

## Sweden as NATO member and the total defense recommendations from SFWF

This is an executive summary of a more comprehensive report in Swedish on Sweden in Nato and how we recommend that the Swedish total defense capabilities should be developed as a Nato member to meet with challenges of today and tomorrow. Our military recommendations lays on the foundation of the Supreme Commander of Swedish Armed Forces from 2022, but here we highlight what we would like to add.

Together with the summary of some key recommendations that are more interesting for an international audience we have translated the chapter of Sweden as a Nato member.

Patrik Oksanen, senior fellow SFWF

### Key recommendations:

- Sweden, as a NATO member, should actively contribute to the alliance's common security and take responsibility, based on geography and economics, especially for the Arctic and the Baltic Sea area.
- The defense budget needs to be at least three percent of GDP as a planning horizon from today to 2035. In addition, at least SEK 100 billion (852 EUR, 932 USD) is added in an investment fund for total defense purposes.
- Sweden should contribute with a mechanized battalion in Latvia to the Canadian led EFP, over time would pre-based equipment for a mechanized brigade be stored in Latvia.
- The amphibious forces and ranger units should be strengthened during the 2020s. The army should get increased capabilities in air defense, adding rocket artillery and ground missiles and two infantry brigades. Sweden would then have instead of four planned war brigades have seven army brigades (with the one in Latvia) and two amphibious brigades (up from today's two battalions).
- The Swedish Home Guard (a force similar to the US National Guard) should put up four battalions that are ready to operate in the larger region, not just on Swedish home territory.
- The Navy should expand at a faster pace to meet an increasingly complex global threat environment, especially in the Arctic, that threatens the freedom of the seas, and thus Sweden's prosperity and security. Instead of nine ships of corvette class or downgraded corvettes today we would like to see 16 corvettes or frigates by 2035. The plans of five submarines should be seven.

- The Air Force should be strengthened with a more developed war organization with logistics and protection, including serving Alliance's F35 and F16. More Global Eyes and transportation planes are needed.
- The total defense structure does not work today. We believe that the Civil Contingencies Agency should be split into two agencies; a Civil Defense Authority with a mandate to lead and plan civil defense and a Rescue agency focused on first responders. The expansion of the non-military elements, including stockpiling and supply readiness, must be accelerated.
- Sweden, Norway and Finland are strategically an island of the Alliance, hence Sweden should invite Norway and Finland for a joint headquarter for transnational civil defenses and logistics. During peacetime plan logistic and supply chains (including strategic production), together with national authorities, and in wartime organize logistics over borders and coordinate FISENO cooperation on civil defense.
- The government must quickly resolve the armed forces' personnel and materiel crisis.
- Sweden should also launch an extensive satellite programme from the space port of Esrange for communications and real time surveillance over the Arctic and Baltic Sea region for both civil and military purposes.

## **Sweden as a NATO member**

Sweden has a tradition of being a model member of international organizations. But what profile does Sweden want in NATO, passive in the back seat or active as a map reader? We at SFWF firmly believe Sweden should contribute actively to freedom, democracy, peace and stability by being ready to quickly do what is required together with others.

It's about taking a regional responsibility; based on geography, population size and economy. The most important role for Sweden, in the short and medium term, is to function as a base area in the region. This requires a greatly increased capacity for logistics and protection.

In the Supreme Commander's military advice from November 2022, it is pointed out that Sweden should offer capabilities for incident preparedness in the air, ships for the alliance's standing naval forces, contributions to strengthen NATO's eastern border and participation in rapid response units. In addition to this, it is logical to have a strong Nordic rapprochement, where the Nordic countries integrate their air forces more and more deeply. Sweden, Norway and Finland should also see their ground combat forces in the north as a whole.

The Nordics should be kept together within NATO so that all Nordic countries end up under the headquarters in Norfolk in the US (the Arctic and the North Atlantic, which includes Greenland and Norway, as an area of responsibility) and not in Dutch Brunssum (continental Europe with Denmark and Finland). Since the Arctic and the Baltic Sea are an operational area with mutual dependencies, there are advantages to keeping the Baltics together

with the Nordics, but then the joint between the headquarters in Norfolk and Brunssum ends up between Poland and Lithuania.

### **Recommendations:**

- Intelligence and situational imagery collaborations; as common sensor systems for the Baltic Sea are self-evident upon Swedish NATO entry.
- Sweden contributes a mechanized battalion to the ENFP unit in Latvia. There is also a strategic benefit to placing Swedish troops under the Canadian-led force based on the common interests of Sweden and Canada in the Arctic-Baltic Sea. Step by step, it will be supplemented with forward-based equipment for a mechanized brigade.
- Sweden should conduct continuous naval visits and exercises, with primarily Finland in particular, in the waters of the Baltic States. To facilitate Swedish-Finnish naval presence and increase operational flexibility, a Swedish-Finnish naval logistics hub is established in Klaipeda in Lithuania. When the Visby corvettes get air defenses, their presence on the other side of the Baltic Sea will also contribute to Baltic air defense.
- Swedish equipment is forwarded to Finnish Lapland for increased mobility.
- Regarding Baltic Air Policing, Sweden and Finland should not join the existing rotation. It would reduce the total number of aviation resources in the Baltic Sea area. Instead, if the need is deemed to exist, a shared support twoship unit (i.e. two aircraft operating together) is offered, which is ready for action from Gotland. This will be an addition to the national incident response. The USA can also be invited and share the rotation, which strengthens Gotland's security and therefore the whole region.