

**Statement by the Swedish Minister for Justice and Migration,
Morgan Johansson, on the occasion of the 13th United Nations
Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**

Your Highness, Secretary General of the United Nations,
Excellencies, Mr. Chairman, *(kan behöva korrigeras på plats
beroende på närvaro)*

On behalf of the Swedish delegation, I wish to express my warmest gratitude to the State of Qatar for its hospitality and dedication in hosting this congress here in Doha.

I also would like to thank the UNODC Secretariat and the Executive Director for all their efforts in preparing and organizing the 13th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

We very much look forward to the coming discussions between state experts, international organizations and the civil society. It is our hope and belief that these discussions will be results-orientated and in support of the ongoing work in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice.

I would like to associate myself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union by the Ambassador (*kontrolleras på plats*). Let me just make a few additional remarks.

Combating crime and keeping citizens secure is an important task for any government. This includes honouring the principles embedded in a society built on the rule of law and human rights. By respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms we reaffirm the goals of the United Nations. We strongly believe that by this we would render a more efficient justice, which in turn would lead to a reduction of criminality.

Furthermore, Sweden recognizes that crime and issues of criminal justice cannot be addressed solely at national level. In order to successfully meet the challenges pertaining from transnational organized crime, we must be prepared to fully co-operate on all fronts and at all levels, bilaterally as well as regionally and globally. It is a shared responsibility, and we must all contribute.

Strong support for the United Nations has always been, and will continue to be a cornerstone in Sweden's foreign policy. We now resolve to do more, to increase our efforts to contribute to peace, security, development, and the respect for human rights. Our

candidacy for a seat in the Security Council 2017-2018 is an expression of this. Sweden wants to build bridges, and participate actively in finding common solutions to the challenges that we face.

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome the theme of this congress on linkages between the *rule of law* and the wider United Nations agenda. *Human rights*, democracy, rule of law and sustainable development are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing. They depend on each other for success. Sweden therefore welcomes that rule of law aspects are given a high priority in the post-2015 development agenda.

However, the rule of law is not just a means to other ends; it is also a principle of governance and something positive in itself. If this principle is respected and promoted, all people regardless of their sex, religion or ethnicity can enjoy safe and dignified lives. Building sustainable societies require inclusive participation of all individuals also regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. This remains a challenge and priority also in Sweden.

Equality between women and men is a fundamental international principle. Gender equality is a precondition when it comes to the fight against poverty, access to education and health services,

taking part in the economy and in the decision-making process. It is true that *women's rights* are human rights, and human rights are women's rights. These can never be set aside with reference to culture, tradition or religion. The Swedish Government wants to strengthen gender equality, improve women's access to resources and increase women's representation - we call it a "feminist foreign policy".

For the Swedish Government, crime prevention is of great importance. For many years, local actors have been engaged in various *crime prevention* projects. For example, there are local Crime Prevention Councils in most of the municipalities. However, at national level there is need for increased coordination. For that reason the Government will initiate a work for various crimes prevention activities, both within the judiciary as well as in sectors of the society such as social affairs, employment and organisations of the civil society.

The Government's ambition in this field also includes increased efforts to *prevent re-offending*. A number of measures have been taken in recent years to reduce the risk of re-offending and facilitate the re-integration into society. Also in this area, co-operation between the Prison and Probation Service, other sectors

of the society and organisations within the civil society is a key factor and a prerequisite for a positive outcome.

As for all kinds of criminal activities it is important to develop and share good practices on how to prevent and prosecute. When it comes to *human trafficking* I would like to mention that Sweden since 1999 has had a prohibition on purchase of all sexual services, irrespectively of the venue. The law is unique as it punishes the buyer but not the seller. The legislation has been a successful strategy and an effective tool to counteract prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes.

Combating terrorism is a complex matter which includes areas such as countering radicalisation and recruitment, setting up mechanisms to hinder travelling of foreign terrorist fighters, efficient information exchange, countering financing of terrorism and other areas, such as ongoing dialogues with religious communities, co-operation with the local society. All these areas are essential for the effective fight against terrorism, although a lot of focus have recently been put on stopping illegal travelling of foreign fighters to conflict zones. Sweden is taking an active part in all of these areas.

As I initially emphasised, we are all aware of the value of *international co-operation* to face the challenges of transnational organized crime and terrorism. Through various UN-instruments we are given efficient tools for coordinated action. However, in this context I would like to highlight one of the fundamental elements in the Swedish system regarding international judicial co-operation. We have, through our national legislation, made it possible to co-operate with another state without the existence of an agreement, for example in matters regarding extradition and mutual legal assistance. Of course there are limitations and regulations in our laws, but an actual agreement in itself is not necessary for the co-operation within this field. We believe that this system is effective and we encourage other states to look at ways that are workable in order to enable as vast mutual legal co-operation as possible.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to conclude by reiterating that when it comes to crime prevention and criminal justice, Sweden attaches great importance to establishing a balance between all our efforts. We must never overlook the need to combine effective law enforcement measures with protection and promotion of the rule of law and human rights.

Thank you all for your attention.