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SWEDEN'S SECURITY POLICY: ENGAGEMENT - THE MIDDLE WAY

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⁽¹⁾ The title is partially derived from Marquis Child's *Sweden: The Middle Way*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1936. The phrase "the middle way" in no way intends to mean that Sweden has not been active; quite the contrary, it stresses Sweden's *special* form of participation and engagement in the international field (including the security dimension).

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INTRODUCTION⁽²⁾

Since 1814, Sweden's security policy has been anchored to varying degrees of neutrality. Throughout this timeperiod, its interpretation has been flexible and trademarked by an ability to adjust to different external conditions⁽³⁾ ; effectively enabling the country to combine participation in international affairs with an adherence to non-alignment.

In this paper, Sweden's evolving foreign and security policy will be analyzed from a sequential point of view, using the "origins" of Swedish neutrality as the date of departure. Specifically, it will be shown that Sweden's policies, following a step-by-step process, have gradually moved towards greater involvement and participation in European security matters. The period after the Cold War will be particularly emphasized, using three stages (transition, entering the framework, and taking initiative) to demonstrate the evolving pattern. In the final section of the paper, some of the outstanding factors (ranging from budget cuts to NATO enlargement) will be addressed to provide an idea of where the issues may drift in the future.

However, before embarking on this task, it is helpful to retract somewhat in time and consider the origins of Sweden's neutrality to build some reference.

⁽²⁾ The author wrote this paper during his time as a visiting fellow at the WEU Institute for Security Studies, Paris.

⁽³⁾ Many works have been written on the topic of Sweden's security policy. For example, for further reference, see: Krister Wahlbaeck *The Roots of Swedish Neutrality*, The Swedish Institute 1986; Wilhelm Agrell *Alliansfrihet och atombomber, kontinuitet och foeraendring i den svenska foersvarsdoktrinen 1945-1982*, Liber 1986; Bengt Sundelius *The Neutral Democracies and the New Cold War* Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press 1987; ed. Bengt Sundelius *The Committed Neutral-Sweden's Foreign Policy*, Westview Press, 1989; Andrén, N. & Moeller, Y. *Fraan Undén till Palme: Svensk utrikespolitik sedan andra vaerldskriget (From Undén to Palme: Swedish Foreign Policy since WWII)*, Stockholm 1990).

PERIOD I (FROM KARL JOHAN TO WWII)

Origins of Swedish neutrality

According to Christer Wahlbaeck, the origins of Swedish neutrality can be traced to King Karl Johan's memorandum of 4 January 1834, sent to the British and Russian governments to proclaim neutrality *vis-a-vis* the Near East crisis (Wahlbaeck 1986, p.7-12). Yet, it would probably be a little more accurate to argue that Sweden arrogated a principle of neutrality almost one hundred years later- on the eve of WWI.

In 1912, during the crises in the Balkans and North Africa which preceded WWI, Sweden joined Norway and Denmark in affirming a commitment to neutrality. After the break-out of WWI, this stance was repeated unilaterally on 3 August 1914, and together with Norway five days later (Logue 1989, p.45).

From this point on, Sweden would coalesce to varying degrees of neutrality. It would be of "varying degrees" since Sweden's neutrality, unlike that of some of other European countries, was (and still is) not constituted or guaranteed by any international arrangements nor confirmed in the Swedish constitution. Viewed as a means rather than an end, neutrality is a self-chosen policy -its interpretation being the sole responsibility of the Swedish government (Aastroem 1989, p.16).

The concept of using neutrality as a means rather than an end would gain special entelechy during WWII. Afterwards, many would argue that, in many instances, Sweden had apostatized neutrality while others would point to the necessity of being pragmatic in times of "unprecedented circumstance"...

PERIOD II (WWII-1989)

World War II- fuzzy neutrality

To a majority of Swedes who lived through the Second World War, Sweden's policy of neutrality represents the key factor which enabled the nation to come out of the war practically unscathed. And in their defense, no one can really deny that a deliberate policy of neutrality was one of the prerequisites for keeping the nation outside the conflict. However, as Aastroem states, "it was not neutrality alone that saved us, but also -and mainly- strategic and political circumstances largely beyond our control" (Aastroem 1989, p.17).

To be more accurate, one would have to argue that Sweden -compatible with the idea of regarding neutrality as a means to an end- maintained its options open during the war to secure its independence and well-being. Several incidents can be traced demonstrating a utilitarian approach, ranging from indirect participation in the War to concessions on the neutrality principle. Let's take a look at several examples:

Actions which demonstrate a pragmatic neutrality approach

1. When the Soviet Union invaded Finland (who had rejected their demands for establishing military bases on their territory) in November of 1939, Sweden proclaimed itself to be "non-belligerent". In practical terms this meant that Sweden resupplied the Finns from its own military stockpiles and gave approval to Swedish volunteers wanting to join the conflict.
2. At the latter stages of WWII, Sweden provided sanctuary for Norwegian and Danish resistance groups. In addition, it trained Norwegian and Danish security forces that later would be involved in the liberation of their respective countries.
3. During the War, Swedish humanitarian aid included the sheltering of the entire Danish Jewish community, some 35,000 Estonian refugees, and about 70,000 Finnish children. Toward the conclusion of the War, Count Folke Bernadotte arranged for the transportation of some 19,000 Danish and Norwegian concentration camp prisoners to Sweden (Logue 1989, p.50).
4. Sweden allowed the transit of German soldiers on leave through its territory during the initial years and the passage of the Engelbrecht Division from Norway via Sweden to Finland in the summer of 1941⁽⁴⁾ (Aastroem 1989, p. 22).
5. Sweden permitted German troop transports to sail through Swedish territorial waters and allowed German airplanes to fly over Swedish air space (Logue 1989, 49). Moreover, Swedish industry supplied Germany with key war materials (notably steel) and civilian goods.

⁽⁴⁾ Sweden rationalized the act as being a one-time only concession to Germany (Logue 1989, 50). According to Aastroem, this was done since the government believed that Sweden's credibility in the West and East would not stand the strain of further concessions (Aastroem 1989, p. 22).

Judging from the above examples, one observe see that Sweden had little if any resemblance to a passive neutral during the war. Quite the contrary, steps were taken both to assist its neighbors and safeguard the independence of the country.

How should one interpret these inconsistencies? Were they proof of a neutrality principle that was flawed from the beginning (since it was left to the government to decide what it meant)? Was it a mere façade that eventually became a slippery slope?

Perhaps these questions cannot be answered objectively, since they often fail to recognize the "extraordinary circumstances" which resulted from the destructive nature of the war⁽⁵⁾. Nonetheless, it is clear that Sweden's pragmatic use of neutrality was an important element for keeping the country outside WWII.

The Cold War -discrete⁽⁶⁾ and open involvement

During the Cold War, Sweden's engagement in the international arena could be categorized into three general areas: arrangements with the West (which would be disclosed as late as 1994); extended involvement within the UN system; and support for regions far from Sweden, especially the Third World. The first two areas will be considered as they bear more relevance to this paper.

Beginning with the most controversial point, it is presently known that Sweden placed much trust in being supported by the West, NATO specifically⁽⁷⁾, in case Sweden was invaded by the Soviets. The so called "neutralitetspolitikkommisionen"⁽⁸⁾ shed light in February 1994 on Sweden's contacts with the West⁽⁹⁾. In summary, it points out that the Erlander government counted on American help if Sweden were invaded by the Soviets. An example of practical measures taken was the lengthening and widening of airfields to be able to accommodate American bombers if they needed to emergency land in Sweden after having emptied their cargo on the other side of the Baltic Sea. In addition, direct contact was established with the American airbase headquarters in Wiesbaden (Tempus, 22-28 August 1996, p.12).

One should underline that information of this nature was made public as late as 1994. Therefore, its impact must be weighed carefully and should not be considered as a clear sign of Sweden's commitment to either "complete participation" or "complete abandonment of neutrality". However, one can draw several interesting conclusions from the commission's results. First, one can once again perceive Sweden's search for

⁽⁵⁾ For two different viewpoints on Swedish foreign policy during World War II see "Phases in Swedish Neutrality" by Joachim Joesten (1945) in *Foreign Affairs*, vol 23, No. 2 pp. 324-329 (who presents a critical view) and "Sweden: The Dilemma of a Neutral" by Noaboth Hedin (1943) in *Foreign Policy Reports*, Vol. 14 No. 5, pp. 50-63 (presenting a basis for defense).

⁽⁶⁾ Discrete as "not widely publicized or expressed".

⁽⁷⁾ In the Conservative party bill 1996/97:m503, one can read the following: "Western Europe has lived for the last fifty years under what has been called 'pax americana'...Under De Gaulle, France tried to demonstrate certain independence, but it was never taken seriously. Everybody knew that the US would protect France and that France would remain loyal to the Atlantic Alliance. Sweden, Finland, and Austria, like remaining neutrals, obviously received part of the American protection" (p.7).

⁽⁸⁾ Which in English would translate to "the Commission on Neutrality Policy".

⁽⁹⁾ The entire report is entitled "Om kriget Kommit..." (If the War had Come) and spans the years right after WWII all the way up to 1969. The era beginning 1969 has not been detailed as it represents the Palme era- still a sensitive timeperiod especially in light of his assassination in February 1986.

guarantees which go beyond the traditional neutral boundary. Second, the findings add value to the argument that Sweden did not want to provoke the Soviets and put Finland⁽¹⁰⁾ in danger. As stated by Abrahamson, "by joining a Western alliance world (sic) tension would only increase and possibly endanger the independence of Finland⁽¹¹⁾" (Abrahamson 1957, p. 88). Finally, the actual revelation demonstrated that Sweden could "move on" and expose something which to most Swedes would seem as damaging⁽¹²⁾.

On the more openly active end, Sweden prioritized cooperation with the United Nations of which it became a member in 1946. Although there was initial hesitation regarding the compatibility between neutrality and possible future armed commitments (Chapter VII⁽¹³⁾ of the UN Charter), Sweden opted for membership stressing the solidarity aspect in which "the credibility of neutral policies would be judged primarily by how they contributed to the construction of a new system for the peaceful resolution of international affairs" (Dohlman 1989, p.100). A facilitating factor was probably the need to obtain consensus from the Security Council -in which the five superpowers had to be in accordance- thus guaranteeing approval from both the east and western camps.

Since becoming a member, Sweden has used the UN as a platform for involvement. Swedish "blue helmets" have been present in a multitude of countries, such as Congo, Lebanon, Cyprus, and former Yugoslavia. According to Jan Eliasson⁽¹⁴⁾, this commitment has led to a broad peace-keeping experience in which approximately 70,000⁽¹⁵⁾ Swedes have been part to the present⁽¹⁶⁾; from a total numbers perspective, of the 530,000 troops that took part in UN operations up to the end of 1991, nearly twelve percent were Swedes (*Sipri Yearbook 1996*, p. 112).

Considering its size and small population (8.7 million), Sweden is one of the largest contributors to the UN budget. According to SWEDINT⁽¹⁷⁾ (Sweden International), the "Swedish contribution is 1.23 per cent⁽¹⁸⁾ [approximately \$14 million] of the total

⁽¹⁰⁾ Finland had signed, under Soviet pressure, a Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance in 1948 between the two.

⁽¹¹⁾ Quite naturally, this would eventually be threatening to Sweden itself as it might have been "next in line".

⁽¹²⁾ Still, judging by the time of release of the information (February 1994), it is likely that Sweden did get some positive use of the revelations. Only a few months later, in November 1994, the EU referendum took place. By mitigating the neutrality concept's rigidity and instead present a flexible frontage, it might have worked to decrease the incompatibility between EU membership and neutrality.

⁽¹³⁾ Chapter VII gives the Council authority to prevent the violation of international law with military means if necessary (the measures are described in articles 41 and 42).

⁽¹⁴⁾ Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Up to 1 January 1996, 72,771 UN posts have been filled by Swedes. One person may have served several times on different missions (SWEDINT Information Center).

⁽¹⁶⁾ Dagens Nyheter, 9 September 1996, p. A10.

⁽¹⁷⁾ SWEDINT is the Swedish Armed Forces competence center for international operations. Having served as a separate establishment within the armed forces since 1961, its main task is to recruit, equip, train and support Swedish and foreign personnel for military and humanitarian assignments worldwide. Regarding the training of foreign officers, 100 persons from 21 nations took part during 1995 (about half coming from the other Nordic countries).

⁽¹⁸⁾ In addition, it should be pointed out that Sweden's contribution to the normal UN budget is only a small part of its bestowment to the organization. Sweden gives a total of almost 4 billion crowns in compulsory and voluntary contributions and also donates to the peace-keeping forces not reimbursed by the UN. The peace-keeping forces alone cost over one billion crowns. Furthermore, Sweden also

UN budget, which is almost as large as the contributions of more populous countries like Australia, Brazil and Ukraine" (SWEDINT Information Center, December 1996). In a similar fashion, one cannot forget the contributions by individuals such as Dag Hammarskjöld (the UN's second Secretary General) and Rolf Ekeus (UN's envoy to monitor Iraq's nuclear capabilities).

Some examples of Swedish UN participation⁽¹⁹⁾:

June 1948 **UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO)** 13 military observers.

March 1964 **United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)**

Between 1964-1987, Sweden participated with approximately 26,000 UN soldiers and 2,350 UN civilian police.

March 1978 **UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)**

In the period 1986-1994, Sweden participated with 7,800 UN soldiers. Prior, Sweden had setup a medical facility with a personnel of 1,500.

December 1992 **UN Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP)** 40 UN soldiers and 1 military observer.

December 1995 **UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH)** 40 UN civilian police.

Nevertheless, Sweden's overall position was confined and did not allow for unlimited "elbow room". One of the landmark examples demonstrating this was its inability to join the European Community. Sweden's door to the Community closed after a parliamentary decision in 1971, which argued that membership was not compatible with Swedish neutrality. It would not be until the end of the 1980's, with the termination of the Cold War, that Sweden was able to reconsider and take new steps towards greater participation in the foreign affairs and security field.

pays significant sums to various voluntary UN activities, for example 600 million crowns to UNDP, 350 million to UNICEF, 235 million to the UNHCR and 270 million to WFP. Source: SWEDINT, Soedertaelje, December 1996.

⁽¹⁹⁾ For a complete list, see annex 1.

PERIOD III (1989-94)

A gradual transition

With the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the declaration of independence by the countries of Eastern Europe, and the unification of Germany, the bipolar system came to an end. All of a sudden, new ordinating principles to guide the conduct of international relations began to sprout.

In the particular case of Sweden, one of the first concrete decisions taken was to apply for EC membership. In a well-publicized trip to Brussels, former Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson handed over Sweden's application in July 1991⁽²⁰⁾. In the words of Bo Hult⁽²¹⁾, "Even though it was openly stated in the preceding parliamentary debate that membership was supposed to be compatible with continued 'neutrality', there can be no doubt that the application was a drastic departure from the past, a revolution in a country which prides itself on not having had any revolutions" (Hult 1995, pp. 146-47). Although the road to membership was still in the distant future, the initial steps had been taken.

The positive attitude towards the EC would continue with the election victory of the Conservative Party⁽²²⁾ (together with their coalition partners) in the September 1991 national elections two months later. The victorious Conservative politicians stressed how the gameboard had been modified, opening possibilities for closer participation in cooperative structures. The then Minister to the EC, Mr. Ulf Dinkenspiel, stated that "the risk of a major war between the East and West is small. On the contrary, there are new risks for local conflicts and instability, as can be presently noted in Eastern Europe. This is a reason to deepen our process of cooperation in Europe" (Sweden-EFTA-EC 1991). Later, the then Prime Minister Carl Bildt exposed a similar attitude by underlining that Europe was in a transition period and that through the "acceleration of the historic process", Sweden needed to consider the possibilities which the changes entailed (Idem).

The concept of neutrality itself began to come under scrutiny as Bildt chose to describe Sweden's security policy as "military nonalignment combined with a European identity" (Hult 1995, p.147). Going from words to deeds, the Swedish parliament modified Sweden's security policy to make it more consistent with the post bipolar world.

Redefining neutrality

In 1992, after extensive debating and consideration, the Parliamentary Committee for Foreign Affairs presented the new outlook on security. It was concluded that Sweden should be more active in the international scene while maintaining the foundations of

⁽²⁰⁾ One must remember that the Treaty of the European Union (Maastricht) was still in the making at the time.

⁽²¹⁾ Director of the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Stockholm.

⁽²²⁾ "Moderaterna", one of the main political parties in Sweden. The Moderates or Conservatives are currently in opposition.

non-alignment. A highlight was the rephrasing of Sweden's security policy definition⁽²³⁾ by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs from "nonalignment in peacetime aiming at neutrality in wartime" to nonalignment aimed at "making it **possible**⁽²⁴⁾ to be neutral" in case of war in the neighboring area. Through this modification⁽²⁵⁾, a certain element of vagueness (since neutrality no longer was an obvious choice) was introduced which eventually opened the way for greater "freedom of action" (handlingsfrihet).

As one rapidly notices, by using such a formulation, the parliament covered all bases: on the one hand, there was the clinging to inner core neutrality⁽²⁶⁾ through a commitment to non-alignment; on the other, there was a call for greater involvement in the cooperation building process. With the passage of time, it became apparent that this new formula created more "elbow room"⁽²⁷⁾ for participation in areas which were traditionally sensitive while feeding the rhetoric process⁽²⁸⁾.

Establishing economic linkages- the EEA

As many of the EFTA country members had begun to notice as early as 1990, the economic future lay within the EC rather than EFTA⁽²⁹⁾. To increase the degree of linkage, negotiations between the EFTA and EC were held over a three year period (approximately), culminating with the implementation of the EEA (European Economic Area) Agreement on 1 January 1994⁽³⁰⁾, giving Sweden -as well as all other EFTA countries- the benefits of membership without political power. It is probable that Sweden used the EEA as a stepping stone to obtain experience of what it actually meant to be part of the EC (while maintaining political independence). In what would become an earmark for future Swedish political progression, once the first small steps

⁽²³⁾ In the spring of 1992.

⁽²⁴⁾ Author's emphasis.

⁽²⁵⁾ Which was accepted by all political parties except the Left Party which wanted to retain the old formulation.

⁽²⁶⁾ "Sweden remains outside military alliances, aiming to be neutral in case of war in our vicinity" (MFA, December 1995).

⁽²⁷⁾ It is interesting to note the then Minister of Defense's (Anders Bjoerck) comments at the June 1992 proceedings of the WEU Assembly: "the prerequisites of Sweden's security policy have changed. A policy of neutrality can no longer be applied as relevant description of the policies we wish to pursue- I mean classical, traditional Swedish neutrality, not neutrality in general." Later on in the speech, Mr. Bjoerck adds:

"One might compare Sweden's policy of neutrality in the post-war period to a number of stone tablets which have now been broken. There are no new sacred tablets in stock..."

⁽²⁸⁾ There was one occasion in 1993 when PM Bildt expressed a more far-reaching statement than that expressed by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs. On November 17, he said -concerning Russian threats against the Baltic States- that he "finds it difficult to see neutrality as a probable choice in the predictable cases of conflict in our vicinity" (from speech at the Institute for International Affairs). It can be added that Bildt received much criticism from the Social Democrats for this statement; they believed that Bildt's statement created expectations about Sweden's possible actions during a situation of war in the Baltic States -effectively reducing Sweden's future freedom of action (Bjered 1995, p. 186).

⁽²⁹⁾ In 1991, 55.1% of Swedish exports went to EC countries (18% went to EFTA countries). In addition, 55.0% of imports to Sweden came from EC countries while only 17.9% came from EFTA countries. Source, Statistiska Centralbyraan. EFTA countries at the time were: Sweden, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Austria, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein (from 1 September 1991).

⁽³⁰⁾ Initially, the target date had been set for 1 July 1993. It had to be modified as the ratification process by EC member states progressed slowly.

had been taken and no serious damage had been assessed, the next steps -of larger magnitude- would follow.

Besides converging on economic issues, Sweden started to "think like an EC" member during the early nineties. One can observe a wide variety of instances during which Sweden demonstrated that it was making decisions or remarks based on what other nations (particularly EC members) would have liked to have seen. Three examples illustrate the point:

- When a Greek veto prevented the EC from recognizing Macedonia, Sweden similarly abstained from recognition -raising the question of inconsistency as other states had gained Swedish recognition in the region.
- During the European currency crisis (September and October 1992), Sweden initially refrained from devaluing the Swedish crown, dealing with the crisis through a means of "crisis packages" (in the end, after having experimented with interest rates in the hundreds, devaluation was deemed "inevitable"⁽³¹⁾). (Mouritzen 1995, p.17)
- During the years 1990-93, Sweden changed its UN voting behavior in the General Assembly. Sweden began to vote more in line with the EU states and more seldom as the third-world states⁽³²⁾. (Bjereld 1995, p.189)

What about security?

Could one note a similar pattern in the security field? During this transition period, one cannot make a case that Sweden had made major practical modifications.

It is of interest to note that one of the greatest commitments to date, participation in UNPROFOR (UN Protection Force), to ease tensions in former Yugoslavia, raised few eyebrows. Not even the fact that Sweden, together with Danes and Norwegians dispatched a Nordic batallion⁽³³⁾ to Bosnia in 1993 (including tanks and helicopters) stirred much emotion. According to a fall 1993 survey⁽³⁴⁾ by the National Board of Psychological Defence, 72% of those questioned thought it was a "correct decision" to send a Swedish contingent to former Yugoslavia (while 28% though it was an "incorrect decision" and 1% "did not know"). In the words of Huldt, the operation "caused only limited debate and led to no substantial opposition despite the risks

⁽³¹⁾ The Swedish crown was devalued on 19 November 1992

⁽³²⁾ According to Bjereld, "Swedish UN policies have long been characterized by a friendly stance towards the third-world countries in voting in the UN General Assembly. Sweden has tended to vote in the same way as third-world states far more often than other western countries have done..." (Bjereld 1995, p.189).

⁽³³⁾ The batallion was authorized by a special decision of parliament and represented "the heaviest, best-equipped and most highly trained unit Sweden has sent into UN service and the first to take part in combat or combat-like operations since the Congo..." (Karhilo 1996, p.112). Financially, the batallion in Bosnia cost Sweden 610 million crowns a year, or more than 1.6 million a day (the UN payed back 100 million crowns plus the cost of spare parts). Source: SWEDINT Information Center.

⁽³⁴⁾ . Using a sample of 1,000 respondents.

involved" (Huldt⁽³⁵⁾ 1995, p.149). While one may think that Swedish foreign and security policy in reality went through few significant modifications during the early nineties, one must keep in mind that changes cannot not be implemented overnight. One can refer to the "supertanker" analogy to illustrate how much time may be necessary to modify the course⁽³⁶⁾. Still, the aim of generating new openness for Swedish action had been accepted. As stated by the then Defense Minister Bjoerck, "The great change for Sweden is that today we are prepared to discuss various options. We are not tied to old formulas" (WEU Assembly proceedings June 1992).

An example of how extensive the discussion of "options" was, can be gathered from the different opinions held by the political parties (during 1993), regarding what position Sweden should take in case of war or serious crisis in its neighborhood. On the one hand was the opinion held by the Left, Center, and Green Party's which argued that Sweden should try to remain neutral in crisis or war (even if one or more of the Baltic states were attacked militarily). Corresponding to a more pragmatic stance were the Conservative and Liberal Parties which maintained that the Swedish government should not determine a priori whether it should be neutral or become engaged in a crisis unfolding in its vicinity. Rather, the actual circumstances should be decisive. Compromising these two views was the Social Democratic Party which asserted two main opinions: first, if a war broke out in its neighborhood the most likely alternative would be to remain neutral; second, the fact that an alternative had a high probability did not mean that it would be chosen in each particular event. Thus, if one of the Baltic states -or an EU member - were to be militarily attacked, the government of Sweden should retain a free choice of action (Bjered 1995, p.186).

It would be exactly these types of discussions underlining the wide scope of available options which would open the way, in 1994, to enter a dynamic framework based on Swedish involvement in several security related structures and organizations.

⁽³⁵⁾ For more on this see Bo Huldt, "Working Multilaterally: The Old Peacekeepers' Viewpoint" (Donald Daniel & Brad Hayes, *Beyond Traditional Peacekeeping*. New York/London: MACmillan 1995).

⁽³⁶⁾ To explain this analogy a little further, a supertanker needs much more time (and space) to do a maneuver when compared to a smaller vessel.

PERIOD IV (1994-1995)

Entering the framework

Joining PFP

Sweden joined the Partnership for Peace (PFP) Programme on 9 May 1994⁽³⁷⁾. Launched at the NATO Brussels summit in January 1994, PFP represents an initiative intended to enhance stability and security in Europe by strengthening the relationships between NATO and mainly Central and Eastern Europe countries; keeping a door open to interested neutrals (it was correctly assumed that they would be attracted by PFP's objective of joint planning, training, and exercises to strengthen the ability for undertaking missions in the fields of peacekeeping, search and rescue, and humanitarian operations⁽³⁸⁾).

According to Huldt, PFP membership caused "no controversy in Sweden (in some contrast to fellow neutrals Austria and Switzerland) as it was closely identified with both Sweden's CSCE policies ('transparency') and its long peace-keeping tradition; it was also genuinely felt that Sweden had something to offer in this field" (Huldt 1995, pp. 153-54). Still, one can sense that the decision was not an obvious one. Although the membership list was wide and included countries from both the east and western camp, there was one big difference: Russia was not yet a member⁽³⁹⁾. This development was aggravated by some tendencies in Swedish newspapers to refer to PFP as NATO's "waiting room"⁽⁴⁰⁾.

Since its accession, Sweden has been part of several exercises in its vicinity, focusing on catastrophe alleviation and search and rescue operations. In addition, Sweden's involvement has increased with the passage of time (this will be described in greater detail under Period V).

Reactions

Swedish post-entry reactions to PFP were positive. According to a survey done by the National Board of Psychological Defence (NBPD) in 1995, approximately two-thirds of the Swedish population (70%) regarded it "correct" that Sweden participated in PFP activities while 17% called the decision "incorrect" (leaving 14% in the "do not know" category). Most of the support came from men (77%), those with medium to high education, and supporters of the Christian Democratic, Conservative, and Liberal Parties. Most of those who were negative belonged to the Green, Central, or Left Party.

⁽³⁷⁾ The government took the actual decision on 5 May 1994 (source: Gunnar Aldén, MFA).

⁽³⁸⁾ List of activities obtained from the Framework Document (2), issued at the Brussels Summit (point number 4).

⁽³⁹⁾ Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev eventually signed the PFP Framework Document on 22 June, 1994.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Even though many continue to regard it as a "waiting room", it is important to point out that membership in PFP does not mean (nor guarantee) eventual NATO membership.

To gain an idea of PFP's probable acceptance prior to 1995 is a bit more complicated. The question posed before 1995 was "would you accept that our [Sweden's] military defense partake in a common European military defense?". Judging from the wording, one could predict that support would not be overwhelming:

Table I: Attitude towards a common European defense⁽⁴¹⁾

YEAR	Yes	Yes	No	No	Don't
	absolutely	maybe	probably	absolutely	know
	not	not			
1991	17%	23%	27%	24%	09%
1992Feb	14%	24%	34%	24%	06%
1992May	08%	24%	34%	31%	02%
1992sept	13%	22%	28%	37%	00%
1993	13%	27%	31%	28%	01%
1994	19%	30%	22%	20%	09%
1995	21%	20%	22%	29%	08%
1996	26%	35%	18%	15%	05%

Although the numbers do not point towards cataclysmic support, one can make two significant observations: that the overall trend goes in the direction of greater acceptance (for the possibilities of being part of a European defense) and that in 1994 -the year before actual PFP surveys were made- a total of 49% were positive (this is the figure one attains when adding the two "yes" categories).

Adding on to this, the political reactions to PFP have been positive, underlining the importance for continued cooperation within the structure. This becomes apparent as one looks through the individual party's reactions. From the perspective of the main opposition party, the Conservatives, PFP enables for "closer and deeper integration between the Nordic and Baltic countries" (party bill 1996/97:m503, p.11).

Considering the future of PFP, added attachment to PFP can be noted from Conservative leader Bildt's suggestion for a regional structure based on the PFP model. According to Bildt, security could be heightened in the Baltic region by forming a Northern European Partnership for Peace (NPEP)⁽⁴²⁾, which would consist of an "expanded defense coordination within the already existing PFP structure." According to Bildt, the scheme would involve the four Nordic countries and the Baltic states. Still, the arrangement would allow Sweden and Finland to retain their neutrality and permit Denmark and Norway to maintain their links with NATO. It envisages the establishment of joint battalions between the participants to be trained for peacekeeping operations, such as in Bosnia. Through its establishment one "would

⁽⁴¹⁾ Source: The National Board of Psychological Defence.

⁽⁴²⁾ From Bildt's speech at the Paasikivi Foundation (Helsinki) on 3 September 1996.

impede the Baltic Sea from turning into an empty space hindering cooperation, especially now that completely new European security structures will grow forth"⁽⁴³⁾.

Looking critically at Bildt's proposal, one can note several advantages and disadvantages. From a positive view, by establishing a NPPF, one would be able to fill the "graazon"⁽⁴⁴⁾ or grey area. Most likely, it would represent a set-up which would be welcomed both by the American and Russian side as the Baltic region would be "neutralized", removing much of the tension which presently exists *vis-a-vis* possible NATO enlargement. Another positive factor would be its use of current PFP work as a base, thus representing a continuation of present tendencies in terms of security building (for example, a form of northern CJTF could be installed to maintain a linkage with the continent).

From a negative viewpoint, one can discern a few difficulties with the conceptualization. First, it is becoming more and more evident that the Baltic states see no substitute for NATO membership⁽⁴⁵⁾. As a result, anything that does not provide a similar security umbrella would probably be rejected in the long term. Second, and arising from the prior argument, one can ask if the security provided by the Scandinavian countries would be enough (would there be sufficient levels of credibility) to guarantee the involved nations security needs? Would Sweden and Finland be able to stave off an attack on the Baltics (especially now that Sweden is diminishing its military capacity)? What would the role of Denmark and Norway be (considering their NATO affiliations)? Another question involves the issue of non-alignment. Would Sweden rapidly abandon its non-alignment if any of the Baltic states were attacked? According to a survey conducted by the NBPD, only a little more over 10% of the Swedish population believes that Sweden should give security guarantees involving military participation should the Baltics be invaded by another country⁽⁴⁶⁾. The questions are numerous, although they mainly revolve around the issue of credibility and willingness, something which presently is difficult to evaluate.

Considering the positions of the other political parties, to the Christian Democrats, "cooperation in PFP strengthens the Swedish total defense capacity and enables us to be part of peace-keeping and crisis management operations; and through that, contributes to the prevention and handling of non-military threats and pressures...To counterbalance the negative consequences of CFE⁽⁴⁷⁾, we need to engage deeper in PFP cooperation in the Baltic Sea region"⁽⁴⁸⁾.

⁽⁴³⁾ Bildt stole the headlines as recently as September 27, 1996, stating that Sweden should not dismiss Swedish membership in NATO. In the same interview, Bildt also mentioned that Sweden should be an observer while NATO hold's its enlargement summit next year (Dagens Nyheter, 27 September 1996).

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Used to describe the present security situation in the Baltics, it depicts the apparent security "vacuum" which predominates in the Baltic region.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ For example, as recently as 15 October 1996, Lithuanian President Brazauskas expressed that "Lithuania's integration into the three main European and North Atlantic structures namely, WEU, NATO, and the EU, is an indisputable priority of our foreign and domestic policy." Address by President Brazauskas at WEU (Brussels).

⁽⁴⁶⁾ However, one must remember that this survey does not use the scenario of a NPPF (meaning that Sweden would not be alone in providing the guarantee).

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Referring to the revised CFE Treaty.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ From party bill to parliament 1996/97:F023 with relation to government bill 1996/97:4.

Sharing a similar view is the Liberal Party: "The Liberal Party looks very positively on the expanding Swedish participation in relation to Partnership for Peace (PFP). It has significant importance to increase the possibilities for international cooperation in both peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts. Of no lesser importance is the growing PFP cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region."⁽⁴⁹⁾

From a more questionable yet positive view is the Left Party: "Swedish participation in PFP is generally positive. We obtain valuable experiences through our cooperation with units from other countries...[however] We strongly feel that our engagement must be based on our own perceptions. Sweden's participation in PFP cannot be given such wide scope and focus that the Swedish people, and the outside world, view us as practically decreasing our military non-alignment".⁽⁵⁰⁾

Finally⁽⁵¹⁾, from the standpoint of the Green or Environmental Party, the main issue is the question of scope and degree of continued cooperation: "The Green Party considers that it should be the Parliament which decides what Sweden does and thinks within the PFP process. Therefore, it should be obvious to present the documents which lay out these, the so called IPP's⁽⁵²⁾ to Parliament. By doing this, Parliament is guaranteed overview of Swedish involvement in PFP. This is especially important now that it is being signalled that the PFP process shall be expanded and given new contents."⁽⁵³⁾

BALTBAT- towards the creation of a Baltic Battalion

Sweden's involvement in BALTBAT is yet another example of its intention to "participate fully in the building up of a new European co-operation".⁽⁵⁴⁾

Originating⁽⁵⁵⁾ through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed during the Nordic-Baltic defense ministers seminar in Visby on 2-3 June 1994, BALTBAT aims to create a peacekeeping battalion consisting of soldiers from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania (the objective being a fully operational battalion by 1997).⁽⁵⁶⁾ The initial Swedish contributions included sending material support and instructors⁽⁵⁷⁾ to the

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Source: party bill to parliament 1996/97:F038 in relation to government bill 1997/97:4.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Party bill to parliament 1996/97:F051 with relation to government bill 1997/97:4.

⁽⁵¹⁾ The position of the Center Party corresponds to that of the Social Democratic Party as they have jointly established the Swedish priorities *vis-a-vis* PFP. This position is consistent with the following description provided by Foreign Minister Hjelm-Wallén: "Sweden's principal interest (in PFP) is the opportunity to develop our own, as well as other cooperating states' ability to act in crises management operations...we want to expand PFP in the Baltic Sea and in general. Not to say the least we see it as important to strengthen the cooperation with Russia." From Hjelm-Wallén's speech "The Baltic Sea- the Sea of possibility in the New Europe", at Foersvarshoegskolan (Defense College), Stockholm 7 November 1996.

⁽⁵²⁾ Individual Partnership Programme in which all the activities the participating country wishes to be part of are outlined.

⁽⁵³⁾ Party bill to parliament 1996/97:F042 in relation to government bill 1996/97:4.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ From Anders Bjoerck's speech to the WEU Assembly in June 1992.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Although the idea was originally proposed by the Estonian defense commander, Lieutenant General Aleksander Einseln, in November 1993 during a Baltic defence commanders meeting. Source: documentation from the Danish Ministry of Defence, September 1995 (*The BALTBAT-PROJECT*).

⁽⁵⁶⁾ A modified MoU was signed in Copenhagen on September 11th 1994 to include the UK. Afterwards, the United States, Germany, France, and the Netherlands have become part of the project.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ At most, Sweden has had 7 instructors in place at the same time. Currently, there are three instructors in the Adazi base (source: Lennart Nilsson, SWEDINT, 1 October 1996).

Baltic states. Specifically, Sweden's support consisted of hospital equipment and kitchen equipment (including entire "kitchens") to the common learning center in Adazi⁽⁵⁸⁾ in Latvia and Rukla in Lithuania. Needless to say, these bestowments did not raise profound moral issues for Swedish policy makers since they were of an "innocent" origin.

However, following the usual pattern of taking steps of increasing size after initiation, in November of 1995, the government decided to obtain and donate 18 grenade launching rifles of Carl Gustaf type, including training ammunition with corresponding practice weapons⁽⁵⁹⁾. Although the numbers are not overwhelming, it represents a marked change from prior donations which were non-military in nature. In addition, to satisfy the need for actual training under realistic conditions, contingents of the batallion have been given opportunities to be part of current UN/NATO operations. In the Swedish case, a contingency of 50 Latvian soldiers are currently assisting the Swedish IFOR batallion in former Yugoslavia. It is important to underline that these men are under Swedish command, following Swedish orders. Financially, Sweden has invested approximately 20 million crowns⁽⁶⁰⁾ into the project (roughly three million dollars).

Looking further ahead, Sweden, together with the other participating states, are considering avenues of how to continue the project after 30 September 1997 (which represents the termination date). Currently, there are three options envisaged for BALTBAT by the military group⁽⁶¹⁾:

- Participation in peacekeeping missions beginning 1998.
- Six month participation in peacekeeping missions followed by inclusion in the UN's peacekeeping forces.
- Six month participation in peacekeeping missions followed by inclusion in UN peacekeeping forces plus additional training in preparation for future peacekeeping missions.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Built by the USSR in the early 1970's, Adazi Camp was designed to train motorized infantry and tank regiment commanders (as well as tank, APC gunners, and drivers). The complex comprises barrack blocks, classrooms, a cinema, gymnasium, galley, assault course, and laundry facility. Adjacent to the camp is a 200 km² training area of flat, sandy and partially forested land. Source: Major Bo Loenn, Defense Headquarters, Stockholm.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ The donation was delivered by Sweden as recently as May 1996. All other countries involved in the project will similarly donate different types of weapons according to a list which organizes all the types and numbers of weapons needed to achieve the peacekeeping objectives.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ According to Major Loenn (AL/PROD, Ministry of Defence), it is difficult to obtain a figure for the entire BALTBAT budget (to compare the different country contributions) as each country needs to attach a value to its own material provisions. Still, according to the Swedish Armed Forces' magazine, "Sweden and the USA are the largest contributors of materiel in this project". ("Foersvarets Forum", special edition 1996, p.18).

⁽⁶¹⁾ Overall coordination of the project is handled by the BALTBAT Steering Group under Danish chairmanship. This in turn is supported by the Military Ad Hoc Working Group (similarly under Danish chairmanship) which is responsible for the detailed aspects of the cooperative programme of assistance (*THE BALTBAT-PROJECT*, Documentation from the Danish Ministry of Defence, September 1995).

Presently, the third option counts with most support as it would produce both political and military benefits. From the political point of view, it would project the Baltic image internationally (this behoof would be created by the two prior options as well). Militarily, it would demand a constant upgrading of Baltic weapons and continued training which eventually enhance each country's individual defense structure⁽⁶²⁾.

IFOR

On 20 December 1995, the UNPROFOR mission in ex-Yugoslavia was formally replaced by IFOR (Implementation Force) under the command of NATO. The force, which counts on a deployment of approximately 60,000 NATO ground troops⁽⁶³⁾, was authorized by the Security Council to use force under Chapter VII but acquired stronger rules of engagement with extensive possibilities to retaliate⁽⁶⁴⁾. Still, its main mission was/is to help implement the Dayton Peace Agreement by separating the armies, ensuring a cease-fire, making sure that rival troops and their weaponry are withdrawn to designated areas, and create a stable environment so that other organizations have the opportunity to fulfill the civilian tasks associated with the Peace Agreement (SWEDINT Information Center).

From the Swedish side, a total of 840 men have served in the mission. It has provided a mechanized battalion (SWEDN) and part of the Nordic/Polish Brigade (NORDPOLBDE) situated within the U.S. Division in the north-east part of Bosnia-Herzegovina⁽⁶⁵⁾ (SWEDINT Information Center). The materiel used by the Swedish battalion includes armored personnel carriers, anti-tank missile systems, anti-tank weapons, mine detectors, and ammunition.⁽⁶⁶⁾

Presently, Sweden is reducing its contingent in Bosnia with 200 men per rotation beginning in December (1996). After a parliamentary decision in 26 September 1996, the Swedish force to leave for Bosnia in April 1997 is expected to have decreased to 450 men (Dagens Nyheter, 27 September 1996).

Reactions

In general terms, the larger parties (the Social Democrats, Conservatives) together with other center-right parties (Central, Liberal, and Christian Democratic Party) approved the decision to take part in IFOR. This left the Green and Left Party which disapproved of the maneuver.

⁽⁶²⁾ Much of the information on BALTBAT was attained from Catharina Wale at the Department for International and Security Affairs (Ministry of Defense).

⁽⁶³⁾ At the end of September 1996, total troops amounted to 47,000. Of these, 39,000 (83%) were from NATO member states and 8,000 (17%) from non-NATO member states. Source: Assembly of the WEU, document 1541).

⁽⁶⁴⁾ UN Security Council Resolution 1031, UN document S/RES/1030, 15 December 1995.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Some logistic assets are deployed in Pecs, Hungary.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Specifically, the materiel includes 34 type-302 tracked armored personnel carriers, 40 type-SISU wheeled armored personnel carriers, 3 type-208S armored all-terrain carriers, 1 type-206 all-terrain carriers, 9 anti-tank missile systems (Bill), 44 Bofors Carl-Gustaf 8.4 cm anti-tank weapon (AT 4), 5 type-90 12.7 mm automatic rifles, 15 7.62 mm snipers' rifles, mine detectors, ammunition clearance robots, ammunition clearance detectors, ammunition X-ray equipment, night vision equipment, and image intensifiers (SWEDINT information center).

Briefly, to the Social Democrats, IFOR is "a concrete and very convincing expression for a common European responsibility for the security in Europe" (statement by Defense Minister Peterson, parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32, p.47). In the words of Hjelm-Wallén, "through a common responsibility for peace and reconciliation in former Yugoslavia, we contribute -NATO allies and and non-aligned nations- to the establishment of a new security order in Europe. Rather than merely holding a discussion about how the blueprint should be, we can now place the first stones of the building's foundation" (parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32, p.56).

From the viewpoint of the Liberal Party, the positive outlook on IFOR has reached the level that they concern themselves with the size of the force in the future. They have argued that Sweden should not rule out the possibility of sending a larger force to Bosnia than that presently envisioned by the government (to meet budget requirements, the future force is to be around 500 men).⁽⁶⁷⁾

Finally⁽⁶⁸⁾, according to Helena Nilsson of the Center Party, "through the common participation of the US, NATO, Russia and non-aligned states of Europe within IFOR, it becomes a concrete and very convincing expression of a common European responsibility for security in Europe" (parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32 p.47). As is the case with the other parties described above, there is no questioning of Swedish participation in IFOR; it is viewed as a natural continuation of former peace-keeping work.

Disapproving of Sweden's participation in IFOR are the Green and Left Parties. They issued a joint registration of dissent, arguing that it would bring the country closer to NATO. Contrary to majority opinion in Parliament, they asked that the government announce it to be a one time event and revert to UN led operations in the future.⁽⁶⁹⁾

Looking at the reaction of the Swedish population, there is no question that the vast majority approve of the presence of Swedish soldiers in former Yugoslavia. According to a surveys carried out by the NBPD, a vast majority of Swedes support the presence of Swedish soldiers in former Yugoslavia:

Table 2: Attitude to sending a Swedish military force to former Yugoslavia

Year	Correct decision	Incorrect	Don't know
1996	78%	17%	5%
1995	76%	18%	6%

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Source: party bill by the Liberals 1996/97:Foe38, p.18.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ There is no consideration of the Conservatives in this section. Their approval goes to the point that there is no mention of IFOR in their latest party bill handling Swedish security and defense (1996/97:m503).

⁽⁶⁹⁾ The government itself described IFOR's tasks as being mainly traditional peacekeeping (government bill [Swedish participation in the peace in former Yugoslavia] 1995/96:113, 30 November 1995).

WEU

As of 1 January 1995, following a decision by the government, Sweden has been part of the Western European Union with observer status. The path leading to this decision was made possible through its formal accession to the EU.

In one of the declarations⁽⁷⁰⁾ (WEU and the Maastricht Treaty) issued by members of the WEU (which were appended to the Maastricht Treaty), it is explicitly mentioned that "taking into account the role of WEU as the defence component of the European Union and as a means to strengthen the European pillar of the Atlantic Alliance", the members of the WEU invite member states of the EU "to accede to WEU...or to become observers if they so wish"⁽⁷¹⁾.

According to the Swedish government decision statement, "the government regards it as valuable that Sweden, while keeping military non-alignment, is given the opportunity to gain insight and participate in the security policy discussion which is maintained within the WEU; especially humanitarian and peace-keeping missions as well as crisis management...Observer status also provides the opportunity to participate in the discussion of EU decisions whose implementation been given to the WEU" (from extract of government meeting, protocol number 8, 12 December 1994). From the point of view of the Foreign Affairs Committee, it is considered that observer status is consistent with Sweden's non-alignment policy⁽⁷²⁾ (1994/95:UU5).

Even though Sweden is merely a WEU observer, such thoughts would have been unimaginable a few years ago. As we shall see later on in this paper, observer status has assisted Sweden to take initiative *vis-a-vis* the security building process (reference: the Swedish-Finnish Memorandum⁽⁷³⁾).

In relationship to the WEU ministerial meeting held in Madrid on 14 November 1995, Hjelm-Wallén took the opportunity to delineate Sweden's modified security position, stressing its freedom for action: "Sweden's policy of non-participation in military alliances does not restrict us in other areas than territorial defense and article 5 of the Modified Brussels Treaty...the Common Foreign and Security Policy, including preventive action, and the WEU conflict management capacities should be seen as complementary tools in a broad spectrum of instruments to deal with the new security challenges". From this statement, it is clear that Sweden's observer position within the WEU is viewed as compatible with the new outlook.

Reactions

As was the case with IFOR, the reactions to WEU membership range from acceptance to disapproval. Commencing with those who are against Sweden's observer status, to the Greens, WEU membership is not consistent with a policy of military non-alignment. As a result, they suggest that Sweden immediately leave the observer post

⁽⁷⁰⁾ In the second part of the second declaration.

⁽⁷¹⁾ From the 40th ordinary session of the Assembly of WEU (March 1995). Accordingly, Finland and Austria also became WEU observers from the beginning of 1995.

⁽⁷²⁾ This view is also shared by the government.

⁽⁷³⁾ Which also springs from Sweden's membership in the EU.

to try to "recreate confidence in a military non-aligned policy" (from party bill 1996/97Foe42).

A similar attitude is held by the Left Party which considers membership "to be the first step in a conscious strive towards closer linkage", something "inconsistent with continued military non-alignment" (from party bill 1996/97Foe52).

Considering the parties which supported the observer status, from the perspective of the Christian Democrats, "the WEU presently is an important bridge between the EU and NATO...and to give all EU members the opportunity to be members of the WEU, the Christian Democrats have proposed that Sweden take the initiative to develop a branch of the WEU for peace-keeping, catastrophe alleviation and crisis management operations⁽⁷⁴⁾ (from party bill 1996/97:Foe23, 3 October 1996, pp.17-18).

According to Lennart Rohdin of the Liberal Party, "our membership in the EU has increased our possibilities within the security policy arena. These are strengthened further by our participation in PFP and the observer status in the WEU" (from parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32, p.10). To the Liberal Party, it is of importance to continue to be open and be part of all opportunities offered in the security building process in Europe, stressing active participation in peace-keeping activities (Idem).

In the words of Helena Nilsson, representing the Center Party, "the Center Party sees membership in the WEU as compatible with our military non-alignment. This has been decided by a large majority by the party's highest decision-making organ" (parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32, p.44).

In the viewpoint of the Conservatives, "Sweden should, just like other countries, strive after increased military cooperation across the borders...trans-national military cooperation serves the stability and security in Europe...Thus, it is in Sweden's interest that the WEU can be developed to become an instrument to strengthen freedom and security in Europe" (chapter "freedom and peace" from the party head's bill presented at party summit, October 1995).

To the Social Democratic party, "OSCE, the Council of Europe, NATO -with PFP- and the WEU with its different association forms are all, by the side of the EU, important instruments for security building in Europe; these are organizations in which Sweden participates actively and obviously must partake in" (speech by Defense Minister Peterson, Parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32, p.47).

Finally, from the population's perspective, it is interesting to note that no surveys have been made regarding Sweden's observer status. In the words of the National Board for Psychological Defence, "it has never been asked about Swedes' attitude to our observer status within the WEU"⁽⁷⁵⁾. The reason for this is probably that very few Swedes presently have knowledge about the WEU. In addition, the fact that it "merely" involves an observer role may tone down the priority given to know what the population thinks. As a result, the best guidance for popular support can be

⁽⁷⁴⁾ This proposal is explained in-depth in party bill 95/96:Foe11. This proposal relates to the Swedish-Finnish Memorandum.

⁽⁷⁵⁾ Response obtained after raising the issue to them on 6 November 1996.

gathered from the results obtained for the question "attitude towards a common European defense" (presented in the "reactions to PFP" section).

EU

Sweden's greatest commitment to date in relation to deepened enmeshment in foreign and security affairs was its accession to the EU on 1 January 1995. Having initiated the process in July 1991, the road towards membership was settled in November 1994 through a popular referendum.

The final months leading to the referendum were intense and heated. The Social Democrats (who had just regained power in a national election held only two months earlier) established two groups with opposing views on accession. Prime Minister Carlsson vindicated that Sweden could not stay outside the EU, forming a strong presence (together with Conservative Carl Bildt) for the "Yes" side. As the population itself would have the last word, they were literally "drowned" with information. The vehemence was reinforced as it was impossible to see which side had more support with only days to the referendum (the two sides were roughly evenly split -although the "No" side had a slight advantage).

In the end, a narrow "Yes" was squeezed through as 52.3% voted in favor while 46.8% were against (0.9% voted "Blank")⁽⁷⁶⁾. The exit poll indicated that the "Yes" side had based their decision mainly on economic factors and on the importance of Sweden's EU membership for a continued peaceful and stable development process in Europe. The "No" voters had mainly pointed to the fear of losing Swedish national sovereignty and to the negative consequences of the adjustment process to EU regulations, including CFSP⁽⁷⁷⁾ (Lindahl 1995, p.176).

Although the complete ramifications of Sweden's ingress to the EU are numerous and in some instances still in the making, two main conclusions can be drawn. First, by becoming part of the EU, Sweden signalled its acceptance of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), effectively putting a boundary to its "handlingsfrihet" or freedom of movement. Second, as became apparent with the passage of time, Sweden would commence to use the EU as an instrument to further its involvement in the international arena -opening the door to initiative-taking.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ Voter turnout was 82% of eligible voters. Source, Central Bureau of Statistics (1995) Be 64 SM 9501.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ For more on this see Swedish Radio Corporation 1994 Election -exit poll results, Stockholm.

PERIOD V (1995-96)

Taking the Initiatives

At the latter stages of 1995, Sweden entered a new phase *vis-a-vis* cooperation within the international field. Having created the foundations for active participation, Sweden now moved towards taking proper initiative (this became especially evident as 1996 progressed).

A good departure point is to consider the 6 December 1995 and 14 February 1996 parliamentary declarations devoted to Swedish security policy formulation. The main thrust of the December 1995 declaration expressed that Sweden, while maintaining its nonalignment, was benefiting from increased levels of participation in the security field. In reference to Sweden's first year within the EU, it was stated that "membership in the EU and *participation*⁽⁷⁸⁾ in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) framework gives Sweden an improved security policy position as well as increased opportunities to engage in foreign and security policy issues in our vicinity" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 7 December 1995).

Similarly, the February 1996 Declaration continued in the same line of thought, adding a calling for greater interaction with the exterior world: "we all depend on our common understanding and can, in the long run, only evolve in cooperation with the outside world." Getting more detailed, it is explained that "we [Sweden] ourselves continue to bear the responsibility for the protection of our territory. On the other hand, *the need and possibilities for cooperation* on a wide basis in terms of preventive diplomacy, crisis management, and peacekeeping *have increased greatly*"⁽⁷⁹⁾.

⁽⁷⁸⁾ Authors emphasis.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ Authors emphasis.

Needless to say, the change in focus (towards a more international approach) brought a variety of reactions. In the words of Permanent Under-Secretary Jan Eliasson: "we were the linesman that ran outside the field and shouted offside. Now we are on the field" (*Dagens Politik*, 13 February 1996). Another poignant example was offered by the then Prime Minister Carlsson, who summed up Sweden's new position as follows: "we are participating and creating a new picture, we have received new pens, but the country which is drawing is still the same. In a pragmatic and flexible way we are ready to test the waters of the security and defense cooperation in Europe".⁽⁸⁰⁾

The Swedish-Finnish Memorandum

On 21 April 1996, the foreign ministers of Sweden and Finland⁽⁸¹⁾ presented a joint proposal aiming to enhance the role and capabilities of the EU within the area of conflict management. In the memorandum, it is argued that there must exist a "crisis management capability that is based on solidarity, humanism, and enlightened self-interest that can meet any threats to peace and security". The timing was probably selected carefully as one of its principal targets was to advise the on-going Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) on where the CFSP should move⁽⁸²⁾.

Primarily, the document stands out for its call for greater EU-WEU⁽⁸³⁾ linkage. Sentences such as "In joint military crisis management, the member-states of the Union will engage resources which are under national and/or common (alliance) authority and jurisdiction for decisions made by the Union and implemented by the WEU" seemed to confirm the new attitude. Nevertheless, one can observe a certain Swedish-Finnish shrewdness when it comes to the decision making mechanism. In the memorandum, the linkage between the EU and the WEU is established by giving the EU the "upper hand" thereby guaranteeing its planning and decision-making capacity:

"The TEU/J.4(2) will have to be revised in order to establish a reinforced link between the EU and the WEU regarding the implementation of decisions of military crisis management adopted by the EU within the scope of CFSP (empowerment). All the contributing EU member-states will participate on an equal footing in planning and decision making related to operations enacted by the EU. It is expected that a declaration by the WEU will be adopted to this end (implementation)."

Thus, in the case of Finland and Sweden, the ramification would be greater influence on WEU matters (in which they participate) while maintaining overall observer status.

To provide more detail on the WEU/EU relationship, Sweden and Finland presented a joint proposal for amendments to article J4 on 8 October 1996. Serving as a direct follow-up to the April initiative, the statement recaptures why there is a need for taking action:

⁽⁸⁰⁾ From Carlsson's speech at the "Folk och Foersvar" Conference in Salen (February 12, 1996).

⁽⁸¹⁾ Tarja Halonen is the Finnish minister for foreign affairs.

⁽⁸²⁾ The memorandum was published in two large issue newspapers on the same day (in Sweden's *Dagens Nyheter* and Finland's *Helsingin Sanomat*). A few days later, it was formally presented to the ministries for foreign affairs in all EU capitals. CFSP was put on the IGC table in May and is currently being discussed).

⁽⁸³⁾ Although Mrs. Hjelm-Wallén had hinted at something along these lines at the WEU ministerial meeting in Madrid on November 14th 1995.

"Today, the EU can try to prevent, alleviate, and resolve conflicts through diplomacy, development cooperation, trade, etc. However, the Union's role in the areas of crisis management that require military means, that is to say, certain types of humanitarian assignments and peace-keeping efforts, needs to be strengthened. Sweden and Finland therefore want to give the EU enhanced possibilities of utilizing the entire spectrum of instruments needed for effective and credible action in this area. Hence, the EU shall also have the possibility of, for example, taking initiatives for a peace-keeping force that is deployed on the basis of a UN or OSCE mandate" (MFA Press Release, 8 October 1996)

To be able to reach these goals, the proposal suggests the following amendment to Article J4:

1. The common foreign and security policy shall include all questions related to the security of the Union, including **humanitarian tasks and military crisis management** and the eventual framing of **other elements of a common defence policy**, which might in time lead to a common defence.

2. The Union **shall have recourse** to the Western European Union (WEU), which is an integral part of the development of the Union, to elaborate and implement decisions and actions of the Union which have defence implications, **including decisions on humanitarian tasks and military crisis management. Member States shall be able to participate on an equal footing in such joint activities.**

Decisions having defence implications dealt with under this paragraph shall be taken without prejudice to the policies and obligations referred to in J 4(4).

(idem)

It is important to note that although there is a slight modification to article J4(1), there is no overall change in the content of the article. By preserving the key words "eventual framing", Sweden underlines its continued pledge to the CFSP. As stated by the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, "by submitting this proposal, Finland and Sweden express their commitment to the development of the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the Union"⁽⁸⁴⁾

The initiative itself is currently being discussed and it is likely that it will form part of the on-going debate regarding the WEU/EU relationship. Although it is too early to tell, the probable strength of the memorandum is that it comes close to a middle (or compromise) stance between the British and Franco-German viewpoints⁽⁸⁵⁾.

⁽⁸⁴⁾ Official speaking notes from the MFA (for further clarification), 21 November 1996.

⁽⁸⁵⁾ It comes close to the so called "Option B" which represents an intermediate EU-WEU institutional convergence (as opposed to "Option C" which would mean the integration of the WEU into the EU. For a more detailed explanation of the option plans see "WEU Contribution to the European Union Intergovernmental Conference of 1996", Forty-First Ordinary Session (First Part). WEU Council of Ministers, Madrid 14th November 1995 (document 1492).

Finding common ground: WEU and the observers

To complete the discussions pertaining to the Swedish-Finnish Memorandum, it is of interest to consider the position held by the WEU -including the relationship between WEU members and observers.

Starting with the least dialectic point, it is clear that the WEU has given greater priority to peacekeeping issues in the last few years. In the Petersberg Declaration of 19 June 1992, it is stated that "military units of WEU member states, acting under the authority of the WEU, could be employed for:

- humanitarian and rescue tasks;
- peace-keeping tasks;
- tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making."

With the progress of time, new ground has been treaded as the possibilities for non-members to take part in such operations have been introduced. Building on the WEU contribution to the EU IGC of 1996, and in the lines of the Swedish-Finnish Memorandum, the May 7th WEU Council of Ministers Meeting in Birmingham devoted part of its attention to the question of the WEU/EU relationship. To enhance the possibilities of an European Security and Defense Indentity (ESDI), it was suggested that the WEU "take further steps forward in its development by establishing closer institutional and operational links with the European Union, to enhance the capacity to respond to the Union's requests and elaborate and implement effectively the decisions and actions of the Union⁽⁸⁶⁾.

Of greater relevance to the Swedish-Finnish Memorandum, there is also a section in which the WEU/Observer state relationship is mulled: "Recognizing the traditionally active role played by the Observer countries in the field of UN peacekeeping and the contribution that the Observers could bring to WEU operations in the Petersberg framework⁽⁸⁷⁾...Ministers recalled the terms of the Madrid mandate and welcomed the decisions adopted by the Permanent Council enabling the Observers to participate more fully in Petersberg Tasks and clarifying the practice and procedures applying to Observers"⁽⁸⁸⁾.

Although one cannot assume any relationship between the Swedish-Memorandum and the result of the Birmingham Declaration, it nevertheless demonstrates that there is a gradual rapprochement between members and observers. More importantly, there is an understanding of the possibilities available for cooperation in the area of

⁽⁸⁶⁾ This represents just one of the three presented routes. The two others were: reinforcing its links with NATO (through Combined Joint Task Forces and strengthening the operational capacity).

⁽⁸⁷⁾ A recent example of this would be the contributions of Sweden and Finland (among others) to the WEU police element within the European Union Administration of Mostar.

⁽⁸⁸⁾ This is a continuation of the Madrid Declaration in which Ministers agreed on the existence of possibilities for WEU Observer participation in the tasks defined at Petersberg. The process is currently under consideration. In the words of Mr José Cutileiro, Secretary-General of the WEU, "We are very close to an agreement which will allow full participation of Associate Members as regards our work with NATO without changing their status. This agreement should also allow the involvement of the Observers, to the fullest extent possible, and in accordance with their status, in WEU's follow up of the Berlin decisions." From the Secretary-General's speech to the WEU Assembly (first part of the forty-second ordinary session) 4 December 1996, p.2).

Petersberg missions. From the Swedish point of view, as expressed by Aastroem, "it permits us to closely follow and contribute to the activities of that organization (WEU) to accomplish its tasks according to the Petersberg principles" (Aastroem 1996, p.135+136).

EU Enlargement

Once a member of the EU, it did not take long for Sweden to capitalize on the avenues available for shaping the agenda. Presently, the pending Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) has become the leading vehicle used by Sweden (naturally, this applies to all member-states) to propel its priorities.

Besides the traditional Swedish priorities of improving the unemployment situation, increasing transparency, heighten equality between the sexes, and enhance cooperation in the environmental area, one of Sweden's top priorities (if not the top objective⁽⁸⁹⁾) is to enlarge the EU eastward; part of the argument being that such a strategy would enhance stability. It is thought that if the eastern countries are involved in the EU process, the possibilities for large scale wars will disappear⁽⁹⁰⁾. In the words of Sven-Olof Petterson⁽⁹¹⁾:

"Enlargement is essential because accession to the EU will enhance security, not only for the new member states but also for the present ones. It will open markets, generate trade and investment and underpin economic growth and development. It will secure and promote a good environment."⁽⁹²⁾

One can appreciate a similar line of thought in the words of Mats Hellstrom⁽⁹³⁾: "For us, such enlargement would strengthen the possibilities for peace in our immediate vicinity and through it increase security levels in the region."⁽⁹⁴⁾

In summary, by stimulating interdependence, the possibilities for better relations would be intensified. As can be deduced from the Swedish-Finnish initiative: "people who become positively and mutually dependent through economic integration tend to protect one another. This model of coexistence between countries is also the guiding principle underlying Nordic cooperation on the Baltic Sea Region, as well as the enlargement of the EU to include the countries of Central and Eastern Europe".

The Baltic Region

Cooperation in the Baltic Sea

⁽⁸⁹⁾ In the words of PM Goeran Persson, "our historic mission is to bind together the East and West" (from speech given at the Olof Palme International Centrum on 2 October 1996).

⁽⁹⁰⁾ One must remember that the "impossibility of war" was one of the main objectives- many would say the main- of the Treaty of Rome of 1957.

⁽⁹¹⁾ Deputy Under-Secretary of State, Head of Division for European Integration at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Stockholm.

⁽⁹²⁾ Address by Mr. Gunnar Lund, Under-Secretary of State and Permanent Representative to the IGC, Kingdom of Sweden, delivered by Mr. Peterson in Tallin on 3 October 1996 (title: "The Intergovernmental Conference in the Context of the Enlargement of the European Union").

⁽⁹³⁾ Stated while he was Minister for European Affairs.

⁽⁹⁴⁾ From Hellstrom's speech on the general politics debate at the Swedish parliament on October 11, 1995.

Cooperation in the Baltic Region has a long tradition. Already in the 13th century, an important economic force was established in northern Europe through the Hanseatic League -primarily involved with securing the commercial interests of the cities associated with the League⁽⁹⁵⁾.

From a modern perspective, however, cooperation can be alledged to have surged in 1992 through the establishment of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS)⁽⁹⁶⁾. Initiated on 5-6 March 1992 by Danish-German initiative, the CBSS⁽⁹⁷⁾ aims to discuss and elaborate common strategies for regional political-economic development and coordinate regional cooperation.

On Swedish impetus, new stimulation was given to the CBSS through the Baltic Sea States Summit held in Visby⁽⁹⁸⁾ on 3-4 May 1996. At the Visby Summit, which was held at the Prime Ministerial level (and in the presence of the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission), new pledges were made around the banner of stability, prosperity, and solidarity; supporting the process of "co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region with particular emphasis on promoting the region as an area where co-operation, democracy and market economy prevail".⁽⁹⁹⁾ Observing the choice of words, it becomes evident that the cooperation was tailored for "soft-level" issues. Rather than concentrate on security issues, the Summit gave way to initiatives which would enhance regional understanding and interaction (for the actual agenda for action established in the Presidency Declaration, consult annex 2).

It is important to note that by focusing on soft-level security issues, the Summit enhanced security guarantees through indirect measures. As it had been concluded at the Summit, by concentrating cooperation in most areas around security, any existing tensions would be mitigated; giving greater space for understanding whilst decreasing possibilities for hot-spots and conflicts.

At the Summit, it was also decided that PM Persson continue to coordinate the Baltic cooperative process. As a result, Persson created a special working group (the Baltic Group⁽¹⁰⁰⁾) responsible for the inter-state cooperative process. In the words of the Swedish government: "the task of coordinating Baltic cooperation allows for big opportunities. Approximately 50 million people live around the Baltic, and if the

⁽⁹⁵⁾ Which, during the 14th century, included about 150 towns. For more see Philippe Dollinger's *La Hanse* (Aubier).

⁽⁹⁶⁾ The members are Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia, Sweden, and the European Commission.

⁽⁹⁷⁾ The CBSS structure consist of a **Council** (Foreign ministers and the EU Commissioner), **Committee of Senior Officials** (Senior Officials of the different MFA's and the EU Commission), and has three working groups: **Working Group on Assistance to Democratic Institutions**, **Working Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety**, and **Working Group on Economic Cooperation**. The CBSS chairmanship rotates every year (past chairs include Finland (1992/93), Estonia (1993/94), and Poland (1994/95). Source: Special issue of the "CBSS Monitor" on the occasion of the CBSS III Ministerial Session in Tallin, May 24-25, 1994.

⁽⁹⁸⁾ Located on the Swedish island of Gotland.

⁽⁹⁹⁾ From the Presidency Declaration, p.2.

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ The group has been in place since October 1996. As recently as the end of October, the group was still getting established and priorities presented (from discussion with Ewa Persson Goeransson, Chief of the Baltic Group, November 1996).

region can be developed into a natural bridge between the former Communist countries and the EU, a market for over half a billion people will be created in our vicinity"⁽¹⁰¹⁾

In addition, Persson created a Baltic Council⁽¹⁰²⁾ which serves as an advisory organ to harmonize and develop Swedish policies towards the Baltic region (by working as a sounding board to the prime minister).

In practical terms, the Swedish parliament has approved a one billion Swedish crown package (referred to as the "Baltic billion") to "strengthen cooperation and development around the Baltic Sea"⁽¹⁰³⁾. The "Baltic billion" is planned to cover a three year period, the actual implementation of projects being the responsibility of the Cabinet Office (it is presently too early to tell in which specific areas the resources will be used, although it will likely target sectors such as energy, education, infrastructure, environment, etc).

Baltic Security

During the summer months of 1996, PM Goran Persson toured the Baltic states to maintain dialogue and discuss issues such as security in the region. The event would have not raised too much attention had it not been for some statements pertaining to Baltic security made in Riga and Vilnius. Especially the first comments in Riga raised question marks regarding Sweden's involvement. In Riga Mr. Persson said:

"We now know that Latvia wants to become a member of NATO. We respect this and we shall do what we can to support Latvia in the process" (4 June, 1996)

As expected, this statement raised confusion. What did Persson really mean regarding Latvian NATO membership? Would Sweden serve as an envoy speaking on behalf of Latvian NATO membership? The issue was clouded further when Mrs. Hjelm-Wallén was asked⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ if Sweden really supported Latvian NATO membership and answered that "we have no reason to say yes or no to that"⁽¹⁰⁵⁾. From Persson's statement in Vilnius a little later, it can be supposed that a little withdrawal had been made vis-a-vis the Riga position:

"We stand outside NATO and we cannot influence the enlargement process. But we have said that those which apply for membership must be treated fairly and equally" (The Baltic Times 14/96)

In spite of this modification, the Latvian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Valdis Birkavs, took the opportunity to use Persson's statement from Riga as a basis for an

⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Regeringens Ostersjoepolitik [The governments policies towards the Baltic], Cabinet Office, 11 October 1996.

⁽¹⁰²⁾ Members are: CEO Percy Barnevik, former EU-Commissioner Henning Christophersen, agriculturalist Bo Dockered, writer Stefan Edman, University President Boel Flodgren, Minister of Justice Laila Freivalds, Minister for Foreign Affairs Lena Hjelm-Wallén, Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, Parliamentarian Paer Nuder, CEO Christoffer Taxell, and Director General Anders Sahlén.

⁽¹⁰³⁾ Regeringens Oestersjoepolitik [The Governmnets policies towards the Baltic], Cabinet Office, 11 October 1996.

⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ She was asked later on the same day while in Berlin.

⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ Interview with EKO's Jan Mosander.

article published in Svenska Dagbladet. In true Trollope-ploy fashion, Birkavs welcomed Persson's comments in Riga by recalling the shared Swedish-Latvian interest of seeing its entrance in NATO. Responding to renewed questions, Persson had to once again modify his comments by clarifying that "Sweden respects every nation's individual foreign and security policy choices"⁽¹⁰⁶⁾.

Considering these episodes, one can wonder about their significance. From the Swedish perspective, were Persson's choice of words simply a Freudian slip or did he have deeper motives, such as testing how far Sweden could be part of the debate without raising too many reactions⁽¹⁰⁷⁾? Relating to this, how should one interpret his fall-back on pre-established definitions⁽¹⁰⁸⁾? What was the linkage of his statements to his remark "the Baltic States priorities are our priorities"⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ issued during his inaugural address in March 1996? A partial response to these questions can be found in Persson's 5 point plan presented during his visit to Washington to meet with President Clinton in August (1996).

Judging from these points, it becomes quite evident that Sweden has strong interests in enhancing levels of cooperation and linkages in the Baltic region:

Bilateral cooperation through investments and political cooperation. Stressing the point that the longterm security prospects do not solely rely on military defense. *Increased regional cooperation.* This is seen as a continuation of the Visby Summit from May, which would aim to push linkage creation.

EU-enlargement. Already a well-established Swedish priority, it works to increase the level of interaction between the Baltic states and Europe, with the final aim of seeing them fully integrated into the EU.

NATO-enlargement. In what media have called the most controversial "point", Mr. Persson stated that NATO enlargement to include the Baltic states has Swedish support.⁽¹¹⁰⁾ This however, does not mean that Sweden is currently considering being part of NATO.

Dialogue with Russia. Representing a condition for stability in the region, and in classic Swedish fashion, represents a indispensable component for opening possibilities for action.

⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ Thus, Mr. Persson's Riga statement should be interpreted as Sweden's acceptance of the choices made by Latvia in the security policy field.

⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ This represents a form of testing the waters. Through trial and error, the limits of action can be mapped.

⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ Only a year earlier, Hjelm-Wallén had stated: "Our position is clear. We respect the right of other European nations to choose their own security policy" (from her speech "Towards a New European Security Order- A Swedish View" held at the Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels, on 30 May 1995.

⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ "Balternas sak aer vaar sak".

⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Asking an official at the Cabinet office for further clarification (October 7th, 1996), it was stated that Sweden supports the Baltic foreign and security policies. Knowing that they strive for NATO membership, Sweden supports their position and is therefore open to NATO enlargement in the Baltic Region (provided that there is some form of dialogue with Russia).

As Persson had stated in his Government Declaration, "it is of top priority for Sweden that democracy, security, and welfare be achieved in the Baltic Region".⁽¹¹¹⁾ Complementing these priorities practically is Sweden's increasing involvement in routine arrangements such as BALTBAT and PFP.

In the security framework, Sweden has stepped up its involvement within PFP exercises held in the Baltic region. Its participation in US-BALTOPS 96⁽¹¹²⁾ is the latest example of expanding interaction. It is of interest to go into further detail regarding BALTOPS 96 since, from the Swedish perspective, the 6-15 June 1996 exercise⁽¹¹³⁾ involved, for the first time, both Swedish jet fighter aircraft and a submarine.⁽¹¹⁴⁾ Looking at some of the activities covered during the week, one can observe that it goes beyond complex search and rescue operations:

control of vessel and blockading identification of submarine⁽¹¹⁵⁾ in underwater position

finding a submarine which has been damaged and rests on the bottom of the ocean floor

assisting a burning vessel

communications exercise with fighter aircraft

firing against balloon targets

firing with artillery against set-up floating targets

identification and classification of vessel from submarine⁽¹¹⁶⁾.

Besides these activities, the post exercise reactions have been suggestive of the growing importance of US-BALTOPS for increasing levels of interoperability as well as the desirability for continued exercises of this nature within the PFP framework. According to Hans-Peter Ehrloew, Commanding Officer at HMS Neptun, "the most

⁽¹¹¹⁾ Declaration speech held on September 17, 1996.

⁽¹¹²⁾ US-BALTOPS, which has been held twenty-four times (once a year) is originally a NATO exercise intended to coordinate the members-states' forces in the Baltic region. It has only been for the past three years that PFP countries have been allowed -granted they have wanted- to be part of the initial week of operations (the second being reserved for NATO members). Permanent liason has been maintained thereafter through SAR (search and rescue) exercises, simple rafting operations, and joint port visits. In addition, the Allied Navy Communication Agency (ANCA) established a joint working group to develop levels of interoperability between the NATO and PFP navies (source: Assembly of Western European Union, document 1494, 2nd December 1995, p. 136).

⁽¹¹³⁾ Which included forty-eight ships and several jet air-craft and helicopters from fourteen different nations.

⁽¹¹⁴⁾ Overall, Sweden participated with the submarine Neptun, the missile corvettes Stockholm and Malmoe, the mine warfare craft Kullen, AJS Viggen (fighter bomber/recee aircraft) from F10, and the helicopters from the 13th helicopter division (Hkp 4) and F17 (Hkp 10).

⁽¹¹⁵⁾ A total of three submarines participated. Besides Sweden's HMS Neptun, there was Poland's Orzel and Germany's U-29.

⁽¹¹⁶⁾ Much of the information here was obtained from Anna Wieslander at the Department for International and Security Affairs (Ministry of Defence) for much of the information pertaining to BALTOPS.

important is the experience that we have attained in communicating with units from many nations...We have also gotten to know colleagues from other nations in the planning of BALTOPS. That contact-net will facilitate our work in the following exercises" (Marin Nytt, June 1996, p.17). A similar line of thought can be noted in the words of Mark Wahlstroem, Commanding Officer of the USS Spruance: "we should intensify our work for creating good relations between the marine officers from our countries. We

can do that by increasing the number of officer exchanges, have more joint exercises, and give our officers increased possibilities to work onboard our respective countries' ships" (Idem).

Enhancing other linkages

It is not only within the BALTBAT and US-BALTOPS processes that one can observe a tendency towards greater routes for cooperation. One can discern cooperative patterns developing in a variety of distinct areas creating complex web of linkages. These include areas of concern ranging from the environment to cultural exchanges. For example:

- The coastguards from most of the "coastal" states cooperate, and the Estonian, Finnish, and Russian coastguards have commenced a joint cooperative process in the Gulf of Finland. The Helsingfors Commission (HELCOM)⁽¹¹⁷⁾, has formed an environmental working group whose priority is to safeguard the purity of the Baltic Sea⁽¹¹⁸⁾.
- Pointing to a more isolated area, cooperation within a few distinct categories is evolving in the Barents Sea region. Among the priorities are: stimulating contacts between inhabitants in the region, environmental cooperation, fostering economic growth, and working to develop different modes of cooperation. The process is coordinated through a council (Barents Euro-Artic Council) within which regional representatives function as the driving force. And although the brunt of the work is related to environmental issues⁽¹¹⁹⁾, there is a movement towards improving communications between the countries, especially in the East-West direction. Currently,

Sweden is holding the presidency of the Barents Council (fall of 1996).

- Communication will also be stimulated through a Swedish initiative (a new stipendprogram), known as the "Visbyprogram". Aimed to the youth, it will

⁽¹¹⁷⁾ Established in 1974, HELCOM is one of the oldest institutions in the Baltic Sea area. Its primary concern is to protect the marine environment of the Baltic Sea against all sources of pollution.

⁽¹¹⁸⁾ "Omvaerldsfoeraendringar och svensk saekerhetspolitik", [Global Change and Swedish Security Policy] Ministry of Defence, August 1996.

⁽¹¹⁹⁾ Specifically, dealing with the pollution arising from the nickel producing plant in Petjenga, handling decaying nuclear submarines in the Kola region, and keeping an eye on several nuclear reactors present in the vicinity (a special trilateral agreement exists between Norway, Russia, and the United States. According to a International Herald Tribune report, "The region around Murmansk, in the Kola Peninsula contains without doubt the most dangerous concentration of nuclear hazards in the world" (IHT, 12-13 October 1996).

enable students and researchers from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Poland, and Sweden to study in a neighboring country.

In summary, Sweden's participation during this period was characterized by its initiative-taking used to push issues of importance to the nation. Among the most salient priorities were to enhance the significance of Peterberg tasks, underline the importance of EU enlargement to the East, and intensify linkage building within the Baltic region.

VI. LOOKING AHEAD

Having explored the past and present tendencies of the foreign and security policy movements in Sweden -highlighting the change in participation levels with the passage of time- it is of value to consider some of the outstanding issues. In many instances, these can be considered as possible stumbling blocks, or at least as hurdles to keep in mind in the wake of policy formulation/implementation.

Defense budget cuts

The first thing one needs to contemplate is the continued trend in Sweden towards defense cuts. Looking at the trend for the past fifteen years, one can note a gradual yet steady decrease in total⁽¹²⁰⁾ defense expenditures⁽¹²¹⁾:

YEAR	EXPENDITURES ⁽¹²²⁾	%GOVERNMENT EXPENSES	%GNP
1980/81	62775	8.6	3.7
1981/82	68091	9.1	3.9
1982/83	66192	7.9	3.6
1983/84	69625	8.2	3.6
1984/85	67664	7.6	3.3
1985/86	71055	8.4	3.3
1986/87	73385	8.5	3.3
1987/88	75741	9.1	3.2
1988/89	75583	9.0	3.1
1989/90	81166	8.9	3.1
1990/91	84266	8.9	3.1
1991/92	76509	7.6	2.8
1992/93	80075	6.8	3.0
1993/94	77798	6.9	2.8
1994/95	79912	6.9	2.8
1995/96	79773	6.9	2.4

(Source: Ministry of Defence)

Currently, the yearly military budget reaches 40 billion crowns or approximately 6 billion US dollars (Svenska Dagbladet, 20 September 1996, p.10). According to the

⁽¹²⁰⁾ Total defence refers to military, economic, civil, and psychological defense. Military defense includes the armed forces proper and military R&D (research and development).

⁽¹²¹⁾ Although the expense figures grow in nominal value, there is no increase in real terms. According to Bjoern Hageling, "there was a political decision in 1972 to 'freeze' defence expenditures in real terms...only in 1982 is there a shift, again at a time time of increasing tension between the major powers, but also there was a decision to develop a new multi-role fighter aircraft, *JAS 39 Gripen* (Hagelin 1992, p. 423). Post 1992, there is an increase in the 1992/93 figure as a result of the 1992 Defense Plan calling for modernization and upgrading: "All in all, the 1992 Plan involved new acquisitions (including the replacement of much of the army's tanks and APCs)..." (Huldt 1995, p.149). Note: APC stands for armored personnel carrier.

⁽¹²²⁾ This includes fixed and variable costs. The figures are in millions of Swedish Crowns.

1996 defense plan⁽¹²³⁾, it is proposed that the budget be cut by 10 percent; meaning savings of 4 billion crowns for the timeperiod 1997-2001⁽¹²⁴⁾.

In practical terms, from the presently 647,000⁽¹²⁵⁾ troops available, the number in the future would be 511,000. Following a similar suit, 10 military bases⁽¹²⁶⁾ would be shut down. In addition, the number of professional officers would decrease from 16,200 to 14,000; reserve officers from 12,900 to 9,800; and civil employees from 11,500 to 9,700 by the year 2001.

The motivations behind such draconian⁽¹²⁷⁾ cut backs are manyfold. First, there is the reasoning holding that the current global situation does not make it likely that large-scale conflicts will develop in the vicinity of Sweden. "Armed attacks that would threaten Sweden do not seem plausible under current global situation" is the exact wording used by the Defense Committee's report which is used as a foundation for the 1996 defense government bill⁽¹²⁸⁾. According to Defense Minister Thage G. Peterson, "there do not exist any war threats against Sweden for a considerable amount of time" (Dagens Nyheter, September 20, 1996 p.1). Thus, a cutback represents a natural measure to adapt to the current environment.

To ensure that Sweden would be able to respond if need be, certain parts of the military defense corps would be permanently battle ready. Albeit, the majority of the military apparatus would remain in a "resting position", although they would attain normal capacity within a year if needed (difficult to quantify, this figure correlates to increases in early warning times).

Second, there is the economic argument which states that Swedish crowns could find better use elsewhere. Having experienced the financial difficulties arising from the maintenance of an extensive welfare system (which presently is being coupled with looming adjustments to meet the Maastricht criteria in preparation for Economic and Monetary Union), many critics (mainly from the center-left side of the political spectrum) hold that Sweden should concentrate more on "butter" as opposed to "guns".

⁽¹²³⁾ Although a formality, the present government bill will not be official until the December 13 parliamentary debate followed by a final decision.

⁽¹²⁴⁾ A parliamentary decision has already been made to save 2 billion between 1997-1999. However, most parties still use the 4 billion figure (the reasoning being that the former decision needs to be included when considering the present one). Nevertheless, the figure one should concentrate on is 2 billion.

⁽¹²⁵⁾ The reason why this number is so large is that it includes the reserves (comprising the Local Defence and Home Guard). According to the Military Balance 1996/1997, the breakdown is as follows: **Active** 62,600 (42,100 conscripts and active reservists); **Reserves** 729,000 (Army, including Local Defence and Home Guard 586,000; Navy 66,000; Air Force 77,000).

⁽¹²⁶⁾ The shutdown of bases is to be completed before 1 January 1999. The affected bases are: I4, T1 and A1 in Lindkoeping; I15 in Boraas; I20 in Umeaa; A4 in Oestersund; Lv 4 in Ystad, Ing 1 in Soedertaelje, F15 in Soederhamn; and F5 in Ljugbyhed (Svenska Dagbladet, 20 September 1996, p.10).

⁽¹²⁷⁾ In the last few years, the military machine has almost been halved, going from 29 (1987) to 16 brigades (one brigade consists of approximately 5,000 men and 1,000 vehicles). Dagens Nyheter, 20 September 1996, p.1A). All in all, the number of operational units of the Swedish armed forces (brigades, naval and air force divisions) have been reduced by 50 percent during the last 25 years (Gustafsson 1995, p. 133).

⁽¹²⁸⁾ "Omvarldsforandringar och svensk sakerhetspolitik" [Global Change and Swedish Security Policy], Ministry of Defence, August 1996, p. 124.

Third, budget cuts are maintained to be reasonable as other states are decreasing their military expenditures. Why not us if almost everyone else? As it is expressed by Defense Minister Peterson:

"The Russian troops have not only been withdrawn from Central and Eastern Europe, they have also been reduced from close to 4.5 million men to around 1.3 million...Also the military capacities of the NATO countries have been decreased. This applies to Germany, Great Britain, France, and other NATO countries. This applies especially to the number of groundforces...The US, which did expand during the early 80s, decreased its military expenditures with 40% under the period 1986-1996. Germany has decreased its expenditures with 20-25% and Great Britain with approximately 15%. France stands in front of large-scale cuts."

(source:parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32 pp.44-45)

Having considered the main arguments for lowering military expenditures, let us move on to examine the domestic reactions.

Reactions to defense cuts

Quite naturally, a sign of discontent came rapidly from the military establishment itself. The response of Supreme Commander Ove Wiktorin when considering the present guiding principles⁽¹²⁹⁾ was as follows: "the economic and operative resources suggested are enough to cover the ambition. Still, by principle, I think that the government and parliament have put the goals too far down, the security and political environment necessitate a higher economic and operative level" (Svenska Dagbladet, September 2, 1996 p.11).

A similar viewpoint can be discerned from the words of CINC (Commander-in-Chief) Swedish Airforce, Lt.Gen Kent Harrskog:

"the basic tenet of our defence posture is that in a threat situation Sweden risks becoming the object of strategic moves, which can lead to invasion. Although right now it all seems relatively calm here in the North, the political situation in many places abroad is quite uncertain and unstable. The possible threats to our national security today span a much broader spectrum than ever before, and this means that we must increase our flexibility and our ability to adjust. While the risk of large-scale attacks has diminished, at the same time the threshold for employing military power seems to have been lowered among some groups, which is leading to new and different forms of conflict".

(Military Technology, 7/96 p.36)

And although Harrskog's response does not necessarily address the question of cutbacks, it presents the viewpoint that the situation indeed is not guaranteed to remain calm.

⁽¹²⁹⁾ The defense power shall protect the country's territorial integrity; be part of international operations; and be able to grow in capacity if the threat increases.

From the political realm, one can discern a wide array of responses. To the Conservatives, the "cutbacks do not seem logical with our ambitions to become a leading actor in the Baltic region" (Svenska Dagbladet⁽¹³⁰⁾, 2 September 1996, p.13). To counter this, they suggest that Sweden keep 14 brigades of high quality, 14 divisions of JAS-aircraft, and modernize ships and vessels which have been in service for an extended periods of time. Financially, the Conservatives propose giving the total defense component 20 billion crowns on top of the government proposal for the period 1997-2001 to sustain the concept of "handlingsfrihet" or freedom of action (party bill 1996/97:m503, p. 15).

According to the Liberal Party, the present environment makes it possible to adjust the Swedish armed forces within the economic boundaries proposed by the government. However, this adjustment should be aimed towards creating a "leaner but meaner" military apparatus. It is envisaged that a reduction in the numerical strength will allow for the acquisition of an "airborne cavalry with attack helicopters". Thus, there is support for a cutback of 4 billion crowns until 2001 while making it "desirable to try to save yet another billion" (parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32 p.51 and party bill 1996/97:Foe38 p.2).

To the Christian Democrats, the present global situation characterized by unpredictability calls for increased capacities to adjust and respond in times of change. In their words, Sweden should maintain an "effective total defense component with such strength, linkage, leadership, preparation, and resistance that it give an important contribution to stability in our vicinity". To guarantee such, they suggest keeping 14 divisions of air-combat aircraft and modernizing and fully equipping the remaining troops that would be left after downsizing from 16 to 12 army brigades. Regarding the navy, they suggest keeping 24 ships⁽¹³¹⁾ as opposed to the 20 suggested by the government. Overall, the Christian Democrats take distance from the proposed budget cuts (party bill 1996/97:Foe23 p.26).

Within the Green Party, there is a desire to save even more than the sum laid forth by the government. They recommend that the cutback be increased by another 5 billion up to 1998, and another 6 billion from 1997-2001. Defending this position, the Green Party states that "it is not only due to tightening budgets within the public sector that we want to save money in the military defense. In the foundation lies our fundamental belief that military means do not benefit our security, and that other threats that we now have included in the security concept should be met by other means as opposed to with weapons" (parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32 p. 23). However, they suggest keeping 6 army brigades (by 2001), 4 fighter squadrons (with two divisions of JAS 39 Gripen in each), while decreasing the number of submarines from 12 to 7 (Idem, p.19)

Finally⁽¹³²⁾, from the point of view of the Left Party, security should not be limited to "our vicinity". As put by parliamentarian Eva Zetterberg, "Sweden as a nation is just as dependent and involved in questions around security globally, and shall act (sic). Civil wars in Africa, offensives against other states in Latin America, dictatorships in Asia,

⁽¹³⁰⁾ Interview with Margareta af Ugglas, former Minister for Foreign Affairs under Bildt.

⁽¹³¹⁾ Presently, Sweden has 30 ships.

⁽¹³²⁾ The position held by the Center Party corresponds to that of the Social Democratic Party. They have jointly supported the 1996 Defense Plan.

etc. are Sweden's business too, because these events represent a threat to global security and therefore Sweden's abilities to function as a nation" (parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32 p.65). Regarding the size of the military apparatus, the Left Party suggests maintaining 10 brigades, that only the JAS 39 air-craft ordered to date be purchased (with no more orders in the future), and that the figure of 20 navy ships is attained quicker than the government proposes -including the reduction of submarines from the current 12 to 7 (Idem, p.15). Economically, they argue that the government has underestimated the costs associated with the maintenance of a defense of the caliber envisioned. The Left Party calculates that the plan would actually cost 202.6 billion between 1997 and 2001 -translating into a yearly operating cost of 40.52 billion crowns⁽¹³³⁾ (party bill 1996/97Foe:52 p.9).

The Russian factor

It would be no exaggeration to argue that Swedish foreign and security policies take significant account of what Russia thinks and does. Presently, one only needs to take a quick glance at the domestic debate to perceive that "the neighbor from the East" has a considerable amount of weight in Sweden:

- a modified CFE-Treaty⁽¹³⁴⁾ can produce a "destabilizing effect in the Baltic area (from judgement by parliament on foreign and security policy in December 1995)⁽¹³⁵⁾.
- "Russia remains, considering its size; and apart from today's problems, through its potential, the most important strategic influencing factor in the Northern European area" (party bill 1996/97Foe23 by Christian Democrats p. 9).
- to the Christian Democrats, the revision of the CFE-Treaty has given Russia greater military "handlingsfrihet". In their words, "we do not take lightly on the revised treaty and look seriously upon the consequences and worries it spreads" (Idem, p.13).
- "By lifting Pskovs oblast from the CFE Treaty northern flankzone, Moscow has been given a hard to understand increased room for action in our security and foreign policy vicinity" (party bill 1996/97Foe38 by Liberal Party p.6).
- "Sweden's foreign and security policy is determined, to a greater extent, by Russia" (Idem, p.3).
- "With a peaceful and democratic Russia, Europe can look forward to a brighter future. But, will Russia be peaceful and democratic? Nobody can know for sure...Russia is a nation that is going through violent change, going from the

⁽¹³³⁾ Approximately the present yearly budget. In their party bill, the Left Party presents no financial figure for its plan.

⁽¹³⁴⁾ In summary, the revised CFE Treaty allows Russia to have, up to May 31 1999, a maximum of 1,897 battle tanks, 4,397 ACV (of which a maximum of 600 can be located in the Pskov oblast - bordering Estonia and Latvia), and 2,422 pieces of artillery. After May 31 1999, the ceilings will be 1,800, 3,700, and 2,400 respectively. The main change resulting from the revision is that Russia and Ukraine can maintain greater numbers of heavy military equipment in the flank zones (The Arms Control Reporter, 1996).

⁽¹³⁵⁾ The modification was put in place in May 1996.

transition of having been a superpower to becoming an average sized European power, at least in all aspects except the purely military. There are strong powers in Russia that will try to retake lost territory" (party bill 1996/97:m503 by the Conservatives pp.8-9).

- Russia is our most important cooperative partner. We shall together with others stimulate Russia to canalise its power through the European institutions and European system of norms." (from speech by Hjelm-Wallén at the Defense College on 7 November 1996).
- "Conflicts in the Russian environs could appear and one can not dismiss the risk that Sweden, just as other states in our vicinity, could be affected by an eventual conflict that primarily involved Russia and one or several of its neighboring countries (*Omvaerldfoeraendringar och svensk saekerhetspolitik* [Global Change and Swedish Security Policy], Ministry of Defence, August 1996, p.123).
- "For some considerable time, the security policy situation in the north of Europe - and hence for Sweden- will be dominated by developments in a Russia that is in a state of economic, political, and military disintegration" (from address by Anders Bjoerck to WEU Assembly, 38th ordinary session, June 1992)
- According to a 1996 survey by the The National Board of Psychological Defence, 50% of those asked perceived Russia as a significant or serious problem for peace and security in Sweden's vicinity⁽¹³⁶⁾.

As one can conclude, Russia plays an important role in the internal Swedish debate for three distinct reason: due to its propinquity, military capacity, and the course of its internal politics.

Discarding the proximity factor (this has not changed too much and will probably stay the same in the future), let us briefly consider the other two.

In terms of military capacity, Swedish attention has been drawn to the Baltic and Cola Region as well as the Northern Military District. Part of the explanation can be found in the following description:

"The Northern Military District is now, as mentioned, included with Moscow and North Caucasus Military Districts as Russia's 'first strategic line'. Since ca. 1990 there has been a considerable replacement of military equipment and redeployment of particularly air units from other groups outside Russia. Still the total military capacity has been somewhat reduced in the last few years. The Kola peninsula contains the most important home bases for strategic submarines and other sea-based strategic elements...The Northern Fleet is the largest and most important of the former Soviet Fleets...There is no change in the number or deployment of strategic submarines with intercontinental ballistic missiles."

(The Military Balance in Northern Europe 1995-96)

⁽¹³⁶⁾ However, ten years ago, 72% of those asked saw the then Soviet Union as a threat or an unfriendly country *vis-a-vis* Sweden.

Looking at some of the actual numbers⁽¹³⁷⁾, one perceives the following:

Northern Military district⁽¹³⁸⁾ (HQ St. Petersburg)

Ground 52,000: 1 Army HQ, 1 Corps HQ; 5 MRD (1 trg)

ABD; plus 3 indep MR bde, 7 arty bde/regt, 4

SSM, 1 AB, 1 *Spetsnaz*, 4 SAM bde, 3 ATK, 2

attack hel, 1 aslt tpt hel regt, 870 MBT, 740 ACV

1,000 arty/MLR/mor, 12 *Scud*, 36 SS-21, 60 attack hel

Air 1 hy bbr regt (20 TU-22M), 1 tac air army:

1 bbr div (80 Su-24), 1 recce regt (20 MiG-25),

1 ftr div (35 Su-27, 60 Mig-29)

AD 7 regt: 100 MiG-31, 90 Su-27

SAM 600

Northern Fleet (HQ Severomorsk)

Bases Kola Inlet, Motovski Gulf, Gremikha, Polyarnyy, Litsa Gulf, Ura Guba, Severodoninsk

Submarines 79: strategic 20 SSBN; tactical 59

PSC 54: 1 CV, 10 cruisers, 8 destroyers, 35 frigates

OSS about 10 patrol and coastal combatants, 33 MCM

25 amph, spme 183 spt and misc

Naval Av. 139 cbt: 63 armed hel

BBR 20 Tu-16, 40 Tu-22M

FTR/FGA 50 Su-24/ -25

ASW ac 8 Tu-142, 16 Il-38, 5 Be-12 hel (afloat)

⁽¹³⁷⁾ To gain a better idea, annex 3 includes two tables (by Andrew Duncan) taken from Jane's *Intelligence Review* (vol. 8 no. 10 October 1996, pp. 442-447) which detail the ground forces in the Baltic MD/Northwestern TVD between 1990-96.

⁽¹³⁸⁾ Explanations for the abbreviations can be found at the end of the paper. The abbreviations listed are from The Military Balance 1996/97.

8 20 Ka-25 55 Ka-27

MR/EW ac 2 An-12, 30 Tu-95 hel 5 Ka-25

MCM 8 Mi-14 hel

CBT ASLT HEL 12 Ka-29

COMMS 8 Tu-142

TKR 1 Tu-142

Nav.Inf 1 bds (96 MBT, 122 ACV, 95 arty)

Coast Def. 1 Coastal Defence (360 MT-LB, 134 arty), 1 SAM regt

Baltic Fleet (HQ Kaliningrad)

Bases Kronshtadt, Baltiysk

Submarines 6: tactical 5 other roles 1

PSC 31: 3 destroyers, 28 frigates

OSS about 42 patrol and coastal combatants, 60 MCM,

8 amph, some 118 spt and misc

Naval A 100 cbt ac, 31 armed hel

FGA 5 regts: 66 Su-24, 28 Su-27

ASW ac 6 Be-12 hel 3 Ka-25, 22 Ka-27, 6 Mi-14

MR/EW ac 2 An-12, 6 Su-24 hel 5 ka-25

MCM 6 Mi-14 hel

CBT ASLT HEL 4 Ka-29

Nav.Inf 1 bde (25 MBT, 34 art/MRL)

Coast Def 2 arty regt (133 arty)

1 SSM regt: some 8 SS-C-1b *Sepal*

(Source: The Military Balance 1996/97)

As one can distinguish, the numbers represent a sizable figure that indubitably would impress most neighbors. Consequently, one can see why many Swedish policy makers would think twice before embarking on ventures with regional implications.

On the other hand, one must not forget that times have changed and that in the Russian case, the capacities are not close to those during the height of the Cold War. Moreover, with the changing climate, would it not be more compelling to state that Russia's priorities focus much more on the situation in the Caucasus to economic difficulties?

In addition, do the figures of the military capacity included previously give an accurate picture of the potential for aggressive maneuvers? In other words, can one really obtain a good idea of what these numbers represent? Does it make sense to present these figures without taking into account factors such as morale⁽¹³⁹⁾, topography, distances, requisites for sustainable offensive movements, etc? It is no secret that the present conditions of the Russian military machine are on decline. In the words of the former chairman of Russia's National Security Council, Alexander Lebed:

"In order to relieve the high state of tension in the military, to make time for serious measures, we need 6 billion rubles (almost \$1.2 million). That would allow us to at least cover the arrears for wages and salaries. Here at the General Staff there has been no salary paid for the last three months. In the Far Eastern forces there is complete disarray. Last Year the federal budget covered only 40 percent of the needs of the military, and we didn't even get that in the end. The armed forces have fallen deeply in debt. The Defense Ministry owes its contractors 20 billion rubles!"

(International Herald Tribune, 7 October 1996, p.8)

In relation to the Russian defence budget in 1996⁽¹⁴⁰⁾, defence spending is to be reduced from 21.3 to 17.0 percent of the federal budget (presupposing a reduction from 5.5% to 3.8% of GDP). Social costs -salaries, housing, pensions, etc- will account for most of the budget; only about 10 percent is to be spent on procurement. Yet, in view of the large payments required by the ministry of Defence to pay off its debts to military enterprises, this means that "actual procurement is virtually reduced to zero" (Jane's Intelligence Review, vol.8,no.10 October 1996, p.456).

Still, another sign of the "tightening of the belt" can be noted when examining the problems faced by the Russian space program. According to Russian and Western scientists, Russia has been without photo reconnaissance satellites for nearly two months. It is the first time since the early 1960s that the Russian military has been deprived for more than a short time span of the satellite pictures deemed essential to modern armies (International Herald Tribune, 23-24 November 1996, p.2). In the words of General James Clapper, Head of the Defense Intelligence Agency from 1991-96, "In the heyday of the Cold War, it would have been unthinkable for them to go for an extended period without a reckon bird up...It shows how much the Russians have turned inwards" (Idem).

⁽¹³⁹⁾ This has special relevance now considering the showing in Chechnya, lack of salaries, benefits, etc.

⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ According to IISS estimates, the real decrease in defense spending since 1992 has been in the order of 45% (The Military Balance 1996/97).

In summary, one needs to take into account that the state of the Russian forces are facing massive constraints and look beyond the actual numbers when considering the threat perception from the east. It is quite clear that in the immediate and medium term, the Russian military forces pose no threat to Sweden (if one excludes the nuclear component)⁽¹⁴¹⁾.

Moving on to the final major element of preoccupation, trends in the political scene, one can similarly paint a two-sided picture (negative versus positive trend coupled with unpredictability) which one would need to take into account before producing a final analysis. On the one side of the spectrum are those who point towards a somber direction for Russian politics and economics⁽¹⁴²⁾. Lets consider a few examples:

- "In the second round of the presidential election in July 1996, the Communist leader Zjuganov obtained over 40 percent of the votes in a democratic election. What does he stand for and which elements does he represent? For those who have followed the message there is no hesitation. It is about nationalistic socialism, the violent focus on one's own nation, anti-semitism, distaste for western values and the sense of historic mission. Zjuganov's book, 'I believe in Russia' is characterized as a variation of Mein Kampf. If these revengeful forces come to power, Russia can develop in a very uncomfortable manner" (from party bill by Conservatives, 1996/97:m503 p.8).⁽¹⁴³⁾
- "Regarding the future, domestic politics in Russia persists to be characterized by unpredictability...the generally difficult social situations, with large and increasing social and economic gaps continues to be the base for political populism" (Omvaerldsfoeraendringar och svensk saekerhetspolitik, August 1996, pp.68-69).
- "The instability and unpredictability remain, even after taking into account the gradual yet difficult change in Russia towards peaceful and ecological (sic) market economy. Even if the prospects for a continued reform policy have increased after the presidential election, all appraisals concentrate on the economic and political insecurities which contain the risk for serious backlash vis-a-vis the economic reforms" (party bill by Christian Democrats 1996/97:Foe23 p.12).
- "The parliamentary elections in December 1995 resulted in continued success for communists and nationalists, building on the change that has occurred since 1993. The last reform politicians in president Yeltsin's cabinet had to leave the scene. In the electoral campaign of 1996, Yeltsin adapted even further to his previous critic's politics...Large unpredictability still remains. The voters continued trust in president Yeltsin and the external worlds "fear of something worse" do not

⁽¹⁴¹⁾ It is important to note this does not apply to the long term. Looking at the long term (20-30 years from now), the scenario could be anything from a benign to a hostile Russia. In all likelihood, though, Russia will be in better economic and social conditions.

⁽¹⁴²⁾ Ranging from the governments difficulty to collect corporate taxes to the inability of repaying the 70 million Russians who lost their savings after Egor Gaidar's 1992 confiscation to sanitize state finances.

⁽¹⁴³⁾ The party bill tones down its statements a little bit later on by expressing, "with the present focus and leadership in Russia, it can be expected to meet a brighter future." (Idem, p.9).

provide large restrictions on continued Russian power politics" (party bill by Liberal Party 1996/97:Foe38, p.4).

From another perspective, there are those who believe that the trend is going in the right direction. For example, in the words of Hjelm-Wallén, "the manner in which Russia has implemented two elections demonstrates that the country wants to be part of the European family"⁽¹⁴⁴⁾. Hjelm-Wallén held a similar attitude about a year ago: "Developments in Russia have not gone as quickly as many would have wished for a few years ago. The new societal structures have shown their fragility. Still, many advancements have been made. The evolution has been going towards democracy and market economy as well as a gradual interlinkage with the European cooperative structures (parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32, p.55). Additional support for this viewpoint can be found in the words of Goeran Lenmarker (Conservative):

"I want to highlight that there are many positive tendencies in Russia. There exists a growing democracy with large degrees of freedom of expression. There exists a really open debate in the country and media. There is biting criticism aimed at the president, government, and the military establishment... Russia is not condemned to fail. There are many benevolent forces at play which contribute towards democratization and modernization."

(parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32, p.3)

Overall, the domestic situation in Russia is not entirely clear and there is room for wide interpretation. The recent power struggle within the Kremlin (especially during the tenure of Lebed), the questions of who would be in power during Yeltsin's operation, and general rivalries between the president's men have not made the task easier⁽¹⁴⁵⁾. Large degrees of volatility remain and therefore one should depart (when considering Sweden's position) from the conclusion formulated by the joint defense and foreign affairs committees in 1995: "there are wide margins, from a development towards genuine democracy to the opposite, a backfire towards authoritarian tendencies, chauvinism, or even revengeism" (parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32 p.3). Thus, Swedish policy needs to continue to consider a wide array of scenarios which may develop in the future (for the long term), ranging from positive to strained relations with Russia⁽¹⁴⁶⁾. Nevertheless, it is indispensable that a fresh outlook is kept which does not prejudge events and assumes that relations inevitably will head for the worse.

⁽¹⁴⁴⁾ From speech at the Defence College, 7 November 1996.

⁽¹⁴⁵⁾ On the other hand, one could argue that there has been stability provided through the presence (although it has been very limited at times) of Yeltsin.

⁽¹⁴⁶⁾ Presently, Swedish-Russian relations are going through a forced period as Russian's claim to have discovered several (3) Swedish spies operating on Russian territory. The Swedes involved however (typically businessmen or company employees) have disclaimed any involvement in illegal activities.

NATO enlargement⁽¹⁴⁷⁾

As NATO moves towards a decision to admit new members, to be taken in spring of 1997, the question of where the Baltics fit in has invariably become a "hot potato". Even though the first round of expansion is not likely to include the Baltics (under this first expansion the going slogan has been "No troops, no nukes, no Balts"), nonetheless the question remains, will they be part of NATO in the future?

Although it has been made very clear by the Baltic states that they want to become part of NATO to guarantee their independence, the subject is sensitive for a variety of reasons⁽¹⁴⁸⁾.

From the Swedish point of view, one can detect two divergent opinions regarding NATO expansion. From the official and political party stance, there is support for Baltic aims *vis-a-vis* NATO membership. This is evident from a variety of sources and statements:

1. Persson's fourth point within the five-point plan for the Baltics (presented while meeting with president Clinton in August of 1996; it is included in the section "Baltic security").
2. "The [joint] Committee continues and infers that NATO enlargement, through the parameters outlined by the organization itself, positively contribute to the political stability in Europe. NATO's inclination can best be perceived in the formulation 'membership and partnership'. The first relates to the right by the new democracies who meet the criteria, if they wish, to become part of the organization. The other refers to having parallel and close cooperation with Russia." (from parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32 p.5).
3. "In regards to the presentation of our position to the Baltic states, Sweden's attitude cannot be of another than that of what is expressed by the joint committee conclusions [defense and foreign affair's]. In it, we clearly state that a NATO expansion is not a threat to Sweden's security policy options; instead, it can serve to increase political stability in Europe" (parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32 p.49).
4. "In Nato's summit meeting, which will probably take place in June of next year, the organization is expected to make it known which of the applying countries can be accepted in the first round. In this situation it is in the interest of Sweden to underline the Baltic states' right to independently decide their own foreign and security policy, but also, in line with the parliament's statements, directly support their objectives of becoming members of NATO..." (from party 1996/97:m503 by Conservatives p.11).

⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ For a more general overview on this topic see: *Enlarging NATO: The Russia Factor* by Richard L. Kugler. Santa Monica: RAND 1996; "NATO Enlargement and the Baltic States" by Ronald Asmus and Robert Nurick in *Survival* vol.38, no.2 Summer 1996 pp.121-42; and "Baltic Iceberg Dead Ahead: NATO Beware" by Anatol Lieven in *The World Today* (Royal Institute of International Affairs) July 1996 pp.175-179.

⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ Including issues such as: having been an ex-Soviet republic, Kaliningrad, the strategic position, status of minorities, border disputes, and defensibility.

5. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania's objective of becoming members of NATO and the EU remain and are seen as important steps towards fuller integration with the countries of Western Europe (from party bill 1996/97:Foe23 by Christian Democrats p.11).

6. It is in the interest of Sweden, in the ways that it is possible, to support our Baltic neighbors in their desires to become members of NATO (from party bill by Liberal Party 1996/97:Foe38 p.5).

One can easily get the impression that there is an overwhelming support for the Baltic states in their quest to become NATO members. However, there are many who question the intentions, mainly arguing that the process may serve only to provoke the Russians. Let us consider some of these statements, indications, and arguments:

- -the first signs were with little doubt the comments which arose after Persson's statements in Riga (stating that Sweden would support Latvia's objective of becoming a member of NATO). Let us consider an example: "Persson's comments lead to much debating. While it looked to the outside observer as if Sweden had changed its stand on the Baltic states' quest for NATO membership, it was expressed for the government's part that Persson had not said anything new...Nowadays we are an actor in a sharp game, and what we say and what we do is therefore carefully inspected. That is something that Goeran Persson is starting to learn"⁽¹⁴⁹⁾ (Svenska Dagbladet, 29 June 1996, p.2).
- In an interview with the Financial Times, Finland's PM Paavo Lipponen presented the issue in clearer terms: "That is why I am asking the Americans if they realise they are riding not a tiger but the bear...Do they really know what they are doing? Is this NATO enlargement really well thought out? I still don't get what the goal really is" (FT, 17 September 1996, p.1+18). The article goes on by stating how "Finland and Sweden are afraid a decision either way will destabilise the Baltic Area, either by provoking or comprising the independence of the Baltic states" (Idem).
- "How the enlargement process is handled affects also non-members of the alliance. I could sum up our views in this regard by saying that we favor both caution and consistency. Enlargement should go hand in hand with development of the relationship between NATO and Russia. It must not come about in ways that would undermine the search for broad, comprehensive solutions to the security problems of Europe...(from speech by Hjelm-Wallén at CEPS, Brussels, on 30 May 1995).
- "They [in this case referring to all ex-communist states] have a history that make them want to have a security policy identity...however, it should be more important for them to try to become part of the EU...One gets much security, and in a more modern manner, through EU membership as opposed to counting on military alliances (Hjelm-Wallén in a Dagens Nyheter interview on 8 March 1996).

⁽¹⁴⁹⁾ Still, one should weight these reactions carefully. Although Persson's comments stirred much media reaction, one cannot maintain that policy ought to be devised taking into account newspaper articles and comments. To adjust policy according to these could be non-constructive.

- "Common security can never be achieved *against* a single nation, it can only be created *in conjunction with* all nations, and that is the basic concept of collective security. Therefore, it is important that the enlargement of NATO, which is currently being reviewed, not create new boundaries through Europe...Nobody wants to see a new Jaltaline appear a little further east of the now gone line. Such [a line] would not be beneficial to either NATO members or other European states' security"⁽¹⁵⁰⁾ (speech by Defense Minister Thage G Peterson, in parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32, p.47).
- "Sweden can not hinder other countries which wish to be members [of NATO], but we can point to the risks and actively work for other solutions. Once again: a reformed UN must be the main line" (from party bill 1996/97:Foe52 by Left Party, p.5).

Having considered these examples, the picture becomes increasingly blurred. Clearly, there are two tendencies regarding NATO enlargement towards the Baltic states: those who see it as a positive subterfuge which would work to fill the security vacuum in the zone, and those who regard it as a risky move which may provoke the Russians and result in unnecessary tension within the region. However, on this issue, there is no middle way or solution which will guarantee the satisfaction of all parts involved. Although the matter will not be clarified until the NATO summit next year, it is indispensable to be ready at the time of decisions so there are as little "surprises" as possible.

The importance of the situation should not be underestimated, as there is much at stake for the nations in the area (lesser so to other countries of Europe and the US). For example, regarding Russia, according to Anatol Lieven,

Senior Fellow at the US Institute of Peace, NATO enlargement to include the Baltics would mean a "massive loss of face by whatever Russian government was in power, the effective dismantling of the Russians' North-western air-defence system, the isolation of their enclave of Kaliningrad behind the NATO front line, complete abandonment of any political defence of the Baltic Russians⁽¹⁵¹⁾, and ultimately, their submitting to security independence on NATO across their whole Western front."⁽¹⁵²⁾

While this description sounds grim⁽¹⁵³⁾, it does provide an insight to what "the worst feeling" scenario might be from the Russian point of view.

⁽¹⁵⁰⁾ In a speech outlining the alliance's future strategy and goals, US ambassador Robert Hunter stated the follows: "we are erasing lines in Europe, some of them generations if not centuries old, not drawing new lines" (from address at the Royal United Services Institution; The Washington File 199, 18 October 1996).

⁽¹⁵¹⁾ The percentages of Russian populations in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are 30.3, 33.8, and 9.4 respectively (Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, A Political and Economic Survey, 1994).

⁽¹⁵²⁾ "Baltic Iceberg Dead Ahead: NATO Beware", The World Today, July 1996, p.178.

⁽¹⁵³⁾ Still, one cannot completely disregard some of the "officially sanctioned" leaks to the Moscow press in which it has been suggested that Russia would invade the Baltics in case of such enlargement. See, for example, the interview of Anatoly Suriko of the Russian Institute of Defense studies, with the Estonian Postimees newspaper in 27 April 1996. A similar attitude can be summed up in the words of a senior analyst at this institute who stated that "accepting the Baltics into NATO would be as

Presently, there are indications calling for prudence. During Igor Rodionov's first international appearance as minister of defense in Bergen, his first remarks were: "Russia has the strategy clear if NATO realizes its eastern expansion...the countermeasures are secret but they will be hard" (Dagens Nyheter, 27 September 1996 p.A12). It was only later, at the end of the speech that Rodionov toned down his initial remarks: "all Europeans are tired of confrontation. It is hard to convince my people that NATO is exclusively a peaceful organization with peaceful intentions (Idem). The Russian position has continued on this course, and as recently as Lebed's visit to Nato headquarters, it was expressed that "Russia would like NATO to wait for a generation before deciding whether to take in members from the former Communist bloc" (The Times, 10 October 1996 p.10).

Are these "threats" or statements actually true? For example, is possible that Russia has a well planned contingency plan in case NATO enlarges as Mr. Rodionov explained in Bergen? Although many of the threats could be blusters, one cannot argue that these statements go unnoticed. They are slowly building political leverage in favor of the Russians. For example, while in office, Mr. Lebed stated that a hasty enlargement could jeopardize key arms control treaties, such as Start-2 nuclear reductions or the East-West pact on conventional force limits (IHT, 8 October 1996).

In summary, the issue of NATO enlargement is complex and contains many cruxes. Even though the passage of time may bring some clarification, the question will not be resolved satisfactorily until a good setup is put in place which guarantees the stability of the region, ranging from the security of the Baltic states to Russia's satisfaction with the mechanism. From the Swedish perspective, the debate must be followed carefully and consideration must be given to a variety of hypothetical scenarios to react rapidly or adjust as the changes take place (which they invariably will at some point).

provokative to us as the deployment of nuclear missiles on Cuba was to Washington. Accepting Poland and Hungary into NATO means a cold peace, while an enlargement to include the Baltics is war" (The Guardian, 3 February 1996, p.12).

CONCLUSION

Having considered Sweden's evolving foreign and security policy during the past seventy-five years, one can draw several interesting conclusions concerning the changes in policy. First, and from a general perspective, it is clear that Sweden has been an active participant in the field of international affairs throughout the 20th century. Even during the tumultuous years of WWII, Sweden practiced a policy which in most generous terms could be described as pragmatic neutrality. In addition, one cannot discount Sweden's longstanding participation within the UN system and its systematic support to Third World countries during the Cold War.

Second, the degree of Swedish involvement in the security field has increased with the end of the Cold War. After passing through an initial transition phase (beginning in 1990) which lasted approximately four years, Sweden entered a host of organizations and structures during 1994-95. A definite turning point was membership in the European Union in 1995. During 1996, Sweden's increasing levels of participation have been manifested by its initiative taking (Swedish-Finnish Memorandum) and increased consideration of structures such as WEU and NATO.

Considering the actual process, it has been gradual yet continually pointing towards greater involvement. In what could be branded as a salami-tactics⁽¹⁵⁴⁾ approach, Sweden has taken steps of increasing magnitude towards closer relations with western security institutions. How much of this change can be attributed to shrewd politicians or to shifts in the international environment is difficult to estimate? The answer is probably a mixture of the two, although most of the responsibility lies with the political leadership.

As has been underlined in this paper, Sweden pursued a discrete form of involvement already during WWII and the Cold War. Thus, in a way, there were two "neutralities" at work: a public one (which gave the population the impression that strict neutrality had been the indispensable factor for saving them), and the more covert one (pragmatic to ensure survivability in case of conflict). With the end of the Cold War, there no longer was a need to maintain the two "neutralities", so the political establishment decided to openly pursue closer ties with the West. However, this turned out to be a difficult task as the population had grown accustomed to the neutrality principle and its significance for keeping Sweden out of conflicts⁽¹⁵⁵⁾. As a result, the use of salami-tactics may have been (and still is) an instrument used by politicians to gradually get the Swedish population comfortable with the idea of being part of Western security structures. Following this logic to the end, it would only be a question of time before Sweden enters structures such as NATO/WEU. Again, it is important to note that Swedish non-alignment is a means rather than an end, and

⁽¹⁵⁴⁾ Salami-tactics is used in defense discourse to represent the idea of taking very thin slices away from something. Using the metaphor in a slightly different angle, one can use it to specify incremental change. For more on salami-tactics, see Thomas Schelling's *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, Conn., 1966).

⁽¹⁵⁵⁾ For more on this idea of "illusion" building and the impact of ideas, logrolling, balancing, and path dependency, see the following: *Myths of Empire* by Jack Snyder (Cornell University Press: New York 1991) and *Ideas and Foreign Policy* by Judith Goldstein and Robert Keohane (Cornell University Press: New York 1993).

although it has become a shibboleth to large segments of the population, its future implementation remains a function of the perceived returns it can provide to the country's security.

Considering the future, Sweden should **continue the process** of gradually **increasing the visibility of its cooperation** with the external world to the Swedish population. Why? Because the neutrality concept is still maintained by a vast majority of Swedes as a guiding principle, even though it has been practically discarded since the early nineties (definitively in January 1995 through admission to the EU). As Hjelm-Wallén notes, "I think it is very positive if we representatives of the parliament and government talk about our security policy in a constructive manner and with an intonation which does not scare people away from the debate. I believe that it is extremely important to get the parties, churches, individual organizations, and the entire Swedish movement to join in a discussion on the large and important questions..." (parliamentary protocol 1995/96:32 p. 59). It is in everybody's interest that the Swedish population note how Sweden's foreign and security policies have evolved in the last few years, especially since the end of the Cold War -the practical result being more avenues for cooperation and involution.

Relating to this point, it is important that "**all doors are kept open**" *vis-a-vis* future policy options. With the prospective security principles which are to govern Europe during the next century still in the making, it is vital that Sweden consider all available avenues (ranging from continued non-alignment to membership in NATO/WEU). Sweden should make an effort to avoid rigid lines which might foreclose options; in the words of Burke, "you can never plan the future by the past".

ANNEX 1 Swedish personnel in UN operations

The figures in brackets show the total number that have served in each mission. The numbers without brackets indicate the numbers serving on 1 January 1996. Source: The Swedish Armed Forces' Magazine, special edition 1996, p.9.

BATALLIONS AND COMPANIES

1993- Macedonia (652) 40

1991- Croatia (786) 95

1993-95 Bosnia (5,207)

1978, 1986-94 Lebanon (8,012)

1973-80 Suez, Sinai (7,642)

1964-87 Cyprus (25,589)

1960-64 Congo (5,331)

1956-67 Gaza (12,160)

MILITARY OBSERVERS

1994- Guatemala (3) 2

1993- Croatia (73) 6

1992- Georgia (14) 9

1991- Angola (65) 20

1951- Kashmir (199) 8

1948- Middle East (1,017) 14

1993-95 Mozambique (29)

1992-94 El Salvador (11)

1990-92 Central America (30)

1988-90 Afghanistan (9)

1988-91 Iran, Iraq (38)

1974- Syria, Golan (1)

1965-66 India, Pakistan (3)

1963-64 Yemen (8)

1962 New Guinea (7)

1958 Lebanon (83)

1952-54 Greece (3)

FIELD HOSPITALS

1992-93 Somalia (307)

1980-86 Lebanon (1,477)

1963-65 Rafah (503)

CIVILIAN POLICE

1995- Guatemala 2

1995- Bosnia 26

1991- Angola (22) 9

1993-95 Mozambique (55)

1992-95 Croatia (96)

1992-94 El Salvador (8)

1992-93 Somalia (2)

1991-93 Cambodia (88)

1989-90 Namibia (75)

1964-93 Cyprus (2,365)

TECHNICAL CONTINGENT

1960-64 cONGO (1,001)

SPECIAL UNIT FOR DISASTER RELIEF (SWEDRELIEF)

1994-Angola

1993-94 Mozambique

1992-93 Somalia
1991 Liberia
1990 Tanzania
1989 Ethiopia
1989 Uganda/Sudan
1988 The West Bank
1986-87 Uganda
1985 Sudan
1984 Mali
1983 Ghana
1982 Ethiopia
1982 Lebanon
1982 Honduras
1981 Uganda
1980 Algeria
1980 Somalia
1979 Thailand/Cambodia

SWEDISH PERSONNEL IN NON-UN OPERATIONS

1995- Bosnia 995
1995- Chechnya (1) 1 military advisor
1995 Bosnia/Mostar 7 civilian police
1994- former Yugoslavia (22) 10 monitors
1992 Croatia (73) 8monitors
1953 Korea (877) 5 delegates
1991 Saudi-Arabia (525) field hospital

1970-71 Peru (85) technical contingent

1968-70 Nigeria (11) observers

ANNEX 2 The Visby Declaration

Integrative field:

- support for Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland in their preparation for membership of the EU.
- support for an early ratification of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the Russian Federation and the EU.

Security:

- reinforcement of cooperation between police border, customs, immigration and coast guard authorities as well as search and rescue services of the Baltic States with the aim of enhancing their citizens' security and stepping up the fight against organized crime.
- improvement of transport systems in the Region, including their integration into the Trans-European Networks, with particular emphasis on the importance of maritime safety and the prevention of environmental damage.
- the need for speeding up border crossing and customs procedures and the possibility of establishing a focal point for monitoring problems and progress in the field.
- intensification of cooperation in the areas of energy and nuclear safety.

Cultural field:

- promotion of people-to-people partnership, such as educational exchange programs around the Baltic Sea, school partnership exchanges and interaction in the cultural field.
- promotion of contacts between young people in the Baltic Sea Region, inter alia through the mutual recognition of university degrees.

Economics:

- support for Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Russian Federation in their preparation for membership in the WTO and their commitment to apply, in the interim, most favored nation status in accordance with WTO principles as a minimum standard for trade within the Region.
- support for the early realization of the free trade area (FTA) between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and for the objective of establishing free trade between these countries and Poland.

- recognition of the new law on the special economic zone for the Kaliningrad oblast as a contribution to trade liberalization and economic development in the Baltic Sea Region as a whole.

Environment:

- restoration and maintenance of the ecological equilibrium of the Baltic Sea and the need to update and strengthen the Baltic Sea Joint Comprehensive Environment Action programme.
- the development of an Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region.
- the need for an assessment of the risks to the environment from the handling and transportation of oil before the Helsinki Commission Ministerial Meeting in 1998.

(source: Presidency Declaration)