedish force reductions during this period were: the Army 50 percent, the Navy 50 percent and the Air Force 25 percent.

**Phase 3: 2010-2014**

During the present phase, focus is on how to defend national interests' home and abroad combined with availability and usability. The main vehicles for the now ongoing phase are the Nordic Defence Cooperation – NORDEFECO, and pooling and sharing among the EU-partners. During the first half of 2011 Sweden was, once again, the framework nation for the Nordic Battlegroup. The force reductions during this period are: the Army 25 percent, the Navy 25 percent and the Air Force 25 percent.

I would like to underline that during these phases the Swedish Armed Forces has reduced the quantitative number of units in favour of increased quality and availability.

The Swedish defence budget is flat, around 4 billion Euros per year. Main posts in the budget are: procurement (around 1,6 billion Euros), training and exercises (around 2,1 billion Euros) and international operations (around 0,3 billion Euros). The budget is transparent to whom who wants to study it.

This slide presents our objectives regarding troop strength and readiness. As you can see, in 2009 the troop strength was 65 000 with a lower readiness compared to the reformed Armed Forces which we are in the midst of building up. Given the historical journey I have presented to you in the earlier slide, we should keep in mind that the Swedish Armed Forces during earlier eras could mobilize one tenth of the population, around 800 000 troop.

We will have finished the ongoing transformation in 2019. By then the organization is manned and equipped with personnel and equipment jointly exercised. In 2019, the Swedish Armed Forces will consist of a troop strength of 50 000 and with a tremendous higher readiness.

As I mentioned in the beginning, the Law on General Conscription was left idle 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2010. However, the law can be activated with short notice by the Government if considered as necessary.

The new manning system is based on voluntary engagement only. In the framework of our ongoing transformation the conscripts are successively replaced by regular and reserve NCO's, soldiers and sailors. The regular and reserve NCO's, soldiers and seamen are offered a time-limited employment up to 8 years, with an option to extend another 4 years. All regular personnel are, if needed, obliged to deploy in international missions, given that the Armed Forces should be able to defend Swedish interests both home and abroad.

This personnel reform with an all- volunteer force is a tremendous change for the Armed Forces, since we actively have to recruit the soldiers and sailors and then have to compete with other employers on the labour market. The Armed Forces have initiated a dialogue with the parties on the labour market in order to find win-win solutions for both the Armed Forces and for the employers.

When we are recruiting personnel, our objective is to represent the entire spectra of the Swedish society with a broad representation of the population. We are looking for the adequate skills and the most talented, and not to sex, religion or colour.

Sweden has a long tradition of participating in different international operations. Actually, the Blue Berets were a Swedish invention, since the then UN Secretary Dag Hammarskjöld took the initiative to UN Peace Keeping forces. Given the fact that the Swedish Armed Forces should be able to defend Swedish interests and values as democracy, human rights and free trade also abroad, we are actively participating in different international operations.

On this slide you can see an overall picture where Sweden has deployed personnel in international missions. Our main ongoing deployments are ISAF and KFOR.

You can also note the Swedish contribution to the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission on the Korean peninsula. Sweden has been engaged in the Commission since its foundation 1951. As all of us, Sweden also has an interest in peace and stability on the peninsula. We are present on the DMZ and Sweden also has defence attachés accredited in the Republic of Korea as well as in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

On this slide you can see examples of more recent operations where the Swedish Armed Forces has been, or still is, participating. We are deploying units from all services in more demanding operations.

EU NAVFOR: Navy

ISAF: Army

EU Battlegroups: Army and Air Force

Operation Unified Protector: Air Force

I will now give you some more information about the Swedish contribution in some of the operations we are, or have, participated in.

The current Swedish contribution to the NATO-led KFOR mission is approximately 70 staff members. The Swedish contribution will be reduced to around 60 personnel in April 2012 and the Swedish contribution to KFOR will be phased out at the end of 2013.

These current and upcoming numbers are modest if you compare to earlier Swedish military contributions to KFOR. Sweden has been participating in KFOR since 1999, and during the first years of the KFOR-mission the Swedish contingent consisted of a mechanized infantry battalion with around 850 troop. During the years, the Swedish military contribution has been reduced. This has been possible given the fact that the situation in Kosovo has been stabilized. And a benign environment is pivotal for developing security and democracy.

The evolution in Kosovo is a proof that the chain security-development has worked. This is also mirrored in the coming Swedish contribution, which after 2013 will consist of advisory teams within Security Sector Reform (SSR). The Swedish Armed Forces also aims to keep a few positions within NATO Advisory Teams (NAT). Hence, also in the future the Swedish Armed Forces will contribute to the long term construction of a democratic society.

Sweden is participating in the NATO-led ISAF mission with approximately 500 troop in northern Afghanistan. The Swedish contingent is supporting the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) in their development.

Last week the Swedish-led PRT (Provincial Reconstruction Team) handed over the lead of the PRT to a civil Swede. At this moment the PRT changed name to a TST – a Transition Support Team. This handover is an important signal to both the Afghans and

the international community that the transition of the security responsibility to the Afghan authorities is an ongoing and irreversible process.

The Swedish military contribution will, accordingly to a parliamentary decision, stay at 500 troop this year and then gradually reduce to around 200 troop in 2014. After 2014, the objective is to focus on the continued support the Afghan National Security Forces on education and training.

In March last year, the Swedish Parliament took the decision that Sweden, from the 1<sup>st</sup> of April during three months should participate in the NATO-led Operation Unified Protector (OUP). The base for the parliamentary decision was UN-resolution 1973.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of April, Transfer of Authority took place. Eight Gripen fighter aircraft and one C-130 T for Air to Air refueling, based at Sigonella Naval Air Station, together with LNOs in the chain of command, started to fly missions to enforce the No Fly Zone.

The Swedish Parliament later extended the mandate to the 24<sup>th</sup> of October focusing on recce missions with five Gripen fighter aircraft. One Info Ops team was added to support the CJTF in Naples.

Last time the Swedish Armed Forces participated with fighter aircraft in an international peace-support operation was in Congo 50 years ago. It is pivotal that all parts of the military services have experiences from operating within multinational force structures. And this is maybe even more important right now in Sweden, whilst we are undertaking our own military reform. Also, by participating together with other nations under a UN Mandate, Sweden contributes to the international community's crisis management efforts.

Contributing to the international community's crisis management efforts is a multifaceted task. In a peace-support operation, very often many different aspects have to be embraced by the operation. One of these aspects is gender.

One might ask what gender and equality have to do with peace and military operations. I would argue that we all know that democracy and common sense demand us to include 100 percent of the population in decision making. It is absolutely fundamental that a secure environment consists of both men and women. Women make up half of the population in any conflict area, and are – as always – the ones who are crucial making the society functioning properly. Therefore both men and women are needed to build a peaceful and long term sustainable society. Gender is furthermore an aspect that greatly contributes to our understanding and accomplishments when it comes to peace-building and construction of a civil society.

A gender perspective will support and strengthen the human rights and overall security situation for the entire population, men, women, boys and girls. Information from the whole population in a mission area increases tremendously the possibilities for a successful operation.

In order to increase knowledge and capability around the issues of gender and UN Resolution 1325, the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations outside Stockholm was founded in January this year. My intention for the Centre is that it

should build a hub of knowledge and expertise which should be beneficial to all armed forces and organizations which are involved in Peace Support Operations in conflicting areas.

As I have reiterated several times today, the Swedish Armed Forces contribute to security home and abroad. A professional military component combined with dialogue is needed to decrease the security dilemma.

I define the security dilemma as follows: When a country feels a lack of security due to low trust from another country, it feels a need to increase the military capability in order to address this concern. These actions can in its most extreme cases lead to a negative spiral of arms race that might trigger frictions and war.

When I as a professional military officer view the global development, I am concerned that the military development in certain areas is going in the wrong direction. One reason for my concern is that the ongoing arms race, without adequate security architecture with confidence and security measures may have negative implications!

Thank you for your attention.