

Master Thesis

In nation branding, how does the Swedish Government manage the tensions between conflicting foreign policy goals, especially the tension between economic interests in arms export and promotion of human rights?



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Abstract

This is an investigation of Sweden's use of nation branding in order to promote two conflicting foreign policies - the arms export to countries who violate human rights and the strong promotion of human rights. The research aims to perform a policy assessment of Sweden's current nation branding strategy through the use of foreign policy analysis and nation branding theory. The data was collected through interviews and secondary data which was then analysed in order to answer the research question of this paper. The theoretical foundation brought up several points of analysis, for example; the image of Sweden abroad, success rate of nation branding, legitimacy, holistic communication, public opinion, economic incentives, globalization and decision making model and biases. These variables was tested on the collected data and analysed accordingly. Potential limitations to the findings as well as to the methodology was discussed. Lastly, the conclusion of this research is that Sweden are successful in promoting their country, but the ethical dilemma of the conflicting foreign policy persists and may negatively impact 'brand Sweden' and the country's legitimacy.

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Introduction & Case Selection

The image of Sweden abroad is an ever changing but still static concept that was the fascination and starting point of this research paper. Marketing of brands is a vital part of any company, but how can a country leverage its own brand in the pursue of economic and political power? The notion of nation branding is an intriguing, complicated and dynamic concept that most countries today are practicing to a larger extent. Every country and nationality in the world are branded by stereotypes and judgements and it is up to them to leverage this to their advantage. This research aimed to comprehend the notion of Sweden's nation branding strategy and which implications this have on a political and economic level. In the search for potential conflicts of interest was the ethical dilemma of Sweden's arms export to countries who violate human rights. This foreign policy seemed to be in direct conflict to Sweden's extensive and political priority to promote human rights across the globe. This specific foreign policy clash, all promoted under the roof of Sweden's nation branding, came to be the research phenomenon of this paper. This leads us to the research question:

In nation branding, how does the Swedish Government manage the tensions between conflicting foreign policy goals, especially the tension between the economic interests of arms export and promotion of human rights?

This research question will help guide the research towards assessing Sweden's current foreign policy framework together with a methodology consisting of interviews and secondary data. The theoretical framework will consist of two major theories; nation branding and foreign policy analysis. This combination of theories will help assess Sweden's nation branding strategy, as well as further investigate the contradictory foreign policies and which decision making processes that led up to this. The debate in Sweden regarding arms export is a sensitive one with many stakeholders trying to push their agenda. The Swedish arms industry exporting to countries who violate human rights is an even more sensitive debate in which the Swedish Government have increasingly allowed for exceptions to the arms trade regulations. This is in direct contrast to the extensive human rights agenda that Sweden is pushing across the globe. The Swedish Government are involved with considerable foreign aid, development projects and humanitarian work. Therefore, it is bound to cause questioning when the Swedish Government have contradictory foreign policy agendas since exporting arms to countries that violate human rights are a direct counteract to the promotion of human rights. Sweden's contradictory foreign policy agendas will be the topic of

investigation as this research will explore the conflict between economic gains and humanitarian values, and what implications it has on the legitimacy of Sweden.

Mapping of Sweden's Official Nation Branding Strategy

As will be presented in this section, the nation branding execution is divided between several ministries, governmental organizations and public-private partnerships - all working with different aspects of branding and promoting the Swedish nation and its trade. The official nation branding strategy of Sweden is a collaboration between many different government agencies. For clarification, the graph below will map out the different governmental bodies involved. All the actors will then be described more fully.

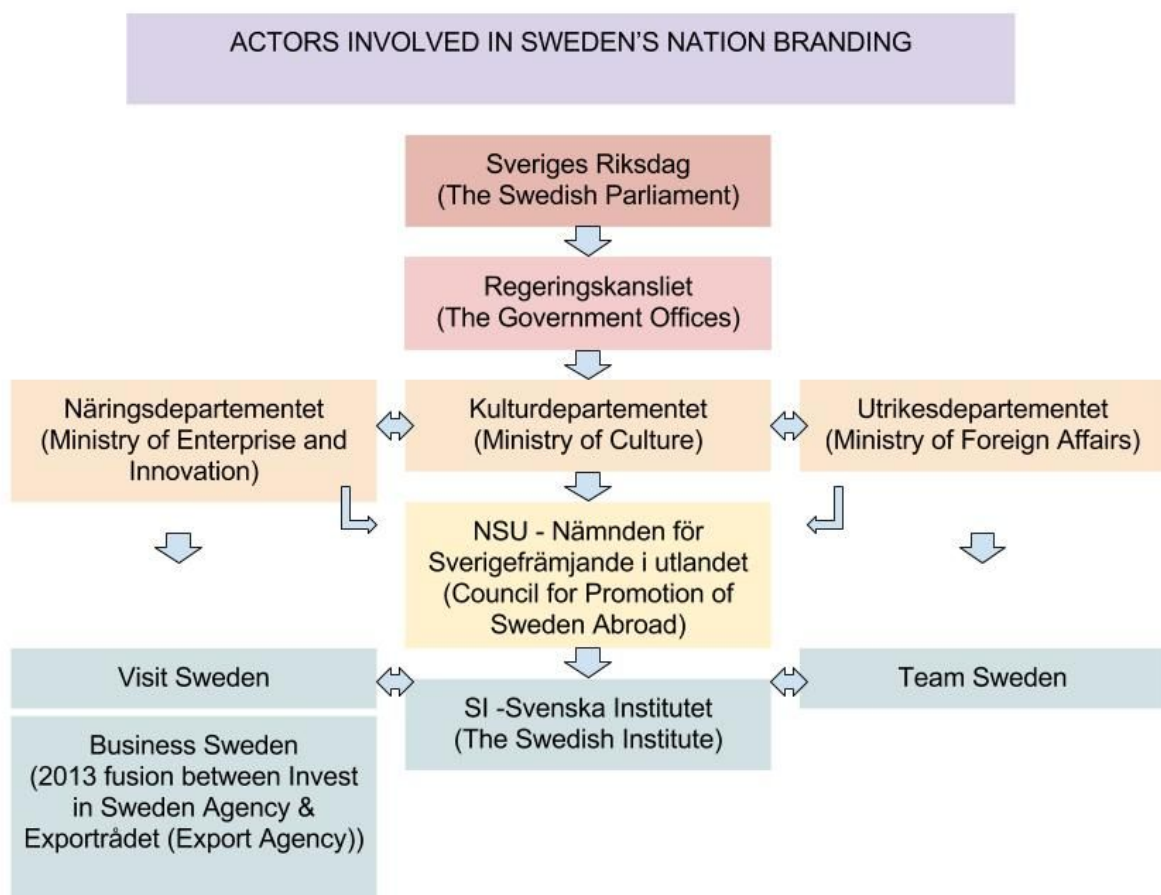


Fig. 1.

The overarching governmental body who makes the formal decision about Sweden's nation branding is the Swedish Parliament. They decide on how much of Sweden's national budget should be allocated to the nation branding policy, which will heavily influence the outcome and workload of the agencies executing this decision. The Swedish Parliament also decides the guidelines in which the task should be performed, eg, vision of the future, objective, purpose and core values which the agencies have to follow.

The Swedish Parliament then pass this task onto the Government Offices, which is the governmental body that is in charge of all the ministries. The Government Offices have allocated three ministries to handle Sweden's nation branding; the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture. From these ministries, there are numerous of public and semi-private agencies that are contracted to perform the task of nation branding. The main ones, which will be elaborated upon in this section is; SI (Swedish Institute), Visit Sweden, Business Sweden, Team Sweden and NSU (Council of Promotion of Sweden Abroad). All the actors mentioned and mapped out in Fig 1. are not necessarily their own entities since most of the actors are collaborating in one way or another. It is therefore hard to differentiate between the exact role of each actor and their contribution to the agencies they are part of. This section about the mapping of the Swedish nation branding strategy will therefore be focused on the main strategy of Sweden and a brief overview of each agent involved.

The Swedish Parliament & Ministry of Enterprise

The current government led by prime minister Stefan Löfven has set out an overall goal for the year of 2020, which is to have the lowest unemployment rate in Europe. This goal will be achieved by increasing the number of people in employment and number of hours worked. The government is well aware of the enormous impact that globalization have on the workforce and Sweden's export industry indirectly and directly employs over 1.3 million people in Sweden (Sweden's Export Strategy, 2015). The new export strategy from 2015 have been conducted by the Ministry of Industry in close collaboration with the business sector including individual enterprises and trade organizations. In the report they openly claim that "Sweden's prosperity is dependent on exports" and that up to 45 % of Sweden's GDP is covered by exports of goods and services. The report states that Sweden has had a tough time maintaining their market share of exports and that Sweden will face significant challenges unless exports are successfully reconfigured. The main points of Sweden's export **strategy** reads:

- "Swedish exports must reach emerging markets to a greater extent"
- "more small and medium-sized enterprises must have the courage and the will to export"
- "Swedish goods, services and systems must reach even higher up the value chain"
- "Sweden's attractiveness to investments, skills and tourists must increase"
- "global trade must be kept open" (Sweden's Export Strategy, 2015)

With this strategy, the Swedish Government hopes to reach these **goals**:

- “increase exports, both in absolute figures and as a proportion of GDP”
- “increase Sweden’s attractiveness to investment, skills and tourists”
- “increase the proportion of enterprises that export”
- “increase Swedish enterprises’ participation in the global economy”

The export report stresses the importance of Sweden’s comparative advantage in the global economy and highlight the fact that Swedish exports are the foundation to create growth, employment and prosperity. However, the Government have high ambitions in regards to environmental and climate policies, which will need to be developed and transitioned into at the same time. The Swedish government hopes to be on the forefront of innovation and developing of technologies that can make businesses grow but also lead to reduced levels of climate impact. In order to reach these strategic challenges and goals, the Government has decided to implement a number of measures. The ones that are relevant to Sweden’s nation branding are: creation of Team Sweden, enhancing interaction with international organizations, promotion of mobility of people moving in and out of the country, strengthening of Sweden’s image abroad, reinforcement of Sweden’s attractiveness to talent and to attract more global events.

Since promoting export and trade is a costly strategy for the Government, all areas of trade cannot be at focus. However, more funds have been allocated for this purpose and the Government allocated 75 million SEK in the spring budget of 2015. In addition to that, there will be more funding during the years of 2016-2019 in an attempt to substantially promote export and investment. The export strategy report presents twenty-two areas where Sweden can improve in order to increase export. Most of them include increase state support, pinpointing high potential opportunities and markets, simplifying import and export, increasing ambition for sustainability, attraction of more talent, attraction of more global events as well as strengthening Sweden’s image abroad.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs have three main responsibilities; international coordination, international development coordination, and foreign trade, trade and investment promotion. All three areas are heavily focused on building and promoting Sweden’s image abroad. The department of international coordination are involved with ensuring Sweden’s national interests abroad and their budget mainly goes to paying the membership fee to organizations such as; UN, Nordic Council, OECD, European Council, OSSE etc. SI (Swedish Institute) are a part of the international coordination agency.

The international development coordination department are responsible for involvement in international aid for developing countries with low or medium income. The focus of the aid is to help establish human rights. The human rights areas include; the current refugee crisis, AIDS prevention and aid, education, as well as female and HBTQ rights.

The foreign trade and trade- and investment promotion section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are concerned with promotion of trade, by opening up for liberal trade within the EU as well as a strengthen multilateral trade agreement within the WTO. They are working to promote foreign investments and export promotion as a mean to create sustainable growth and prosperity. A list of 26 prioritized countries have been developed where Sweden see the largest potential for successful trade and growth. The Ministry of Industry are closely collaborating with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to reach the set goals.

The Ministry of Culture

The Ministry of Culture are involved in a variety of tasks with a foundation in promotion of Swedish culture both inside and outside of the country. The Ministry of Culture's role is to strengthen culture, freedom of speech, democracy, human rights, cultural minorities, civil society, the Sami (native) people, religious beliefs, as well as work against discrimination. One of their main international strategies is to collaborate with international organizations in regards to strengthening and exchanging information about democracy, culture and human rights. The Ministry of Culture have appointed councils abroad at numerous Swedish embassies who work on cultural promotion and exchange. The Ministry of Culture have a vital role in the promotion of Swedish culture.

SI

The Swedish Institute (SI) is one of the governmental agencies that are fully involved with the image of Sweden abroad. They are commissioned to perform within three main areas:

1. To be an expert organization when it comes to follow, analyse, and promote the image of Sweden in other countries.
2. To communicate Sweden and Swedish competencies, experiences and values from a wide perspective. To communicate relevant topics in regards to Sweden and the world, such as innovation, sustainability, culture and societal issues, in which SI provides tools and support to communicate the Swedish way.

3. To build long-term relationships with talents, opinion-formers and decision makers in other countries. To build international networks and relationships with people in other countries through tools such as international diplomacy.

The purpose and mission of SI is to:

- create interest and trust in Sweden
- to promote international exchange within culture, education, research and society
- to develop Sweden's relations with the Baltic Sea region
- to promote openness and democratic practices, as well as promoting democratic culture in Eastern Europe
- support Swedish education on a higher level in other countries, as well as be responsible for the coordination of the publicly funded Swedish education abroad for non-Swedish citizens
- to inform and promote Swedish higher education in other countries
- promote the interest for employment in Sweden for foreign citizens and to be a coordinated authority for international information within the area.

SI is the agency who directly work with the promotion of Sweden abroad and are greatly contributing to Sweden reaching its set out foreign policy goals.

NSU

NSU (Council for Promotion of Sweden Abroad) is an agency combined of various actors, such as; SI, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Industry, VisitSweden and Business Sweden (Fusion between Invest in Sweden Agency and Exportrådet -Swedish Trade). NSU have developed and strategically planned the brand and the brand platform of Sweden which have resulted in the web page *sweden.se* who is administrated by SI. The current brand platform was launched in 2005 in collaboration with the advertising firm Söderhavet.

NSU continues to create reports about the image of Sweden abroad and how the brand is seen today, how it is changing and how to measure the brand.

Strategy For the Promotion of Sweden Abroad

The official report "Strategy for the promotion of Sweden abroad" released by the Council for Promotion of Sweden Abroad (NSU), state that Sweden have four enhanced focus profile areas; society, innovation, creativity and sustainability. This profile area aims to highlight Sweden's focus on human rights, equal opportunities, entrepreneurship and reform efforts and is described as a "key to growth and a precondition for prosperity"(2014). Areas to highlight here are; an open and tolerant society, reform of central government finance,

internet freedom and security, gender equality, advanced welfare and social security and deregulation (NSU, 2017).

The innovation focus area highlights the fact that Sweden has been ranked one of the most innovative countries in the world, which Sweden should use in their favour to attract investment and talent, strengthening their position, promote business and highlight Swedish success stories in the area of innovation. Within innovation Sweden should highlight; life science, environmental technologies, IT/Telecom, innovation for society and world-leading innovations in the automotive industry and mining.

The sustainability focus area aims to promote the long history of Sweden's international commitment to achieve a sustainable development. This is also an area where Sweden is at the forefront and have developed many new environmental technologies and sustainable system solutions. The areas to highlight here are; renewable energy, green buildings, waste management, air and water treatment, people and nature, right of common access and sustainable fuels and battery-driven vehicles.

The fourth focus area creativity, is also one where Sweden is a strong player. The cultural and creative industries have grown significantly in the last years which has helped Sweden gain an image as an imaginative and innovative country. Areas to focus on here are; creative professionals and entrepreneurs, fashion and design, film, literature and music, performing arts, computer games, gastronomy and marketing communication. As a part of this four area focus strategy is also a development for bettering the monitoring and measuring of the results..

Business Sweden

Business Sweden's goal is to help Swedish companies to reach their full international potential as well as helping foreign companies with investments in Sweden. Business Sweden is jointly owned by the Swedish Government and by the private business sector. The joint ownership functions as a way to fully reach all business networks and contacts.

Visit Sweden

Visit Sweden is a communication platform with the purpose of market Sweden as a tourist destination internationally. The goal of Visit Sweden is to attract tourism to Swedish destinations and experiences, as well as communicate and market the brand Sweden globally. Visit Sweden are working on assignment from the Government to increase tourism

to Sweden with the end goal of increasing revenue and creating more jobs. One of the strategy goals for Visit Sweden's 2020 vision is to double the revenue for tourism spending.

Team Sweden

Team Sweden is a network formed by governmental offices, organizations and companies who collaborate to increase Swedish export abroad. The network was created after complaints by Swedish businesses that the government is not helping enough to increase exports. The purpose of Team Sweden is to simplify the process for Swedish companies to export abroad as well as offer support.

Sweden's Foreign Policy

Sweden's Arms Industry and Trade

The history of why Sweden has become one of the biggest exporters of arms per capita in the world¹, stems from a neutrality act in which Sweden decided to become self-sustaining in regards to arms and defence in order to keep their neutrality. This neutrality act became official in the 1950s but had been practiced long before that. However, the research and development of their own weapon industry turned out to be very costly. In order to be self-sustaining Sweden needed to fund their own arms production through export to other countries. This is how arms export became central to Sweden's political neutrality act. The arms export would however be restricted and only be sold to pre-approved and regulated states. World War I and World War II, where Sweden was neutral, turned out to be a profitable time for the Swedish export and Sweden's arms industry grew significantly with more companies involved with research and development. Sweden had now reached a point where Sweden was a part of selling arms to both parties involved in wars and armed conflicts and their intentions were questioned. The arms export had reached a point where it was in strong contrast to their foreign policy. After the end of the cold war and in combination with Sweden's membership in the EU, the old neutrality act was revised and Sweden had to agree to the Lisbon act where the EU member countries are bound to act in case of catastrophes, terror attacks or armed attacks. The Swedish government later declared that they "will not act passively if a Nordic country or EU country are being in a catastrophic situation or under attack"(Åkerström, Den svenska vapenexporten, 2016, p.20), which is quite a significant change from the previous neutrality act. The ambition Sweden once had to only export enough to afford their own research and production of arms has also been

¹ Svenska Freds- och Skiljedomsföreningen. Nya siffror: Sverige tredje största vapenexportören per capita. <http://www.svenskafreds.se/nya-siffror-sverige-tredje-storsta-vapenexportoren-per-capita>, Published 14.04.2014. Retrieved 06.04.2017.

changed over the years. In 1997, 25% of Swedish arms production went to export. In 2005 it was up to 50%, and in 2013 the percentage was up to 60. The number of receiving countries has also risen. In 1990, Sweden exported to 33 countries and in 2015, they exported to 62 countries (Åkerström, Den svenska vapenexporten, 2016, p.22).

The organization that approves the specific arms export sales are called ISP (Inspectorate of Strategic Products). They are responsible for interpreting the Swedish arms export laws and approving specific sales to governments making deals with Swedish arms manufacturer. The law reads "Authorization for the export of military equipment, or other cooperation with any foreigner regarding military equipment, should be permitted only if such export or cooperation;

1. is deemed necessary to meet the Swedish defense's need for material or know-how or otherwise is a security policy desirable.

2. do not contradict the principles and objectives of Sweden's foreign policy."²

Sweden does not export chemical, biological or cluster weapons, and only to states, governmental branches or a state authorized receiver. The Swedish law also states that they "should not export arms to;

- a state who is an armed conflict with another state
- a state who is involved in an international conflict, who might lead to an armed conflict
- a state who has internal armed conflicts
- a state where extensive and serious human rights violation occur"

(Regeringens skrivelse 2015/16:114, 98.)

However, these four rules only apply to the category 'war material for combat', which includes ammunition, missiles, recoilless and combat vehicles. In the second category named 'other military equipment', which includes radar systems, camouflage net and armor plate, the law says that "approval should be given unless the foreign policy goals are contradictory. Between 2013-2015, the ISP approved arms export to 72 countries, many of which have been registered for serious violations of human rights by Amnesty International. These countries are; Mexico, Indonesia, Algeria, Malaysia, Singapore, Kuwait, Bahrain, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Tunisia, Turkey, Pakistan, Egypt, Tanzania, Zambia, Ukraine, Bangladesh, Brunei, Oman, Qatar, Namibia and South Africa (Åkerström, 2016).

² ISP, <https://www.isp.se/media/1220/de-svenska-riktlinjerna.pdf>, 1991/92:174. Retrieved 15.08.2017)

The Swedish government are in charge of the arms export politics and the responsibility has been on the Ministry of Enterprise or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At the change of governments in 2014, the arms export responsibility was given to foreign minister Margot Wallström at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In May of 2016, the responsibility was moved to the Ministry of Justice and the Minister of Migration and Justice Morgan Johansson. This may or may not have been connected to Margot Wallström's open criticism against Saudi Arabia in 2015, when she condemned Saudi Arabia's lack of human rights and Sweden's weapon export to the country. She has stated that she has personal issues with arms export to countries who violate human rights³.

Human Rights in Swedish Foreign Policy

Swedish foreign policy places substantial weight on the promotion of human rights as it is considered a priority area. Sweden aims to support human rights in all areas of their foreign policy; security policy, development cooperation, migration policy and trade policy. Sweden works toward the goals of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 1948. From this declaration, the Swedish Government has decided to put extra emphasis on the following eight topics;

- “building democracy
- strengthening freedom of expression
- acting for the abolition of the death penalty
- combating torture
- combating summary executions and arbitrary detention
- upholding the principles of the rule of law
- protecting human rights and international humanitarian law
- combating discrimination”

(Regeringskansliet. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Human rights in Swedish foreign policy. p.2. 17.03.2009.)

The Swedish Government aims to work toward these goals by aligning and using a range of channels and foreign policy instruments. They also aim to influence other governments in respecting human rights as well as using its development cooperation.

³ Regeringspartierna pressas om vapenexport, Sydsvenskan, <https://www.sydsvenskan.se/2017-02-15/regeringspartierna-pressas-om-vapenexport>, Published: 15.02.2017, Retrieved: 30.08.2017)

This section has now described all major governmental actors involved in Sweden's nation branding. The foreign policy of human rights advocacy has been presented, and the Swedish arms industry and trade have been explained. The strategy as well as goals have been presented and outlined, in order to create an overview of Sweden's political agenda.

Literature Review

The fundamental interest of this research, is to understand how Sweden balances conflicting foreign policies and analyse the benefits and disadvantages of this way of conducting foreign policy decision making. The foreign policies of interest is their nation branding and their arms export. The aim of this literature review is to outline and map out what has been written about the topic of nation branding and foreign policy assessment as well as trying to find potential gaps in the literature in which this research will hope to add to the existing literature.

Nation Branding & Competitive Identity

Nation branding or competitive identity as Simon Anholt defines it, is based on the presumption that every country on earth is being perceived in a simplistic and sometime cliché way (2007, p.1). For the human brain to be able to handle and categorize hundreds of cultures, countries and languages, our brains simplify this cognitive process by making short summaries. Some of the most known perceptions of countries are for example that South Africa make great wine, that Germany makes good cars, that Russia has expensive caviar or that Brazil have carnivals and love soccer. Most people would also agree to pay more for a product that was made in Italy, compared to the same product being made in China. The perceptions of countries, no matter if they are good or bad, true or false, highly affect they way we behave and interact with them.

“Some quite progressive countries don't get nearly as much attention, visitors, business or investment as they need because their reputation is weak or negative, while others are still trading on a good image that they have acquired decades or even centuries ago, and today do relatively little to deserve.”(Anholt, 2007, p.3)

This quote explains just how important a reputation is for a country, and that reputations can stick with the country for many decades - for better or worse.

Countries engage in nation branding due to many reasons. For example to attract tourism, to stimulate investment and export, to attract specialized and skilled workforce as

well as attracting higher education students. Furthermore, a country might also use nation branding to

“...increase currency stability; help restore international credibility and investor confidence; reverse international ratings downgrades; increase international political influence; stimulate stronger international partnerships and enhance nation building (by nourishing confidence, pride, harmony, ambition, national resolve).”(Dinnie, 2008, p.17).

Fundamentally, nation branding is a way to build a nation's wealth, meaning that nation branding is a tool that is highly important in order to implement and advance a nation's political agenda. In regards to this, Anholt argues that all sensible governments need to care for their nation's identity in a holistic way. Each country need to identify the reputation and perception of the nation and thus build a strategy for managing it in the most useful way. However, most countries have plenty of agents who participate in some kind of nation branding strategy, for example; governmental offices, non-governmental organizations, special interest groups, companies, ministries and others. These actors usually do not coordinate their nation branding strategies which might create different version of the nation. This might lead to contradictory information being spread, thus resulting in a non-consistent image of the country. Anholt writes in his *Competitive Identity*, that

“Far more can be achieved if the work of these stakeholders is coordinated, of consistently high quality, and harmonized to an overall national strategy that sets clear goals for the country's economy, its society and its political and cultural relations with other countries. This is a role that none of the conventional disciplines of public diplomacy or sectoral promotion is able to perform alone.”(2007, p.3).

According to Anholt, the coordination of nation branding is key to its success.

Public Diplomacy

Simon Anholt argues that the idea of competitive identity is a construction of company brand management and public diplomacy. Public diplomacy can be described as “(...) the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies.”(2007, p.12). The notion of public diplomacy has changed rapidly over the past few decades. The communication and technology revolution has changed how public diplomacy once was strategized and communicated. Modern public diplomacy is usually described as the process where the entire national reputation is being managed. Nations today have focused on collaborations and integration between many governmental bodies, embassies and trade

and tourist offices. The national brand reputation strategy is likely to succeed when all agents are working towards the same agenda and with the same strategic approach and when all considerable stakeholders are represented. However, a huge factor in how the communication is going to be received by the public depends on the power of the nation. A nation with a weak reputation will find themselves in a vicious circle, just as a nation with a strong reputation will find themselves in a virtuous circle.

For a successful implementation of a competitive strategy the nation will need a two-way communication, where the policy makers take into account what the public opinion thinks. The policy makers need to take public opinion seriously and incorporate it into future policies which will ensure that policy decisions will be received in a positive light by the public. However, Anholt stresses that

“It is only when public diplomacy is carried out in coordination with the full complement of national stakeholders as well as the main policy makers, and all are linked through effective brand management to a single, long-term strategy, that the country has a real chance of affecting its image and making it into a competitive asset rather than an impediment or a liability.”(Competitive Identity, 2007, p. 14-15).

It becomes evident that Anholt is arguing for a holistic approach to nation branding and public diplomacy for the policy to be successful.

The Theory of Competitive Identity

Anholt writes in his *Competitive Identity* (2007) that most countries communicate their reputation, both deliberately and accidentally, through six outlets. These outlets are the following:

1. *The tourism publicity.* Both from the tourism agencies as well as the actual tourists and visitors. The tourist board usually have the biggest budget and the best marketers.
2. *The export brands.* The most famous export brands from each country function as a marketer for the nation and have considerable power to influence perceptions about the specific nation.
3. *The policy decisions of the nation's government.* Both domestic politics and foreign policy affect perceptions when being reported in international media.
4. *The business audience.* The way the nation tries to attract investment, skilled professionals or students.
5. *Cultural exchange, activities and exports.* This outlet is through arranging sports games, winning sports games, the works of authors, filmmakers and music artists.

6. *The inhabitants of the nation.* How they behave when they are abroad and how they treat tourists in their own country. Famous movie, music and media stars as well as high-profile political leaders all make a difference on the reputation of a nation.

These six outlets have been created into a hexagon figure shown below.

Figure 2.1 The hexagon of Competitive Identity



Source: Simon Anholt, *Brand New Justice* (Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann, 2003)

Fig 2.

Anholt explains in his writings:

“The basic idea behind Competitive Identity is that when governments have a good, clear believable and positive idea of what their country really is, what it stands for and where it’s going, and manage to coordinate the actions, investments, policies and communications of all six points of the hexagon so that they prove and reinforce this idea, then they stand a good chance of building and maintaining and competitive national identity both internally and externally - to the lasting benefit of exporters, importers, government, the culture section, tourism, immigration, and pretty much every aspect of international relations.” (Competitive Identity, 2007, p.26).

However, the reality of most countries’ nation branding is far from this utopia. Most of the time, every stakeholder is looking out for their own agenda without making an effort to coordinate competitive strategies, which results in a contradictory or confusing image of the nation. To be able to achieve some form of substantial brand equity the nation need to substantiate the *capture* and *accumulation* of the reputational value. Without a strategic plan the nation is likely to engage in an endless game with no or little economic gains. Anholt argues that “Every act of promotion, exchange or representation needs to be seen not as an end itself but as an opportunity to build the country’s overall reputation; and all the bodies,

agencies and organizations at each point of the hexagon have to work together, meet together, and align their behaviour to a common national strategy.”(2007, p.27).

A national identity is nonetheless, a slowly changing brand due to the strong previous beliefs of the public. People’s personal beliefs are simple and comforting descriptions that will not change unless something drastic changes. Therefore, a nation’s image can stay the same for years, even though the nation itself have changed dramatically.

Anholt writes that a countries with intent to build a competitive identity needs clear and identified short-term and long-term goals. These goals should be;

- *“clearer domestic agreement on a national identity and societal goals*
- *a climate where innovation is prized and practised*
- *more effective bidding for international events*
- *more effective investment promotion*
- *more effective tourism and business travel promotion*
- *a healthier “country of origin effect” for exporters of goods and services*
- *greater profile in the international media*
- *simpler accession into regional and global bodies and associations*
- *more productive cultural relations with other countries and regions.”* (Competitive Identity, 2007, p.28-29)

This list will need to function as the agenda setter for a nation’s strategy in implementing a competitive identity. However, it is important that a nation is not trying to rebrand themselves completely. A nation is likely to succeed when they they make their reputation work for them, instead of against them, which means that the nation should research thoroughly what kind of reputation and image they have abroad and use this as their starting point. According to Anholt, their strategy should look like this:

- a. “Find out how people really see the country today, and understand why this view is preventing more of them from taking an active interest in the country, respecting and admiring it, listening to what it says, investing in its economy, spending more time and money there, or whatever the particular aims of the country are.
- b. Come up with a clear vision of how people *would* need to see the country, in order for them to start doing all of these things.
- c. Work out a democratic, effective and accountable process for getting from the current brand to the future one.” (Competitive Identity, 2007, p.30)

Anholt goes on to explain that simply communicating positive things about your country are not a very effective method. Instead, the country need to create a buzz, meaning that when

they become dedicated to come up with new ideas, new innovations, new laws, new science, new art and new intellectual property, people will start to talk about that country and the reputation will spread through media. This buzz needs to be created based on the competitive identity strategy. In regards to this Anholt writes "...creating Competitive Identity for a country, region or city is 80 per cent innovation, 15 per cent coordination and 5 per cent communication."(Competitive Identity, 2007, p.37). This highlights the importance of the message communicated and less so how it is communicated. The message relies heavily on the execution of highly skilled and talented creators managing the competitive identity reputation.

Formulate, Plan & Implement the Nation's Strategic Vision

When a country has decided to create a competitive identity the first step is to understand how other people perceive the country. This can be done by researching how things are done in a country, which products are made and how they are made in a country, how other people speak about the country and how the inhabitants themselves speak about the country. When having a clear idea of what the country stands for, comes the planning and strategic actions. What follows is a simplistic outline of what most countries need to do in order to manage their reputation:

- "decide on their identity strategy and get a good number of stakeholders behind it
- help create a new climate of innovation among those stakeholders
- show them how those innovations can really benefit their business *and* be aligned with the CI strategy at the same time
- encourage them to reflect and reinforce the identity in everything they say and do."(Competitive Identity, 2007, p.37)

If the country's reputation turns out to be somewhat or completely different from the reality in a negative way, there is an existent information gap. The way to go about this problem is not simply overproducing websites and creating more information as one may think. This problem will need to be solved by marketers who will work to stimulate people's interest about the country, thus creating curiosity which will trigger the target groups to go search for the information themselves.

The target group is also a vital part of building a competitive identity. Every potential market must be analysed in order to know its importance in regards to future investments, tourism or other national wealth building interests. If a country has no plan to seek investment from specific countries or regions, they should not waste their time, money and energy on that task. There also needs to be an assessment made regarding the reputation

of the nation. Anholt argues that it is “important for countries to distinguish between negative reputation that matters, and negative reputation that can be safely ignored because it has no consequences.”(Competitive Identity, 2007, p.66). In situations where the negative reputation matters Anholt suggests a few different approaches depending on whether the reputation has true or false grounds. If the negative reputation is unfounded, the reputation needs to be suppressed or be dealt with by ignoring it. If the negative reputation is founded in the truth, the best thing is to acknowledge that there is a problem which will be addressed and demonstrated with progress as soon as possible.

Anholt has created a six-point model which helps evaluating a country’s competitive identity strategy.

1. Creative. To stand out among hundreds of other countries, to find the interesting of buzzing things about the country.
2. Ownable. To be credible and unique. To market what people will accept as the truth. A strong link between desired and current reputation.
3. Sharp. To communicate a unified and edgy image. To create polarized opinions and daring ideas.
4. Motivating. To make people think and behave differently towards the government, the private sector and civil society.
5. Relevant. To offer the target groups a promise. To cater to the needs of the target group.
6. Elemental. To be as meaningful for as many people as possible by being simple, practical, usable and robust.

(Competitive Identity, 2007, p. 77-78)

The idea of this six-point model is to get the creators of competitive identity away from a comfort zone where their strategy becomes dull and general, which will lead to virtually no reaction or attention from the target groups. Anholt argues for stand-out strategies which creates polarized opinions instead of no opinion at all. He means that it is easier to turn a negative perception into a positive one than it is to turn a non-reaction to any reaction at all. He goes on to write that a country needs to guess where the next social change is going to be and plan to be correctly positioned when that happens (Competitive Identity, 2007, p.79).

Challenges in Nation Branding: Legitimacy and Ethical Implications

There are of course plenty of challenges when creating a competitive identity. A few has been mentioned before, such as coordination between agencies as well as sending a unified

message. However, there are plenty of challenges that for example a normal commercial brand would never face. Since a nation is not selling a product, but instead are creating viable communities and increasing wealth, their process needs to be fully democratic, fully transparent and fully inclusive. If not, they will fail. (Anholt, *Competitive Identity*, 2007, p.82) Another challenge with nation branding, as mentioned previously, is how the message will be communicated. The communication needs to spark people's interest, not just inform people about the country in general terms. Anholt writes that many governments make the mistake of printing up expensive books that are handed out and will in most cases end up in a dusty bookshelf. The real challenge of communication lies in getting people interested and motivated to learn about the nation.

There are also ethical and legitimacy challenges involved with nation branding. Since the nation branding is a representation of the nation, every citizen becomes a stakeholder. Dinnie writes in his book *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice*: "If nation branding is to become accepted by both governments and citizens, it needs to establish itself as a socially and politically acceptable activity." (2008, p.169). He suggests a collaborative public-private sector structure to secure legitimacy where the citizens interests are represented. This collaborative structure where all stakeholders are represented makes the nation branding strategy legitimate and ethical. The democratic process in nation branding is considered a vital part of the strategy to achieve success for all stakeholders.

Summary Nation Branding

What has been presented in this theory section about the nation branding field has been highlighting the most important pillars of the concept. Firstly, the concept of nation branding was explained and why it is important. Countries engage in nation branding due to many reasons but the most important ones are wealth creation, attraction of tourism, to get more political influence and increase investment and exports. To be able to succeed in this the stakeholders needs to be coordinated and work towards the same long-term and short-term goals. Here, public diplomacy is an important tool to influence the attitudes of the public in a collaborative public-private structure. The communication in nation branding is of utter importance and Anholt's hexagon illustrated the six main outlets, namely; tourism, brands, policy, investment, culture and people. If the hexagon is properly communicated by the nation it will likely build and maintain the country's competitive identity both internally and externally. The nation branding strategy needs to have some clear and achievable goals. The most successful nation branding countries work with 'what they got' meaning that use

pre-existing opinions and perceptions about the country. The strategy needs to be formulated, planned and implemented in regards to the goals and visions for the nation. However, there will be challenges in nation branding involving legitimacy and ethics. The nation will only gain legitimacy if they democratically represent every stakeholder involved in building the nation's brand, especially the inhabitants. Also the nation branding will not succeed if it does not take ethical implications into account. Being involved with corruption, environmental effects and human rights violations are all ethical implications that could potentially ruin reputations and harm legitimacy.

Foreign Policy Analysis

Foreign policy analysis is a description of analysing foreign policy decisions and outcomes in a political context. Neack writes in her book *The new foreign Policy* (2008) that:

- "Foreign policy is made and conducted in complex domestic and international environments."
- "Foreign policy results from the work of coalitions of interested domestic and international actors and groups."
- "Foreign policy issues are often linked and delinked, reflecting the strength of various parties and their particular concerns."
- "Foreign policy analysis needs to be multilevel and multifaceted in order to confront the complicated sources and nature of foreign policy." (p.6)

The focus on foreign policy analysis will be to map out how and why a nation develop certain goals and how they attempt to achieve these by looking into how certain behaviours arise. Foreign policy analysis have three levels of analysis; *individual level of analysis* where you analyse an individual decision maker, *state level of analysis* where you analyse societal and governmental factors in a specific state, and *system level of analysis* where you analyse bilateral state-to-state relations and global issues (Neack, 2008, p.10-11). However, Neack argues that it is impossible to isolate one level of analysis from another, meaning that a single-level analysis of foreign policy in a globalized world would lead to an insufficient analysis.

The worldview of the policy makers are of great importance for understanding strategies, goals and vision. There are three main worldviews; realism, liberalism and Marxism, which all offer an explanation of how, on a subjective level, the world of politics work. The political worldviews will help analyse the past as well as trying to predict the future.

The Rational Actor Model

From the realist worldview stems the rational actor model, which can be seen as the cornerstone of foreign policy decision making. Neack writes that “The rational actor model assumes that all leaders are motivated to preserve the long-term national interests, thus individual differences between the leaders are insignificant.”(2008, p.45). The rational actor model is founded on the premise that the state is distinguishable by the power they hold and not by their internal attributes, which means that the history, type of government, economics and leaders of the nation has little importance to the overall analysis. Instead there is a basic economic utility calculation made where different choices are presented together with potential gains and losses, which is selecting between the given alternatives and their individual consequences and choosing the one with the preferred consequences. The rationalist model can help maximize both conflicting national interests and minimize potential damages as much as possible. The best choice of action is the one where the state can maximize their goals and minimize costs (Neack, 2008, *The New Foreign Policy*, p.34).

Belief Sets and Cognitive Structures

A different approach to the rationalist actor model is the cognitive approach which assumes that decision makers are much more biased and close-minded when assessing a situation. Neack writes:

“A cognitive approach assumes a complex, and realistic, psychology about human reasoning and decisionmaking. It does not assume individual awareness, open-mindedness, and adaptability relative to an “objective” environment, but assumes individuals are likely to view their environment differently and operate within their own “psychological environment”.”(The New Foreign Policy, 2008, p.53)

The human cognitive process is largely influenced by learned behaviours, worldviews and existing theories and try to fit new information to fit the already existing belief structure. Therefore decision makers are likely to act in a non-rational way, or at least in a semi-rational way when trying to assess a complex situation with many variables. There is also a high risk of taking cognitive short-cuts when complex situations arise as well as to be heavily influenced by emotional and philosophical beliefs. Individual differences have a tremendous impact when it comes to foreign policy decision making and must be taken into account when trying to predict which choices the leaders around the world will make.

The Poliheuristic Theory

The poliheuristic theory is a model that combines both the rational and cognitive approach.

“The poliheuristic model is a two-step process. In the first step, the decision maker reduces the set of alternatives while using cognitive shortcuts. In the next step, the rational approach is used to select from the remaining alternatives. Thus, a decision has two components. The poliheuristic model is innovative in that decision makers simplify their environment in the face of stress and time constraints by making decisions in two steps.” (Mintz & Derouen, 2010, p.78)

This model leaves more room for a combination of two different approaches and offer a more loose fit to the very strict rationalist decision making model.

Using Game-theory as Decision Making Model

When decision makers are faced with conflicting interests when conducting foreign policy, they can use the decision making model game theory. The game theory decision making model helps to understand which choices are available and putting them in a strategic perspective. Mintz & DeRouen writes:

“...game theory helps us to see the choices states have when dealing with each other. It puts their choices into a strategic perspective because it lets us see how an actor's decision is contingent on the other actors' past and expected behavior. The game format simplifies complicated relationships by uncovering equilibria among the players.” (2010, p.62)

Modern game theory involves all actors at play, even the non-state ones. To create a game theoretic model you need to know all the players involved, the rules involved, every possible combination of moves and their outcomes and solutions, each actors outcome of every combination and lastly a solution concept which predicts the result of each combination. Using game theory in order to manage the tension of conflicting foreign policies stems from the rationalist approach to weighing the positive and negative outcomes of each foreign policy scenario and through this reach the conclusion of how to balance them. In complex decision making processes with many actors it is important to include all possible outcomes and thoroughly map out each scenario as this could ease the tension of the outcome.

Biases in Foreign Policy Decision Making

Decision makers are likely to be subject to various biases in foreign policy making due to cognitive limitations. In situations where complicated conflict of interest are present, leaders have to make decisions under constraints of information processing limitations. Mintz and DeRouen writes: “Biases often lead to misperception. Leaders see the world in ways that are subconsciously filtered by previous beliefs and experiences.” (2010, p. 38). There are plenty

of different biases in decision making. Following are the biases outlined by Mintz & DeRouen (2010, p.39);

- *“Focusing on short-term benefits rather than long term problems*
- *Preference over preference*
- *Locking on one alternative*
- *Wishful thinking*
- *Post-hoc rationalization*
- *Relying on the past*
- *Focusing on a narrow range of policy options rather than on a wide range of options*
- *Groupthink*
- *Overconfidence; overestimating one’s capabilities and underestimating rival’s capabilities*
- *Ignoring critical information; denial and avoidance*
- *Focusing on only part of the decision problem*
- *Turf battles leading to suboptimal decisions*
- *Lack of tracking and auditing of prior decisions and plans*
- *Poliheuristic bias*
- *Shooting from the hip*
- *Polythink*
- *Group polarization effect”*

These biases can significantly affect the judgement of the decision makers and since the decision making process is seldom tracked and audited, their cognitive shortcuts are not analysed. Even when decision makers are aware of biases and perform a so called debiasing, they continue to make the same mistakes. A foreign policy analysis that disregard cognitive biases is an incomplete one.

National Self-image, Culture and Domestic Institutions

The country’s own national self-image is the foundation of how foreign policy is created. According to James Rosenau there are three main national image factors that influence foreign policy; size of the population, level of developed economy and level of democracy (Neack, 2008, p.84). However, there are plenty of other factors that go into formulating a national self-image. The self-image is also constituted by common and perpetuated idealized stereotypes that are shared and confirmed by its inhabitants. The national self-image and culture are greatly influencing the domestic institutions of the country. For example, research

shows that countries who call themselves 'democratic' are less likely to go to war than countries who do not. The idea of democracy is connected to peace, hence leading to more peaceful political decision making (Neack, 2008, p.92-93). When the inhabitants of a nation accept their national self-image as true they are also more likely to accept the decisions of their political leaders, if it reflects back to the national self-image.

The Role of Public Opinion

The relationship between policy makers and public opinion is to be analysed thoroughly to understand policy making. The public opinion is a great influencer when it comes to policy making, which has been illustrated many times throughout history. Further, the public opinion is especially taken into account during elections when the politicians are more likely to please the public in order to get the popular votes. (Mintz & DeRouen, *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making*, 2010, p. 131).

There are two main views on how the relationship between public opinion and foreign policy making works. One of them implies that the public opinion does not matter for foreign policy making and the other one argues for a strong impact. The view that argues for a strong impact between public opinion and foreign policy making is based on a pluralist model of policy making and has a bottom-up approach. This means that the public and other groups of society can exert power over the policy makers and that the power is measurable and distinct (Neack, 2008, p. 115). The other view has a top-down approach meaning that the elite groups that rule society are influencing the public, hence leading to the general public having no power to influence the top. Furthermore, there are also scholars that argue for a more complicated relationship between the two views, aiming for a more dynamic view. There are societies where the public is uninformed and uninterested in foreign policy making, hence leading to foreign policy making that is unnoticed by the public. There are also societies where the public opinion is more sensitive to certain political decisions, leading to policy makers being fearful of upsetting the public. In these cases the policy makers can face hardships between dealing with the complex issues and stakes, while balancing the public opinion that may only have a simplistic view of the issue. This leads to policy makers being restrained by the tolerance level of the public. The relationship between policy makers and public opinion is nevertheless a complicated one, however it can be argued that democracies are more likely to have a bottom-up relationship whereas non-democracies are more likely to have a top-down relationship. This means that public opinions is of great importance to democracies and allowed to manifest itself on different levels of policy makers.

Media and Foreign Policy Making

The media also plays an important role in the relationship between the public opinion and foreign policy makers. The media is performing framing, which means that they describe an uprising foreign policy problem and solutions in a highly simplistic way. It can be described as: "selecting and highlighting some facets of events and issues and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation and / or solution."(Neack, 2008, p. 126) Most actors involved with foreign policy making are performing some kind of framing, the media usually frame the problem in a small and simplistic manner with an easy solution. This cognitive shortcut is being fed to the public who are accepting it as the truth. The art of framing can be used both against and for policy makers depending on who is controlling the framing.

"...a government can control its own response to a foreign policy event when it stays on top of the event, framing and explaining the event and the country's response to it. When policy makers let others - domestic political opponents, media - define the event, policy makers lose control of the event. Foreign policy choices in such a case are determined by actors outside the regime, if the regime cannot succeed in distracting the public in order to maintain its own foreign policy frame. Ultimately, the regime that loses control of the frame loses control of the policy."(Neack, 2008, p.127)

This quote highlights the importance of the public opinion and sentiment and how it will shape the foreign policy making.

Globalization & Foreign Policy Analysis

Globalization has greatly impacted the foreign and domestic policy making and will continue to do so in our ever growing globalized world. Globalization has made states weaker and is slowly undermining its domestic and foreign policies, while NGOs and IOs are on the influential uprise. There are both negative and positive aspects of the rise of these non-governmental groups, as the world is facing both terrorist networks as well as groups that investigate and act against human rights violation in authoritarian and semi-democratic states. Terrorist-networks use strategic communication through the internet and media through a grassroots mobilization approach which has proven successful for these groups hence leading to an increased security threat around the world.

Summary Foreign Policy Analysis

This section about foreign policy analysis has highlighted the complex and intrinsic relationship between the actors in domestic and international environments and how dependent they are on each other. The foreign policy making is a result of many coalitions of these actors on a multilevel and multifaceted level. Foreign policy decision making is also seldom, if ever, conducted from a rationalist approach. Instead, a complex cognitive and psychological mindset needs to be taken into account when understanding and conducting foreign policy decision making.

Theoretical Framework

Application to Research Question

The combination of nation branding theory and foreign policy analysis will form the analytical framework for how the research question of this paper is going to be answered. The research question: *In nation branding, how does the Swedish Government manage the tensions between conflicting foreign policy goals, especially the tension between economic interests in arms export and promotion of human rights?*, will use foreign policy analysis to assess and understand the complex relationship between the Swedish government and the actors that influence their policy making. Nation branding theory will be used to analyse the Swedish nation branding policy and execution and its tension of policy goals between economic interest and humanitarian work.

Combining Nation Branding and Foreign Policy Analysis

Foreign policy decision making is a complex and dynamic process where many actors, groups and interests are to be taken into account. It is not seldom that interests clash and policy makers are caught in between policies. In the case of Sweden, the policy makers have tried to balance their economic interests with their human rights values and formed somewhat conflicting foreign policies. Their nation branding policy where they both promote strong human rights and the sales of arms to countries that violate human rights is the core issue of this research paper. How did the decision making process evolve for the Swedish government to execute this foreign policy? Which actors are pushing their agendas here? How does a country balance their moral values with economic gains? To be able to answer these questions as well as the research question, this section will combine and form a theoretical foundation which will be applied in the analysis section.

As presented in the literature review, the strategic execution and development of nation branding is a well-used framework for countries worldwide. The nation branding concepts

will be directly applied to Sweden's nation branding policy. The foreign policy analysis will help assess the nation branding policy, and the two conflicting policies that are under the roof of this policy. The combination of theories and concepts will help investigate new correlations and viewpoints not seen before.

The Basic Foundation of Nation Branding Analysis

Firstly, to be able to analyse and understand a nation's competitive identity, there needs to be a set foundational ground. Foreign policy analysis will help set this foundation in terms of setting the political worldview (Marxism, liberalism and realism), level of analysis (individual, state and system) and decision making model (rational, cognitive, polyheuristic and game theory). Based on the political worldview among the Swedish decision makers, level of analysis and decision making model the Swedish nation branding policy can be assessed in a proper manner. The nation branding is seen here as something fluid and dynamic whereas the foreign policy analysis is seen as a set toolkit to understand, evaluate and analyse Sweden's nation branding. The dynamic nation branding theory together with the fixed foreign policy analysis tool creates a unique theoretical foundation to help answer the research question in this study. Not only is the nation branding theory applied to foreign policy analysis, but its contradictory features are also applied. The tension within the nation branding policy needs an analytic framework in terms of decision making comprehension which the foreign policy analysis will provide.

Public Opinion in Nation Branding and FPA

The most central concepts from nation branding theory will be combined with the central concepts from foreign policy analysis. According to Anholt, a successful competitive strategy is dependent on a two-way communication between the public and policy makers. The public opinion approval of policy making is key for creating a legitimate and democratic state. The role of public opinion in policy making is a vital concept within foreign policy making as well. Two main views are present in foreign policy making; the bottom-up approach and the top-down approach, which will be applied to the case of Sweden and their nation branding policy. Furthermore, the public opinion's trust in the policy makers heavily influence the relationship and will make the public overlook or pay attention to certain issues and policies they might not agree to.

The Competitive Identity Hexagon and FPA

A central concept in Anholts' competitive identity theory is the hexagon figure which outlines six communication outlets where a nation create their reputation, namely; people, tourism, brands, policy, investment, and culture. These outlets form a significant part of nation branding theory and each outlet will be analysed from a foreign policy analysis viewpoint. Since these outlets can be both deliberately and accidental, foreign policy analysis can help establish which one is which as well as measure their outcomes and effects. Every act of communication needs to be seen as a part of a bigger picture where each point of the hexagon work together to form a national strategy.

In nation branding, the reputational value of a country is challenging for the policy makers to control, since a reputation, both good and bad, can stick with a country for decades and is partly out of the country's control. From a foreign policy analysis viewpoint, this can be hard to account for due to its somewhat uncontrollable nature. However, in this project foreign policy analysis will give the tools to map out different scenarios regarding factors like these, when for example conducting game theory analysis. Other complex factors such as stakeholders' goals and size, as well as governmental goals can be outlined comprehensible with help from the analytic and inclusive nature of foreign policy analysis.

Short-term and Long-term Goals

In accordance with nation branding theory, a nation needs a set agenda and goals. As explained in the literature review, there are a range of set goals for building a nation's competitive identity. These long-term and short-term goals will be applied and compared to Sweden's strategic branding goals and analysed from a foreign policy analysis framework. In addition to the FPA framework, the case of Sweden will also be evaluated with help from Anholt's six-point model mentioned in the literature review. The six-point model of evaluation will be combined with tools from FPA for example; level of analysis, national self-image, decision making model and potential biases. National self-image is a concept that both nation branding theory and foreign policy analysis value as an important notion. Size of population, level of developed economy, shared and perpetuated stereotypes, domestic institutions and level of democracy are a few factors used to analyse and understand foreign policy decision making.

Since nation branding is a political policy that involves a high financial value, the stakes are high. Anholt argues that it is one of the most valuable assets for a country and one of the main responsibilities for governments in the 21st century. Since nation branding as a policy is inherently complex with ranging ramifications and outcomes, the foreign policy analysis is

a necessary tool to be able to fully comprehend the contradictory policies at play. Since foreign policy is usually volatile to international factors, characterized by high risk, created with incomplete information or information asymmetry, and at the same time conducted with multiple stakeholders interests and high risk assessments, it is safe to say that foreign policy decision making is a tough and complicated process. Nation branding is no exception and perhaps the contradictory policies is an outcome of this intricate process where every citizen is a stakeholder.

Interviewing in Connection to the Theoretical Framework

The chosen data collection methods for this research are interviews and secondary data. This section will link together the theoretical framework with theoretical driven variables and interview questions. The interviews will play a significant role in data collection since this will give a unique insight into how the interviewees view the combination of the two theories. The interviews will function as data collection on how the interviewees themselves view a simplified image of Sweden and its reputation as well as their interpretation of how the world views Sweden. This will help unfold the different images and clichés about Sweden from both the individual level but also a perceived system level.

Anholt's nation branding theory places substantial significance on the national reputation and perception. Therefore, the interviewees will be asked about their impression on how Sweden is viewed and what reputation Sweden has. As Anholt has explained, the perception of a country has great effects on the overall reputation and nation branding success. Anholt is also interested in the success rate or failure rate, therefore the interviewees will be asked about their perception of this. Another important term in Anholt's theory is public diplomacy which also will be investigated. The interviewees will be asked how they perceive their own ability to influence the policy makers, both from a citizen standpoint and from a professional standpoint. According to the holistic communication approach, gaps in communication can easily occur and therefore it is important to minimize the risk of this. The interviewees will be asked to elaborate on their views and knowledge of gaps in the communication. The information gaps will play a significant role in this research since the aim of this project is to find potential gaps in their foreign policy, more specifically nation branding policy. Sweden's competitive identity and its real identity will be investigated and evaluated in order to find potential gaps. Any communication gaps will be looked into in order to figure out if these gaps are significant or non significant for the overall image of Sweden.

As for foreign policy analysis, Neack presents the three different levels of analysis; individual level, state level and system level. The interviewees will be asked to differentiate and analyse the different levels of a society from a nation branding and decision making process standpoint. Neack also places importance on the different decision making models (the rational actor model, the cognitive model and poliheuristic theory) and therefore the interviewed persons will be asked on how they perceive the government's decision making process in regards to the case selected. Questions will be asked to get the interviewees to argue for why the Swedish government are making and arguing for their nation branding decisions. The interviewees reasoning and understanding of how a decision making process is established will function as important data for establishing which form of foreign policy analysis Sweden is using politically. Potential biases in decision making will be brought up and discussed in order to evaluate their importance to the decision making process.

Neack highlights the relationship between public opinion and political decisions. Therefore, the power of the people and how media frames certain issues and political decisions will be asked to the interviewees. Potential risks or benefits with media and framing will be discussed in order to get insight into the interviews personal and professional opinion on the matter.

Below is a table of the three-step argument from theory to variables or issued identified by theory to questions to ask.

Theory	Variables identified by theory	Questions to ask
Anholt & Neack	Perception & reputation	-What image does Sweden have abroad? -If you could describe Sweden with only a few words, what would they be? -What stereotypes of Sweden exists?
Anholt	Success rate and failure rate	-Would you consider the foreign policy as successful? -What do you think could harm the image of Sweden? -What can help build a more positive image of Sweden? -Does Sweden have a strong brand in comparison to other countries?
Anholt	Holistic communication & Public diplomacy	-What differences do you think there is between Sweden's competitive identity and its real identity? -In our information age, do you think Sweden might have a hard time with "controlling" their reputation?

		-Do you think the image of Sweden matches the real identity of Sweden? -Do you believe Sweden's communication platforms send out a unified message?
Anholt	The six communication outlets	-Are Sweden strong in promoting these six outlets? -Is any outlet more important than the other? -Is any stakeholder more important than another?
Anholt	Long term and short term goals	-What are Sweden's long term goals? -What are Sweden's long term goals? -What are some of Sweden's buzz?
Dinnie & Anholt	Legitimacy & ethical implications	-Do you see any ethical implications or potential problems with branding and marketing a nation? -Do you think Sweden have a challenge when it comes to balancing values and interests? -How do you think the image of Sweden affects its legitimacy? -Do you think Sweden would gain more legitimacy if they made their weapon export laws more tight? How about if they stopped exporting weapons?
Neack	Decision making model & biases	-Do you think Sweden have a challenge when it comes to balancing values and interests? -Do you think selling weapons are important for Sweden politically? Economically? -Do you think Sweden has conflicting foreign policies when looking at the weapon selling policy and the development of human rights abroad policy?
Neack	Media & foreign policy	-How do think the incident of the Saudi Arabia-scandal affected Sweden and its legitimacy? -In our information age, do you think Sweden might have a hard time with "controlling" their reputation? -What role does the media have in affecting the brand of Sweden?

Fig. 3

The combination of theories offers a unique comprehension and basis of analysis of the Swedish policy makers decision making process leading up to their nation branding strategy and potential inconsistencies. The merger of the two theories will take the analysis of Sweden's nation branding foreign policy to the next level and highlight conflict of interests, inconsistencies and dilemmas that the Swedish government is trying to handle. The theory of foreign policy analysis will give a significant importance to the level of analysis in terms of highlighting the crucial role of the individual, the people, the media and the decision makers.

The holistic communication model together with the public opinion theory will highlight the complicated process of political decision making and execution.

As explained above, the two theories will be interlinked and combined during the interviews. There will be no clear distinction of the different theories to the interviewee as the interview guide will have a flow of interlinked question based on the evidence this research is looking for. The evidence this research is hoping to find is how the decision making model in regards to nation branding looks like. What are the Swedish government trying to communicate to the world, and what are they trying to hide? Is their foreign policy regarded consistent by the public? How is it analysed from the different levels of society? And what happens to a country's image if they have inconsistent foreign policies?

Methodology

This section aims to explain and argue for which methods and procedures were used in this research paper in order to highlight the understanding of knowledge creation and philosophy of science. The methodology choices in this research project will be explained and argued for, as well as considerations involving the data collection.

Philosophy of Science & Deductive and Inductive Reasoning

This research will position itself in the debate between inductive and deductive reasoning, as it is a policy assessment of Swedish nation branding. Based on this, there are no hypothesis drawn from the theory, which also means that there is no hypothesis to be tested. This is a normal practices when doing an deductive approach. On the other hand, the research will not use a classic inductive approach where the research starts with gathering data in form of interviews and observation. The research will have elements of both inductive and deductive approaches.

Epistemology & Ontology

This research paper is designed within the field of social science and contain three foundational beliefs of philosophy of science, namely; ontology, epistemology and methodology. The ontology can be described as how the scientific philosophy understands the world, whereas epistemology can be described as how knowledge is created (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The methodology is setting the foundation on what kind of worldview the research is guided by.

The ontology constructivist perspective sees knowledge comprehension as something that is solely dependent on our own ability to make connections between objects and relations. The ontology of constructivism focus on how these connections are formed in front of our eyes and put great emphasis on causal relationships, actions, thoughts and mentalities. (Egholm, 2014, p.26)

The social constructivist epistemology stems from believing that time and place are moving, therefore knowledge is constantly changing. Emphasis is put on understanding phenomenon by looking at how and why the phenomenon is being explained and made sense of. The knowledge is an imprint of a specific point in time and place and therefore the social constructivist epistemology has some traits of realism. (Egholm, 2014, p.148)

The Constructivist Worldview

This research paper will use the constructivist worldview, which is typically used in qualitative studies. Here, the meaning of worldview is “a basic set of beliefs that guide action”(Guba, 1990, p.17).

There are four kinds of constructivism, namely; discourse/communication constructivism, social constructivism, cognitive constructivism and socio-technical constructivism. The discourse/communication constructivism is understanding reality through language, metaphors, storytelling and rhetorics. The social constructivism understands reality from social groups who creates reality collectively and in accordance with their interests and goals. Here, emphasis is put on groups that gain power through these constellations which is met with resistance by other power groups. Cognitive constructivism understands reality from the neurological and cognitive processes that is developed by our brains. The human perception of the world is a biological process that has shaped through our lived experiences. Socio-technical constructivism understands the world as a dynamic network between humans and objects, for example; new technologies. All these actors connect ideas, interests and actions into one construction that forms reality (Egholm, 2014, p.142-146).

All four previously named constructivism will be used as a method in this project, but emphasis will be put on the social constructivist worldview since this is the most fitting to the nature of the research question.

“Social constructivist believe that individuals seek understanding in the world in which they live and work. Individuals develop subjective meaning of their experiences - meanings directed toward certain objects or things. These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas.”(Creswell, 2014, p.8)

This quote highlights the social surroundings that influence each individual and mean that perception of reality is highly subjective. The social constructivist worldview will form the basis of analysis when investigating decision making processes in the political context.

Furthermore, according to Gergen (1999) there are four basic assumptions in social constructivism;

1. There is no necessary correlation between the world and our concepts of the world.

Our world of language is simply a metaphor of what we perceive as reality and is by no means a mirror of reality. Even a simple task of collectively identifying an everyday object is an impossible task, since each person's background will shape the way they see the object.

2. Our descriptions of reality originate from our social relations.

Our worldviews are interlinked with other people's worldviews, which means that our understanding of the world is collective and dynamic. Only when we assign value to things collectively, do the things become valuable. Even our own identities are shaped by social conventions and it is impossible to distinguish between the public and private identity.

3. We shape our future through our understanding of the world.

Only when we reflect critically on our language and social constructions is when we are able to change it. Our ability to critically reflect on problems and issues in our world is dependent on our ability to be aware of the social construction we live by.

4. Reflecting on our understanding of the world is vital for our future well-being.

This reflects back on societal change where marginalized groups have gotten more rights in Western societies due to the changing way of describing and speaking about them. (Beck Holm, 2013, p.123-129)

As for interviewing, the social constructivist worldview asks general questions with broad endings so the participant can fully engage with subjective meaning. The subjective meanings are usually formed by historical and social contexts they are in, which is the focus of this worldview. In a constructivist approach the researcher is expected to make sense of the meanings that others have of the world but also be aware of that their own background is forming the process and result of the research.

Criticism of Social Constructivism

Social constructivism is like all worldviews subject to a couple of criticisms. One of them is that according social constructivism, scientific progress can only happen due to our way of speaking about it differently. A scientific breakthrough in medical research is hardly an outcome of our way of talking about it. For this reason, social constructivism are best applied in social sciences and not scientific ones. However, this claim is also flawed since the only access we have to the world of science is through our language.

Social constructivism has also been accused of its idealism. This means that the social constructivist worldview is simply intellectualist prejudice. The people outside of the academic world might not agree with that the social world is constructed but instead produced by us, as argued by Marx (Beck Holm, 2013, p.138).

Research Design

The empirical data collection of this qualitative research paper is founded on interviews and secondary data. This section will argue for the specific use of interviews and secondary data.

Interviews

Interviews were chosen as the most appropriate data collection due to the complicated relational structure of political decision making processes and foreign policy analysis. Observation was deemed out since there was no possibility of observing the actual decision making processes at play. To observe such a complex and broad spectrum of political decision making would be impossible under the time frame of this research paper.

Scientific interviews as a methods allowed this research to understand the world from the interviewees point of view and unfold the meaning of their experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.1). In order to conduct the interviews in a scientific way, this research followed the seven steps of Kvale & Brinkmann's interview design. The seven steps and how they were applied will now be presented below.

1.Thematizing	Formulation of the purpose of the research. Why and what theme was chosen.
2. Designing	Design the study according to a plan. Consider all seven stages of interviewing.

3. Interviewing	Create an interview guide and conduct the interviews accordingly.
4. Transcribing	Transcribe the interviews from oral speech to written text in preparation for the analysis.
5. Analyzing	Decide the appropriate level and mode of analysis.
6. Verifying	Check the validity, reliability and generalizability of interview findings.
7. Reporting	Report the findings and results in accordance to scientific criteria, ethics and methods applied.

Fig 4. (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009, p.102)

1. *Thematizing*

As for *thematizing*, the goal and purpose for every research must be formulated before the interviewing takes place. The purpose of this research is to investigate the decision making process leading up to Sweden's contradictory foreign policy regarding nation branding and how this influences Sweden's image abroad and legitimacy. This will guide the research into analysing how Sweden balances arms export with strong human rights advocacy in a global economy. No hypothesis will be tested, which will lead to less structured interviews, due to less sensitivity of standardized questions and formulations. Because of the goal and purpose of this study, it was decided that interviews would be the best fit as research method.

2. *Designing*

The *designing* of the research has been done with the seven steps in mind as well as with moral implications. When conducting interviews, the steps needs to be planned and thought out both before and after the actual interviews. A qualitative method approach has been chosen for this research and data collection will come from interviews and secondary data.

3. *Interviewing*

The *interviewing* part of the research was done with a planned interview guide and reflective approach that asked follow up questions that were not in the interview guide. These semi-structured interviews was conducted both in person and over the phone and were all audio recorded. The goal of the interviews was to gain knowledge about the subject's life world, interpret meaning of described events and follow up with further and new questions. Before the interviews, an interview guide was created which included the research topics

with suggested questions due to the semi-structured nature. The interview guide was created from the theoretical foundation and had both the researcher questions and interviewer questions. The researcher questions was formulated in a theoretical language, which functioned as the base of the interviewer questions. Each researcher question had several interviewer questions, all formulated in a conversational language and these questions were the ones asked to the interviewee. Below is an example of how the researcher questions and interviewer questions would look like.

<i>Researcher questions</i>	<i>Interviewer questions</i>
What image does Sweden have abroad?	-If you could describe Sweden with only a few words which words would it be? -What do you think could harm the image of Sweden abroad? -What do you think could help build a more positive image of Sweden abroad?
How does Sweden balance conflicting foreign policy?	-Would you consider the nation branding foreign policy as successful? -Do you think exporting arms are important for Sweden politically? Economically? -Do you think Sweden would gain more legitimacy if they made their weapon export laws more tight?

Fig. 5.

Through this process the interview guide was created and made the interviewing structured and enabled fallback questions if some questions were unclear or confusing to the interviewees. The interview guide started with introductory questions, followed with main questions and lastly debriefing questions. Each interview guide was edited to fit the interviewees special knowledge and organization. The full interview guide can be found in the appendix.

Seven people from several organizations and with different specialities within Swedish foreign policy, nation branding and Swedish arms export were interviewed for this research. Four of the interviews were conducted in person and three interviews were conducted over the phone. The full list of the interviewees are provided below.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Time and location of interview</i>

1. Mattias Hallberg	Political & economic advisor for Moderaterna. Previously employed by Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Washington D.C	Moderaterna	Personal Interview, Stockholm 29th of March 2017
2. Maja Åberg	Advocacy Officer Specialization: Swedish weapon industry	Amnesty International	Personal interview 30th March 2017, Amnesty HQ in Stockholm
3. Ann-Marie Ekengren	Professor in Swedish foreign policy & International politics	Göteborgs Universitet	Phone interview 31th of March 2017
4. Greger Widgren	Retired diplomat Specialization in law & negotiation	Swedish Research Institute, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Phone interview 4th of April 2017
5. Linda Åkerström	Lobbyist against Sweden's weapon industry and export. Author of Swedish arms export book.	Svenska Freds- och Skiljedomsföreningen (Lobby organization against Swedish arms export)	Personal Interview, Svenska Freds Office, 4th of April 2017
6. Jacob Stenberg	Analyst with specialization in the image of Sweden and communication. PhD in Communication from Lund University	SI -Svenska Institutet	Personal interview, SI HQ, Stockholm 4th of April 2017
7. Olle Wästberg	Expert on the image of Sweden. Previous Consul general in New York at Swedish Embassy. Director general at SI for five years.	Self-employed	Phone interview, Gothenburg 26th of May 2017

Fig. 6.

During the interviews, the interviewees were encouraged to speak as freely as possible without interference (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.128). The personal interviews were conducted with focus on full eye-contact and attentive listening in order to create a

comfortable and focused interview without distractions. The phone interviews were also conducted with attentive listening but with more attentive words from the interviewer, such as, “yes” and “mm” to let the interviewee know that he or she was heard and understood. Each interview was conducted with three steps in mind; introductory information and questions, main questions and debriefing in the end. During the interviews, the interviewees were encouraged to speak as freely as possible without interference from the interviewer. The interviewer would ask follow-up question on interesting new topics, clarify questions if needed and simply confirm what the interviewee was saying without imposing views or opinions. Each interview ended with the interviewer asking if there was anything the interviewee felt they needed to speak about that had not been mentioned, or simply add to anything. This was done to ensure that the interviewees felt free to speak their mind without direction from the interviewer.

4. Transcribing

The *transcribing* part of the research was done from the audio recordings from each interview to transform the interview conversation to written text. Kvale & Brinkmann writes that “...transcription is an interpretative process, where the differences between oral speech and written text give rise to a series of practical and principal issues.”(2009, p.177). The art of transcriptions is subject to plenty of pitfalls. For example, non-verbal language is hard to describe in written text, as well as irony, body language, tone of voice, intonations and breathing.

The transcribing in this research was done word-by word, but without sounds such as “hmm”, pauses and laughing if it was considered non-meaningful. Each interview was transcribed and thereafter controlled a second time in order to minimize the risk for misinterpretation and lost meaning and to ensure that each interview was reliable, valid and ethically appropriate. The reliability, validity and ethical implications of the transcription procedure was done in accordance with the relevancy and usefulness of the research. Two of the interviews were conducted in English and five of them in Swedish. Each interviewee was given the option to chose themselves between speaking Swedish or English. This was done in order to make the interviewees feel as comfortable as possible and not hindered by any limitations in their language.

5. Analyzing

The analysis was done with focus on three different approaches; analysis of meaning, linguistic analysis and theoretical analysis. The table below highlights each approach and its core analysis.

<i>Analyses focusing on meaning</i>	Meaning coding Meaning condensation Meaning interpretation
<i>Analyses focusing on language</i>	Linguistic analysis Conversational analysis Narrative analysis Discourse analysis Deconstruction
<i>General analyses</i>	Bricolage Theoretical reading

Fig. 7. (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009, p.197)

Furthermore, the analysis followed Miles & Huberman's five step ladder of abstraction.

Step 1	Summary sheets, collecting notes, transcribing interviews.
Step 2	Theory-driven notes that were tested on the data.
Step 3	New data-driven codes and recoding, identifying patterns.
Step 4	Identifying the theoretical concepts.
Step 5	Organize findings into coherent story.

Fig. 8. (1994, p.92)

After each interview transcription, notes were added and summarized in preparation for the coding and analysis. All transcriptions were then added into the coding software program Dedoose, which helps organize codes for qualitative studies. Based on the theoretical framework, codes were created and the collected data could be arranged under each individual code. During the process, more codes were added as new topics came to light that fitted the theoretical framework. Notes were also written down as memos for interesting points for future analysis. When all the data was coded, the software program helped gather all relevant quotes and data for creating a comprehensive analysis. Some of the quotes used in the analysis are shortened due to partly irrelevant information. This is called meaning condensation and was used based on Kvale & Brinkmann, where long statements are condensed into shorter and more precise statements to highlight meaning (p.205-207). Since interviews were conducted in both English and Swedish, the codes were conducted in their original language. The Swedish quotes were translated into English only when being used in the final analysis. The translation was done in a delicate manner to assure that no meaning was interpreted wrong or lost.

6. Verifying

As for any qualitative research, the validity and reliability must be discussed and controlled for in regards to using interviews as data collection method. As for objectivity, a concern needs to be raised about if knowledge produced from interviews can be free from bias. Kvale & Brinkmann argue for different uses of objectivity, namely; freedom from bias, reflexivity about presumptions, intersubjective consensus, adequacy to the object and the object's ability to object (2009, p.242). These five uses of objectivity has been accounted for when collecting the data.

When using interviews as a data collection tool, it must be assumed that the interviewees are speaking from their experiences and opinions. This may lead to subjectivity and distortion of the truth. To avoid this, the interview data must be researched and cross-checked to verify the statements. However, all questions and answers are not verifiable, for example the question about what image Sweden has abroad. Data of this opinionated nature was allowed.

Additionally, the research needs to be consistent and trustworthy. During the interviews and transcription, the information was tested for reliability by looking at the consistency of the answers.

7. Reporting

This research will only report and present what the author chooses to. Kvale and Brinkmann writes "The interview report is itself a social construction in which the author's choice of writing style and literary devices provide a specific view on the subjects' lived world." (2009, p.267). When reporting the knowledge from the interviews, the link between the original conversation and the final report is missing. The transformation is often hidden in a "black box" where "...the readers will have to guess about the social context of the interview, the instructions given to the interviewees, the questions posed, and the procedures used during transcribing and analyzing the interviews." (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.270). To avoid to lose important information it is crucial to practice a set methodology and treat everything as data.

There is also ethical considerations when reporting the data. All interviewees was informed about the purpose of this research and agreed to be audio recorded as well as be presented with name and title in the project. No confidentiality agreement was necessary for the research and no interviewee asked to be anonymous. No significant ethical and political

consequences of the interview report is to be expected from this research, hence no confidentiality or anonymity.

Secondary Data

Interviews and secondary data was selected as sufficient data collecting for the purpose of this research. Sweden's government has made huge efforts to be as transparent as possible which has resulted in that most information about the government and political policies can be found online. The main sources of secondary data has been collected from Sweden's official governmental websites and the specific ministries in which this research is looking especially into. There has also been data collection from non governmental organizations such as Amnesty International's official reports on Sweden's arms trade and the lobby organization Svenska Freds- and Skiljedomsföreningen, whose ambition is to end Sweden's trade export completely. Secondary data also comes from the book "Den Svenska Vapenexporten" by Linda Åkerström who is employed by Svenska Freds and expert on global arms trade, and "The Oxford Handbook of Swedish Politics". More specifically, the secondary data from the Swedish government comes from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture and Democracy, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of Justice, Business Sweden, Svenska Institutet, Visit Sweden and NSU (Council of promotion of Sweden Abroad).

The use of secondary data was considered crucial for a comprehensive and reliable research paper. Solely using interviews as data collection was decided incomprehensible since the topic of Swedish foreign policy and politics has been well researched and written about by scholars. The combination of interviews and secondary data was considered the best approach in creating a reliable and valid report on the matter. Also, the secondary data helped build the background and case selection as well as helped formed the interview guide.

Data Analysis

This section will present the findings and analyse them in accordance with the theoretical framework and codes developed. The codes are created based on the variables subtracted from the theory as presented in fig. 4. There were also data-driven codes added during the coding procedure. The analysis will be divided into two parts. One part will analyse Sweden's nation branding and perceptions and reputations of the country. Further, the communication outlets, stakeholders and the public diplomacy will be analysed. The first

section will also analyse Sweden's long term and short term nation branding goals. The second section will analyse Sweden's contradictory foreign policies, which is the core issue of this research paper. The arms export and the human rights policy will be analysed and variables such as legitimacy and ethical issues will be brought up. The second section will also analyse the Swedish government's decision making model and biases when creating its foreign policy.

The two sections aims to provide the foundation when answering the research question of this paper: *In nation branding, how does the Swedish Government manage the tensions between conflicting foreign policy goals, especially the tension between the economic gains of arms export and promotion of human rights?*

Sweden's Nation Branding & Perception

When looking into what kind of perception and reputation Sweden has around the world, it was important to establish an all around image of Sweden, both from an individual standpoint and how individuals understand how other people see Sweden. Since nation branding stems from the already existing image of a country and wants to use this as leverage for strategic purposes, the current image is of high importance. The current reputation of Sweden followed a similar theme among almost all of the interviewees. They explain Sweden as an open, tolerant, modern, non-corrupt country with great nature and with political focus on the welfare state, strong human rights and free trade. There were also indications that people experienced Sweden as being very influential despite its small population, but also that Swedes may think that it is more influential and known than what it actually is. A few people also mentioned that the image of Sweden has been questioned and criticized lately as a response to the immigrant crisis and its effect on the welfare state. When asked to describe the image of Sweden with only a few words, one interviewee answered:

"One is progressive. Another one is secular. A third is non-corrupt, dependable. (...) Sweden is pretty weak when it comes to culture and tourism, we don't have any famous landmarks like the Eiffel tower for example. But we are strong when it comes to being a well functioning society. In those terms, we are top in the world."

-Olle Wästberg

This quote highlights the political status of Sweden in the world and downplays the culture and tourism as a large part of the Swedish brand. The same interviewee goes on to further explain Sweden as a famous political example:

“We’ve been used as an example and tool fairly much. Just look at the latest election campaign in the USA where both Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton used Sweden as a rolemodel.”

-Olle Wästberg

This further strengthens the image of Sweden as a political role model when it comes to social welfare, free education, equality, human rights, democracy, non-corruption and universal health care. The secondary data coming from the Swedish government mostly confirm the image of Sweden as described by the interviewees. Their research about the image of Sweden abroad highlight these areas; Sweden is not as famous as Swedes might think, Sweden is more famous than similar European countries, the image is mostly positive, the further away from Sweden - the less the impression of Sweden, stereotypes and clichés such as sex, wealth, somberness, blond and blue eyes are still strong. Strong areas are the Nobel prize, sports, the new Swedish model, international businesses and openness. Weak areas are culture, history, national politics and social competence. The study also mentions the negative reputation of Sweden and mentions small individual freedom, dark and cold climate, high prices, high taxes and hypocrisy regarding its arm export and alcohol regulation as well as thinking they always have the best solutions to problems⁴. The international Swedish companies are also a large part of the image of Sweden and the most famous ones are; Volvo, IKEA, Saab, Absolut Vodka, Electrolux, Ericson and H&M. Among these companies, IKEA was considered the single one most Swedish connected company, much depending on its branding with blue and yellow colors, Swedish names, foods and the effective and modern product system and prices.

The overall image of Sweden abroad is still resting on old perceptions and reputations. The governmental study also highlights the influence of the media when it comes to the image of Sweden abroad. They regard the media the most important tool to measure the current image of Sweden today.

Successful or Non Successful Nation Branding

The Swedish nation branding is a complex national strategy that is dependent on many different variables and stakeholders. Because of this, the brand of Sweden is not easy to

⁴ Bilder av Sverige i utlandet. Regeringskansliet. NSU. 2005.

control and the success rate of the national brand strategy is a dynamic and fluid measurement. When investigating the successfulness of the Swedish nation branding, the interviewees were asked if they regard the perception of Sweden as positive or negative. All of the interviewees regarded Sweden as having a positive brand, but a few of them raised concerns that negative perceptions had become a part of the brand in the last few years.

“We tell ourselves that it’s positive, and it is, especially in international media. Sweden has gotten a lot of bad media lately, but it has been very positive”

-Greger Widegren

The recent bad media was explained by the interviewees as being about the immigrant crisis, no-go zones for the police and a collapse of the welfare state. Some of these issues were referred to by the interviewees as being ‘fake news’ and being spread in social media by opposers of the Swedish political system. A few of them also mentioned Donald Trump and his statement about Sweden and its refugee crisis, that caused a media storm.

“The last month has been very interesting since the world’s most powerful man mentioned Sweden in a way that is not necessarily true. That got enormous of attention, and can that hurt the image of Sweden? Yes, it is possible. We can see in our reports that the americans are interested in Sweden’s ‘extreme’ positioning when it comes to immigration.”

-Jacob Stenberg

The interviewees paint a picture of Sweden with an overall positive reputation but also a fragile one that is much dependent on traditional and social media. Sweden has been criticized and getting negative press in the media lately, which makes the interviewees question whether or not the brand is still as positive. However, they also confirm the long withstanding positive image and the success rate of the nation branding of the Swedish model. One interviewee explain the successes of Swedish nation branding:

“I think it’s important to stress the fact that we are sort of this market economy with a conscience. That would be a way to pitch it at least. Like we do have market economy. We value individual freedom but we try to tend to have a big public sector with a very strong welfare state and it’s solidary European in a sense, but promotes growth and efficiency that is more maybe North American in a sense.”

-Mattias Hallberg

This quote describes Sweden as a “market economy with a conscience” and go on to talk about that the Swedish model has elements of both European and North American values.

The secondary data retrieved from SI (Svenska Institutet) who constantly measure the effects of the promotion strategy abroad have discovered that the conditions for promotion of Sweden abroad has become worse in 2016 compared to 2012. The report state that the world has become more polarized and less trusting of true information and facts. The public conversation, in both traditional media and digital media has become tougher with elements of hate, threats and less respect for facts and nuances. They state that Sweden has, in the recent years, been affected by negative rumours and in some cases disinformation, especially in regards to areas concerning migration and integration. However, some conditions for Sweden's promotion has become better. The increase of digitalization has helped boost the communication across borders and a internet culture of sharing has become a valuable source of spreading information about Sweden. The NSU report makes a final remark that their current strategy is still relevant and successful. They also comment that the current challenges are being met with implemented strategic tools.

The six Communications Hexagon & Stakeholders

Anholt's six communications hexagon has been a central topic of the theory and will now be analysed based on the collected data. The six outlets consists of tourism, brands, people, policy, investment and culture. As analysed in the previous section, the Swedish nation branding was considered positive and successful both from the interviewees standpoint and from a governmental standpoint. When analysing the hexagon, the different areas of branding will be further investigated into more detail, in order to figure out if some areas are more successful than the others.

Tourism & Culture

There seems to be a somewhat weak focus on the culture and tourism part of the hexagon in comparison to the other parts. Swedish culture, tourism and nature was not a factor that the interviewees experienced as a key factor in the Swedish nation branding. A few of the interviewees even commented on a lack of focus on the promotion of tourism.

"I think that they have toned down this part of the foreign policy in the recent years, which is a shame. Now the focus is mostly on economic promotion and building a foundation for Sweden as an investment nation. I think they should do more for the parts they have cut down, such as culture and the image of Sweden. I think that is important."

-Olle Wästberg

The interviewee shows considerations for the impact of cutting down spending in the promotion of tourism and culture. In regards to Anholt, this interviewee shares his view on a holistic communications platform where each communications outlet needs to be promoted, due to their inter tangled nature. Interviewee Greger Widegren, a retired diplomat, explains his experience with promoting Swedish culture through the embassies:

“It’s not only about having offices, embassies and residences abroad, you also have to show Swedish architecture, Swedish carpentry and Swedish art, to show them ‘this is Sweden too’. You can even say that the embassies themselves are a representation of Sweden. To market Swedish art and Swedish design is an important part of that. That was our special mission when working towards an increase in export”

-Greger Widegren

This interviewee explain the holistic image of Sweden, and confirms the fact that all communications outlets are connected, but that the culture part is a strategic choice when promoting exports. As presented previously in this analysis, the weak areas of ‘brand Sweden’, was in fact culture and climate. The question remains if this is related to the perceived cut back on promoting these areas or if these areas themselves are harder to promote, or not economically interesting enough. The secondary data provides a similar assessment of the tourism situation. In surveys, people have stated that Sweden is too cold and expensive to visit. Sweden is also not considered a prioritized country for first time visits to Europe among American and Chinese tourists. However, points of interest for tourists include the ice hotel in Jukkasjärvi and the midnight sun. The report also state they wish to see more governmental spending towards promoting tourism⁵. As for culture, the report states that the knowledge about Swedish culture is limited, and that writers such as Astrid Lindgren and Henning Mankell are known only in a few countries.

Furthermore, the communication outlet of ‘culture’ are similar and not easy distinguishable from ‘people’. Since both ‘culture’ and ‘people’ entail famous writers, music artist and sports stars, this section will be elaborated upon more in the next section.

Brands & People

When asking about brands and people, there was a consensus among all interviewees that this was a strong part of the brand. Some interviewees even claimed that this had substantial more influence than any governmental policy and branding strategy could ever

⁵ Bilder av Sverige i utlandet. Regeringskansliet. NSU. 2005. p. 192

have. Especially IKEA was mentioned several of times as a huge impact on the brand of Sweden:

“The image of Sweden is so much more than what the government and state do. I really think that IKEA has a bigger impact on the image of Sweden than most governmental actors do. The fact that you have these yellow and blue department stores all over the world who sell meatballs, furniture with Swedish names and they have brochures and similar things.

-Olle Wästberg

The role of IKEA for the brand of Sweden is by no doubt an important component in building the nation brand. However, one must also reflect on the fact that IKEA are leveraging the already positive image of the Swedish brand to their advantage. If the Swedish brand, colors and names did not already have positive connotations, it would be unimaginable for a company to use this in their marketing. IKEA as a multinational corporation also have branded themselves as more and more Swedish over the years, changing the logo to yellow and blue from the former white and red logo. It is safe to say that both IKEA and Sweden as a nation are using each other to gain a more positive reputation and perception abroad.

Not only companies are connected to help building the Swedish nation brand abroad, but people are too. When asking the interviewees about this, one of the first to come to mind was ABBA, Olof Palme, Alfred Nobel, Raoul Wallenberg, Zlatan, Björn Borg and Gert Wingårdh.

“If you look at the most famous Swedish people, you have Raoul Wallenberg who is historically the most noticed, by Nobel for example. Then we have people like ABBA and Björn Borg who also play a part in connecting Sweden to things.”

- Olle Wästberg

“I think that whatever Zlatan says about Sweden is kind of 10 000 times more influential among millions of people than what the Swedish government does.”

-Mattias Hallberg

The impact of famous Swedish people around the world was considered very important among the interviewees. Some of these famous Swedes have millions of followers and fans around the world which adds to the Swedish brand on a deeper level. An emotional bond to someone Swedish impacts their overall reputation of Sweden and Swedish people. The secondary data from the governmental report about the image of Sweden abroad confirms the notion of the importance of famous Swedish people. However, they state that many

Swedish music performers such as Ace of Base, Cardigans and The Hives are famous abroad for their music but not their heritage. The report also states that the Swedish Royal family brings a positive reputation of Sweden, but mostly among the European countries. Famous Swedes may not be well known across the entire globe but only among certain geographical locations and groups.

Policy & Investment

As for Swedish political policies and investments, the interviewees were all explicit about the importance of free trade, exports and getting investments. A few of them mentioned how vulnerable Sweden is on its own and explained that the export is a key to Sweden's entire development and economic wealth.

"Sweden is extremely dependent on exports and always has been. Our prosperity rests completely on that we have successful products and getting well paid for them. To be in the forefront and having a technical development that make other countries want to buy our products, that we stay competitive, that is the core. Otherwise, we wouldn't be as well off as we are."

-Greger Widegren

This quote highlights why staying on top with technological developments and business opportunities is vital for Sweden's economic wealth. It is no surprise that the Swedish government is putting a large focus on their export strategy and economic growth as well as increasing interest for foreign investments, skilled professionals and students. One interviewee talked about his experiences with promoting Swedish entrepreneurship and trade at the Swedish embassy in Washington D.C:

"We really wanted to promote and rebrand to say that we are all of these positive things; creative, modern, a place where different cultures meet, a melting pot, and an entrepreneurial environment. I think they have been fairly successful with that. We were making sure that image was going to stick a bit faster than it would have."

-Mattias Hallberg

Sweden is putting a lot of emphasis on economic promotion and in today's globalized world, the competition is becoming tougher, which Sweden is trying to address with its aggressive export strategy. The secondary data shows the advantages and disadvantages actors deal with when deciding to invest in Sweden. The advantages of investing in Sweden are; a sophisticated market, educated workforce, high technical competence, good infrastructure

as well as being well-organized and safe. The disadvantages are considered; high costs, high taxes and small market⁶.

One interviewee mentioned the importance of Sweden's soft power and argued that this was a vital tool in order to push their political agenda. He also points out that Sweden would be vulnerable in a war situation and that a successful nation branding might be the reason other countries are willing to help in a situation of war:

“Sweden’s soft power is important to Sweden. Since we believe it’s important to push human rights and other similar policies, we need to be perceived in a positive manner. That’s why soft power is important for the image of Sweden. Also, soft power is connected to our military chances. If we were to be in a serious military crisis situation we would be dependent on help from abroad, from other countries. Other people would need to be willing to risk their lives for Sweden, and then we would need a very positive image of Sweden and its democracy.”

-Olle Wästberg

The secondary data confirms the notion of the importance of export for Sweden and its economic wealth. In the export strategy report conducted by the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation from 2015, the state that Sweden's export is still strong, but is losing export shares in comparison to the rest of the world. One of the challenges in the future is being able to keep up with our export market share across the world and create new markets in growing areas, such as Asia. The report states that Sweden will face significant challenges if they are not able to expand their exports into these markets.⁷ The report states that the Swedish export is not performing as well as they are hoping it to. The purpose of the report is to outline the current strategy to increase the exports. Both the interviewees and the secondary data confirms the importance of Swedish export for the prosperity of the country and highlights this area of the hexagon as one of the most prominent.

Holistic Communication & Public Diplomacy

This section will analyse how holistic the nation branding communication of Sweden is. As Anholt argues in his theory, the importance of a holistic communication is key for a successful nation branding. All stakeholders and governmental bodies need to send out the same, unified message. This section will analyse if Sweden have managed the complicated

⁶ Bilder av Sverige i utlandet. Regeringskansliet. NSU. 2005. p. 191

⁷ Sveriges exportstrategi. Regeringskansliet. Näringsdepartementet.

task of sending out a holistic nation branding or if 'brand Sweden' does not match the real Sweden. This is one interviewee's answer to the question if Sweden are what they portray themselves to be:

"I think to a certain extent it does, but there are definitely cracks in the shiny surface."

-Maja Åberg

"It's a fine line between communicating the best aspect of your country and sugar coating."

There's a fine line and it's hard to know when we're at that point. We probably have a tendency to sugar coat, maybe we are not too honest about the conflict of interest that are within the country. We tend to say that this is the homogenous image of Sweden, 'no one is a racist, we are happy and we are intellectual, everyone is consensus oriented'."

-Mattias Hallberg

Both these interviewees confirm that Sweden does live up to what it portrays themselves to be, but that it is a complex task to communicate a holistic image of an entire country. Most interviewees confirm the notion of the difficult task of holistic promoting and one even questioned if it was possible to correctly promote a country at all. However, they argued that in today's social media climate, Sweden would have a tough time with controlling their reputation since they have no way, nor sought to have, the ability to control everything that is being communicated about the country.

"Sweden is being written about online and it reaches volumes that is unheard of. That makes it almost impossible to control. It will spread in different ways."

-Olle Wästberg

Instead, Sweden is focusing on sending out a holistic message from the units that they can control. From secondary data, the holistic communications platforms of Sweden have been developed and unified over the last few years. Sweden's official online platform was developed between 2005-2006 and involved 500-600 people were part of the process. The platform also involves a unified graphical portfolio with images, logos, and font. The platform is being described as a successful tool in order to send out a unified message about Sweden to the rest of the world. The secondary data retrieved from the government in order to investigate their holistic communications outlet all endorse the notion of a unified communications outlet.

As for public diplomacy, there seems to be a slight coordination issue. As Anholt argues, the public diplomacy will be successful only when there is a two-way communication. When looking at the arms export policy, the government is by no means acting in a way that is approved by the public. Amnesty International released a report showing that 84% of Swedes think that Sweden should not export arms to countries where serious and/or widespread violations of human rights occur⁸. In this specific policy, it seems like there are a top-down approach. This means that the Swedish Government does not take into account what the public thinks about this issue. This apparent glitch in Swedish public diplomacy is being addressed by this interviewee:

“You know the feeling when you are doing something you know you shouldn’t? That feeling is not something you want to use in marketing. There is a large part of shame in many areas of this export”

-Linda Åkerström

This interviewee is confident that the lack of two-way communication in the public diplomacy regarding the arms export is known among the policy makers, and that they feel ashamed about it. This glitch will be elaborated upon more further in this analysis, as a well as discussion.

Long-term & Short-term Goals

Sweden are admin about formulating their short term and long term goals and being transparent about them. As has already been brought up in this analysis, the Swedish export strategy is a key to Sweden’s future prosperity, and contain both short term and long term goals. Other goals for the Swedish government is to push their human rights agenda. One interviewee describes the Swedish human rights strategy like this:

“I also think we think that our system is rigged for human rights champions. There’s a belief that we are successful maintaining and upholding human rights at the same time as promoting a lot of positive values. It’s very interesting, because it’s a huge focus on this in all embassies and foreign policies. We are probably the only country in the world, except the US, that are doing human rights reports for every country in the world. We are like policing the whole world in terms of human rights”

-Mattias Hallberg

⁸ Amnesty International Sverige.

<https://www.amnesty.se/vad-gor-vi/vapenhandel/svensk-vapenexport/> Published: 21.06.2016.
Retrieved 03.09.2017.

Interviewee Mattias Hallberg highlights the importance of human rights for Sweden as a political agenda and long term goal. Secondary data from the Ministry of Culture confirms the human rights agenda and explain that it is Sweden's foreign policy goal to make sure that all people around the world is benefitting from the human rights policies developed by the UN and other international forums⁹. As for the policies regarding the arms export, Sweden is currently developing a new regulatory framework in which organizations such as Amnesty International are hoping for a more strict framework. The framework is yet to be officially presented, but the drafts have shown no significant changes on arms trade to countries that violate human rights.

Sweden's Contradictory Foreign Policy - Legitimacy & Ethical Problems

When closer analysing the conflict of interest between the economic gains of exporting arms and the promotion of human rights, many ethical and legitimacy issues have risen. The interviewees were asked if they believe that Sweden might face legitimacy issues because of this contradiction. Most of them did not think that this would create legitimacy issues and that Swedes have a large trust in their own government to not do anything bad.

"I don't perceive these questions to lead to a lack of legitimacy to a larger extent"

-Ann-Marie Ekengren

"Generally I think that Swedish people tend to trust that the government is not doing anything too terrible. So if they say that they are not exporting anything bad, we trust them."

-Maja Åberg

The first quote indicate that the conflict of interest may not be particularly significant for Sweden's legitimacy both nationally and internationally. The second quote indicate that Swedes have high trust in their government and democratic system and would not suspect their government of doing anything bad. The high trust in the Swedish government could be leveraged in order to benefit economically from arms trade.

However, there were also interviewees who expressed their concern about Sweden not being credible when it comes to promoting human rights:

⁹ Regeringskansliet. Ministry of Culture.

<http://www.manskligarattigheter.se/en/human-rights-in-the-world/human-rights-in-swedish-foreign-policy> Retrieved 03.09.2017

“I think the key issue is when you do take that moral high ground and you want to be big with human rights, then it's incredibly important that you live up to that as much as you possibly can because otherwise you will not be a credible voice.”

-Maja Åberg

As Dinnie argued for in his writings on nation branding, the democratic process is vital. This would mean that Sweden could potentially have legitimacy issues regarding its contradictory foreign policy regarding their human rights and arms export agenda. If Dinnies' argument would be applied to the report of Amnesty International suggesting that 84% of Swedes think that Sweden should not export arms to countries where serious and/or widespread violations of human rights, then Sweden is facing substantial ethical and legitimacy challenges. A few of the interviewees also brought up the fact that Sweden is conducting non related arms trade to countries who violate human rights and that this is also an issue:

“China is an example of a country who has increased their trade enormously with the Western world in the last 20 years, and there's no signs of there being more democracy there either. Of course when there's been a state visit and when Swedish ministers have been in China there is always a discussion ‘have you really been clear about what Sweden thinks of the lack of democracy, or the lack of human rights that prevails in China?’”

-Ann-Marie Ekengren

This statement highlights the fact that Sweden is also conducting general trade with countries that violate human rights, and that this also sparks an ethical discussion in the media. The art of ethical trade is a complex trade that involves many considerations. The massive trade with China despite a lack of human rights is explained by this interviewee:

“Considerable human rights is something we don't see in China. There are few countries who execute as many people as they do and keep people in prison, but trade is a central concern for the Swedish export industry. We put a lot of effort and money into developing our relationship to China and make sure they buy from us.”

-Greger Widegren

This quote illustrate that the importance of trade and Swedish export is of greater concern to Swedish politics and economics than pushing their human rights agenda. This is another example of dilemmas in Swedish foreign policy regarding economic benefits versus human rights. Secondary data from the Swedish Government regarding the trade with China, claim that Sweden is working toward influencing China to better their human rights and democracy

through expanded areas, economic exchanges, cooperation projects and increased breadth of interpersonal relations¹⁰.

Decision making model & biases

The Swedish decision making model and biases will now be analysed. This section aims to understand the logical process and argumentation behind the action of its contradictory foreign policy and potential biases that influence the decision making model. The decision making model will be used as a key factor in order to comprehend Swedish foreign policy. The interviewees had many suggestions and reflections to why Sweden are acting the way they are. When asked to reason about Sweden's contradictory foreign policy of conducting arms trade with countries who violate human rights and at the same time pushing their human rights agenda, they brought up many different arguments and reflections.

Local Politics

“Above all it has regional political value, meaning that the arms industry is very strong in certain locations in Sweden. Obviously, if you would stop producing there it would lead to a bad job market in some cities across the nation. Karlskoga is the classic example. Simply put it means jobs, and then they have made a compromise. There will be situations where these weapons get into the wrong hands, but it still leads to an income for these companies, and it leads to jobs, so I believe they have made that calculation when they reason these issues.”

-Ann-Marie Ekengren

The local benefits of producing arms is here mentioned as a prime argument to Swedish arms export. This argument was mentioned by a majority of the interviewees. Interviewee Linda Åkerström argues that the benefits of exporting arms land close to home and the drawbacks land far from home, and that this is one reason why the contradictory policies can exist.

“The weapon export and its problem is that the “benefits” are placed very locally, whereas the drawbacks, the consequences, are placed far away. People outside of our borders, people will less power than us, people that live in poor countries, they are the ones that get affected by this. The profits are local and the negative aspects are far away from us.”

-Linda Åkerström

¹⁰ Regeringen.se, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <http://www.regeringen.se/sveriges-regering/utrikesdepartementet/sveriges-diplomatiska-forbindelser/asien-och-oceanien/kina/>, Retrieved: 04.09.2017

This describes one of the many biases brought up in the theory section, namely *“focusing on short-term benefits rather than long term problems”*. This argumentation process is only regarding local and short-term benefits, and safely ignoring the recipient's country inhabitants and the long-term effects of poverty and lack of human rights.

The economic aspect of the arms trade and its relation to the Swedish military supply of weapon was further reasoned among the interviewees. Here Olle Wästberg, argues:

“It is important economically, it's a part of the economy. Plus that we have our own weapon industry and the Swedish military aren't able to take on that cost alone, they need to distribute their development costs on several units, and therefore the arms export matter. However, it cannot be said that the arms export to Saudi Arabia matter.”

-Olle Wästberg

The interviewee here makes a point out of that the Swedish arms export matter economically, but that the arms export to countries that violate human rights might not matter economically. Furthermore, there were indications that the arms industry are very successful at lobbying and that Swedish politicians, especially the prime minister Stefan Löfven, have strong ties to the steel and arms industry.

“I think the arms industry is, they are very very good at lobbying. They invest a lot in lobbying.”

-Maja Åberg

“The arms industry will always want a less strict regulatory framework. They will always fight for what they call a leveled playing field. They want Sweden to lower their standards to be competitive to other European countries who produce weapon”

-Linda Åkerström

The quote above highlights the strategic goal of the Swedish arms industry and what their lobbying aims to achieve.

“Stefan Löfven comes from a trade union background for metal, and that's where the workers who work for the arms industry, that's where they belong. So before he became prime minister I know that he wrote at least one op ed about the importance of the arms industry for Swedish industry and Swedish jobs. So it's clear that some of the heavy men

within the government are very much in favour of the arms industry. Both when it comes to Swedish jobs but also when it comes to thinking it's important for the Swedish defence."

-Maja Åberg

This quote indicates that the decision making model is heavily influenced by personal and cognitive beliefs. The Swedish prime minister comes from a background in the metal industry and therefore has an emotional and historical connection to this industry and the jobs it creates. Therefore, it would be likely that his decision making model is skewed towards being in favour of the current arms export regulation and based on cognitive structures.

A few interviewees mentioned an internal conflict among the ruling party Socialdemokraterna and in their Government. As has been mentioned previously in this project the responsibility of the arms export was moved from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Margot Wallström after it became known that her personal opinion opposed arms trade with dictatorships.

"But what happened was that, again it's a dualistic, weird, schizophrenic thing, where one part of the ministry going 'yay this is exactly what we want' and the other part, the trade part are like, 'oh no this is horrible'. So one thing that they did actually fairly soon after Wallström became the foreign minister, they moved all of that to another minister, to the minister of justice, Morgan Johansson, which is in itself really strange. It's so clear that 'oh no we don't want Margot to be in charge of these issues because clearly she cares more about human rights and peace, we can't have that'. Because still, the arms trade still stands under the foreign ministry, so it should be Margot Wallström. So it stands under one ministry but a completely different minister in a different ministry, which is itself a very strange conclusion."

-Maja Åberg

The interviewee draws the conclusion that Margot Wallström was taken out of managing the arms export due to her personal beliefs that was opposing the political beliefs of the Government. This decision could have been made from a rational actor model, where the Government needed to make sure that their politics were being executed and not influenced by personal opinions of Margot Wallström.

A couple of the interviewees mention that foreign policy is not something that the average voter is particularly interested in. Very seldom has a Swedish election been dependent on issues regarding foreign policy, but instead on national politics, such as; education, healthcare and taxes.

“We need to to remember that foreign policy generally mean little for the voters when they decide which party to vote for. There’s a clear relationship here in Sweden that you may think foreign policy is important but it does not matter when you vote on election day.”

-Ann-Marie Ekengren

This voting behaviour might be a reason that the Swedish Government are able to have contradicting foreign policy. Since foreign policy rarely, if ever, have heavily influenced a Swedish election, the ethical dilemmas concerning the arms trade might be overlooked by the politicians and Sweden can continue to benefit economically from this trade. In connection to the economic benefits of trade is the argument of keeping up with globalization. One interviewee explain:

“It’s obvious that globalization contributes to all that and we cannot keep ‘clean’ the same way we did when we were a small and neutral country with moral standards we tried to live by. That’s not how it is anymore, we are affected by outside pressures in a way that is hard to deviate from. In the 80s it became clear that some economic transactions were approved that wouldn’t have been approved before. It became more allowing and after that the barriers weren’t able to stop it.” -

Greger Widegren

This quote highlights the effects of globalization on Swedish trade, and offers an insight into how Sweden can no longer keep up with their own moral standards if they want to compete in a globalized world. Outside pressures and national economic growth goals and strategies are making it harder for Sweden to limit their trade with countries who violate human rights. It is possible that the Swedish Government are practising game theory as decision making model here, as they are mapping out other countries’ strategies and goals in order to strategically place themselves in the globalized trade. The data shows evidence of the Swedish Government putting higher importance on economic gains than on human rights when conducting political policies.

Secondary data reflecting the decision making model of the Swedish Government's' foreign policy analysis is not explained or reflected upon in any official document that the author of this paper had access to, except to state that it is a democratic process.

Media & Foreign Policy

As argued by Neack, the media plays a substantial role in foreign policy outcome and development. This section will analyse how the media influence Sweden's nation branding, arms trade politics and human rights agenda. Interviewee Linda Åkerström, who works for the lobby organization 'Svenska Freds', explain that their organizations strategically use Saudi Arabia as an example in order to get their message across in the media:

"We often choose Saudi Arabia because if we keep on exporting to them, there are principally no limits to whom we can export to. They are on the worst of the worst list, and it gets a lot of attention and people immediately understand the conflict. It is much easier to bring up them instead of Thailand for example."

-Linda Åkerström

The statement explain this anti-arms lobby group strategic use of media and which countries to focus on to get the most amount of reaction from the public. As Linda Åkerström explain, a country like Thailand to which many Swedes have positive connotations to due to tourism, is it not as effective as an example.

The same interviewee goes on to argue that they always try to get the politicians to answer publicly. It is first when the discussion becomes public that they experience medial success:

"It is first when politicians are forced to take responsibility for their priorities between human rights on the one side and defence and safety politics on the other side, that we reach success, if they are forced to do that argumentation in the public eye. As long as it happens under secrecy it is usually the human rights that gets compromised."

-Linda Åkerström

The influence of media in the political debate is described as vital for this lobby organization in order to push their agenda. She argues that in the debate of arms trade versus human rights it is often the human rights that gets compromised - if the political argumentation is behind closed doors. This quote reflects that Swedish policy makers are having issues with what policy they want to execute behind closed doors and which policy that want to address publicly. This is an indication of a glitch in the image of Sweden and their foreign policy decision making process, in regards to who they want to be to the outside world, and who they are in practise.

In regards to the nation branding aspect, the media is also considered a vital part of 'brand Sweden'. One interviewee reflects on how the media portray Sweden in the media:

“It is important when we talk about the image of Sweden abroad that we must look at it as very complex image with many different factors at play. There are many images of Sweden. There is not one image of Sweden, there are many media images of Sweden, many opinions about Sweden (...) When you look at how Swedish media describe Sweden, they portray Sweden as having one image. And if that was the case, that would be impossible.”

-Jacob Stenberg

Interviewee Jacob Stenberg describes the Swedish media as portraying Sweden in a simplistic and unified way, which is not necessarily the true image. He goes on to argue that a ‘true image’ does not exist either, due to the complex, dynamic and personal opinions people have of Sweden. Another interviewee reflects on the fact that Swedish media is admin about publishing articles about what the media in other countries are saying about Sweden.

“We are very interested in how we are perceived abroad. When Sweden is being mentioned in international media that is always mirrored in Swedish media to a large degree. I’m sure that can affect the Swedish Government’s legitimacy in our country and in other different areas.”

-Olle Wästberg

How Sweden is perceived in other countries seems to be of high importance to Swedish media. This has already been touched upon in the section about what image Sweden has abroad. Sweden’s nation branding is an important tool for Sweden to get leverage as a trading partner and the reputation of Sweden is constantly being measured and analysed by Governmental branches.

Swedish Foreign Policy - Human Rights & Arms Export

The final part of the analysis is going to present data on how the strain between Sweden’s human rights agenda and arms export is being perceived. The political dilemma of human rights and arms export was confirmed by almost all interviewees as a complex issue with no simple solution. However, there were different opinions on how much this dilemma actually negatively influenced Sweden’s reputation and legitimacy. Interviewee Jacob Stenberg who works with communicating the image of Sweden abroad stated this:

“That’s nothing that I’ve noticed is affecting how we work with the promoting of Sweden or ‘brand Sweden’. We haven’t noticed that foreigners associate Sweden with the paradox of trading with dictatorships and having a feminist foreign policy.”

-Jacob Stenberg

Interviewee Mattias Hallberg also believe that this dilemma is not being taken very seriously, either at home nor abroad:

I don't think that Swedish diplomats are critiqued a lot because we have these policies, I don't think there's a lot of public discontent against Sweden, either here at home or abroad.

-Mattias Hallberg

Interviewee Ann-Marie Ekengren, professor in Swedish foreign policy argued that the dilemma is being met with hard regulations on arms trade:

"I think we all know that the tension is there. Sweden has tried to meet that by making the arms trade very regulated, since it's not like that in other countries. So they have tried to manage it that way, you have a regulatory framework, you have a special committee to surveil, but we can all see the trade so it sparks a lot of debate and discussions in some trade deals. There are questions of how to interpret the law. We do have a positive ambition, but it doesn't reach the whole way"

-Ann-Marie Ekengren

The notion of Sweden being comparatively good in comparison to other countries, and that this may be a reason why the outside world is not troubled by the arms export is an argument that several interviewees mentioned.

"Sweden is on the whole comparatively good in an international context as far as what kind of arms and product we export to what countries, but it's not good enough when it comes to following our own very strict law and living up to its own very high human rights standard."

-Maja Åberg

However, Maja Åberg mentioned that Sweden does not live up to their own human rights standards, which is a problem in itself. Interviewee Mattias Hallberg, also commented on this political dilemma.

"If we are the ones to promote human rights and an ideal, it's very important that we uphold that in our own country with our own policies. That is sort of a way to have high legitimacy. I think that's always the argument in Sweden that we need to do something that is not always beneficial and that is costly. We argue that we need to do this, otherwise how do stand up to the real criminals of the world? If we don't promote this policy here in Sweden, how can we, if we sell weapons to a dictator, how can we critique the same dictator when he uses those

weapons to kill innocent people? So I think that's always the conscience part again. It's something that is taken into consideration a lot of the time."

-Mattias Hallberg

The quote above highlights what he sees as the foundation of Swedish politics and reasoning and argues why it is important to uphold your own political and ethical policies. The dilemma of the conflicting foreign policies is by no means a simple question with a simple answer, but he argues that Sweden do act in a way that is not always the most cost efficient and economically beneficial to its citizens and that is why Sweden has high legitimacy. A possible solution to the dilemma, according to interviewee Linda Åkerström, would be to stop exporting arms to the list of countries that are severely violating human rights.

"If we remove that category of recipient countries, we would have a much larger possibility to work for human rights values and legitimacy in our development politics."

-Linda Åkertsröm

Interviewee Olle Wästberg, adds to the previous argument when asked if Sweden would gain more legitimacy if Sweden stopped exporting all arms:

"Not necessarily if we banned the arms export, but if we were a bit more consequent, logical and had stricter rules, I would imagine that our legitimacy would go up, yes. Especially in the areas concerning human rights"

-Olle Wästberg

The dilemma of conflicting foreign policy within nation branding have been presented with many concerns, conclusions and opinions. The discussion will now follow to dig deeper into these areas.

Decision Making Model, Worldview and Level of Analysis

The analysis up until this point has shown evidence of Swedish policymakers being subject to all decision making models presented in this research. There are elements of the rational actor model, the poliheuristic model, the cognitive behavioural model, game theory and biases. It has been a complex process in trying to outline the decision making model simply by interviewing people who have not been involved in the actual decision making process. Any secondary data regarding this specific part of the theory has been almost impossible to retrieve since the Swedish Government does not release reports on how they have reached certain political decisions.

The level of analysis (individual, state and system) is also hard to differentiate. The nature of the theory is that the three levels are interlinked which also makes them hard to separate. The interviewees have through the interviews touched upon all three levels of analysis.

The political worldview also needs to be established. The data collection shows evidence of Sweden having a realist worldview, with elements of a rational decision making model. However, Sweden do have elements of liberal and Marxist worldview, which have been taken into account when assessing Sweden's foreign policy.

Discussion

This section will present the findings, followed by the explaining of the relevance and consequent contributions to the findings. The findings will be discussed in order to fully answer the research question of this paper: *In nation branding, how does the Swedish Government manage the tensions between conflicting foreign policy goals, especially the tension between economic interests in arms export and promotion of human rights?*

This section will then go on to reflect on the purpose of this research and which significance and contribution it has to this field of research. Possible transferability of the findings to other research will be discussed as well as critique of the theory, limitations to methods and the research as a whole.

The Findings

This research used interviews and secondary data as qualitative data gathering. My research stemmed from interest in Sweden's nation branding and possible conflicts of interest in this field. The selected conflict of interest was the contradictory foreign policies regarding the economic benefits of arms export to countries who violate human rights versus promoting a strong human rights agenda.

The findings present an image a country that is highly dependent on their nation branding in order to be economically competitive. The Swedish nation branding is a tool to market the national interests; export, trade, tourism and other economical and political interests. Nation branding is especially important for a smaller nation like Sweden in order to stay competitive in a globalized world where the competitiveness is becoming increasingly harder. It was concluded that Sweden has been and still is successful at nation branding. However, in the

last few years, the image of Sweden has gotten negative attention in the media, especially regarding immigration and integration.

In Sweden's nation branding, an analysis of Anholt's six communications hexagon showed that all six communication outlets were covered by the Swedish nation branding, but some of them were given more monetary funds than others. The culture communications outlet had a smaller share of the hexagon than the trade and investment outlet. The reason for this was explained by Sweden's direct and high dependency on exports, trade and investments for the future prosperity of the country.

The importance of non governmental bodies such as companies and famous people were deemed very important for the image of Sweden abroad. IKEA was brought up as a prime example of promoting the Sweden abroad. However, it was also noted that IKEA could in fact use the Swedish image in their promotion due to the fact that it brings positive connotations and emotions. It was therefore reflected on that the image of Sweden and 'brand Sweden' is a tool that can be leveraged both ways in order to increase trade and other strategic goals.

The communication platform to brand Sweden were considered fairly holistic, with certain areas of difficulties. The topic of interest that has been highlighted in this research was the conflicting foreign policies, consisting of a strong promotion of a human rights agenda versus strong promotion of Swedish arms export. The arms export in itself was not considered to be in direct conflict with human rights, but the arms export to countries who violate human rights were considered to be contradictory. The aim of this paper has been to investigate how the Swedish Government balances this conflict and what their decision making model has been in order to establish such contradictory foreign policy, in the name of nation branding. The contradictory foreign policy was investigated and complicated to answer. The decision making model of the Swedish Government was hard to analyse, but the data showed evidence of it consisting of several of the decision making models presented in the theoretical framework. The decision making models that were brought to attention were the rational actor model, belief sets and cognitive structures, game theory, and several biases. The evidence shows that the Swedish policy makers are not completely rational and that economic gains were given higher importance and value than the promotion of human rights.

The data collection showed evidence of several arguments to why these decision making models were performed in order to balance the two different foreign policy goals. One of the

main arguments were globalization. The world is becoming ever more globalized, which leads to harder competition in trade for all countries, Sweden included. A small nation like Sweden have been, and still is, highly dependent on trade export in order to be a well-functioning and prosperous country. Therefore, Sweden's export trade is regarded to be the backbone of the society as a whole. In order to stay competitive to other countries, Sweden would have to adjust to trade practices of competing countries, which is one of the reasons Sweden have been facing significant challenges with upholding their strong human rights agenda. The Swedish arms industry have a strong lobby organization, who are pushing for a less regulated market. There are also significant local economic benefits to the Swedish arms industry. The local benefits are thousands of jobs for the workers employed within the industry, whereas the the disadvantages of arms trade are located far away from Sweden. Simply put, it seems like the Swedish policy makers are regarding the economic benefits of exporting arms to countries who violate human rights greater than the benefits of pursuing a strong human rights agenda.

There are also big concerns that this policy conflict could harm the Swedish brand negatively. Most of the interviewees showed great concern for having these contradictory policies, and criticised Sweden for not living up to their own human rights standards. This political tension may very well lead to legitimacy issues for Sweden and less credibility when trying to push future political agendas and goals, as well as being a less reliable trade partner. This may lead to potential future complications. Furthermore, a restricted arms trade may lead to a trade disadvantage for Sweden and loss of important national arms producers. SAAB, one of the main arms producers in Sweden, has already threatened to move their business elsewhere if the regulatory framework for arms export becomes even stricter¹¹. The question the Swedish Government need to ask themselves is just how much does the arms export to countries, who violate human rights, negatively impact the Swedish brand?

The Purpose of This Research

This research aims to investigate a country that has one of the most strong human rights agendas in the world, but also one of the most tight arms export regulations in the world. Other countries who do not focus on human rights as much, nor have as tight arm export regulations, will automatically have less conflicting foreign policies. In regards to Sweden's foreign policy, the tension of policies have become a target of discussion. The debate of

¹¹ Defence News, Swedish defence industry uneasy over proposed export controls, <https://www.defensenews.com/pentagon/2017/04/07/swedish-defense-industry-uneasy-over-proposed-export-controls/>, Published 07.04.2017. Retrieved 06.09.2017.

ethical high grounds and economic development may not necessarily be contradicting, but in the case of exporting Swedish arms to countries who violate human rights, the ethical conflict becomes evident. In the midst of this ethical conflict, Sweden uses nation branding to promote both spectrums of the debate. In essence, Sweden is using nation branding to strategically build political leverage to push human rights and promoting their arms industry to export to countries who violate human rights - all at the very same time. This investigation hopes to add to the debate of the complications of this contradiction and which consequences it may have for the Swedish government and its legitimacy.

The Contribution and the Significance of the Findings

As nation branding is becoming, and have been, a significantly important tool in order to build economic wealth for a country, this research has used the theoretical concepts developed by Anholt, Dinnie and others to investigate Sweden's strategic nation branding today. This research is a contribution to the ever changing image of Sweden abroad and how countries and companies leverage a nation's brand in order to pursue their strategic goals. This research is also a contribution to the research regarding the economical and ethical debate regarding Sweden's arms export industry, the human rights agenda and its implications. This research is also a contribution to research regarding decision making processes in foreign policy analysis.

Critique to Theory

Like with any scientific research, the significance and limitations of this research needs to be reflected upon. The use of nation branding theory was used based on Anholt and Dinnie, but with a larger emphasis on Anholt's theory and research. Anholt's nation branding theory provided an extensive foundation to form a successful nation branding strategy. However, it must be mentioned that it is complex to recommend a "one size fits all" theory. Even though Anholt has taken differences of countries into consideration, there are tremendous of ways to successfully brand a nation, and his recommendations may not necessarily fit all countries across the world. Also, it may not fit the world ten or twenty years from now, as the branding techniques and practices may look different. There are numerous of examples of countries with good reputations that has not followed every step of Anholt's nation branding theory. Different countries have different political and economical goals which might not automatically be reached with the use of nation branding. Anholt's nation branding theory should on these concerns be taken with a grain of salt, because countries and brands are complex, dynamic and changeable things that might not fit into an established framework.

The use of foreign policy analysis must also be critiqued and contemplated. This research only chose certain elements of foreign policy analysis for the use of theoretical framework, namely; decision making model, biases, public opinion, the role of the media and national self image. As already established, the decision making model of foreign policy analysis is an almost impossible task. To fully investigate how the decisions are made in foreign policy would take an extensive amount of research, observation and time. That research would have to go into other scientific fields such as psychology, sociology and philosophy. Foreign policy analysis offers a very limited ground in order to fully comprehend political decision making processes. Therefore, the decision making process is also of limited nature in this project. Especially since the interviewees reflections on the political decision making process also is subject to the same decision making models and biases. It would take a lot more than seven interviewees to reach a significant result in this matter. The conclusion of this research can only be seen as a mere indication of the real decision making model of foreign policy analysis.

As for the combination of theoretical frameworks, there are complications when trying to merge theories. The use of nation branding in combination with foreign policy analysis turned out to be a complex process. Since both theories have related and dissimilar elements, the theories could not be completely combined. Therefore, certain elements of each theory that would form a good combination was chosen to form the theoretical foundation. The nature of nation branding theory is to strategically build a foreign policy and foreign policy analysis is concerned with analysing an already existing political policy. The two theories were used in different steps to assess Sweden's foreign policy. Nation branding was used to assess Sweden's current nation branding strategy, whereas foreign policy analysis was used to analyse the conflicting parts of the foreign policy.

Limitations to Methods

This research collected data from seven interviews with people who were directly connected, professionally or academically, to the image of Sweden abroad, Swedish foreign policy or Sweden's arms trade. In combination with data collection from interviewing came also secondary data. The secondary data was mostly derived from governmental sources, but also from relevant scientific research about Swedish foreign policy and Swedish arms trade. The interviews in combination with the secondary data has been considered to be a good fit for this size of research paper and with the allocated time frame. If the size of the paper was

larger and if the time allocation would have been longer, the methodology would have been slightly changed. Under those circumstances, discourse analysis would have been allocated as one of the methods. That method would have allowed for a deeper investigation of the change of foreign policy regarding the arms trade during the last couple of decades to get a clearer overview on decision making model. Quantitative methods could have also have been selected as method. The use of surveys across different countries around the world could have been a good source in finding out how Sweden is perceived as a nation and how people view the contradictory foreign policies. However, if this research would have been done with surveys, it would have been vital that the responders were involved with these political issues, due to the fact that most of the world citizens cannot be expected to know about Sweden's contradictory foreign policy and nation branding. Perhaps this is also an indication on how much the average world citizen know about Swedish foreign policy and the level of implication contradictory policies actually would have.

Moreover, the current methodology have several points of concern. Firstly, this project is only based on seven interviewees. Due to this narrow sample of interviewees, the data can only show an indication of a result. Also, the research was unable to interview someone who actually is involved with the arms trade. The research tried to get interviews with employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Industry, the Ministry of Culture, Business Sweden, Visit Sweden, Team Sweden, the Council of Promotion of Sweden Abroad and the ISP. Getting interviews with these actors turned out to be harder than anticipated. However, the interviewees that were participating in this project were chosen based on the expertise they possessed in Swedish nation branding, Swedish foreign policy and Swedish arms export.

Furthermore, a larger sample size of interviewees would have strengthen the reliability of this project. Due to the smaller sample size of the interviews, a large emphasis was put on the secondary data. This was done in order to create more reliable research paper and also confirm some of the statements said by the interviewees. Interviews are always prone to subjectivities and personal opinions, which the secondary data aimed to find and exclude from the data collection. The secondary data substantially strengthens the reliability and validity of this research paper.

Limitations of the Author

As the author of this research paper, I must reflect on my own personal opinions and biases and its implications on the research paper. I have contemplated upon my own scientific

process in order to ensure that my personal beliefs have not influenced the result of this research. I have done my best in order to not let any prior knowledge or opinions influence the research. However, I do believe there are limitations to me being the sole author of this paper. When constructing and executing a research paper of this size by yourself, the process is less questioned and critiqued than if you would have done it in collaboration with another author. I believe it would have been beneficial to the overall process to co-write with another student. However, I do believe the result I have reached would have been the same if another author investigated the same topic with the same methods.

Transferability

Due to the narrow scope of this investigation, there are limits to how transferable it is. The focus of this research is specialized in a specific field of Swedish foreign policy, which makes it hard to generally apply to other field. However, it is possible to apply this research to other ethical debates within politics when trying to assess which decision making model was used to reach certain political decisions. It is also possible to apply this research on the ethical debate of arms export to countries in general and specifically to countries who violate human rights. Sweden is not alone in exporting to these countries, and other countries may face a similar dilemma when exporting arms there. This research can definitely be applied in the ethical debate of economic gains versus humanitarian work and the complexities of this notion.

Conclusion

The focus of this paper has been to investigate how Sweden is using nation branding to promote two contradictory foreign policies, namely the promotion of strong human rights and exporting arms to countries who violate human rights. The aim has been to establish a policy assessment of Swedish foreign policy with the use of foreign policy analysis to understand the reasoning leading up to this policy making. The result of this research shows that the Swedish Government have implemented a successful nation branding strategy and that 'brand Sweden' is a positive brand with good connotations. The image of Sweden abroad is being leveraged in order to push political and economical agendas. Sweden is considered to have high legitimacy, which is an important tool when competing with the rest of the world for increased influence and export shares. However, the concept of legitimacy is dynamic and subject to change. If Sweden wants to maintain their legitimacy they need to be aware of their actions and make sure they are leading by example. As Joseph Nye wrote: "a country may obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics because other countries want to follow it,

admiring its values, emulating its example, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness”(The paradox of American Power, 2002). This reflection on the power of soft power may be a strategy that the Swedish Government should pursue in order to gain legitimacy and political power. Sweden is, like most countries, subject to the globalization and increased competitiveness in which they have made policy changes to keep up with the competition of the arms industry. The Swedish Government is pressured from both sides in the political and economical debate of promoting strong human rights and exporting arms. The research confirms this dilemma and have outlined potential decision making models and biases when dealing with these opposing views. Since decision making process and biases are subject to a range of rational, irrational, cognitive and behaviour mechanism it is a complex process to establish a holistic decision making process. However, the main contradictions in this debate have been outlined and analysed in order to assess the policy. The current contradictory policies are a compromise of opposing views and opposing policies, but nevertheless two very important political agendas that cannot seem reach a settlement. When looking at the development of these policies over the last few decades, they both have seem to grown significantly more important for Sweden’s political and economic gains than ever before. Perhaps this development have created a political collision in which Sweden is now facing with no easy justification. If Sweden wants to continue their successful nation branding streak and continue having high legitimacy, there is no doubt that both policies cannot keep on growing. The Swedish Government will need to decide which political agenda they want to push, which country they aim to be and which future they wish to hold.

Further Research

There are plenty of future research possible for the topic of this research. A way to deeper analyse the opposing political forces, would be to explore the Swedish arms industry, their lobbying and their strategic goals for exporting arms. The Swedish arms industry is a somewhat low-key industry that is not proudly mentioned in Swedish media or by the Government and I believe a further investigation into this would have been a interesting further research area. Further research could also be done on how other countries handle this dilemma of exporting arms to countries who violate human rights. To investigate how similar countries handle the arms trade regulation and compare to Swedish arms regulation and politics would have been an interesting further research. Further research could also be done on other ethical dilemmas in political processes and how they have been dealt with.

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Appendix

Interview Guide

The image of Sweden abroad

What image does Sweden have abroad? If positive, why do you think Sweden has that image?

If you could describe Sweden with only a few words which words would it be?

(Do you think Sweden has a strong brand in comparison to other countries?)

Do you think the image of Sweden matches the real identity of Sweden?

What differences do you think there is between Sweden's competitive identity and its real identity?

What do you think could harm the image of Sweden abroad?

What do you think could help build a more positive image of Sweden abroad?

In our information age, do you think Sweden might have a hard time with "controlling" their reputation?

What role does the media have in affecting the brand of Sweden?

Do you see any ethical implications or potential problems with branding and marketing a nation?

Sweden and nation branding as foreign policy

How important is nation branding as a foreign policy?

Would you consider the foreign policy as successful?

(What complications do you think the policy has?)

Do you think the policy is important to gain soft power for Sweden?

Why do you think human rights is such an important foreign policy for Sweden?

Do you think Sweden have a challenge when it comes to balancing values and interests?

Sweden and legitimacy

How do you think the image of Sweden affects its legitimacy?

Do you think Sweden would gain more legitimacy if they made their weapon export laws more tight? How about if they stopped exporting weapons?

Sweden and weapon export

Do you think selling weapons are important for Sweden politically? Economically?

Do you think Sweden has conflicting foreign policies when looking at the weapon selling policy and the development of human rights abroad policy?

What do you think about Sweden branding themselves as having strong human rights and at the same time selling weapons to countries who violate human rights?

How do think the incident of the Saudi Arabia-scandal affected Sweden and its legitimacy?

Svenska The image of Sweden abroad

Vilken bild har Sverige i utlandet? Är den positivt, om ja varför?

Om du fick beskriva Sverige med bara ett fåtal ord, vilka hade du valt?

Tror du Sverige har ett starkt varumärke i jämförelse med andra länder?

Tycker du att bilden av Sverige stämmer överens med Sveriges riktiga identitet?

Vad skiljer sig mellan Sverige som varumärke och Sveriges riktiga identitet?

Vad tror du kan skada varumärket Sverige?

Vad tror du kan stärka varumärket Sverige?

I vårt informationssamhälle, tror du Sverige kan ha svårt att "kontrollera" sitt rykte och varumärke?

Ser du några etiska svårigheter eller problem med att marknadsföra en nation?

Sweden and nation branding as foreign policy

Hur viktigt är det för ett land att ha en utrikespolitik som går ut på att marknadsföra nationen?

Tycker du att Sverige som varumärke är en framgångsrik utrikespolitik?

Tror du att ha ett starkt varumärke är viktigt för Sverige att få mer "soft power"?

Varför tror du att mänskliga rättigheter är så viktigt i Sveriges utrikespolitik?

Tror du att Sverige kan ha svårt att balansera sin värdegrund med handelsintressen?

Sweden and legitimacy

Hur tror du att Sverige som varumärke påverkar deras legitimitet?

Tror du att Sverige skulle upplevas som mer legitimt om deras vapenexport lagar var striktare? Eller om vapenexport förbjöds helt?

Sweden and weapon export

Tror du att vapenexporten är viktigt för Sverige politiskt? Ekonomiskt?

Tycker du att Sverige har motsägande utrikespolitik, när det kommer till mänskliga rättigheter och vapenexporten?

Vad tycker du om att Sverige marknadsför sig som att ha starka mänskliga rättigheter men samtidigt sälja vapen till länder som kränker mänskliga rättigheter?

Hur tror du Saudi-skandalen har påverkat Sverige och deras legitimitet?

Interview with Mattias Hallberg

Wednesday, 29th of March 2017

M: I am Mattias Hallberg and I am an economist and I used to work for the Swedish parliament, for Moderaterna as a political advisor and I also been working for the Swedish embassy in Washington DC, at the political section.

L: What image does Sweden have abroad?

M: Well of course that's a very general question. I think it's hard to say that Sweden has sort of a unified brand abroad as in the whole world. I think it's probably a bit of different segments have a fairly different opinion of the various populations. But I think that Sweden has, the brand of Sweden is positive. It brings mostly positive connotations. Wherever I have been abroad at least, it's something that is good. I do think that we tend to overestimate how many people know of Sweden and has a accurate image of Sweden. I mean we are a fairly small country, a very small population I would say. We punch above our weight a lot of times I think. We get more recognition and people know of us more than we deserve in terms of just per capita sense in the world. But still for a small country, we cannot really assume that everyone knows of Sweden and know what Sweden stands for. So that is just one general reflection on our nation's brand, but wherever I've been, if they know anything of Sweden its positive. I think that Sweden is probably a country where there more general knowledge of the country in more academic circles abroad at a policy maker level, there's probably more knowledge about Sweden. Probably more accurate knowledge as well. So I guess in terms of the nation's brand if you go to the average citizen in a western country, I would say, they know of Sweden either via sports, culture, maybe some of the big corporations like IKEA, that has a brand that is fairly connected to Sweden. But if you go to the academia and policy makers, there's more sort of interest and knowledge about the Swedish model and welfare combined with market economy. That would be general quality or something where we stand out, like good health policy or something. That's how I regard Sweden, the Swedish brand abroad.

L: Why do you think the image of Sweden is positive?

M: Well, I mean. First of all, in the sense that they know of us, we don't have any major, we don't have very salient, bad things connected to us. We haven't, our history speaks to our advantage. We haven't attacked anyone or been fighting against anyone, recently at least. We haven't been in any major conflicts as sort of the bad guys. Not a lot of our citizens, we don't have a lot of high profile citizens that are connected to any major world problems that I can think of at least. Of course, there's probably countries where we are regarded negatively. There's not a lot of salient examples of anyone would have negative feelings about Sweden. Not caring would probably be very common, but a strong negative feeling? Maybe not. Maybe you know, yeah not even, we are not connected to some major things of what people don't really like. We are not regarded as a colonial power, that we mistreated third world countries, we don't have a communism thing really. We weren't part of the east block, we were not a part of any major war interventions, so I think it would be hard to find

why would they have a very strong negative view of Sweden. We haven't done anything bad recently.

L: If you could only describe Sweden with a few words, which words would it be?

M: I would point out, well, okay. Something that would say something about our geography, I would say a fairly, like a northern country, the nordic ness of sweden. It's important to understand that we are a northern country, part of the north. Say, modern would definitely be a word to describe sweden. I guess also like fairly consensus oriented. Calm and consensus oriented. Creative. And sort of, well just well functioning. It's a well run and well functioning society.

L: How would you describe the politics of Sweden?

M: It's sort of. I think it's important to stress the fact that we are sort of this market economy with a conscience. That would be a way to pitch it at least. Like we do have market economy. We value, an individual freedom but we try to tend to have a big public sector with a very strong welfare state and it's solidary european in a sense, but promotes growth and efficiency that is more maybe, north american in a sense. So that's one way of describing it. But also, in terms of foreign policy we are. A thing that kind of captures the whole Swedish mentally, in terms of foreign policy, it was this fun quote from the us diplomatic that wikileaks put online, where the us diplomat said wrote a line about our minister of foreign affairs, quote "he's a medium size dog with a big dog attitude". We might not be that influential, we don't have that much say, but we have a sense that we ought to be, we really think we should belong to the G8, the club where things are decided, but a lot of times we don't really. So that's sounds depressing, but it's not in a bad way I guess. I mean we are engaged, even though we are a small country, the stake of our country is pretty small. I think there's some kind of pathos in the minds of the Swedish policy makers, and it goes back to. There's some examples of prominent Swedish leaders that tried to, or had a large stake at politics. We had Dag Hammarskjöld which is obviously a good example of a UN general. Olof Palme, also someone who was a fairly influential on an international stage. I think that is something that lives within the Swedish psyche. Both in the public but especially among policy makers.

L: Do you think the image of Sweden, their competitive identity matches the real identity of Sweden?

M: Maybe, you know. I don't know I have too much experience from this field. I can mainly draw from my experiences at the embassy, where I think that, maybe. It's a fine line between communicating the best aspect of your country and sugar coating. There's a fine line and it's hard to know when we're at that point. We probably have a tendency to sugar coat, maybe we are not too honest about the conflict of interest that are within the country you know. We tend to say that this is the homogenous image of sweden, no one is a racist, we are happy and we are intellectual, everyone is consensus oriented. On an average we are probably more of that than most countries, but still what kind of conflict does this create in our society? We are not very honest about that maybe, and is this a sustainable path, How did we get there? In that sense, I think there's too much sugar coating, But then again, it would

be strange to be too gloomy about your country when you try to promote it. We don't want it to be complicated. What I saw, kind of projecting the Swedish image abroad, if you do this it makes it hard to deal with complexities. We see that now, it's a good example, everyone is very much, you know when Donald trump says something bad about sweden, he's criticizing sweden saying there's a problem with immigration, look what's happening in sweden, not very specific on what he meant. Then people, say oh my god, it becomes almost a policy goal for the government to counteract, to boom the image of Sweden. At the same time they have other members of the government, who go to urban neighbourhoods in Sweden, actually addressing the same problems they don't want other world leaders to talk about. It becomes hard to deal with those complexities, if you are not open for that there's some conflict in your country as well. So maybe that would be a potential problem, for the work that we do abroad. Maybe that.

L: Do you think in our information age, do you think Sweden have a problem with protecting its reputation?

M: That's interesting, yeah. I don't think we do a fairly good job at that. I do think the government and any other major corporation probably rely pretty much on traditional one way communication probably. I know there's an ambition to do more of social media for embassies and stuff but what I saw, is that it's still very controlled. But in a sense, we have been, the whole @sweden on twitter is good for people's communication probably. I don't know what the result or the content of that channel is. Just one thing that I have noticed, talking to people abroad, very anecdotal of course, I think that what kind of, whatever Zlatan says about Sweden is kind of more, 10 000 more influential among millions of people in the image of sweden, than what the swedish government says. So in that sense, it's obvious we cannot control everything, and it's yeah, I think it's a very complicated communication environment. It must be hard. If you were just genuinely interested in sweden, how would you do it? Well, I guess like you wouldn't really go to that country's government website right? You would go to pick up on some reliable new media outlet or something. I don't know, if there's a lot of information about Sweden in foreign languages and stuff like that. It might be interesting to look into, I don't know.

L: Do you see any ethical implications or problems with branding? Or marketing a nation?

M: I don't know if it's in the core business of the government so to speak, I don't see any ethically wrong about doing it, I think anyone can brand a country in the way they like in this age. It is a good thing for Sweden to have a nice brand. Probably it's good for its citizens when going abroad, when we say we're from Sweden people like that. We have a fairly positive brand in that sense, which is good of course. It's probably good for some of our companies, I think IKEA is one that are really clinging on to the Swedish identity, the yellow and blue logo. Trying to be swedish company, obviously because they think there's a value in the Swedish brand. I don't think, the ethics of it, I don't see how it can be harmful in any way, but I don't know if it's in the core or mission of the government to, the public sector to do that. Sweden has a bigger society than government and even though a swedish citizen would benefit from that it's not necessary that the government should spend tax money on doing so. First of all, we have to ask them, can it be successful? If successful, what kind of

value does it create? Is that in any way, can we motivate that when looking at the costs or the policy of nation branding? That's what I would see is the potentially, reason for not doing, but I don't see any ethical arguments.

L: How important is nation branding as a foreign policy? But maybe you would argue that's it's not that important?

M: I mean, what's the foreign policy goal? With the same argument I just made, I could say that the foreign policy is not that important at all. I would argue that the least democratic part of our national politics is opeg, people don't really know about it. We have this whole diplomatic core that is pretty isolated from the core from the other government agencies and offices. It has always been this elite profession so I think it's very hard to know what's the national interest of foreign policy. It's obviously security, consularity issues of course, to have good contracts with other countries about economic issues, trade. So this is just an overarching thing that is foreign policy. We have foreign policy goals but if you go and actually read foreign policy goals of the Swedish government, and listen to the minister who every year gives their kind of declaration on what's the goal of our foreign policy, it's very kind of altruistic, mission statement. I think it would be the same for most countries, they, take much responsibility of the world. Promote peach, collaboration, bla bla bla, it's very high up in the air a lot of time. Not so much focused on national interests, which I think it's just a consequence of foreign policy, when you promote foreign policy you don't want to promote your own national interest all the time because that would make it hard to collaborate with other countries. I think from a policy person perspective where you think it's very important to get along with other countries and go to the right conferences, and be the keynote speaker and the right panel or whatever, and you have a strong belief that is just something that's right or in the interest of sweden, if you have that perspective, I think nation branding is super important. That's probably why the ministry of foreign affairs spend a lot of money on it, being popular within a club where it's not very clear to me at least what that popularity capital is going to be spent on. And what is the cost benefit of that. Sweden spent a lot of that popularity capital getting a seat at the security council in the UN. I don't really know that after that, 2 or 3 years, I don't know how long the mandate is. I don't think the average swede will know the difference, to know that in some way improved their life. I think it's a very hard question and it is a question that most governments don't really want to ask themselves.

L: Would you consider the Swedish nation branding policy as successful?

M: Yeah that's the major problem with these things. I think branding in general, it's so hard to measure an effect. There is no really empirical way I think, that we can measure the impact of a specific policy. It has to be, just a stronger belief, if it's good it's good. If we are successful, then it is successful. It has to be very anecdotal. I guess there can be surveys, there are lists, and the main popularity contests, soft power lists or whatever. Or you can do some surveys among world populations and stuff like that, but it's just so complicated to know if your policy is successful.

L: Is it important for our soft power?

M: Yes, it is important for our soft power. How is the soft power going to be used? How powerful is the soft power you know. There's all of these hard questions to think of. I think it's very rigorous. You cannot say rigorously if it has been successful or not. It's not the fact that we shouldn't do stuff just because we cannot measure the impact of them, then it would be really hard to do a lot of stuff. So even though it is with very big uncertainty, we can't really know if we are successful or not. I think that I would argue that it has been kind of successful, I mean I do think that. As far as I know, the government is trying to understand, rebrand Sweden. The big problem we had in the US (at the embassy) most people had a fairly old-fashioned view of Sweden and we really want to promote, rebrand to say that we are all of these positive things that I said before; creative, modern, a place where different cultures meet, a melting pot, sort of an entrepreneurial environment. All of those things. So I think yeah they have been fairly successful with that. I think that that image would have been inevitable, maybe we are just helping it along the way. Making sure that it's going to stick a bit faster than it would have. It might be successful, it's hard to say.

L: Sweden very much promotes human rights as a foreign policy, why do you think human rights is so important for Sweden?

M: That's a very interesting question because it's very true. There's a big human rights aspect of Swedish foreign policy and also I guess, nation branding. It's such an official, academic, in those circles, the public Sweden circles, human rights are amazing, that's the best thing you ever heard of. We really want anything that is labeled human rights is always very positive. It's a good thing, the notion of human rights is of course very important for progress that has been made in the world. I do think it has something to do with our relationship to the UN. I think there's a very positive view of the UN, we are very pro UN, everyone loves the UN. When we were kids in school, we hoisted the flag, there was some kind of song, and do think we love the UN here and the human rights agenda is so closely connected to the UN. There's not a critical debate about the UN in Sweden, it's been very hard. There has been many reasons, we are so pro the UN, it's hard to understand why. Maybe it's because we are so small and we realize we cannot do anything unless we are, we can only be the popular kid in UN. Maybe then we can have the impact on the world we would like to. Because we realise if we don't have the UN we are sort of marginalized. Maybe that's the reason why, maybe we love the fancy environments of the UN. Or it could also be rooted in our very consensus oriented way of policy that we have been having for a long time now. And we have this idea of negotiation instead of conflict, a lot of those UN values run right through the Swedish foreign policy community. I also think we think that our system is rigged for human rights champions. There's a belief that we are successful maintaining, upholding human rights at the same time promoting a lot of positive values. It's very interesting, because it's a huge focus on this in all embassies and foreign policies. We are probably the only country in the world, except the US, that are doing human rights reports for every country in the world. We are like policing the whole world in terms of human rights. When I was at the embassy we were writing a human rights report on the US, we were going to tell those Americans what terrible human rights violations they are doing. Which they are, we also get critiqued when the US does reports on us, we are not perfect. Isn't this true for all countries in our region, like Denmark, Norway. Maybe it's a sort of, when you

have this belief, that you are done with human rights in your domestic, we feel that we don't have many human rights violations left, we maybe want to expand to the rest of the countries.

L: Maybe it related back to what you said earlier, that sweden is a market economy with a conscience?

M: Yeah human rights is the conscience.

L: it is also a foreign policy you can't really argue with, it's always positive. It's a simple bet.

M: Yeah it's a simple bet.

L: a neutral bet

M: yeah especially if you have this idea that you have foreign policies that don't rely back on national interests and stuff. Well, what do you do then? Human rights seem to be obvious. That might be where we are deceiving ourselves though. If you don't want this confrontative "America first" foreign policy, a national interest foreign policy, then what is left? Human right I guess. That's kind of where you're aiming at.

L: Do you think that Sweden might have an issue when balancing say, human rights with monetary interests?

M: Yeah, I think that's one of those conflicts of interests that the official branding or like the policy community are really afraid to talk about, maybe not afraid, they are pretending it doesn't exist. It's a hard and complicated conflict that can become messy. But in reality I don't know if it poses that many problems. I'm not sure. There's a challenge when those conflicts come up. We have seen that it will be conflict of interest and there have been tough debates about it but some reason they don't seem to be that persistent. No one seems to be willing to change fundamentally, at least. We are not willing to give up this idea of a very noble foreign policy where we just vote for everyone's best interest. I don't know why, the fundamental parts of foreign policy hasn't been challenged more or the fundamental story that we tell ourselves. Maybe it's just because those conflicts of interest they don't come up often enough. Or they are not strong enough, or big enough or challenging enough for our policy or maybe the foreign policy community are very good at communicating and arguing for different reasons why it happened, it's hard to know. There are some salient examples, that you could point at but it's hard to know. What would the interests be? Yeah, national security and making money, so growth and national security. Of course by doing that sometimes we would run into a conflict of interest. Maybe we try to avoid that as much as possible, I don't know. I don't really know.

L: I assume that there's a difference between Sweden's national identity and their real identity. That could create some kind of legitimacy problems. What do you think about that? Do you think Sweden as a strong legitimacy, politically?

M: Well, it's complicated of course. What is legitimacy and not? But I think in general, they probably have a strong legitimacy from the people who they represent. I think our foreign office, that is something that Swedes think highly of, something that we are proud of, this kind of idea that we are a small country but we still do something on the world stage. I think that's something. In terms of the policies that we promote, we are working with, I do think that we were a bigger actor, if our voice would have mattered more on the international stage, if what we would say was more important, we would have been scrutinized harder. Then it would probably be harder to have the position we have, then national media and other media, organizations and governments would probably scrutinize our track record of our government and our country a lot harder. So in that sense I think we are in a thankful position. We do whatever. Most people don't really care that much if we are legitimate or not. So yeah, maybe that's one reason for it. But yet again I think that we also try to care, we do understand there could be a legitimacy problem if we don't do as good as we should. I think that's one of the reasons, it was tough for the Swedish government to do this harsh, it took a long time before they took this kind of hands-on, harsher stand on immigration policy, the refugee crisis in Europe. Like we have to be, if we are the ones to promote human rights and an ideal, it's very important that we uphold that in our own country with our own policies. That is sort of a way to have high legitimacy. I think that's always the argument in Sweden that we need to do something that is not always beneficial and that is costly. We argue that we need to do this, otherwise how do we stand up to the real criminals of the world? If we don't promote this policy here in Sweden, how can we, if we sell weapons to a dictator, how can we critique the same dictator when he uses those weapons to kill innocent people? So I think that's always the conscience part again. It's something that is taken into consideration a lot of the time.

L: to me it seems Sweden has some conflicting foreign policies. Just in terms of their human rights policies and then at the same time Sweden is one of the largest exporters of weapons per capita in the world and we do export to dictatorships like Saudi Arabia and Thailand etc who are violating human rights. What do you think Sweden argues for that? How do they balance that?

M: Well, it's definitely one of those hot topics. There's a consensus that this is not something that we should talk about that much, just because the implications are tough. I mean, the whole long answer to that question is that we have, and whenever we start to talk about this people tend to avoid answering the actual question, which is explaining the actual context in which to understand this, the history about the weapon industry of Sweden, and you know. It's fairly easy to give an answer that is sort of an answer that is created to kind of, remove yourself from responsibility. It's just so hard to figure things out. It's just sort of saying that we need to see this in a broader context, or something like that. And we don't see a fully fledged defence for either side, you tend to get people who try to balance these things and say 'you have to think about this, you have to think about that, these aspects, bla bla bla and we have to think about'. And I think the only time a politician made a you know, a real actual defence of the weapon export was our previous prime minister that said this is about jobs, you know, we have to keep jobs in Sweden, which you don't hear that often. I don't think that was a very successful statement because I don't think, I mean people don't want to hear that. We are, to save jobs in Sweden, we sell weapons to countries that are

waging wars. I don't people have a problem with that happening but they don't want to hear about it. Necessarily. And yeah I think those examples are interesting, Saudi Arabia and Thailand, we seem to have a very conflicting relationship with Saudi Arabia. Now it's strange that we are able to pull that off, the way we are doing, the government are doing. People are not putting enough attention. But Thailand is interesting, so many people go to Thailand. Maybe Thailand have been successful in their national branding because I don't think people are not aware that there are major borders conflicts with almost all the neighbours of thailand. There's the military intervening in the politics a lot. So maybe that's been a problem as well. But as I said, the long answer sort of is that, and this is where it comes in, removing yourself of responsibility because the only kind of intellectually viable defence for the defence industry in sweden is that we wanted, we needed it to uphold a neutrality policy after the world war you know. If we wanted to stay neutral and not go align ourselves with Nato and not be drawn into the communist sphere, we really have to have a strong national defence, you have to have a weapon industry in order to develop advanced weapon systems, you had to export as well because the national market is too small. That's how we say, we had to do these morally not perfect stuff, but still we wanted to stay neutral and to be a part of the US nato thing we would have to fight in Vietnam and Iraq. That would have also been morally reprehensible, so that's why we had to do it. I think that would be the academic defence of it. Obviously today when our weapon industry has changed that much, we don't produce our own weapon systems anymore, we import most of it from other countries, and we do export more than just, it's transformed now so I don't think that argument is legitimate anymore, so joining nato which I think we will be doing, in a short while. I think all of this will be cast in a different light, these questions. There's a real challenge in the future, for policy makers, to try to square that circle in a sense, to see how that's going to affect people of affect how people regard Sweden. So it's a tough question. Why I think it's a consensus, I don't necessarily think everyone is happy with that consensus, there's has been developed a consensus between the more kind of security and defence community. Because foreign policy is multifaceted and you have this kind of groups within the foreign policy community, and some focus more on human rights and democracy, and other people focus more on security and geopolitics and stuff like that. There's sort of this consensus that we can have an ambitious foreign policy on human rights and we can speak up, and we can do all of these reports and we can send a lot of aid money and just have this very expansive human rights approach, all over the world. As long as you get to do that, we get to do our thing and have a defence industry basically. So, that's sort of how I think that consensus developed, overtime, especially within the social democratic party. They have always been split in this question, they want to have solidarity, focus on job and industry but also national security and neutrality. So it's been a way for the social democrats policy establishment to bind those two conflicting interest and everyone is like. I think everyone hopes that that consensus won't break apart in this new world that we live in at the moment. That's my view on that.

L: Do you think Sweden would gain more legitimacy if they made their weapon laws more tight? Or what if they stopped exporting weapon, would that change the image of Sweden?

M: Yeah in some circles probably, but most circles probably not. I think we do balance, and we are not too bad at least. I don't think that Swedish diplomats are critiqued a lot because we have these policies, I don't think there's a lot of public discontent against Sweden, either

here at home or abroad. It's not like our embassies are blockaded or something that people are outraged about the defence export really. I don't see that as a major problem now. It's sort of more it's a liability for Sweden in terms of it is something that could potentially become a problem. It's like they are carrying around this thing that could go off at some point. It could be very hard to repair that damage, like we know with reputation and with brands it's something that can take decades to build up, but it can probably go down the drain pretty fast as well. It's sort of risk management rather than downsides of having it are potentially large, the downside of not having it is not very large. So that's probably how those cost benefit analysis work. It might be my limited understanding of this, but I don't see how it's a major... It is also interesting, if there were a very negative public opinion on Swedish defence export, would it be driven by domestic audience or be driven by a foreign audience of discontent. I think that we did have a fairly vocal domestic opposition against these policies but for some reason, there seems to be persistent, even when the parties that are very strongly opposed to tightening those regulations, when they get into the government, they seem to abandon the policies so. And they don't seem to pay a hugely high price for that in terms of public opinion. So it's hard to say, it might be changing. A bunch of other factors, they make it harder to tell these stories about neutrality and having your own national defence industry, then maybe it's going to be tougher. Maybe if human rights became an even more important issue, I don't really see that happening. It's more the potential risk, that's what I would see if I were in charge.

L: A few years ago there were the Saudi Arabia scandal, it seemed like the weapon export question was very discussed in media, but then it died off. Do you think that incident affected Sweden's legitimacy at all? Or has people forgotten about it now?

M: That's a very good question, I don't really know, it's hard to say actually. Yeah, it doesn't seem to have affected it too much actually. Okay, so we sell some fairly harmless weapon systems to Saudi Arabia. Everyone knows Saudi Arabia is not the best country in the world, they have a lot of issues, but Saudi Arabia is such a special, they have very good diplomatic relations to a lot of Western countries, to the US, they are seemed as a very important actor in the middle east, which everyone is focused on a lot. They have advisories, maybe Iran would be the biggest one that comes to mind. Well, now the Swedish government went to Iran just a few months ago, had a great meeting with the head of state there and talked about a very positive trade agenda, so it doesn't seem to have had a large impact on the foreign policy, or how other countries regard Sweden. We did get our seat in the security council on a very tough human rights agenda, we still pushed those issues, a lot. It's hard to see the negative impact that scandal had. I don't know how much was written about it in the international media, that could be something that's easy to look up. It probably hurt us with some of the NGOs like Amnesty, or other organisations that have this specific issue high on their agenda. I do think that Sweden is still an important ally with some of those organizations that we could probably withstand a blow that that scandal would have been. If anything, I do think that the damage was more at the domestic arena. The damage of that particular scandal was probably larger in Sweden where the public kind of, I think it's like that with all political scandals, it slowly erodes political trust in it's own environment. Maybe from it's own people. It feels like, whenever that comes up, it feels like we have this avoidance strategy, let's not talk about it. The responsible minister had to resign instead of actually

explain the policy and why we did this. There was a lot of mentioning the crisis and let's not have an open debate and a discussion. I think a lot of politicians do that they solve the crisis temporarily, focus on something else, but slowly they erode the long term legitimacy of their whole project, so I think that might be the long term damage that scandal had. It just stresses that we will have to talk about this eventually, but maybe not now? Maybe it's not the right time? I don't know. It's sort of something that a political leader has to decide.

Interview Maja Åberg

Thursday 30th of March, 2017, Amnesty Stockholm

L: Can you start with introducing yourself?

M: Maja Åberg, I'm a senior policy advisor for Amnesty International, the Swedish section. I have worked for amnesty for many many years mainly with human rights lobbying and what we call military security and police transfers, have been the areas I have worked with. And within that is also the arms export, it comes in under that area, so that's what I do.

L: What image does Sweden has abroad?

M: Well, I think it has possibly changed a bit lately, I'm considering what is happening in the world with fake news etc recently. I do think that Sweden still has a reputation of being kind of forward and modern, and equal society. There's still quite a bit of effort put into portraying that. Sort of painting that picture of Sweden abroad. But it most definitely has to do with which circles you move in. I think if I look at my international friends, or international social media, it's that "oh i'm an american living in Sweden, and it's so great, with paternity leave and hanging with my babies" but in other circles it's kind of "oh the immigrants are taking over and we have 52 no-go zones". I do think that the picture is getting a bit more, not nuanced that would be good, rather kind of conflicting. But I still think there's that, kind of modern society.

L: Do you think Sweden has a positive image?

M: Yes, yes definitely yeah. It's a rich country with lots of beautiful nature, yeah.

L: If you would describe Sweden with only a few, say five, words what would they be?

M: This is kind of tricky when you're working with human rights, because you're never satisfied. But, oh dear... I mean I want to give a fairly positive picture, but as a human rights person, as soon I think, okay, fairly equal I think, pretty good country for women to live in, yeah but my amnesty persona says: this, and this and this and this, this is definitely not good, but yeah I would say; it's a rich country, people who live here are mostly, fairly privileged in an international sense, not to say those five words, do you see that? It's hard. Okay, modern, radical, democratic, equal, nature. Dear, that was a tricky one.

L: Do you think the image of Sweden matches the real identity of Sweden?

M: Now we're talking haha. Not necessarily, I think to a certain extent it does, but there are definitely cracks in the shiny surface. So, yeah to some extent, it does. It comes from something, obviously but it's not maybe as positive as the picture. But again, this is saying the picture is as positive as it has been. I do think there's been a change maybe the last six months.

L: Do you see any potential problems with Sweden branding themselves as something, and then being something else= Ethical implications? Problems it may cause? Legitimacy issues?

M: We will get into that, when we talk more about weapon and arms export but I think in general no, because I think most countries like to, if it's within their power to, to promote their country internationally. It's perfectly natural that that a country would do that when looking at things like tourism, for example. Obviously any country that wants to have tourism will portray themselves as, you know, show all the beautiful things. So it's not necessarily problematic in itself but, talking about why Sweden is a nice place to visit for tourists but then I do think that Sweden in international forums like the UN, I think they try to have a balance of yes to try to have a moral high ground which some countries don't like, but I think in many aspects it's deserved, but I also do think that many of our politicians and ministers and people who represent Sweden in the United Nations are open with the fact that obviously there are problems in Sweden too. So it's not necessarily black and white.

L: No. Nation branding is a foreign policy that Sweden put a lot of money into, to brand themselves as having a moral high ground, and human rights, etc. Do you think it's important for Sweden to have that as a foreign policy?

M: Yeah, I think it is. I think the key issue is when you do take that moral high ground and you want to be big with human rights, then you it's incredibly important that you live up to that as much as you possibly can because otherwise you will not be a credible voice. I think in general that Sweden is a credible voice, but that one thing is so important to keep your eye on and this whole area that you're looking into is one of the areas where that picture is not as, it doesn't look as good as it should.

L: Yeah. Why do you think human rights is so important for Sweden as a nation?

M: I think the obvious reply would be that we think we are good at it and so we think other people should have it too. We can kind of point at ourselves and say 'look we did it, you can do it too'. So in a way it is a natural decision to push human rights, it's natural I think, looking at our own history of democratization, the women's movement, the labour movement, trade unions, and how all of that led into the society we have now. So yeah, I think it has to do with, there's still that pride in having made that journey, in a fairly short time considering what Sweden was a hundred years ago. And so because of that, it's also, a natural conclusion that we would like to push that internationally.

L: Sweden has conflicting foreign policies when it comes to human rights and exporting weapons to countries that violate human rights. How are Sweden balancing these two, why do you think we have conflicting foreign policies?

M: I think the people who work with these issues, people in the foreign ministry, people in the ISP, inspektionen för strategiska produkter, which i can't remember the english name. I know the english name but it dropped out of my brain. I don't think that they see it as conflicting, I

think they are convinced that they live up to their part of the bargain. They think that we still, and to a certain extent they are right, they think that we have a very strict regulations of arms export. I think honestly they think that Sweden are not selling arms that, you know, there is not an overriding risk that they will be used to commit human rights abuses. I think they actually do feel that they do their homework, they don't sell those kinds of weapons to those kinds of countries. But this is, I think this is the core of what you want to know, so I don't know if you want to come back to this and ask more questions or, if you want me to dive in?

L: You can dive in into, that's perfectly fine.

M: Okay, because the thing is on paper Sweden has one of the toughest arms export laws and regulations in the world. On paper, the law is actually what we call förbudslag which means that it is not allowed to export arms, that's the basic, but exceptions can be made in order to ensure the military, safety and security of Sweden. So we have a law that says it's not allowed to export arms, but you can make exceptions, in order to keep the Swedish defense running because we have an arms industry and they produce arms for our own defence, but our own defense is not a large enough buyer in order to keep the arms industry going so we need to export some in order to keep it going. That's the basic idea. So there's, you know, exceptions are allowed but in order to make the exceptions, there is a very strict regelverk, regulation, it's not even a list of regulation but. There are things to look at when making exceptions. It says that human rights should be at the heart of this, do you have the exact writing? Because I can give them to you.

L: Yeah, I know them.

M: You know them, okay. And also the other ones you know, Sweden should not export arms to countries who involved in armed conflicts, whether it's an external one or internal in their own country. And I think this is something that, this is how people believe that it works. And the way the law and the regulations are written it's not material specific. It basically says, that if a country is violating human rights in a grey a serious way, they should basically be disqualified, they should not be allowed to buy Swedish arms at all. But the interpretation of the law has changed over time, so the people who interpret the law used to know the regulations, mainly the ISP, partly the parliamentary committee, Exportkontrollrådet, which is parliamentary committee that the ISP can turn to if they believe they have a sale or an issue they feel they need advice on for example, this is kind of tricky, we need to check this with the politician in the parliamentary export committee. Those are the ones that concern themselves with this law. They interpreted in a different way, they look at every single product, and they say that they make a risk assessment on that specific product, and going to that specific country. And if they don't believe that there is a risk that specific product will be used to violate human rights then it should be okay to send it. But that's actually not what it says in the law, the law says, the regulations say that you don't even need to look at the product if the country is abusing human rights then you shouldn't sell to them no matter what. So this is, one of the different opinions in the people that interpret the law in the Swedish government in this context, and the people who are criticising what the Swedish government is doing which is us, but other organizations too, peace and freedom, Swedish

peace and arbitration society and others, because we actually look at the law the way it is written. So our criticism is that Sweden is not living up to the requirements. But, it gets more complicated, because in an international context there is now as you know, the arms trade treaty in place which was not there a while ago, but now it's there, and a lot of people have signed it, sorry, a lot of countries have signed it. There is a bunch who has ratified it too. So now we have that, but because that is a UN convention/ they always tend to be less strict than national legislation, so I would say that is the case. It is still pretty good, much better that it could have been but in an international context, what Sweden is doing at the moment, I would say is in most cases probably in line with the arms trade treaty. But what Sweden is doing in relation to its own law and regulation, that's where the problem is. So, what a lot of the people who are criticizing this within Sweden, saying, and this is what comes back to your question in our high opinions of ourselves when it comes to human rights and wanting to be a beacon of freedom and democracy etc, is that we have very high standards on paper but we can't live up to them. But in an international context, we are still not that bad. So for Amnesty, because we are an international organization. It is a little bit tricky for us because we too criticize Sweden for not living up to its own rules but in an international context we know that we are not terribly bad after all. Then there are specific things for example, these radar equipment, the global eye, the erie eye, that has been sold to Saudi Arabia and it's going to the emirates now. Those things can be used both for surveillance but they can also be used for stridsledning, and in Sweden we don't really speak about the fact that they can be used for stridsledning, we say they can only be used for surveillance. And if even they can only be used for surveillance, that could still be used to violate human rights, you could keep track of big movements, refugees, you can use it to drop bombs on refugees, or use it just to keep track of dissidents, there are ways you can use that kind of radar surveillance equipment to violate human rights, so it's not safe in itself. But if it also used for stridsledning then it gets more serious and looking at what's happening now in Yemen and the Saudi led coalition there and I would say very credible reports of war crimes, then it gets very serious I would say. Because what Sweden will say is that these things that we export to some of these countries with very serious human rights situations, they are not, either they will say, they are not krigsmateriel för strid or they are not krigsmateriel med förstöringsbringande verkan. Which is sometimes true, sometimes not because we also do export actual arms to Saudi Arabia. We have sold tons of robots, du kan bara kolla i statistiken, det finns vapen också. Sorry for the Swedish. But we would say that there are cases where Sweden has not done the due diligence risk analysis we should have or it's not serious enough, in that instance for example when it comes to Saudi Arabia, the emirates, it's a case like that and it's something that we have brought up in Amnesty's latest report under Sweden, where we said there are questions whether what due diligence that is made in those cases. So to sum it up, it's Sweden is on the whole comparatively good in an international context as far as what kind of arms and product we export to what countries, but it's not good enough when it comes to following our own very strict law and living up to its own very high human rights standard.

L: When you mention Saudi Arabia, looking at them, they are a dictatorship, and they violate human rights. Why do Sweden trade with them at all? According to the rules, they shouldn't but they still do.

M: Yeah. Money. I think the arms industry is, they are very very good at lobbying. They invest a lot in lobbying. If you want to dig into it, I'm sure you can get some information, when you speak to Linda Åkerström, there is a lot of going back and forth between people in high positions in the arms industry and the people in political office. It's been lots of politicians and staff, tjänstemän, who has worked in the defense, or the foreign ministry with politicians that have gone to Saab for example. And they know exactly which people to talk to, they are just very good lobbyists, though and this is really interesting, you would think that the arms export is a large part of Swedish overall export, that is a lot of money and it's important for Swedish jobs which is something you hear as an argument often. But it is really a very small part which is the weirdest thing of all. The arms export is less than 1 % of the Swedish export, as far as how many people of employs it's most definitely less than that. And that is according to the numbers from the Swedish weapon industry, Linda has this. I think it's 0.4% of people employed in the weapon industry. It's in Lindas book and you'll get it. Don't take my word for it, Linda has this information. Double check, but I'm pretty sure it's that. So that's another thing that is so weird, the whole arms export industry in itself is not a large part of Swedish overall export. The export to the poorest countries, the ones with really terrible human rights is even smaller than that, so why they could not leave that one alone is a mystery but it must be that it's still a big enough business deal to these particular companies that it will get through and that I think has to do with fact that they are just very good at making their voices heard. They use all the arguments, they use all the repertoire. Jobs for Sweden and Swedish exports, and all of that. But if you really analyse it, it wouldn't make that difference if we would just stay away from some of the, the worst countries, just according to our own legislation.

L: Do you think selling weapons is important for Sweden politically? You mentioned it's not that important economically, at least. But is it important politically? Soft power for example?

M: If you had asked me this years ago I would have said no because I think the political part of it wasn't such a big thing then, going back a few years when we met the defence committee and parliament for example, försvarsutskottet, most politicians regardless of political color, would have said yeah but everybody knows that we don't necessarily need a defence anymore and the world is safe, we only need a military in order to participate in international peacekeeping missions for example. That's pretty much what all of them said. Social democrats and moderaterna. And that has changed so much the past few years with this whole rolling back to almost cold war sense and that kind of atmosphere because of a huge fear of Russia and what happened in Crimea, so now I would say it is more important, politically, because that's the feeling of you want to have a strong defence and therefore we need a strong arms industry to supply ourselves with weapons. But I would say before, which it's still a part of it, it's not so much the defence part but more being an international player, being in favour of always bring up things that we want to participate in pirates. It sounds weird but it's one of the arguments that you would hear from the ISP, we need to export to these countries in the middle east because we need to fight pirates. Or we need to just be seen as a credible player when we cooperate with others, or another argument is they are kind of true, but not they would need to weigh. They are not that important in my mind, I would also say that the arms industry today is so internationalized, that in order for us to have our own arms industry we need to cooperate with other countries, lot's of swedish

arms are not even made in Sweden anymore, a lot of the parts are made in other countries. But yeah, it's that one thing to be seen as the a credible player in security area I think, before that would have been an argument. Honestly it's so funny because a few years ago they were like 'no no we will never have another war here really' which is why so many regiments were closed down and allmän värnplikt was stopped, because actually there was a political unity around the fact that "that's not even on the table anymore'. Now it has come back with vengeance, so now I would say that it is politically important, due to the fear of Russia, which is more a traditional, historical view in Sweden and that is definitely very prominent right now.

L: A few years ago there was the whole Saudi Arabia scandal, and the incident was brought up in media and there was a lot of debate about the Swedish arms export, but then the discussion kind of died. And now it's almost forgotten, but do you think that it might have affected Sweden's legitimacy? Or is it restored?

M: I think from a human rights standpoint I think it was great for Sweden, because Margot Wallström got so much positive press from all over the Western world. All of the really heavy media in the united states, like Washington Post, I mean there was 'finally there is a foreign minister who's willing to dare to speak the truth about Saudi arabia, we all know it's crap when it comes to human rights but no one is saying anything'. It was an excuse for us journalists and reporters to bring up the very problematic us relation to saudi arabia. The very schizophrenic relationship that they themselves have. Definitely great from, if I look at my Amnesty International colleagues from around the world, they still think, they call me about saudi arabia 'oh sweden really did something, because Sweden has that foreign minister who's not afraid of anything, she's speaks the truth and she definitely has a moral compass'. I would say that that is probably true about Margot Wallström because she personally thinks this is right and she has not apologized and she has been clear in saying that, she hasn't apologized or taken anything back, it still stands for her. But what happened was that, again it's a dualistic, weird, schizophrenic thing, where one part of the ministry going yay this is exactly what we want and the other part, the trade part are like, oh noo this is horrible. So one thing that they did actually fairly soon after Wallström became the foreign minister because the arms export issues used to be under the foreign ministry, they moved all of that to another minister, to the minister of justice, Morgan Johansson, which is in itself really strange. So now he has kind of like all the papers, it's so clear that 'oh no we don't want Margot to be in charge of these issues because clearly she cares more about human rights and peace, we can't have that'. Because still, the arms trade still stands under the foreign ministry, so it should be Margot Wallström. So it stands under one ministry but a completely different minister in a different ministry, which is itself a very strange conclusion. But what also happened was that you had, this is what you're writing about, you had one ministry going 'yay Margot, yay we got all of this international press about being outspoken about human rights' and then the other part is saying 'oh how can we patch this up financially, and business wise, oh let's send a swedish king to meet the saudi arabian king and see if he could patch things up which he could'. And now they have had several trips and another one in the pipeline again, with one of these främjande resor. They are going very soon, any day, we haven't gotten a date, but we know they are going again, and there was one you know this autumn, Löfven went there, so they are really really pushing relations

when it comes to trade. And that would be fine if it wasn't arms trade. I would say fine go ahead, trade with Saudi Arabia. Amnesty is not against trade as long as there is a human rights analysis done. There are other things that could be used for human rights violations even if it's not weapons, but with weapons it is so clear. Arms export is not like all other export. It is a different thing. So to your original question, I would say it was probably great for the image of Sweden as that outspoken advocate for human rights in the world. I think that is what the world saw. And I think the world did not, the world doesn't know that we still sell arms to Saudi Arabia, they don't necessarily know that our ministers go there to sell surveillance equipment. The world only knows about Margot Wallström being outspoken about human rights. That would be my picture of the whole thing.

L: Yeah that's what I think is very interesting to. I don't actually think that a lot of people know that Sweden is one of the largest exporters of weapon per capita in the world. Because maybe Sweden has been pretty good at hiding it? Do you agree with that? Do you think they actively maybe not hide it, but not brand this? They don't talk about it? Is this an area where they are not as transparent as with other things?

M: Yes, the last part of that question is true. They are definitely not as transparent as they should be when it comes to sales. They do, obviously they publish the statistics every year, but from an organizational standpoint I would want them to be even more transparent with the statistics. But the statistics are fine generally, they can be good to know which exact product, they don't write that, so sometimes you can't know. They write 'this kind of product' which can be anything within this group. That's the problem. But the big problem with transparency is that they don't talk about how they made the decision to make the exception. The exception that actually shouldn't be allowed, but they still make it. Also there is no way for the citizens and the voters to hold their own parliament accountable, because the people in exportkontrollrådet those parliamentarians, they answer to no one. Because everything that is said in there is secret, so nobody can go 'oh but look my liberal politician voted for this sale to Saudi Arabia, I don't like that'. But nobody can tell, so that's another part of the transparency problem. Coming back to your initial question on whether Sweden is actually trying to cover it up, I don't think so. I think they have been comparatively open with the fact that we have an arms industry but traditionally the other sides have always kind of overshadowed that, so I don't think it's necessarily a long-term policy of hiding our arms export or industry, it's more the fact that it hasn't been terribly interesting for international media to look at. It's more like 'yeah yeah they are exporting' whereas what has been interesting is looking at that other picture of Sweden historically, because of the experiment with as I think from an US standpoint with, an experiment with a mix of socialism and capitalism, growing out of the 50s and 60s and the welfare state and all of that. I think that is the legacy that we still are living with. And that is what is part of that picture of Sweden today and the arms export hasn't been interesting in that context and therefore it hasn't been receiving attention. But I don't think they have tried to hide it, I think the question of transparency is an important one but I think that the transparency issue is much more relevant to Swedes, to ourselves when it comes to holding our government and politicians accountable for what's happening.

L: What does Amnesty think the Swedish government should do to match their human right advocacy? What would be a realistic scenario?

M: My own dream picture would be that Sweden would live up to its own law and regulation and now they are writing on a new law, right now. And we don't know what that is going to look like, but it comes out soon. But the first kind of, the suggestions when the ISP looked at it, they said 'oh this is not going to make a difference'. So if worst comes to worst we may have put in a lot of work into a new law that won't make a difference at all, in terms of how they interpret it. BUT my dream scenario would be that, that we could just keep what we have but interpret it much more literally, and not make exceptions for those countries where there are grim and systematic human right violations. Which would mean that we wouldn't sell to Saudi Arabia and we wouldn't sell to the United Emirates, and we wouldn't sell to certain countries, to Colombia for example where it's again, this is kind of cynical. Obviously Colombia has had a bloody civil war for many many years and now we have a peace agreement, yay, and that's one two three months maybe but then let's send someone from Sweden and work on an arms deal. Did you see this?

L: No, what happened?

M: Yeah, a few weeks ago. If you google Colombia, maybe it was Morgan Johansson och Jonas Ygeman, one of the ministers who went to Colombia to discuss arms trade with Colombia. Like 'yeah to peace agreement and then a little bit of weapons from Sweden', it's just so cynical. But obviously they can say 'oh but we don't have a problem in Colombia anymore'. Yeah, maybe and first of all, we do have a problem in Colombia as far as human rights, but it's just so weird that we want to move in countries that are so problematic for so long with human rights. Couldn't we just have waited a little bit and see what happens? I don't know what it is, it's just, it's definitely in the interest of the arms industry. They are really pushing it and they are really good at pushing it. Because politically, again looking at Swedish defense, you know there wasn't a difference for Swedish defence before we started selling weapons to Saudi Arabia and after, I mean we are not better nor worse better off really. So and that is supposed to be the one deciding factor, is this important to the Swedish military defence? Mostly, these deals, they mean a lot of money for the arms manufacturer, but for the Swedish defence? No, it doesn't make that much of a difference. So that is really the one argument that according to the law is the only reason we do export arms at all.

L: It seems like Sweden has this core issue, which is balancing human right and capitalism? We have a market economy with a conscious and selling weapons is the most showing incident.

M: Yes. It's like the core of conflict.

L: The core conflict of having values and having economic interests. They did a valuation, how much arms can we sell but still not harming our reputation or credibility or legitimacy? Have they found the perfect point between this?

M: Yes, I think they have in an international context, because in an international context they are still pretty good in comparison, which is you know, it's kind of difficult for me to say as an amnesty person, but I believe it is the truth. Comparatively they don't sell, there are exceptions. There are some things that are really dodgy, but comparatively in an international context, Sweden is still better than a lot of other countries. But we are not as good as we should be and we're not living up to our own law. But I think internationally it's not harming us, a lot of my human rights colleagues that I meet internationally they get very surprised when they hear that amnesty, or that Sweden is actually exporting arms to Saudi Arabia, because obviously they thought we wouldn't be selling anything. And they think, because that's also an interesting thing. Because when everything happened with Margit Wallström and all that exploded. What people thought happened was that Sweden wouldn't sell arms to Saudi Arabia anymore, but that's not what happened, that's not at all what happened. The only thing is that Sweden did not renew an ongoing agreement, a military cooperation agreement with Saudi Arabia that hadn't really meant anything anyway because we hadn't done much. There had been those plans building that factory which was secret, which exploded in Swedish media which was a bit of a stink too. But again, in an international context it wasn't really big, I don't think. But what's interesting is what happened was a non-issue, it wasn't even that we broke the agreement, the agreement was coming up for a set to run a number of years and now those years have come to an end and it was a question whether or not we are going to renew it or not and we decided not to renew it and that's the issue. But what I think what people thought in Sweden and internationally, that Sweden was not going to sell arms to Saudi Arabia anymore, that was not the case at all. Wallström didn't say a word about that, the only thing she said was that we're not going to renew the agreement and that she criticized human rights. But I think in an international context, Sweden is not really risking anything because they can just say 'oh but we don't export arms, we only export surveillance equipment or parts, or styrledningssystem, computer systems, those things. It's not explosives or anything, which is again what Saudi Arabia mostly is true, but there are some arms that they have sold. So like I said I don't think they are risking very much in an international context and that's why they keep doing it, they don't think it's going to hurt them at all. This is only an issue in Sweden, for Swedes, or for people who are researchers or academics who are interested in the arms industry internationally. They will know about this, but I think it's mostly an issue in Sweden because internationally if the question came up, Sweden would say 'yes we do sell some equipment', they wouldn't even say arms, 'to Saudi Arabia, but it's not harmful, or it's not something that could be used to violate human rights'. And that's what we say in Sweden 'sanning med modifiering', because we believe that they haven't done the due diligence even on those radar surveillance systems and area for examples, that could be used to violate human rights. And especially with a country that has very bad human rights record, you can't really trust them, you can't trust anything they say it's true because they do what they want anyways, so they could use that kind of system to bomb refugees, or among minority groups, or you know anyone that they for some reason don't like.

L: And they could sell the equipment to other countries that are even worse.

M: Yeah. They could. If you deal with a human rights baddie, you can't really trust them, but again, if you spoke to a representative of the Swedish government who worked with the

foreign ministry and trade they could say, 'oh no but we have slutanvändarintyg', whatever that is called in english. 'So that's not possible'. But yeah, true, if they honor that agreement, but they may not. And also depending on the situation in the country which could rapidly change, yeah that could be true now, but you also need to look ahead, you know what's the situation, how volatile is the situation on the ground in this country. Is it possible for example, that an arms guerrilla group that a part of the country and will they take weapons, and use them or sell them to someone else? Or give them to another coalition? You know, those are the things that as a conscientious arms exporter, you need to take into account in your risk analysis, your due diligence, and I would say that Sweden is not going that far. I think they would settle and say 'oh but we have that end user certificate, they promised they are not going to hand these weapons off, that they are going to stay here, so that's fine, we're safe'. But we would say to be on the side of caution.

L: We also export to Thailand and Thailand does not have a democracy at the time, they also don't really have freedom of speech in terms of criticizing the king, they also have border conflicts but we still export arms to them. But that's not criticized? I am wondering if that's swedes have a very positive image of Thailand, they go there on vacation all the time, it's this lovely country, people are nice and friendly, that's why swedes don't really criticize selling weapons to Thailand. It's also like swedes image of saudi arabia is completely different than Thailand.

M: Yeah absolutely, Right on. I think that's definitely a part of it.

L: Thailand has probably done a good job of nation branding as well. Which a lot of swedes accept as the truth.

M: Like you say, it's not even a question, it's the human rights situation which is a problem in itself, but there is also a conflict going on that I would say if one of those fairly forgotten problems, is that people generally don't even know about. But yeah, I think that's part of it. Again, the government would say 'oh but we are not selling bad things to thailand, or at the moment we are not selling any new things to thailand'. This is another issue with Sweden is that we keep sending parts och efterleveranser, delleveranser som håller på, they can go on for years and years.

L: Because that group of weapons is kind of airy fairy, we don't really know what they send, they can just say that they send parts and nobody can really check on it.

M: Yeah. Yeah. So yeah I think that analysis is spot on. Thailand wouldn't even, it's not something that Swedish society would care very much about, 'oh but Thailand is nice and beautiful'.

L: I don't know if I have more questions, I think we have covered most. Okay, I want to ask you more about legitimacy. It doesn't seem like, I would assume that having a conflict like this affects Sweden's legitimacy within Sweden. But it doesn't seem like this conflict doesn't really change people's view of Sweden. Would you agree to that? Do you have any comments on that?

M: I agree with you. This is very strange, because whenever you ask Swedish people, there has been polls made over the years and amnesty we made one ahead of the election on 2014 asking the Swedish public, you know thousands of people, so it's a legitimate poll asking them if they think Sweden should export arms to countries that are violating human rights. And there is always an overwhelming majority that says 'no, we should definitely not do that'. You know between 95 and 98% who says we shouldn't do that. So that's one thing, You know, Sweden do not think we should do it, but first of all, it gets a bit of media attention, and it gets a lot of media attention for example with Saudi Arabia, so there's a part of the Swedish population, that is interested in human rights and foreign affairs. They care, and they get kind of annoyed, irritated and angry at the government for that double standard. But I think most people don't care that much, even though most people also don't think we should sell arms to dictatorships or countries that violate human rights.

L: Is it because they feel detached to the foreign policies? It's not something that affects their daily life. It's not something they see, it's not education.

M: It is possibly that and possibly also the other thing that we we're onto when you were talking about Thailand. That's why people care when it's about Saudi because everyone knows that in Saudi Arabia the women can't drive, and it's generally crappy, but with Thailand, Thailand is nice, they have beautiful beaches, and very nice people. Obviously it wouldn't harm if we sent them weapons. It's partly kind of the idea or the knowledge of what the human rights situation is like in the world, that's part of it. But the other part I think is also, we just don't care that much, or that we, or a large part of people, and again this is changing now, sort of populist anti-immigrant, that kind of radical, right-winged, slightly fascist, movement that is going all over Europe. It's changing in Sweden but in many other countries too. But generally I think that Swedish people tend to trust that the government is not doing anything too terrible. So if they say that they are not exporting anything bad, we trust them. I think it's both. I think it is harming the legitimacy within Sweden for a special group, but not the group that was already critical beforehand. But I think now when there is a revival for constriction and fear of Russia is coming and all of that, then there will probably be even more support to have an arms industry to supply our own military defense. It's my guess. It doesn't cost them very much, that there is a fairly small group that is concerned. But it's not big enough for a lot of the. I think for media attention, and there is a lot of media attention around Saudi Arabia but also some of other countries. That is really, what's the word, pinsamt.

L: Embarrassing

M: Yeah, it's embarrassing, to the politicians, whenever it comes up. So it's definitely an issue but it's even though it is embarrassing, that side doesn't win, it's the industry side that keeps on winning. I do think that there is a divide within the government, it is quite clear that there are doubts and hawks within the Swedish government to this issue so that Margot Wallström for example. I am sure that I heard her say this, that she is not in favour of weapon export at all really, but definitely not to countries with human rights records. And that's why they have taken the issue away from her, and put it on someone else because

Stefan Löfven comes from a trade union background for metal, and that's where the workers who work for the arms industry, that's where they belong. So before he became prime minister I know that he wrote at least one debattartikel, op ed, about the importance of the arms industry for Swedish industry and Swedish jobs. So it's clear that some of the heavy men within the government are very much in favour of the arms industry. Both when it comes to Swedish jobs but also when it comes to thinking it's important for the Swedish defence. And they are the ones that are winning at the moment, or when, as you say, they have kind of two conflicting pictures, they have the moral high-ground female minister who is doing one thing and there's a bunch of male ministers who were doing another thing. Very weird, but possibly something, it probably works for them since they keep on doing it. And also, another thing that we haven't touched upon in this interview is how close the social democrats and moderaterna, how do you say moderaterna in english? Because they are not the conservatives necessarily, but they are right winged. The right-winged party. They are so close when it comes to this issue, and that's why it's very difficult to cause change because I would say it's the smaller parties that has always been.

L: Centerpartiet?

M: Ja, centern actually lately they have been very quiet in this issue, but I would say the liberals and the christian democrats, because both the liberals and the christian democrats they have that 'jesus turn the other cheek, peace, plogbilsrörelsen'. That's a part of that that has always been part of the christian democrats, but they have also, I would say, made a turn to the right with Ebba Busch Thor so they are much more influenced by the evangelical movement of the united states and suddenly very conservative, kind of strange for Swedish society. There's always been that part of the christian democrats, but now it's very dominating, whereas that kind of peace part and solidarity and development aid and all of those things that have always been a part of them suddenly that is kind of pushed to the side. So I think it's the small parties, including centern, though centern lately it's very hard to know where they stand. But the liberals, and Birgitta Ohlsson for example, has always been incredibly clear in criticizing all of these arms deals. And then there's vänstern and miljöpartiet so it's those four that have always been able to seize these deals. Whereas socialdemokraterna, moderaterna, de har alltid varit rörande eniga. So it doesn't really matter what kind of government it is because the two big parties have always been in complete agreeance in this issue, and sverigedemokraterna, you know they are very big now. So what happens at the next election is, I am assuming that they will be very much on the lines of socialdemokraterna and moderaterna in this issue. It's very much in line with what they think in terms of defence and sweden and swedish industry and swedish jobs. So I think it would've been, the social democrats are the ones that have a divide within their party. Just as much as there is a divide within the government. Because at the moment there is a divide between, within the social democrats, like I said between ministers and parts of it. And there is a divide within the social democrat party so that the women's, kvinnoförbundet and SSU they have traditionally been much more critical of this, less so at the moment which is interesting. Also, de som kallades för broderskaparna som är kristna socialdemokrater, and now they are called 'tro och solidaritet' eller något sånt. Anyway, it's a fairly a large and influential part of social democrats traditionally. So there's been three big movements within the social democrats who has always been more negative towards arms export, there's that

divide within, but there's also a huge divide between the green party and the social democrats. The green party has also been very much against arms export before but now when they are in government it is very difficult for them to do anything because they are in a sticky situation politically. But I think if anything were to happen, it would've been now because there is, or there has been that push within the social democrats that at least it's an issue that has been discussed. But at the moment it's not happening and with moderaterna there is not even an opening. They are just, fine with selling arms, 'why wouldn't we?'. They don't have against in ideologically against that. Even though moderaterna when it comes to saudi arabia on paper, theoretically, they don't like it. But if it were them in power now, they would gladly go on selling it.

L: And they have been, when they were in power too.

M: Yes, definitely. That's another thing, it's not really possible to kind of vote away the problem because the two main political parties who stand against each other, are they don't stand against each other in this issue, they just agree on this issue. So I think that's another key to why nothing is changed. But having said that but what has happened under this government is the most interesting in a long time because of what Margot Wallström did. I think why they didn't renew the agreement was partly due to public pressure and that pressure largely came from the organizations and mostly from Svenska Freds because they were the ones that actually ran the campaign, through driving traffic through their website.

L: Does amnesty and svenska freds collaborate with this issue?

M: Yeah we do, we have a network. It's actually a fairly big group that we now work with, and that's: amnesty, svenska freds, IKFF, Kristna Freds många gånger, Röda korset, diakonia, FN förbundet har varit med ibland, men I would say there's a smaller core group at the moment. Looking specifically at what's going to happen when the new law comes out and that is amnesty, svenska freds, IKFF och diakonia. The four of us have a network. Monitoring the situation together. I am actually going to a meeting this afternoon to see what's happening. It is something that we feel it's strategic for us to just keep up with each other because we all are interested in what's happening even though our angles are slightly different. Our angle is the human rights part and that's of course very important for the others too but I would say diakonia has more of a development angle and IKFF and svenska freds have more of a peace and conflict resolution angle. So we complement each other very well with our network.

L: I don't have anymore questions, but is there anything you want to talk more about? Something that we haven't touched upon?

M: I think we have covered most of it, and I'm sure you will get, what you will get from Linda Åkerström, who I would say is one of the best experts from the organizational side, she would be the main expert, so it's very good that you're meeting her and she will complement this picture from her angle. I think like I said for amnesty it's a bit of a tricky situation because internationally we see that sweden is not so bad, comparatively. I think I said, det finns grader i helvetet, and sweden is not the worst by far but we are nationally, I just hate the fact

that we have such a good law on paper and we don't follow it. So there is kind of a also, for amnesty it's a bit of internationally we can't be too harsh because when we write our reports, sweden often comes into it, but when by international colleagues look at it they say 'oh yeah we can see that sweden is selling this, but compared to what the US and China are selling I think we're going to have focus on those anyway.'. So it's like yeah fine I buy that, that's fair enough, but from our standpoint here in Sweden I still would like to hold us accountable to our own higher standards. And we want, that's another thing, I think the movement with this new law is, and it has been for a long time, they want to kind of harmonize the swedish law with eu law and international law. Which means actually lowering it on paper, and that would mean putting the law kind of where the practice is today because the practice is not harder than the law. And that's the, we think that would be bad because obviously think that we should have higher standards than that. But even if we did that in an international context, we still wouldn't be worst. Also, you know, for someone writing about this, you kind of will have, I guess it will be two parts where you have to look at, internationally and look at it nationally.

L: Exactly

M: De här främjanderesorna, just att man fokuserar på vapenindustrin där, I think that is so not worthy of swedish foreign policy, there are so many other areas of business. You know, kör på ikea, hennes och mauritz, and there's human rights contexts to that too, there could be child labour, and there could be lots of crap that go on there, but at least it's not killing people to the same extent that arms can do. Ändå är det så intressant att de tar med sig folk från vapenindustrin på dessa främjanderesorna. Just till de svåraste länderna, några colombia, det är ju så bisarrt. 'Ja först lite fredsavtal och sen lite vapen från sverige', du kan kolla på det, du kan googla och så kommer du hitta, regeringen har släppt nåt pressmeddelande och sådär. Ja.

L: Intressant, jättejätteintressant.

M: Ja, om du tänker, nu kör jag på svenska, men det blir intressant också när du får träffa Linda, för dom har ju ett svenskt centrerat perspektiv, de behöver inte tänka så mycket på den här internationella jämförelsen som vi på amnesty ändå måste göra, när vi tittar internationellt, så blir det ju inte alltid sverige, vi kan upp sverige i vissa fall men vi är ändå bättre än en del av de andra stora. Och det, för att vara rättvis så måste man också säga det tycker jag.

L: Är det frustrerande för amnesty att se alla problem i sverige men de är inte tagna på lika stort allvar för det finns värre saker som sker någon annanstans?

M: Ja. Det är det ständiga. Det är ju en poäng med att vi samarbetar för då, eller att vi har detta nätverket för svenska freds kan ju gå ut att vara bredare. Vårt mandat är ju inte emot vapenexport egentligen. Amnesty, vi vill bara att för varje enskild produkt så måste man göra en väldigt bra riskanalys och liksom den riskanalysen, man ska tänka framåt, den ska vara bred och vid och allomfattande och det vi tycker är att, sverige gör en riskanalys, men vi tycker att de ibland missar grejer. Medans svenska freds är lite mer, vi ska inte exportera

vapen alls, utan de kan gå längre men även utifrån vårt åtagande finns det vissa saker som, det här är faktiskt inte okej.

L: Jätteintressant. Det känns som inget riktigt händer när Sverige inte följer sina egna regler och lagar. De kan göra lite vad de känner för. Lagen är inte riktigt lika inför alla där direkt.

Interview Ann-Marie Ekengren

31 March, 2017. Phone Interview with Ann-Marie Ekengren

L: Vilken bild har Sverige i utlandet?

A: Jag tror att det beror väldigt mycket på vem du pratar med. Det är väl helt klart att Sverige i stora delar av tredje världen om vi nu använder det uttrycket fortfarande har en positiv bild och att det lever kvar, delvis från 70 och 80-talen. Och det är ju faktiskt någonting Sverige försökte använda nu i samband med våran kampanj för att bli valda till FN:s säkerhetsråd, att man i princip knöt an till arvet från Olof Palme, vi stödde ett antal befrielseströrelser i tredje världen, att vi gett omfattande bistånd och sådär så, ja den bilden finns och den är ju naturligtvis väldigt positiv, sen finns det en uppfattning också att Sverige vill gärna veta bäst, att man kanske är lite storebror och lite prätig också i vissa sammanhang. Så jag tror att, jag uppfattar det som att båda de bilderna finns och det finns ännu fler bilder också men det kanske är de dominerade så.

L: Skulle du säga att det är ett positivt intryck folk har av Sverige?

A: Ja, men det tror jag ändå är den övervägande, ja jag tror att den övergripande bilden är positiv. Klart att det också har att göra med att vi kommer väl ut i de här internationella rankingarna och utvärderingarna, när man tittar på vilka länder som är bra att leva i. Vi har ett välfärdssystem, levnadsstandarden är ganska hög, låg barnadödlighet, man har möjlighet att gå i skola, grundutbildning och universitetsutbildning kostar ingenting, så att det är klart att när det gäller den typen av internationella utvärderingar då tror jag det klickar in och vi uppfattas som en positiv förebild i många avseenden, ja det tror jag.

L: Hur viktigt är det för Sverige att ha en utrikespolitik som går ut på att marknadsföra nationen?

A: Ja, det är en del i det hela. Jag menar utrikes och säkerhetspolitiken består av många delar, det handlar om att främja handelspolitiska målsättningar, det handlar om att främja ekonomiska målsättningar, det handlar om att främja vissa opinionsmålsättningar och naturligtvis också vissa ideologiska målsättningar som vi har. Man vill försvara mänskliga rättigheter, man vill försvara vissa uppfattningar om demokrati och så vidare. Det är en mångfald av mål och klart att det då är det här att främja en positiv bild av Sverige, det är en del i det. Jag tror det kan hjälpa till att skapa status för Sverige, kan hjälpa oss att få visst inflytande i vissa frågor för trots allt är vi ingen stormakt. Vi spelar inte på samma arena som de riktiga stora länderna i världen, så det är klart att då måste man jobba lite med andra instrument och andra ja exempel helt enkelt för att nå dit man vill då.

L: Du nämnde mänskliga rättigheter som är viktigt för Sverige som utrikespolitik, varför tror du att vi fokuserar så mycket på det i Sverige?

A: Det uppfattas som en väldigt positiv norm. Det är ett universellt värde, det finns en internationell lagstiftning kring det, FN:s mänskliga rättigheter och rättighetsdeklarationer, och jag tror att, det är klart att försvara det mänskliga livet kan stå ibland mot statens intresse, och dom andra de lite mer strukturella elementen, på något sätt i världspolitiken. Så ja jag tror att det är lättare för ett litet land, det blir viktigt att försvara mänskliga rättigheter, tror jag.

L: Jag kommer titta på utrikespolitik som motsätter varandra lite grann. Och det jag har tänkt på är vårt fokus på mänskliga rättigheter, men samtidigt har vi en vapenexport som exporterar vapen till länder som kränker mänskliga rättigheter. Tror du Sverige har problem med att balansera sin värdegrund med handelsintressen?

A: Ja, jag tror att, jag tror att alla känner att här finns det ett dilemma i partierna diskuterar man detta mycket och tycker det är problematiskt. Alla partier hårbärgerar mer, aktivistiska grupper också som vill att Sverige för en mer restriktiv vapenhandel och att man ska reglera den ännu mer än vad man redan har gjort idag. Så jag menar jag tror att alla känner den motsättningen finns där, man har ju delvis försökt bemöta det just genom att handeln är väldigt då reglerad, det är den inte i alla länder. Så det är klart att man gör försök att hantera det dilemma på det sättet, man har liksom en lagstiftning, och man har en särskild kommitte som ska övervaka och så vidare, men alla ser ju att det sker, det blir ännu mera debatt och diskussion i vissa affärer, för det blir tolkningsfrågor som uppstår. Så absolut finns det ett dilemma här, men det är klart att det gör nog så att det blir ännu viktigare i väldigt många andra avseenden för jag tror man kan ändå visa liksom, vi försöker ha en reglering här men vi når inte hela vägen fram, men ja, vi har ändå en positiv ambition på något sätt då. Men det kan ju gälla annan handel också naturligtvis, som till exempel vad företag gör. Viss handel kan ju gynna en regim, ett land på något sätt som gör att en regim överlever längre än vad den skulle gjort annars och sådär. Det finns naturligtvis sådana aspekter, men samtidigt är ju Sverige för fri handel i så stor utsträckning som möjligt. Vi vill ju främja rörelse och ja, så fri handel det nu går liksom.

L: Tror detta dilemma kan påverka Sveriges legitimitet? Inom Sverige.

A: Nej inte så mycket ändå. Ja jag tror att det är väldigt många som är medvetna om det, det kan leda till ah men vissa tillfällen då det blir debatt och diskussion kring det men vi ska också komma ihåg att utrikespolitik generellt sett betyder ganska lite för väljarna när de bestämmer tex vilket parti de skall rösta. Det finns väldigt tydliga samband här i Sverige, att man tycker utrikespolitiska frågor är viktiga men dom har inte så stor betydelse för vem man lägger sin röst på, på själva valdagen. Det är trots allt inrikespolitiska frågor som väger mycket tyngre, så att ja, de finns med som en av väldigt många frågor men de får ganska liten tyngd trots allt. Jag uppfattar det inte som de frågorna som leder till någon legitimitet minskning i särskilt stor utsträckning i alla fall. Det är nog, ja det kan nog va snarare att man inte kan leverera välfärd eller om man uppfattar orättvisor på andra sätt så.

L: Ja, okej, tror du vapenexporten är viktig för Sverige ekonomiskt sett? Politiskt sett?

A: Ja, jag har sett någon siffra på det, den är väl ganska stor. Framförallt så har han väl regionalpolitiska betydelse, dvs att vapenindustrin är väldigt stark i vissa orter i Sverige. Och det är klart att skulle man sluta med det skulle det leda till väldigt ja dålig arbetsmarknad i vissa städer och vissa delar av landet. Karlskoga är det klassiska exemplet där. Så jag tror att det finns ju, det är ganska tydliga såna regionalpolitiska hänsyn som väger in också. Det innebär arbetstillfällen helt enkelt, och då har det blivit någon typ av kompromiss i detta, ja okej vi bestämmer här att vapen kommer ju oftast inte användas i, till positiva saker, men då får vi försöka att reglera det så mycket vi kan. Det kommer uppstå situationer när vapen ändå hamnar i fel händer men ja, det leder ändå till inkomst för dom här företagen och det leder till jobb så man har gjort en, ja den aspekten eller den kalkylen finns liksom med när man resonerar om dom här frågorna, det tror jag.

L: Tillbaka till det du sa innan att för väljarna spelar det inte så stor roll just det här med utrikespolitik. Tror du att om Sverige nu skulle skärpa sina vapenlagar, skulle väljarnas uppfattning om regeringens legitimitet ändras eller skulle den vara oförändrad?

A: Jag tror ganska oförändrad faktiskt, jag tror inte att det är en fråga som skulle leda till särskild stor. Det skulle bli en elitdebatt, dvs det blir en diskussion på ledarsidor och med vissa delar av det civila samhället osv, jag menar de rörelser som har propagerat hårdast för skärpning av vapenlagar och så, men jag tror faktiskt inte det hade lett till så stora förändringar i nån större väljarcadre. Det tror jag inte, nej.

L: Om vi ska gå tillbaka till Sverige och marknadsföring. Tror du att Sverige i vårt informationssamhälle som vi lever i nu kan ha svårt att kontrollera vad som sägs om Sverige? Idag i jämförelse med 20 år sedan?

A: Ja, alltså det är nog lite dubbelt det där tror jag. Naturligtvis har du rätt i att sociala medier så har det uppstått mer mediala plattformar och vi vet också att nyheter kan spridas mycket snabbare och man pratar om det här med filterbubblor, dvs att vissa personer med vissa preferenser lyssnar och tar bara del av vissa typer av nyheter. Så att i den meningen, kan det nog uppstå en diskussion i vissa sociala medier tex, som skulle kunna sprida direkta felaktigheter, som skulle kunna spridas ganska snabbt och det skulle vara ganska svårt att bemöta det. Men å andra sidan kan man just också handlägga moteld på något sätt. Jag tror att man kan också jobba aktivt med marknadsföring och sprida nyheter, positiva nyheter, tex, de här olika internationella rankingarna som jag nämnde tidigare och sådär att man kan visa att Sverige uppfattas som ett väldigt bra land att leva i. Det är väl Danmark, Norge som brukar hamnar i topp och så men vi brukar inte hamna långt efter och det ser lite olika ut i några av de här rankingarna men vi är alltid med där uppe i toppen i alla fall. Så det är klart att det kan också vara någonting som kan utnyttja, att man kan sänka kostnaden för att sprida information också. Man kan använda reklam på facebook och man kan använda ja mer så att säga internetplattformar för att sprida information, man behöver inte köpa dyra annonser i tryckt press liksom. Å andra sidan kan det också vara så att om man går tillbaka till hur media-situationen såg ut på 50-talet så, så är det klart att om en beslutsfattare sa något i media så kunde man nästan återge det ordagrant. Det var inte så mycket kommentar och analys ens, dess uppfattning fick stå ganska okommenterat. Så det är klart, på den tiden var det lättare att föra ut ett visst budskap så, men det är nog kanske inte heller utanför

landets gränser så lätt utan då var det mer i nationella medier i så fall. Så att det kan nog vara lättare att snabbt nå fler idag på ett sätt med hjälp av sociala medier. Men det kan också vara svårt att veta exakt vilka du når och hur det sprids och som sagt även då negativa nyheter kan vara svårare att veta hur det sprids och så. Det kan vara svårt att bemöta det så, så det är väl dubbelhet. Det som är en fördel för en själv kan också vara en nackdel i vissa lägen.

L: Sverige har på något sätt satt upp väldigt höga mål som vi själva måste leva upp till, kan sverige ha svårt att leva upp till dessa mål? Har sverige svårt att balansera sin värdegrund med ekonomiska intressen?

A: Ja det är klart att i vissa lägen kan det ju vara det. Jag menar det klassiska exemplet är trots allt Kina, ett land som vi trots allt handlar mycket med också, vi handlar ju väldigt mycket med EU och andra demokratiska länder också, de nordiska länderna ligger ju i topp också men det är klart att Kina är trots allt ett sådant exempel som har ökat sin handel enormt mycket med västvärlden de senaste 20 år och det ser inte ut att minska att säga så men det finns inga tecken på att det är mer demokrati där heller. Det är klart att när det har varit statsbesök så blir det ju alltid, när svenska statsministrar har varit i Kina så blir det alltid en sån diskussion, 'har ni verkligen varit tydliga mot Kina nu vad Sverige tycker om den bristande demokratin, eller den bristande mänskliga rättigheter som råder i Kina'. Och det har varit en del svajiga formuleringar så kring vad som är en demokrati och så vidare men det är klart att Sverige gärna vill göra de här besöken eftersom det kan gynna Svenska företag som är intresserade av att ha fabriker i Kina och är intresserade av att investera i kinesiska företag och vice versa så det är klart att ja, det blir ju den typen av målkonflikter uppstår även i handelssituationer. Men det måste ju inte göra som sagt var i och med att vi trots allt handlar till väldigt stor del med andra demokratier, så är det ju.

L: Precis. Jag har inga fler frågor. Har du något annat som du skulle vilja tillägga som vi inte har pratat om?

A: Nej men det är väldigt spännande frågor. Det är väl möjligtvis bara den allmänna känslan av frågorna är ju att ja det finns den här typen av dilemman men det är inte så lätt att lösa dem. Jag tror inte det finns en självklar lösning mer än att man då måste försöka att va, alltså lösningen hade väl inte varit att Sverige skulle prata mer eller mindre om demokrati på det sättet, så blir spänningen mindre allvarlig. Jag tror snarare att man får försöka prata om det så mycket man kan och jobba för det och kanske långsamt ändra uppfattningen om vad som är det rätta. Och sen då får man också ha respekt för att det som har visat sig mycket i litteratur om demokrati och demokratisering är att det är inte bara att lyfta över ett styrelseskick i länder som inte haft det, det blir oftast inte så bra heller av det. Utan det måste anpassas efter lokala förhållanden och lokala kulturer och lokala kontexter och så. Det man kan jobba mycket med är de goda institutionerna, att få goda institutioner på plats för att motverka korruption. Det känns som att svensk policy, vi kör fortfarande väldigt hårt med det här med demokratibistånd och så men det känns ju också som att vi inser att vi måste också jobba med politiska institutioner för att få dem på plats på olika sätt. Det handlar om rättssäkerhet och få en rättsstat, så att det finns polis och domstol och sånt som fungerar i andra länder och det kan vara, ja och det är också väldigt viktigt för att få en

positiv utveckling så. Så ja det var spännande frågor. Det är inte något jag funderar på varje dag, jag forskar ju om svensk utrikespolitik och lite liknande frågor funderar jag på i det projektet som jag arbetar med just nu om svensk, som handlar om sveriges kandidatur till säkerhetsrådet och att bli invalda. Det är också en fråga om hur Sverige vill framstå själv och varför vill man lägga så mycket kraft och tid på att få den här platsen i säkerhetsrådet. Då jobbar man väldigt mycket med hur Sverige ska uppfattas utomlands, och vilken uppfattning man ska ha och så.

Interview Greger Widegren

4th of April 2017, phone interview.

G: Ja, Sverige bilden har väl, det finns ju rätt mycket om det där. Vilka är det du intervjuar i Stockholm? Är du uppe på UD och träffar några där?

L: UD har inte haft tid med mig, men jag har intervjuer på Svenska Institutet.

G: Har du träffat några på exportrådet eller business sweden?

L: Nej business sweden har inte heller haft tid har de skrivit när jag kontaktat dem. Men sen har jag pratar med professorer i svensk utrikespolitik på GU.

G: Vilka är det då?

L: Hon heter Ann-Marie Ekengren.

G: Jaha, det känner jag inte igen. Du får komma ihåg att jag har varit pensionerad i snart nio år nu så de jag känner är min generation lite grann och de är ju på väg ut. Så ja, men det är bra att veta. Men rent spontant så tycker jag att det här med Sverige bilden, vi har ju en informationsbyrå på UD som ju ger ut, gör sammanfattningar om hur Sverige uppfattas i utländsk press och så, det borde du kanske åtminstone ägna en tanke åt, att titta på det. Så var det i alla fall på min tid att det kom ganska ofta. En gång om året hade man någon slags genomgång om hur svensk utrikespolitik och svenska åtgärder utomlands, sverige bilden. Där kan du läsa av hur utvecklingen har varit under en lång tid. Det skulle jag rekommendera att ha en kontakt med någon där, du får gå in på hemsidan och se. Dom brukar vara ganska bussiga mot studenter som skriver, det ligger i marknadsföringen att hjälpa såna som du. Det där tror jag du kan få bra tips om. Det som jag kan bidra med, jag har hållt på med helt andra saker.

L: ja du har arbetat med Elisabeth Özdalga i Istanbul.

G: Ja när Elisabeth var chef för Istanbulinstitutet i två omgångar var jag hela tiden, nu har jag lämnat det uppdraget, men jag satt i styrelsen i Istanbul. Jag var då nominerad av UD, man vill gärna ha med någon från UD. Har du varit där i Istanbul?

L: Ja det har jag varit.

G: Institutet sitter på samma tomt som konsulatet och är en del av, och uppfattas som en del av, iaf av turkarna som en del av konsulatet som det organisatoriskt egentligen inte är. Men UD ville gärna ha någon från kontoret med. Jag var administrationschef så jag fick naturligtvis vara med i det där sammanhanget och satt väldigt länge på det uppdraget för att biträda styrelsen med de frågorna. Under hennes tid så, även före och efter, så var det väldigt mycket bygghus. Det skulle byggas institutet skulle bygga till det här annexet som ligger längre ner i backen där. När var du där?

L: Jag var där 2010 senast.

G: Ja men då har du sett huset.

L: Då bodde vi där i hennes lägenhet på övervåningen.

G: ah jag förstår, nedanför ligger ett hus och det höll jag på med väldigt mycket och hon var ju väldigt hårt utsatt för ombyggnaden. Under hennes tid så var det ett väldigt borrhäls och bökande i backen där men sen så hade vi mycket att göra med varandra på den tiden. Sen är hon en fantastisk person. Är hon i göteborg nu?

L: ja hon är i göteborg, jag vet inte exakt vad för uppdrag hon har. Universitetet tror jag

G: Ja hon hade hela tiden en anknytning till göteborgs universitet, även när hon satt i Istanbul och Ankara. Nu bor väl både hon och hennes man i Sverige?

L: Ja, jag tror han åker fram och tillbaka en del, men pga av alla oroligheter så bor hon i sverige nu.

G: Ja han får lov att vara försiktig eftersom han motsatt sig Erdogan ganska tidigt. Ja.. det där är ett kapitel för sig som vi inte behöver ta nu.

L: Arbetade du med handelsfrämjande?

G: Nej, det sa jag till dig, jag höll inte på alls med sådant. Utan jag var jurist och jag är jurist och var administrativt direktör där och det har mycket att göra med löner och byggande och praktiska frågor . Men eftersom jag var chef så satt jag med i många olika sorters samråd. Man var på UD en gång i veckan, man går igenom olika ärenden och då förekommer handelsfrågor. Jag är inte ekonom, och de är inget jag jobbat med aktivt på UD.

L: Jobbade ni mycket med att förstärka Sverige bilden i Turkiet?

G: Nej, ja alltså i den mån, i och med att jag var byggnadsdirektör, och hade hand om inredning och konst och utsmyckning av ambassader, om det är en del av sverige bilder, det gällde ju att visa upp. Det handlar inte bara om att ha kontor och ambassad och residens utomlands för ambassadören, man måste också visa upp svensk arkitektur, svensk möbelkonst, svensk konst, konsthantverk som ska tala om när man kommer till den svenska ambassaden att såhär fina grejer gör vi. Så man kan säga att även ambassadfastigheterna och residenset där ambassadörerna finns och har representation och mycket representation är en annonsplats för sverige. Att marknadsföra svensk desig och svensk stil, det är ett icke-oväsentligt inslag. Det hade vi som särskilt uppdrag och där kan man säga handelsfrämjande. Om dom som kom dit till en ambassad, om det vi visar upp är snyggt och eftersträvarsvärt så nåt som man vill kopiera. Titta på ikea som driver en möbelstil som är svalt nordisk och som är oerhört uppskattad. Om man tittar på ett land som turkiet till exempel som har en möbeldesign som är helt annorlunda, men bland unga människor är det otroligt vanligt att man har ikea och skandinavisk stil på inredningen. Och det tycker jag man

kan göra, om man tycker att detta är en del av sverige bilden och främjande av svenska produkter så har vi ju det helt klart. Vi hade det uppdraget va, så jag sysslade mycket med kontakt med tex glasbruk och sånt, skruvs och orrefors och de här som gör, vad heter dom, utanför arvika, textilier och sånt. Och ambassaderna visar upp detta på residenserna och det kommer ju massvis med folk och det är inte bara för att prata politik och handel men det är också för att titta på stilen och vad sverige presenterar. Så där kan jag säga att jag har ganska god erfarenhet av sverigepromotion på något sätt, om det passar in på det du skriver det vet jag inte men.

L: Absolut, det är varumärkesbyggande helt klart.

G: Vi lade ner mycket energi på detta och jag hade mycket samarbete med fastighetsverket, gamla byggnadsstyrelsen och med statens konstråd och med national museum. Vi hängde ut svensk konst på ambassaderna och konsthantverk och visa upp hur duktiga vi var då, och det tror jag många gånger var det avant garde. När vi gjorde den stora, fina ambassaden i berlin så var detta ju väldigt viktigt, för vi visste att det skulle väcka stort uppseende, då de skandinaviska länderna gjorde ambassader på samma plats i Berlin. De nordiska ambassaderna har en gemensam tomt där man har byggt, och där sverige skulle marknadsföra sverige, danskarna skulle marknadsföra danmark och så vidare. Det var väldigt fokus på byggkonst, de var väl gert wingårdh som ritade vår ambassad.

L: Jaha okej.

G: Som är vår stora arkitekt för närvarande, ja eller han kanske är på väg ut. Men han var då väldigt inne så där kan man säga att det är en form av sverigebild och sverigefrämjande som nog har fått väldigt gott genomslag. Du talar om intressekonflikter och det ser jag inte några där. Där är det väl bara ett tydligt marknadsförande för vad vi står för rent designmässigt och kultur. Inte bara vad vi gör idag utan gammal svensk kultur också.

L: Hur är sverigebilden i utlandet?

G: Vi inbillar oss själva att den är väldigt god, och det är den ju. Sverige har alltså ju i utländsk press tidigare, men den har fått en hel del örfilar i senare tid va. Socialt sett har vi varit, med socialförsäkringar och frihets och sånt har vi varit, bilden har varit väldigt positiv av sverige överallt egentligen. Och man kan säga att en politik som, jag menar Olof Palme och den politik som han representerar är något som fick genomslag i tredje världen och sverigebilden där från den tiden är ju, det märkte jag för jag var ambassadör ett tag för, reseambassadör så jag satt i Stockholm, så jag reste till öarna i still havet, Toga, Fiji, Nya Guinea, samoa, och sådär, de visste inte så förskräckligt mycket om sverige men om de visste något som var det om Olof Palme och våra insatser i biståndssammanhang och sånt, det kände de till och så då ABBA. Och ja, det är sant, den delen av världen, och detta är 20 år efter ABBA var populära, och de är ju fortfarande en stor grej i Australien. Så att det kan jag nog säga att sverigebilden i u-länder så är den väldigt väldigt god, det märkte jag klart och tydligt att vi hade nytta av detta, att vi framstod som en mycket välvillig nation som stöttar frihetsrörelser och demokratiutveckling på alla områden. Det har ju varit vår stora utrikespolitiska grej att göra.

L: Mänskliga rättigheter har ju varit en stor del också.

G: Ja, mänskliga rättigheter principen är vi väldigt måna om. Det ska vara demokrati och självständiga domstolar, folk ska inte behöva bli berövade sin egendom, och frihet utan det ska följa ett mönster som alla bekänner sig till. Det är ju lite så och så med tillämpningen i vissa länder. Inte minst Turkiet skulle jag vilja påstå. Det som naturligtvis har försvårat det här är globaliseringen och det som du sa konkurrensen från andra, men vi i Sverige har varit väldigt tidiga med att ha, förutom att vi hade ett utvecklat välstånd och hade det bra och där man tog hand om de fattiga, barn, det har varit vår stora grej och det är vi fortfarande väldigt bra på. Barnfrågor, pension och socialförsäkring och så har många andra länder lika bra och bättre men inte när det gäller omhändertagande av barn, barnavårdscentraler och hälsovård och barnbidrag och ledighet för mammor och pappor va, där är vi fortfarande världsbäst, det finns ingen som närmar oss där. Ja kanske några länder i Europa, som Frankrike har väl något åt det hållet. Men det har varit en satsning som har väckt en del uppmärksamhet utomlands.

L: Jobbade ni med mänskliga rättigheter i Turkiet just?

G: Nej, det kan du prata med din faster, det vet hon bättre men forskningsinstitutet är ju ett rent forskningsinstitut och ska inte syssla med politik, det är klart att man kommer in på politik när det handlar om samhällsutveckling, men just nu är det en väldigt känslig fråga för den som är hennes efterträdare. Och styrelsen där att man kan ha forskningsprojekt som den nuvarande regeringen inte alltid tycker är så kul att man tittar på, så där finns en tydlig konfliktrisk att man har samarbete med social forskning där man tittar på demokratiörelser och Erdogans regim, ju misstänksamare den blir, det är inte kul alla gånger. Det finns ju en, som jag ser det, en stor risk för konfrontation där som jag ser det. Man måste vara försiktig när man har forskning där, jag kan nämna åtskilliga personer som institutet har haft kontakt med som den nuvarande regimen ha burat in, och inte är främmande för att bura in på sikt. Så där finns det en risk ja, för forskningsinstitutet, och Sverige försöker att stödja de rörelser som jobbar för kvinnofrågor och minoriteter och så. Det är något som den nuvarande regeringen i Turkiet slår hårt på så att det där är ingen lätt uppgift, men Turkiet är inte det enda land vi har haft problem med rörande demokratier och rättsstatsfrågor. Det är många som säger att de gör det men i själva verket är diktaturer å värsta sort. Vi har en tydlig grej är Sydafrika där vi under en längre period under apartheidtiden bedrev en politik och stödde frigörelserörelsen och ANC och så småningom ledde fram till en förändring, en kraftig sådan i samhället och apartheid försvann och allt det där.

L: Exporterar Sverige vapen möjligtvis till dessa länder?

G: Nej det gjorde vi inte. Det var ju bojkott av sydafrikanska varor, men man fick inte köpa varor som kom därifrån. Sverige har alltid varit rätt praktisk och det fanns en del metaller som bara kom ifrån Sydafrika och dem bojkottade man inte. Det var en del delegeringar och metaller som vi behövde och där var vi inte så noga med bojkotten och importerade i alla fall. Ekonomiska ting så finns alltid en ventil för, det är inte alltid 100 % konsekvent den politik man driver.

L: Det jag tittar på är att vi satsar väldigt mycket på mänskliga rättigheter men samtidigt så exporterar vi vapen till länder som kränker mänskliga rättigheter. Vad tycker du om det?

G: Ja det där är förstås ett dilemma som, och det finns en organisation som heter Svenska Freds som låg på och ligger på, men de har nog mildrats lite nu för man ser inte så mycket av dom i pressen. De tittar på all de här export, vi hade en krigsmatetirelexportör som bildade ett litet ämbetsverk som ska godkänna export av svensk vapenexport.

L: ISP?

G: Ja precis, ISP, inspektionen för strategiska produkter ja. Där har du ju frågan ställd på sin spets. Den stora grejen som jag kommer ihåg som var en brytpunkt för oss var ju Bofors affären i Indien där det visade sig att vi inte bara exporterade en massa vapen och kanonen från Bofors till Indien som då låg i krig med både kina och framförallt pakistan och inte bara det, det visade sig att Bofors hade både fått pengar för att muta beslutsfattare i Indien för att köpa kanoner från bofors, det var den första smällen och där var Palme rätt illa ute, i politiska sammanhang. Sen har det fortsatt, du har ju det senaste, Margot Wallströms medryckande historia med Saudiarabien va när det började visa sig att hur ska man hantera ett land som Saudiarabien? Saudiarabien är en av de få länder som inte ens utåt har ett parlament så, det är ren diktatur. Alla de andra håller sig till någon form av skendemokrati men saudiarabien var det verkligen elakartat va. Det blev ju väldigt tydligt att handelsintresserna konflikt med vad vi säger om rättsstatsfrågor och allas lika värde, där kvinnor inte får köra bil eller göra någonting, oerhört hårt. Någon politisk frihet finns inte heller, utan de som kritiserar regimen buras in och piskas, så just där är det väldigt väldigt tydligt Där tror jag den svenska bilden, när det bedömdes i utlandet, fick sig en knäck.

L: Inom landet, tror du svenska medborgare fick sämre syn på sverige? Att de tappade tron på sveriges trovärdighet?

G: Ja det tror jag. Det vore konstigt annars, de som läser tidningar tänker och så, de som bekymrar sig om sverigebilden blir nog inte särskilt imponerade av. Jag tror att bofors var en av de riktigt stora grejerna och sen har det varit många andra, telia i Uzbekistan och alla dom här affärerna med olika före detta sovjetstater, där det handlat om stora pengar och frestelsen har varit stor, man har till och med använt hundratals miljoner till mutor och för att köpa sig till leveranser som man annars inte hade fått. Det är klart att när det gäller det här korruptionsindex som någon organisation, fristående tankesmedja, så har Sverige ramlat ned rätt ordentligt. Vi är ju inte världsbäst på sådana saker längre, vi har ansetts vara ett korruptionsfritt land men det är klart att det här affärerna med stora ekonomiska gottgörelser, helt enkelt mutor, det har inte bidragit till att höja sveriges anseende vare sig i utlandet eller inrikes. Det tror jag nog man kan säga, vi ser också internt i landet med bankerna vad som sker, Panamaaffären, det är lite mycket sånt där nu. Det är klart att globaliseringen bidrar med det där och vi kan inte hålla rent på samma sätt som vi gjorde när vi var ett litet neutralt land som hade höga moraliska krav och försökte leva efter dem. Så är det inte längre, vi påverkas av yttre omständigheter på ett sätt som är svårt att värja sig från men jag tror rent allmänt har det betydelse från 80-talets början då det här blev allt tydligare med ekonomiska

transaktioner hit och dit som inte skulle ha blivit godkända tidigare. Det blev mer tillåtet och sen har spärrarna inte lyckats hålla emot. Vi ser många exempel på detta. Till exempel Frankrike de har löst frågan genom att exportera till båda sidor, de har aldrig haft minsta dåligt samvete för att de har en vapenexport. Och vi säger att har vi ingen vapenexport av den omfattning vi har så kan vi inte heller förse vårt eget försvar med den högteknologi som behövs. Sverige har inte mycket försvar kvar men det lilla vi har är väl ändå sånt att det väcker någon respekt i tekniskt avseende. Vi exporterar trots allt till andra länder som köper våra plan och kanoner och sådär. Det där är ett dilemma och det har alltid varit så men det blir svårare och svårare att hålla rågångarna för det går helt enkelt inte att göra. Och det tycker jag många besluts som har tagits där uppföljningen är, ja. Pressen försöker undersöka det, politikerna har svårt för det handlar om svenska jobb och välfärd och så vidare. Man måste på något sätt kompromissa och acceptera.

L: Nu har vi bilden utåt att vi är ganska duktiga på mänskliga rättigheter, måste vi sänka garden för oss själva?

G: Ja, Sverige försöker ändå, det finns få länder som ger så mycket pengar till olika former av demokratier som då mänskliga rättigheter och rättstatsprinciper som Sverige. Per capita ger vi alltid mest pengar till sådana organisationer. Våldigt mycket av biståndet handlar om det, att på något sätt att utveckla civilsamhället som det heter numera. Man ska ge stöd åt rörelser som står för demokrati och mänskliga rättigheter och rättsstaten och så. Det är inget fel i det, och jag tror vi har en betydande roll, det svenska namnet, ovanligt hederliga och bra i sådana sammanhang om man jämför med alla andra. Det hade varit svårt att argumentera för något annat än att det skett en knäck, jag menar det har varit så många saker på sistone. Stora grejer med de här telia-affärerna och saudis och annat som gör att samma höga rykte som vi hade för 20 år sedan har vi inte.

L: Nej, jag har fått lite indikationer att svenska medborgare är inte jätteintresserade av utrikespolitik, de bryr sig mest om vad som händer inrikes. Skulle du hålla med om det?

G: Inte intresserade av utrikespolitik?

L: Ja det kanske inte gör så mycket att vi haft utrikespolitiska skandaler för de kommer inte påverka så mycket.

G: Ja huruvida svenskarna själva, ja vad är det som styrker din tes?

L: Det var när jag när pratade med en professor i svensk utrikespolitik, Ann-Marie Ekengren som sa att utrikespolitik inte påverkar svenska val tex. Vad är skatterna och inrikes påverkar mer.

G: Ja, ja. där har det skett en försämring av utrikesintressen i svenska tidningar. Om du jämför med hur svenska tidningar var idag och hur de var för 15-20 år sedan så har bevakning och intresse för internationella frågor tycker jag har minskat kraftigt. Ja det tycker jag. Om man jämför med de korrespondenter och utrikesbevakning som media hade i utlandet då så har kvaliteten gått ned, det beror helt enkelt på att tidningarna har dålig

ekonomi och de har inte råd att ha den bevakning som var. Jag tycker det som jag får av svenska tidningar räcker inte, jag prenumererar på utländska tidningar för att nöjaktigt kunna följa internationella spelet, där tycker jag du har, där har det uppenbart blivit sämre. Men sen kan man säga om du tittar på italienska eller franska tidningar så har du alltid ett intresse för inrikespolitiken. Där är de inte särskilt intresserade eller har aldrig varit intresserade av oss utomlands, utan det har varit mest om det politiska spelet i landet som de är i. Så så tycker jag att det är, men det där är väl kanske en personlig fundering. Men jag tycker inte att jag är särskilt nöjd med tv, radio är bättre än tv men annars så tycker jag att utvecklingen går åt fel håll. Men vill du kolla på hur svenskarna uppfattar sverige bilden eller hur den är utomlands?

L: Just nu tittar jag på båda. Bilderna hör ihop.

G: Ja sverige bilden kan ju vara hur vi sverige uppfattar oss själva också. sverige bilden utomlands och hur den påverkar vår handel är ju ändå hur man i utlandet uppfattar bilden och hur den påverkar vår handel. Det är väl det som är det viktigaste i din studie?

L: Ja precis. Jo det är det. Hur vi använder bilden utomlands till handel och hur det riktiga bilden är av sverige.

G: Ja, men fortfarande så driver vi dessa frågor, vi driver frihandelfrågor mer än något annat land, vi är väldigt aktiva i sådana sammanhang och menar att frihandel är grunden för välstånd och vi har satsat mycket på sånt. En del av biståndspolitiken handlar om när biståndet fasas ut så är det meningen att vi ska driva handel mellan länderna, det finns ett mellanläge där man fasar ut biståndet och sen hoppas på att det man satsat i bistånd ska leda till att när de länder blir kraftfullare också handlar med sverige. Så att det som var ett biståndsland och det som har utvecklats positivt ska då leda till, där vi fasar ut biståndet, det finns flera sådana länder där man har sett att det inte behövs mer bistånd. Det kan också vara politiskt ställningstagande att man inte vill ge bistånd till länder som har en uttalad diktatur, men det har funnits och finns en linje att biståndet ska växla ut i handel så småningom när landet har börjat växa ekonomiskt.

L: Varför tror du just mänskliga rättigheter har blivit en sån viktig del av sveriges utrikespolitik? Varför har vi just valt det?

G: Ja, men det är väl ett självklart, mänskliga rättigheter är ett väldigt vitt begrepp, det handlar ju om det som vi varit inne på, det handlar om demokrati, det handlar om utöva styrelseformen, var land ska kunna tänka fritt och välja sina representanter, och rättsstaten är också en mänsklig rättighet. Att du inte ska kunna inburad och åtalad och det finns en form av legalitet och rättsprocess som garanterar de mänskliga värdena och att man får säga vad man tycker och att man inte ska bli dömd ohörd och så där. Mänskliga rättigheter är ett samlingsbegrepp för väldigt mycket av det en demokratisk rättsstat står för, det är ett vitt begrepp. Vi i dom frågorna är vi inte ensamma, alla författningar i alla länder innehåller sådana här rättighetsförklaringar, sen att dom inte tillämpas i varierande grad, det är en annan sak. Att vi reagerar mot apartheid och de mänskliga rättigheterna, egentligen förekommer ju kommunistländernas förtryck och vad som vi ser i Kina och Vietnam idag är länder som är stenhårda diktaturer och där har du också en bra konflikt att peka på. Så

mycket mänskliga rättigheter ser vi ju inte i Kina, det finns få länder som avrättar så mycket folk och håller folk inburade men handel är en central fråga för svensk exportindustri. Att vi lägger ned mycket kraft och pengar för att utveckla vår förbindelse med Kina och se till att dom köper. Där har du.

L: Ja det är jätteintressant .

G: Där har du tydliga. Det tänker vi inte på va men tänk på Kina är så otroligt mäktigt och ekonomiskt starkt att ingen egentligen vågar ge sig på de frågorna. Norrmännen har ju en bra, där har du en bra jämförelse. Norrmännen vågade ju, det var nån nobelpristagare, en fredspristagare i stortinget i Oslo som misshagade kineserna rätt ordentligt. Han stod för demokratifrågor, och där har kineserna markerat och gör fortfarande mot Norge, rätt ordentligt. Där har man fått betala ett pris för man vågade ha en uppfattning om mänskliga rättigheter, ja. Jag kommer inte ihåg vad han hette men det är några år sedan.

L: Blev det en diplomatisk kris där då?

G: Ja, precis, inte bara diplomatisk utan ekonomisk. Kineserna bojkottade, eller om de inte gjorde det betydligt svårare för Norge att handla med Kina. Det har sitt pris va. Den här konflikten som du pratar om, den finns inte bara i sverige. Jag vet inte om danskarna har ju alltid, du studerar ju i Danmark. Danmark har alltid varit otroligt mer pragmatiska än Sverige när det gäller såna här frågor. De är duktiga på affärer, mycket duktigare än vad vi någonsin har varit, för danskarna har alltid varit. Ja om du frågar folk som håller på mycket med handel, så vet alla att danskarna är hårda och pragmatiska till tusen alltså. De låter sig inte bekymras sådär förskräckligt mycket av sådana här frågor utan de kör ett annat race 'n vad vi gör då. De har därmed större framgång vad gäller handelsmässigt än vad sverige har. Vi får nog betala ett pris för vi håller oss på mattan sådär, men vi är inte lika aktiva, vi vågar inte riktigt lika mycket. Men ja, det är svåra frågor du har gett dig på.

L: Ja det är det.

G: Fick du välja ämne själv, eller är det?

L: Ja jag får välja själv men det måste vara politiskt och ekonomiskt inriktat. Jag vill främst titta på intressekonflikter,

G: Ja det finns många så du har verkligen och bita i. Sverige är ju ett extremt exportberoende land och har alltid varit det. Vår välstånd vilar till, ja helt och hållet, på att vi har framgångsrika avsättningar för våra produkter och får bra betalt för dom. Att vi ligger bra till och har en teknisk utveckling som gör att andra länder vill köpa våra varor, att vi är konkurenskraftiga, det bygger helt och hållet på det. Annars hade vi inte haft det så bra som vi har det. Vi har skonats från krig och så och vi hade omedelbart efter krigstiden enorma vinster för sveriges produktionsapparat. Vi kunde raskt exportera till ett sönderbombat europa, där vi behövdes för att de andra skulle komma ifatt va. Vi har också varit duktiga när det gäller att hålla formen, vi är duktiga i viss marknadsföring för våra produkter och det måste vi fortsätta med men konkurrensen blir hårdare och det är klart att när vi drabbas av

såna här globaliseringseffekter som det blir när man måste spela med i mutkarusellen, så kommer man på konflikt med andra värden och värdegrunder som vi håller av. Vi är en rättsstat och vi vill vara det och vi vill gärna att alla andra ska vara det också. Vi kommer i konflikt med de ekonomiska aspekterna. Vi har tusentals exempel på detta, så där har ju du ett stort ämne att bita i.

L: Verkligen

G: det har du väl upptäckt?

L: Jo, haha, det har jag upptäckt. Jag ska bara försöka fokusera och skala ned det.

G: Ja du får välja ut ett par exempel.

Interview Linda Åkerström

4th of April, 2017, intervju med Linda Åkerström, Svenska Freds 16.40

La: Vi kan börja med att du får presentera dig, vad du gör och lite om vad Svenska Freds jobbar för.

Li: Jag heter Linda Åkerström jag är ansvarig för nedrustningsfrågor på Svenska Freds, det betyder jag är ansvarig för allting som handlar om vapen och vapennedrusting, framför allt svensk vapenexport. Svenska Freds är Sveriges största, världens äldsta fredsförening som har funnits sen 1823, och som är mest kända för exportfrågor men bevakar också generella frågor om hållbar fred. Hur kan vi skapa en långsiktig strukturell förändring för att förebygga de väpnade konflikter som vi vet finns istället för att satsa på kortsiktiga lösningar.

La: Intressant. Tror du att vapenexporten är viktig för Sverige politisk sett? Soft power tex.

Li: Alltså den kan ju vara viktig på flera olika sätt. Jag tror att den är betydelsefull både utifrån vad Sverige ser sig få ut av exporten, jag tror också den är betydelsefull vad gäller den påverkan som den har negativt på Sveriges möjligheter att verka för olika värden som demokrati, hållbar fred och mänskliga rättigheter, utveckling och så vidare. Vapenhandel är inte vilken handel som helst, utan det är ju en handel i makt om man får vara krass. En handel, om ska prata i de termerna, en handel i makt. Det får såklart konsekvenser på en massa olika sätt. Både för de relationer som skapas, vissa affärer har livslängd på decennier. En del har en sån lång livslängd att Sverige blir knytet till det andra landet som köper i många decennier framöver, och då är det klart att det skapar relationer som får påverkan, utrikespolitiskt och försvarspolitiskt.

La: Tror du att det är viktigt ekonomiskt sett för Sverige?

Li: Det där är intressant för det där argumentet att vapenexporten skulle vara en viktig ekonomisk källa för Sverige. Det finns inga forskningsmässiga belägg för det, det är en väldigt liten del av exporten, mindre än en % utan Sveriges totala varuexport. 0.3 % av Sveriges anställda arbetar med krigsmateriel. För mig när jag såg den siffran första gången, jag beräknade den för boken som jag skrev, blev jag ganska chockad, jag trodde den skulle vara mycket mer med tanke på hur viktigt det argumentet är i debatten, att det skulle röra sig om, Reinfeldt har en gång sagt att det rör sig om 100 000 jobb, det handlar om 12 800 jobb år 2015, som är direkt anställda.

La: Ja för Reinfeldt har väl argumenterat att vapenexporten är viktig för jobben?

Li: Det är ju viktigt för jobben på vissa orter, för Linköping, för Örnsköldsvik, för Karlskoga är det en extremt viktig industri. För Sverige för en helhet, om vi tar allt det stöd som vapenindustrin får vilket är ett stöd som inte är med att ge andra branscher, så finns det flera undantagsregler, tex EU:s inre marknad får man ge stöd till vapenindustrin som man inte får ge till andra tex träindustrin. Som om man skulle ta allt stödet å ena sidan vad gäller pr

resor, stöd osv och sen kvittera det mot de skatteintäkter man får rent ekonomiskt så tror jag inte att det är en vinstaffär. Och enligt regelverket får man inte säga ja till vapenexport av näringspolitiska skäl. Om det var så att det var en vinstaffär så tror jag fler skulle argumentera med just det argumentet men det gör dom inte.

La: Utrikespolitiken som vi har idag i Sverige motsäger sig självt, vi fokuserar oerhört mycket på mänskliga rättigheter samtidigt som vi exporterar vapen till länder som direkt kränker mänskliga rättigheter, och jag får inte ihop det.

Li: Jag tror ingen får det.

La: Vad tycker Svenska Freds om det?

Li: Jag tror det är det som gör vapenexporten så intressant, fascinerande, för det är där allting krockar. Det är lätt att å ena sidan stå och prata om mänskliga rättigheter och sen nästa dag kan man stå och prata om att tjäna pengar, men i det här området så krockar de här två så himla mycket och vapenexport-lagstiftningen och hela Sveriges vapenexport är en olöst kompromiss, en krock mellan värderingar. Vi tycker att det kan vara en trovärdig kraft för mänskliga rättigheter, hållbar fred, utveckling så länge man får beväpna de länder som håller på med det här och direkt stödjer förtryck runt om i världen. Man stödjer felprioriteringar där länder har råd med insatser för mänsklig säkerhet som hälsa och sanitet. Istället satsar man mångmiljardbelopp på att köpa svenska JAS plan. Det går inte att vara trovärdig i en sådan politik, man kan inte bara snacka man måste också höra ihop med sina handlingar.

La: Just det här med trovärdighet är väldigt intressant för man förväntar sig att när Sverige motsäger sig själva och sina lagar att det skulle påverka dess legitimitet, men det känns inte som det gör det, iaf inte inrikes. En vanlig medborgare bryr sig inte så mycket om utrikespolitik utan mest inrikespolitik. Tror du därför att Sverige har gjort en beräkning att vi kan exportera vapen och samtidigt behålla vår legitimitet i hemlandet.

Li: Ja men det är ju ett problem som försöker jobba emot den här exporten är just att utrikespolitiska frågor så sällan är valfrågor, det finns väl nåt litet undantag genom historien men generellt sätt har en utrikespolitisk fråga aldrig avgjort ett val men däremot vård, skola, omsorg. Vapenexporten, dess problem är ju att "fördelarna", inom situationstecken, dom hamnar väldigt lokalt medans nackdelarna, konsekvenserna dom hamnar långt bort, människor helt utanför våra gränser, människor som kanske inte har samma makt som vi har i form av underlägsenhet, att de lever i väldigt fattigt land eller så, det är dom som drabbas och det är. Vinsterna är lokala och de negativa sakerna ligger långt bort från oss. I en sån situation, ja det är lätt, de påverkar hela dynamiken i att försöka påverka detta såklart. Och om då de fördelar som går att framhäva har med säkerhet för Sverige, man kan få folk att bli rädda, och vilja investera mer i försvarsmakten eller försvarsbudgeten. Eller hävda att det handlar om människors jobb eller deras säkerhet, eller deras välfärd. Då är ju det någonting som slår, har större betydelse i ett val än vad kvinnors rättigheter att vara självständiga individer i Saudiarabien tex, har i en valrörelse. Så det är ju ett problem, absolut. Det har vi sett också i dom fall som vi har kunnat påverka vapenexportspolitiken, att

de blivit en mer striktare politik, tex i saudi-vapen skandalen. Vi var väldigt aktiva i att få regeringen att avsluta saudi-avtalet. Det är ingenting som hade hänt om vi inte hade fått till en stor omfattande debatt. Så dom här frågorna, det vi kan se i vår erfarenhet är att det måste ut i ljuset. Och först när politiker tvingas ta ansvar för sina prioriteringar, mellan mänskliga rättigheter å ena sidan och försvars och säkerhetspolitik å andra sidan, om man tvingas göra den avvägningen i det offentliga, det är då vi kan nå framgång, eller vad vi ska säga. Så länge som det sker under sekretessen är det oftast mänskliga rättigheter som kompromissas med.

La: Tror du att i en globaliserad värld, tror du att Sverige kommer att tumma på mänskliga rättigheter för att kunna tävla? Kapitalistiskt sett med andra länder. Vilket håll tror du utvecklingen kommer gå åt? Striktare vapenlagar eller står det stilla?

Li: Just nu finns det en politisk process att förbjuda vapenexport till diktaturer, något som Svenska Freds jobbat med sen, jag tror vi framförde det förslaget någon gång på 90-talet. Om det skulle gå igenom, så att Sverige faktiskt skulle få ett sådant regelverk som sätter stopp för diktaturer, att exportera till diktaturer så skulle vi vara först världen då av stora vapenexporterande länder, att ha ett sådant regelverk, så det är ett steg i rätt riktning sen tidigare. Där kan man säga, då går det åt rätt håll. Sen finns det många, sen finns det global arms treaty som det återstår att se om det kommer få någon effekt eller inte, men det återstår att se. Så det är i positiv riktning, men sen ser vi å andra sidan att det sker utvecklingar som gör det svårare att kontrollera vapenexporten. Som att företag och industrin blir mer och mer internationaliserade, vapensystemen är inte bara gjorda i sverige längre utan består av delar och komponenter från många andra länder. Precis som Sverige exporterar delar och komponenter till andra länder, det blir svårare att i den situationen få kontroll men man ser också mer och mer civila produkter som tex övervakningssystem som inte är kontrollerade som används militärt, så det är också frågan, hur kan man kontrollera allt, alla dessa aspekterna. Hur det kommer bli, det tror jag kommer bero på vinner argumentationen. Vapenindustrin kommer alltid vilja ha lägre regelverk, de kommer alltid kämpa för att det ska vara, va de kallar, level playing field, sverige ska sänka sin ribba för att ligga i kant med andra europeiska länder som producerar. Det är svårt att säga, det är som att alla politiska områden en fight om definition och språket och värderingarna kontinuerligt.

La: Jag läste en nyhetsartikel som kom ut idag som handlar just om att de ska ändra vapenrestriktionerna. Men ändringarna skulle ge mer tolkningsutrymme än förslaget. Det känns som det går i fel riktning.

Li: Ja det är bara början på en lång debatt som kommer komma nu. Utredningen har föreslagit en formulering som är att 'vid grava brister i demokratisk stat utjämt hinder av export' det är en typisk sån formulering som man har ingen aning om vad den betyder, hur högt är ett hinder? Det har jag ingen aning om, vad det kommer innebära. Då hade regeringen läkt en formulering där de säger att vi bör inte exportera till diktaturer, det står redan i regelverket att vi bör inte exportera till länder med grova och omfattande kränkningar av mänskliga rättigheter så om man tittar på hur Sveriges vapenexport ser ut så är det tydligt att det vi inte bör göra det gör vi ändå. Så att den formuleringen har vi redan sett vad den håller för. Så just nu är den kamp om hur dessa formuleringar ska se ut, men vi tycker att det

ska stå 'vi ska inte exportera till diktaturer'. Vi vill inte att det ska lämnas öppet för tolkningsutrymme, kompromisser men tyvärr så är det ganska symptomatiskt till sveriges relation till vapenexport politiken, det är något vi inte bör göra men som vi ändå gör i större utsträckning.

La: Den här Saudiskandalen som var 2012 med vapenfabriken och mutor. Det känns som Sveriges legitimitet går ned lite just under skandalen men sen glöms det bort och går upp igen. Vad tycker ni om det?

Li: Det är alltid någonting som är, folk gillar ju skandaler, och om folk har gjort något olagligt. Så det blir mycket uppmärksamhet om nån har varit ren olaglig eller mutor får stor uppmärksamhet och så men vi tycker ju det som är mest upprörande är det som görs lagligt, att man helt lagligt kan beväpna saudiarabien, helt lagligt att man kan få militären som samarbetspartner och bygga en vapenfabrik till exempel. Så vi försöker alltid att när det kommer en skandal är att lyfta den större frågan om att detta är faktiskt något som vi själva har bestämt att vi är okej med. Men ja, legitimiteten, för 10 år sedan ungefär var det få som visste att vi hade en vapenexport överhuvudtaget. Om vi föreläste i skolor då så, de flesta visste inte. Men i och med saudiskandalen och arabiska våren och det arbete vi har gjort så gör att jag tycker nu att det är fler människor som känner till det och då är nästa steg vad vill vi göra åt det. Legitimiteten jag tror att, jag känner att många bryr sig om vapenhandeln, opinionsundersökningar visar också att en majoritet av sveriges befolkning inte vill ha någon vapenexport alls. Saker som vi då jobbar för runt 80% vill inte att vi ska beväpna människorättskränkare och diktaturer. Det är ju en enorm stor majoritet så varför når vi inte folkets vilja genom de politiska beslutsfattarna.

La: Varför gör det inte det då?

Li: Men jag tänker att det hänger mycket ihop med utrikespolitikens roll i valrörelsen, att man inte liksom inte gör det till en fråga. Man vill inte ha den här fighten öppet och det ser man ofta, locket läggs på den här frågan och det är en konflikt, inte bara mellan vissa partier utan också ofta inom vissa partier. Inom tex socialdemokraterna så inom själva partiet så finns det liksom både de som starkt stödjer industrin och dom som starkt arbetar med solidaritet och rättigheter, så det är en fråga som skapar splittring inom partiet och som också kapar blockgränserna, så det är inte bara vänsterblocket som är emot och högerblocket är för, absolut inte. Utan liberalerna är ett av de mest kritiska partierna till exempel vad gäller vapenexport till diktaturer, mycket mer än socialdemokraterna. Och det gör att i den här frågan finns det starka krafter som inte vill att det här ska bli en fråga som kommer upp på dagordningen.

La: Jag förstår, det känns rent generellt som att Sverige inte marknadsför sig själva som en av de största vapenexporterarna i världen, utan vi framhäver oss själva som att ha demokrati, mänskliga rättigheter, jämställdhet. Jag får känslan av att det tystas ned ganska rejält.

Li: Du vet känslan, hur känns det när man gör något som man egentligen inte borde göra. Jag bör inte typ, jag vet inte, röka men så gör jag det ändå. Den känslan det är inget man vill

marknadsföra, så det finns ett stort mått av skam i många läger i den här exporten. Jag tyckte det märktes väl i utrikesdebatten senast när Margot Wallström sa 'men min personliga åsikt är att vi inte ska exportera vapen' så även när vår utrikesminister står och pratar i utrikesdebatten om sin personliga åsikt, det är så uppenbart att det finns en stor klyfta också inom regeringen för vad man säger utrikespolitiskt.

La: Tror du det är stor skillnad på Sveriges identitet utåt sett och Sveriges identitet som den verkligheten är?

Li: Några av de vanliga frågor jag får av utländska journalister är det är alltid såhär 'sverige, vi trodde att ni var bra, men så exporterar ni vapen' och det är lite så att många utländska, internationella journalister gottar sig lite i det här. 'Ah men ni har så stor svansföring och ni står här och säger så mycket saker och ni är alltid bäst på allt, alltid och nu gör ni det här idiotiska, varför säger ni inte det för?' det finns en stort intresse för klyftan, gapet i mellan vad man säger och vad som görs. Som också påverkar Sveriges möjligheter att förhandla i vissa frågor, vi står och säger en sak och sen finns det dom som står och säger 'ah men vi vet vad ni gör i egentligen, egentligen är ni bara realpolitiska, bryr er om er själva och så vidare. Ni kan stå där och prata om kvinnliga rättigheter i saudis, eller vad det nu kan vara, men vi vet hur det egentligen förhåller sig'. Så det påverkar Sveriges legitimitet och rykte också.

La: Saudi arabien, det är enkelt att kritisera för det finns så många uppenbara brister och det är ingen i sverige som har varit i saudiarabien, det är inget turistmål direkt. Men tittar man på Thailand tex som är en militärdiktatur, som har väpnade konflikter med gränsande länder, ingen pressfrihet, åsiktsfrihet, kritiserar du kungen hamnar du i fängelse. Men folk i sverige har en sån positiv bild av thailand, ett härligt ställe att åka till, det är semester, folk är så vänliga där. Det är okej att exportera vapen till thailand men inte till saudis arabien?

Li: En gång när jag skrev en artikel om Thailand och vapenhandel fick jag arga mail av människor som faktiskt hade varit i Thailand och faktiskt att det var så trevligt där och faktiskt så var det inte alls som jag sa och så vidare, och det är ingen diktatur, för det är så vänligt där. Jag tänker att absolut, det ligger någonting i det där. Vi väljer oftast saudiarabien för det är liksom, om vi fortsätter exportera dit så finns det inga gränser till vem vi kan exportera till i princip. Det är såhär worst of the worst listan och sen har det fått så mycket uppmärksamhet och folk förstår direkt konflikten i att göra det, det är lättare än att ge sig på Thailand till exempel. Det är klart att vi inte ska exportera till Thailand, det säger ju sig självt.

La: Nej precis. Jag har inte kontaktat ISP men de måste uppenbart tänka att de följer regelverket och vad är deras åsikt. Har Svenska freds kontakt med ISP?

Li: Ja, jättemycket. Jag träffar dom och pratar, både att vi ger våran syn på deras arbete, frågar dom om specifika fall, försöka få ut så mycket information från dom som möjligt. Sprida den, det är mycket som är sekretessbelagt. Svårt, men vi träffar dom, har dialogmöte med dom och ses ofta då när jag skrev min bok om vapenexporten som jag skrev förra året. Då intervjuade jag dom massor av gånger och sådär. Jag skulle säga att vi har en ganska bra relation. Dom tycker att dom följer regelverket och jag kan inte säga att de inte gör det

för regelverket är formulerat på ett sånt sätt att lite vad som helst kan passa där i många aspekter. Det står inte, det är väldigt få saker som slås fast, det är få saker som man vet vad bryter egentligen mot det här regelverket, det är få saker som egentligen gör det.

La: Regelverket är också såhär att de här specifika vapnen som vi exporterar dom specifika vapen kommer inte kränka mänskliga rättigheter, istället för att se det på en högre nivå.

Li: Det finns olika regelverk, det finns ATT och EU:s gemensamma ståndpunkt och Sveriges regelverk. EU:s gemensamma ståndpunkt och ATT, de är formulerade på det där sättet, det vi brukar kalla materielspecifikt synsätt att såhär kan det här specifika vapnet i framtiden att användas för de här kränkningarna, då ska man ha en spåkula och kunna se 20 år i framtiden, det är en helt omöjlig uppgift. Men så är dom utformade. Mer juridiskt kanske, medans det svenska regelverket är ett politiskt resonemang som ser på mottagarna som helhet, så pågår det omfattande grova kränkningar av mänskliga rättigheter i det här mottagarlandet. Så bedömer man det och det avgör huruvida man ska exportera eller inte. Så dom här två sorters regelverk har helt olika angreppspunkter och det svenska regelverket har mycket mycket mer rimliga syn, mycket bättre riskbedömningsmöjlighet, också mycket striktare i de flesta aspekter än det andra regelverket.

La: Som jag har förstått det så är Sverige inte så farligt i jämförelse med andra länder, därför fokuserar man inte internationellt på svensk vapenexport. Det finns många andra bovar. Sveriges regering kanske utnyttjar detta spelutrymme som de har?

Li: Sverige är ju världens äldsta och största vapenexportör ungefär i de kretsarna.

La: Per capita?

Li.: Totalt sett. Ja om man jämför med de 15 största vapenexportörerna i världen, ja då har vi ett strikt regelverk i jämförelse med dom. Men det man ska komma ihåg är att de flesta vapenexportörerna i världen, vad är det 189 länder eller nåt, exporterar inte vapen alls. Så det är såhär det finns ju länder, jag tycker såhär att huruvida vi har ett strikt regelverk eller inte, det måste ses i ljuset av det regelverket får för konsekvenser, om man kan bli världens äldsta och största vapenexportör och att exportera till länder som är de grävsta diktaturer i världen i enhet med regelverket, är det då ett strikt regelverk? Det är ju striktare än Frankrike men jag tycker att det, det säger inte så mycket.

La: Vad är Svenska Freds ståndpunkt i det här?

Li: I våra stadgar, står det att vår vision är en värld utan vapenhandel, så vi vill ju att Sverige ska exportera vapen överhuvudtaget men det är långt in i framtiden mål. Absolut det som är viktigast är att Sverige slutar exportera vapen till diktaturer, till länder som allvarligt kränker mänskliga rättigheter, till länder som ligger i väpnad konflikt eller riskerar att hamna där eller länder som har stora omfattande utvecklingsbehov. Om vi tar bort de kategorier av mottagarländer skulle vi ha mycket större möjlighet att kunna verka för de här värdena och trovärdighet i vår utvecklingspolitik. Då kan vi ta en diskussion sen om huruvida vi ska

exportera till Schweiz eller Norge eller så men det är liksom, det kan vi ta då. Det här är de stora striderna.

La: Hur arbetar ni för det här målet?

Li: Allt det där som vi pratat om vad som behövs för att väcka debatten, det vill vi skapa, vi tar information som inte finns någon annanstans tex hur ser Sveriges vapenexport ut, per capita siffrorna det är det vi som har räknat ut. Så vi hjälper journalister och många andra med information som inte går att få tag på. Så det och sen driver vi debatt, opinionsbildning, ser till att debatten hålls vid liv, försöker påverka utvecklingen framåt på olika sätt vad gäller regelverket. Men också i hur ISP gör sitt arbete, vilken insyn riksdagen får i olika dokument, osv. Vi, i den mån vi kan hjälper till att granska olika affärer, hjälper journalister, studenter, allmänheten med information. Vi lobbar också mot politiker, tex det här nya regelverket, ska det stå bara, eller hinder, eller ska det stå ska och så vidare. Vi försöker tjata på dom så att dom inte glömmet frågan, att de inte kan komma undan med kompromisser utan behöver ta ansvar för det också i offentligheten. Om man nu ska beväpna förenade arabemiraten under bombningar, så ska man stå för det också.

La: Av ren nyfikenhet, hur finansierar ni ert arbete?

Li: Om man säger att det är tre delar, en tredjedel är organisationsstöd som de flesta organisationer får som är reko, en tredjedel är projektstöd för våra projekt i Myanmar och Södra Kaukasus, och sen en tredjedel är gåvor, arv och givare, medlemmar. Så mycket av det arbetet som handlar att påverka politik är pengar som är svåra att få projektpengar för, som verkligen hänger på att människor vill vara med oss i att sätta en person som kan lägga, som typ jag, all min tid på att grota ned mig i formuleringar i lagstiftning så att vi kan vara en motpart i debatten på ett område som är oftast väldigt komplext och tekniskt. Ofta blir man avfärdad, så här 'nämen det där är så komplicerat, det är så många saker som ligger i det här, och du kan inte rätt termer'. Så blir man avfärdad pga av det, så att kunna vara proffs i fredslobbyistfrågor inom det som många vill stödja.

La: Hur behandlar riksdag och regering Svenska Freds?

Li: Det beror på vilka såklart. Svenska freds har jobbat med det här sen 20-talet och aktivt haft en person anställd sen mitten av 80-talet och vi hjälpte avslöja delar av Bofors-affären och liksom, så där har vi en historia av att vara väldigt aktiva med att ge kritik. Jag skulle säga att det finns en öppenhet och dialog, men det beror på vem, det finns ju en större öppenhet hos dom som tycker som oss, än de som inte gör det såklart. Öppenheten är också mycket större när det inte är ett val antågande. När vi närmar oss valet då märker vi också hur dialogen och kritiken inom partierna tystnar, en större ovilja att prata om det här.

La: Jag förstår, jag ska se om jag har några mer frågor. Tycker du generellt sett att Sverige har svårt att balansera sin värdegrund med handelsintressen?

Li: Vet inte riktigt, jag har inte jättestor koll på den frågan, jag tror du måste prata med någon person. Du borde prata med Parul Sharma. Hon är advokat på advokatbyrån Vinge. Hon

skulle kunna vara en person att prata med, men jag vet att hon är mycket upptagen. Hon har sommarpratats också om vapenhandeln och CSR. Men det är svårt, ja jag tror du ska prata med någon som har koll på handel. Jag tror jag tror du måste prata med någon annan. Men jag tycker vapenhandeln är en tydlig illustration, det är där det krockar mest tycker jag. Det är liksom en väldigt kontroversiell handel som ändå är laglig, brett talat. Jag tänker att om är beredd att kompromissa där så kan man nog kompromissa med andra saker också.

La: Jag har inte fler frågor, men har du något mer du vill prata om som jag inte frågat?

Li: I vapenhandeln skulle jag säga att krocken är mellan former av säkerhet, utrikespolitiken utgår från en mänsklig säkerhetstanke särskilt just nu, när man höjt nivån för principerna ganska rejält med den nuvarande regeringen. Högre större ord har större fallhöjd, att det är någon typ av mänsklig säkerhetstanke som att utveckling är säkerhet, fred är säkerhet. Att man behöver jämställdhet, jämlikhet för säkerheten, hållbar fred. Det är den synen som krockar med en nationalistisk och militaristisk syn på säkerhet i försvarshåll och att det är dom två som krockar. Sen kommer handelspolitik in där men jag tror främst det handlar om den krocken här. Ja, man vill gärna bry sig om en bra värld, man vill gärna investera långsiktigt i det man vet funkar på längre sikt, men man är också rädd, man har också traditioner om militäriska strukturer som gör att man agerar på ett sätt, upprustning tex. Nu när det finns en stark rädsla för Putin och ryssland och att man ser att den här rädslan driver upp materielanskaffningen hos försvaret osv. De materielanskaffningarna i sin tur kommer följas av marknadsföringsinsatser för att försöka casha in pengar för de här investeringarna så sveriges inköp av vapensystem till försvarsmakten hänger direkt ihop med vår försäljning så ja. Men det är intressant att vapenexporten låg på Margot Wallström från början, hon var ansvarig och då var det mycket enkelt för oss när vi satt i möten med henne, när hon pratade om flickors rättigheter i Pakistan så, ja men vi exporterar ju vapen dit, så hur tänker du då? Det blev väldigt lätt att knyta de här två grejerna tillsammans. Nu har det flyttat till Morgan Johansson, så blir det svårare. Så ju mer vi kan försöka föra samman de här två sakerna och visa på det här, konflikten, desto bättre för oss. Ju mer dom kan hålla isär dom, ju mer de kan ha mänskliga rättigheter å ena sidan och inte prata om den här konflikten, desto bättre för dom.

La: Var det ett strategiskt val tror du att flytta detta till Morgan Johansson?

Li: Jag vet inte. Jag vet inte varför de gjorde det men om hennes personliga övertygelse är att vi inte borde inte exportera vapen då förstår jag varför hon inte vill vara ansvarig för ett område hon inte kan stå för. Så, ja.

Interview Jacob Stenberg

Jacob Stenberg, Svenska Institutet, 4th of April 2017

L: Vilken bild har Sverige i utlandet idag?

J: Börjar med de enkla frågorna.

L: Ja i och för sig vi kan börja med att du får presentera dig och berätta lite om dig själv och vad du gör.

J: Jag jobbar som analytiker, vilket innebär lite olika saker. Mycket av det jag håller på med just nu, det handlar om att se hur samtalet ser ut på digitala plattformar och sociala medier plattformar för att följa vilka samtalsämnen, vilka narrativ som uppstår och vilka som är populära, vilka som är de mest centrala narrativen när det kommer till Sverige. Det är viktigt av flera olika anledningar, men en av de anledningar som har kommit upp på sistone, som du säkert har läst en del om, handlar mycket om falsk information och falska nyheter som sprids om Sverige vilket har ökat i nivå de senaste 2 till 3 åren. Dels som en följd av flyktingkrisen i Sverige där då Sverige blev ett slagträ för specifika aktörer i deras inhemska politiska debatt och där kunde vi då se att väldigt xenofobiska narrativ som behandlar Sverige på gränsen till samhällskollaps och systemkollaps till följd av ett högt asylmottagande. Det fick väldigt stor spridning och det görs i olika länder. Det är en roll som jag har och just nu håller vi på att författa en väldigt stor rapport som kommer vara klar om 2-3 veckor som handlar just om det för att se hur bilden ser ut av Sverige på sociala medier och digitala plattformar. Sen jobbar jag med lite andra saker också, dels andra sverigebildsundersökningar kan man säga, som inte enbart handlar om sociala medier och digitala plattformar. Hur den allmänna befolkningen utomlands, hur de ser på Sverige, det ligger på mitt fat. Vi jobbar väldigt mycket, vi på SI är ungefär 140 medarbetare, som jobbar med olika saker, allt från konkreta evenemang tillsammans med utlandsmyndigheter och ambassader och ofta tillsammans med UD, utrikesdepartementet. Men också så har vi ett väldigt stor fokus på våra egna sociala medier och digitala plattformar. Vi har satsat väldigt mycket där och som myndighet tror jag att vi är väldigt duktiga på det och vi gör det väldigt väl. Vi har väldigt kloka medarbetare. Kommunikation är viktigt såklart och det jobbar vi egentligen alla tillsammans med. Analysfunktionen som jag arbetar med ska ju vara en integrerad del av kommunikationen, att veta hur människor där ute pratar om Sverige underlättar, eller ska underlätta för att veta hur man ska kommunicera. Ja det är ungefär det tror jag.

L: Vilken bild har Sverige i utlandet just nu? Är den positiv?

J: Oj, jättenyanserad och mångbottnad, det måste jag säga. När man kollar på exempelvis medier som beskriver hur Sverige ser ut, då tänker jag svenska medier, då vill jag gärna ha en uniform bild av att det existerar en bild, en uniform bild av Sverige. Och om man tänker på det så, så vore det omöjligt om så vore fallet. Världen består av många olika människor och olika medborgare har olika erfarenheter och olika grader av erfarenhet, man har väldigt många olika associationer till Sverige. Men man kan säga såhär, att på grund av det som har hänt de senaste 2-3 åren, när man har antagit att immigrationsrelaterade frågor

associeras alltmer med Sverige och då att nidsbilder har skapats på sociala medier, att det då är det är mycket våldtäkter och våld i Sverige, som en följd av det har man antagit att bilden av Sverige är negativ, att den allmänna befolkningen associerar bilden av Sverige till just förfall och kollaps och så vidare. Och det stämmer nödvändigtvis inte alls. Jag tror man måste se en distinktion mellan vad som existerar på sociala medier och allt det där andra vad människor ser och uppfattar. Jag tror att man kan säga så att det finns politiska krafter som vill svartmåla Sverige, det betyder nödvändigtvis inte att bilden där ute är negativ överhuvudtaget. Sen så finns ju de uppfattningarna självklart också, men allt beror på väldigt mycket vilka det är man pratar med. Jag tror att en ung, progressiv målgrupp är mer källkritisk och är mer intresserad av specifika värderingar när det kommer till exempelvis jämställdhet, när det kommer till HBTQ frågor, det ligger oss i fatet att vi är relativt progressiva när det kommer till den diskussionen. Jag tror att den bilden av Sverige existerar också, som ett öppet och progressivt land. Men inte alltid självklart.

L: Vilka Svenska grundvärderingar är det ni vill visa omvärlden att Sverige står för?

J: Nu har vi en feministisk utrikespolitik och med tanke på att vi får regleringsbrev från UD som pekar på vad vi bör fokusera på.

L: Är det UD främst som ger er dessa direktiv?

J: Ja men också handelsministern och hennes departement. Nu är jag lite osäker på det, för jag är en vanlig tjänsteman så jag har inte alltid koll på vad ledningen håller på med. Men UD är utan tvekan en samarbetspartner men också en myndighet som ger oss ramar för vad vi bör fokusera på. Sedan har vi en självständighet också, vi är en självständig myndighet vilket betyder att andra myndigheter inte kan komma och peka på samma sätt som andra myndigheter. Med tanke på att vi liksom ska vara ansiktet utåt och framför allt arbeta internationellt med internationella målgrupper. Där är vi unika, det är bara UD egentligen som gör det, så då får man spetsa på vilka värderingar som är väsentliga och borde ha. Det är inga extrema värderingar eller politiska frågor eller kontroversiella från ett svenskt perspektiv. Fokus på jämställdhet, fokus på hållbarhetsfrågor, fokus på innovationsfrågor, på tolerans och så vidare. Och allt handlar om var man gör det såklart, det är väldigt svårt att åka till specifika regioner och diskutera jämställdhet. Det är väldigt svårt att åka till Ryssland och diskutera feminism, det går inte att göra. Allt handlar om var man gör det såklart. Men med tanke på att vi, att det ligger i vårt uppdrag att driva de frågorna så måste vi hitta på ett sätt att göra det. Och det är inte alltid enkelt, speciellt inte i Ryssland men även i några andra länder också. I USA är det inte alltid enkelt. Så det är nog det tror jag, du kan kolla här bakom dig, vår kalender för direktiv för Sverigefrämjande. Det är det vi ska fokusera på i år, tillsammans med UD då. Vi har feministisk utrikespolitik, globala mål som handlar om agenda2030 och FN:s arbete med det. Yttrandefrihet, transparens, forskning, motion, handelsfrämjande, Sverigefrämjande, ja det är ungefär det.

L: Har Sverige ett starkt varumärke?

J: Ja det skulle jag nog påstå att det har. Jag tror en viktig dimension är också att ju längre bort man kommer från Sverige och Europa, ju mindre känner man till. Jag tror inte vi kan

anta att vanlig medborgare om man säger så kan väldigt mycket om Sverige. Vi kanske förutsätter eller tror det men det är en felaktighet. Så då är det vissa aktörer eller associationer som hjälper främjandet på vägen. Det är svenska företag, alltifrån Ikea, Volvo, Saab, Spotify, den typen av aktörer kan göra ganska mycket för ett land. Där tror jag att Sverige skiljer sig åt från ganska många mindre länder i alla fall. När vi kollar, utifrån de studierna vi har, så associerar man Sverige till ganska så mjuka värden. Vi har inte varit i krig på 200 år, vi har inte en armé som är stor jämfört med andra länder överhuvudtaget. Så jag tror de mjuka värdena som vi kanske associeras med, allt från öppenhet, tolerans, jämlikhet och så vidare. Den typen av frågor, den typen av värden hjälper varumärket att sticka ut. Feminism är något som vi sticker ut extremt med. Så skulle jag nog tro att den typen av mjuka värden skulle underlätta för vårt varumärke idag, speciellt när man kollar på hur polariserat samhället är idag. Om man kollar på senare utvecklingen med Trump och Brexit som kanske har uppenbarat vissa aspekter som vi kanske inte riktigt var beredda på egentligen. Vilket gör att kanske Sverige, nu motsätter jag mig själv, men kanske Sverige står som lite mer extremt än vad vi trodde från början.

L: Extremt då just inom våra värden? Extrem inom feminism, extrem inom immigration.

J: Ja, precis. Ja men liksom de värden som vi ansåg var knutna till en liberal demokrati och så vidare som kanske blev, eller fick sig en törn i och med Trump som förespråkar en viss typ av politik som Sverige kanske inte alltid skulle acceptera. Samma sak med Brexit till exempel, den typen av frågor. Med tanke på att det uppenbara att det finns väldigt många människor som ser det som vi kanske vill få ut som någonting som är intressant överhuvudtaget. Så på så sätt tror jag att varumärket kan ses som ganska extremt, om man med varumärke tänker på associationer som man har till ett visst specifikt land.

L: Du har nämnt några saker som kan skada varumärket Sverige, tex Trumps uttalande, fake news, om immigration. Vad mer kan skada Sverige som varumärke? Jobbar ni aktivt för att förhindra skada?

J: Det man kan se är att, bilder av länder är extremt trögrörliga, det ska krävas väldigt väldigt mycket för att skada ett varumärke av ett helt land i en negativ riktning. Man kan möjligtvis jämföra med stora finanskrisen i Grekland som påverkade deras varumärke. Till exempel Island och deras bankkris påverkade deras varumärke för många år sedan, att de skadade deras varumärke på flera olika sätt. Men samtidigt så för vem? Sett till Sverige så kan man möjligtvis se, den senaste månaden har varit ganska så intressant då världens mest mäktiga man nämnde Sverige på ett sätt som inte alltid är sant. det såg vi får en enorm spridning, kan det skada ett varumärke? Ja det är fullt möjligt. Det ser vi också i våra egna analyser att i just USA så är intresset för Sverige på relativt hög nivå fortfarande och kopplat till ganska så extrema positioner när det gäller immigrationsfrågor, och självklart så är det falska nyheter som sprids. Så det skulle jag vilja säga, jag talar inte för hela SI nu men det skulle jag vilja säga är en stor utmaning i det landet och att varumärket kanske kan ha skadats som en följd av det. Men det kan jag nog säga är för tidigt att yttra sig om egentligen. den här typen av diskussion på sociala medier, det är för tidigt att säga om det är inom specifika filterbubblor eller om det handlar om en hel befolkning som har den typen av uppfattning om Sverige.

L: Jag tänker i vårt informationssamhälle, vi blir bombarderade av information. Arbetar SI på ett annorlunda sätt nu i och med informationssamhället? Måste ni arbeta på ett annat sätt för att förmedla Sverige-bilden? Inte att kontrollera bilden men veta vad som sägs?

J: Ja det handlar nog dels ska vi vara en röst som talar med sanning, vi ska inte föra ut information som är falsk och det är någonting som vi är väldigt måna om. Vi ska vara en antidote mot allt det där som försiggår på sociala medier. Men det är en ny utmaning och förutsättning i det medielandskapet att kunna nå ut. Det är väldigt väldigt svårt, det är extremt svårt. Medborgare där ute som redan har bestämt sig för att Sverige är dåligt, man kan inte omvända folk, det är inte den typen av verksamhet som vi gör. Men där tror jag analys blir väldigt mycket mer väsentligt, med tanke på att medielandskapet är så pass komplext. Så det handlar också om att förstå det, att förstå hur folk pratar om Sverige. Som jag var inne på innan. Det är inte bara hur, det är vad som diskuteras. För att veta vilka arenor, vilka områden, vilka frågor som faktiskt kan få ut. Så jag menar, desinformationens roll, falska nyheters roll, den typen av aspekter, ja det är svårt, helt klart svårt. Vi pratar om shitstorms som uppstår, och det är mer eller mindre omöjligt för oss att hantera. Inte omöjligt men det är väldigt väldigt komplext i alla fall. Efter Trump till exempel så uppenbarades det väldigt konkret då, den information som vi vill få ut. Vi är måna om att sprida en bild av Sverige som är sann. Då måste vi veta hur vi ska skriva om det. Speciellt när det handlar om svåra frågor som immigrationsfrågor, flyktingkrisen, då måste vi veta vad som hände under den där perioden. Och ibland får vi hjälp av andra myndigheter som immigrationsmyndigheten, tex deras statistik. Och det gör det också väldigt mycket mer trögt, alla andra aktörer kan göra det ganska så enkelt egentligen för de måste inte förhålla sig till sanningen överhuvudtaget. Vi måste förhålla oss till sanningen vilket tar mer tid, så det tar mer tid och mer resurser helt klart. Men sen om vi når ut är väldigt väldigt svårt att veta överhuvudtaget. Vi är en röst av väldigt väldigt många och sett till våra analyser och så, nej jag är osäker på om vi gör det överhuvudtaget med tanke på desinformationslandskapet som existerar.

L: Jag tänker, ni på SI, det ni mest pratar om är det positiva om Sverige. När man bygger ett varumärke brukar man oftast fokusera på det som är positivt. Tycker du att det finns en skillnad mellan hur Sverige marknadsförs och vad som är den riktiga identitet?

J: (lång tystnad) Jag skulle vilja säga nej, egentligen inte. Jag menar det är väldigt svårt att säga, det är väldigt komplext. Vad är den riktiga svenska identiteten? Det går ju inte att uttala sig om överhuvudtaget. Jag tror såhär, att det inom Sverige nog finns kanske politiska krafter, och nu talar jag som privatperson, men det finns nog politiska krafter som tycker det som SI håller på med, med fokus på jämställdhetsfrågor, med fokus på migrationsrelaterade frågor, som inte nämner specifika aspekter som nog får anses vara extrema. Så jag tror att mitt diplomatiska svar får nog vara, sett till vad vissa politiska krafter i Sverige, jag tror de tycker vi håller på med väldigt, att vi är en propagandamyndighet egentligen och då propaganda i att vi sprider falsk information. Dem skulle då vilja påstå att detta inte är Sveriges identitet som kommuniceras. 'Sverige ska inte vara jämställt så som vi ser det, vi ska inte ta emot många asylsökande', och det säger ju inte vi att vi ska göra heller. Det är inte vår uppgift men vi måste förhålla oss till den realitet som existerar och på så sätt gör vi

det ganska bra och mycket av det som vi kommunicerar utåt är neutrala beskrivningen även fast du säger att mycket av detta är i positiva ordalag. Mycket handlar om natur, ganska neutralt och okänsligt ämne.

L: Hur mycket arbetar ni med handelsfrämjande på SI?

J: Om jag ska vara ärlig är jag lite osäker där. För jag är inte alls inblandad i den typen av frågor, men visst vi samarbetar ju med Business Sweden utomlands, vi samarbetar med utlandsmyndigheter som har på sitt bord att främja Sverige utifrån ett handelsperspektiv så. Men det jag sitter på är endast kommunikation så framgår det inte lika tydligt jobbar med den typen av frågor skulle jag säga. Inte det som vi kommunicerar på våra digitala kanaler, utan det är mer främja Sverige som en studie-nation tex, och handskas med alla de plattformar, om det är kinesiska plattform, eller ryska eller twitter, facebook och så vidare. Vi har inte samma tydliga koppling till handelsfrämjande på just det sättet. Men sen finns det, jag är faktisk osäker, men det finns ju medarbetare här som jobbar lite mer aktivt med entreprenörskapsfrågor, men jag är osäker där faktiskt.

L: Hur viktigt är det för Sverige att ha en utrikespolitik som fokuserar mycket på att marknadsföra nationen?

J: Mmm. (tystnad) Jag tror det förenklar för väldigt många utanför Sverige, det tror jag utan tvekan. Alltså speciellt då utanför Sverige, utlandsmyndigheter. Dom kan prata om Sverige på ett bra sätt. Mycket av det de gör är också att anordna och conceptualisera specifika events som tex utlandsmyndigheter kan använda för att de ska kunna prata med nyckelpersoner i deras egna länder så att säga. Så främjararbetet är väsentligt på det sättet att knyta ihop nätverk av aktörer och nyckelpersoner, allt från företag till tjänstemän eller politiker i dessa olika länder och för att kunna förenkla för att kunna sprida bilden av Sverige utomlands, det tror jag utan tvekan. Så sett till utlandsmyndigheter så är det väldigt viktigt tror jag. Jag tror inte alls att de skulle kunna jobba på exakt samma sätt överhuvudtaget, jag tror inte de skulle vara lika duktiga på att formulera och conceptualisera specifika ämnen. Jag tror inte de har resurser, för de har ju så otroligt mycket att göra, så någonting sånt här tror jag är väldigt väsentligt och speciellt i dagens klimat tror jag, när det är så pass polariserat, det tror jag. Att kunna skapa nätverk och skapa förhållanden mellan människor tror jag är väldigt viktigt och där tror jag Sverige kan göra väldigt mycket på grund av att vi har varit neutrala, vi är neutrala, så där tror jag att vi har en väldigt viktig roll, utan tvekan.

L: Kan Sverige ha problem med att balansera sin värdegrund som mänskliga rättigheter, feminism, jämställdhet med handelsintressen? Om man tänker exempelvis vapenexport, handel med diktaturer? Intressekonflikter. Är det något i måste ta ställning till och kommunicera?

J: Nej, alltså jag tänker på en studie som vi genomförde i några gulfländer där vi undersökte hur begreppet jämställdhet och feminism och hur den typen av aspekter togs emot av specifika målgrupper. Där blev det ganska klart att man kan diskutera denna typen av frågor men på ett visst sätt, man kan inte använda begreppet feminism till exempel, men huruvida

det krockar med handel? Jag tror att det är helt separata domäner egentligen, krockar för vem tänker du? Oss som organisation tänker du?

L: Ja, om Sverige har en utrikespolitik som krockar, de har två policies som krockar, som motsäger varandra, om det påverkar Sveriges legitimitet och hur ni måste kommunicera detta ut. Eller stå till svars för det?

J: Jag tror att på det stora hela så påverkar inte detta nämnvärt. Vad är det som krockar egentligen? Det är jag lite osäker på. Ja visst finns det diskussioner om det men att det skulle påverka varumärket i stort, det har jag svårt att se faktiskt.

L: Jag tänker på exempelvis Saudi-skandalen men det där vapenfabriken där Margot Wallström var väldigt mycket utåt och diplomatisk och stark i sina åsikter att detta inte är okej och detta ska inte Sverige göra och så, men det var en krock i värden versus handelsintressen.

J: Ja precis.

L: Men det kan också vara så att svenskar generellt sett inte är jätteinvolverade i utrikespolitiska frågor utan mer bryr sig om inrikespolitiska. Så det kanske inte påverkar Sveriges legitimitet alls sådana skandaler?

J: Det beror lite på hur du menar med påverkar Sveriges legitimitet, alltså var då? I handelssammanhang? När vi pratar tillsammans med entreprenörer i det specifika landet? Eller att diskutera med medborgare eller aktivister?

L: Jag tänker en vanlig svensk medborgare. Hur ser en svensk på sin regering om det blir en sådan skandal.

J: Ja okej, Det är svårt att säga för jag kan inte påstå, jag tror inte att SI har det perspektivet riktigt, att vi kan yttra oss om just den aspekten egentligen. Med tanke på att vår målgrupp befinner sig framför allt utomlands även om såklart att svenska medborgare är väsentliga för oss. Men just den frågan, jag tror inte att den är jätterelevant för oss just nu i alla fall, det tror jag inte. Det är ingenting som jag märkt har påverkat hur vi arbetar eller med Sverigefrämjandet generellt eller som varumärke för den delen. Eller att utländska medborgare associerar Sverige med en paradox när det gäller försäljning till diktaturer och att vi har en feministisk utrikespolitik. När målgruppen är såpass stor när det handlar om hela internationella spelfältet egentligen, jag tror man måste ha det i åtanke faktiskt, att beröra oss, och ska vi ha det i åtanke? Ja det tror jag verkligen. Om det berör Sverige som varumärke på ett internationellt sätt bland svenska medborgare, nej det tror jag faktiskt inte eller hur vi jobbar utomlands. Sen är det väsentligt för oss att känna till den diskussionen om det existerar där ute, det är väldigt väsentligt såklart. Men hur det ser ut i Sverige? Ja det har jag aldrig riktigt, jag tror inte vi har den dagliga diskussionen riktigt så. Och jag menar jag vill inte prata direkt om det för jag tror inte det är vår fråga att ta hand om just den aspekten om jag säger så.

L: Hade det gjort SIs jobb svårare, om ni var tvungna att visa Sverige på ett visst sätt men att det inte var det? Ni får fokusera på att visa det här, men inte något annat? SI har en enklare uppdrag än ett annat land som kanske har mer korruption eller en annan bild i utlandet. Sverige har den här bilden att vara ett moraliskt land med mycket fokus på mänskliga rättigheter och sådär, så när vi inte följer det själva så blir vi kritiserade för det, men ett annat land med lägre standard så hade inte det skett på samma sätt.

J: ja, men samtidigt tror jag det är viktigt att poängtera att vi kommunicerar inte bara positiva aspekter utan mycket av det vi för ut handlar om utmaning som vi står inför speciellt när det kommer till, vilket har uppenbarats efter och under Trumps utspel, då var vi tvungna såklart att ...

L: Hamnade det hos er? Att kommunicera ut svaret?

J: Ja delvis såklart och självklart då UD:s bord också och ambassaden i USA. Men där fick vi kraftsamla helt klart, inte bara för att kommunicera i våra egna kanaler utan för att leverera innehåll och underhåll till SIs ledning som var tvungna att nå ut i speciella mediekanaler, tex USA, BBC osv. Där blir det väldigt väsentligt för oss att påtala att Sverige står inför utmaningar när det gäller integration av nyanlända tex. Så det tror jag är väldigt väsentligt.

L: Ni måste ha hamnat i en mycket ovan situation. Ni är inte vana vid att USAs president säger något vagt uttalande som man inte riktigt vet vad det är och så blir det världens hype.

J: Ja så är det verkligen.

L: Det måste ha varit väldigt ovanligt för er?

J: Ja, det var unikt, det såg vi själva efter när vi hade sansat oss lite och kunde se hur spridningen blev på sociala medier och redaktionellt innehåll så ser vi att den här händelsen överträffar allt som har hänt det svenska varumärket vad gäller kvantitet alltså. Kvantitet på det traditionella sociala medier. Så det var självklart unikt men också lärorikt men som exempel kan man säga, jag menar efter Trump går ut, så är det också en sådan extern och intern dynamik som gör det hela svårt för oss att efter Trumps utspel, jag tror det var ett par dagar efter hans utspel så uppstår våld i Rinkeby tex som fick jättestor spridning, pga av det hela. Jag menar den typ av händelser måste vi ta i helt plötsligt också. Och kommentera det vilket innebar att vi åkte till Rinkeby och filmade och intervjuade människor där på plats. Och där vill vi ju inte liksom säga att vi inte står inför utmaningar för det gör vi ju självklart, men vi vill ju självklart också nansera bilden samtidigt som vi vill ge en korrekt bild, eller så korrekt som möjligt såklart man kan ju inte inkludera allting. Men vi var ju måna om det att ögonen var lite på oss under ett tag. Så nansera bilden till följd av falska nyheter och desinformation som sprids gör det väldigt aktuellt att sprida en nanserad bild men också faktabaserad bild om svåra ämnen.

L: Hur når man fram? Det måste vara jättesvårt att bemöta falska nyheter.

J: Har du svaret på det får du gärna sälja idén till oss. Det är väldigt svårt att veta, för det första vad innebär det att nå fram, det är inte alls självklart att vi når fram till en kritisk massa utomlands. Jag tror inte vi når fram till folk som redan är övertygade att Sverige är ett jävla skitland, det tror jag verkligen inte. Det gör inte andra länder heller. Väldigt många befinner sig ungefär samma situation även fast Sverige har börjat associeras till en viss grad med problem kopplat till flyktingkrisen och det höga antalet asylsökande. Men har vi möjlighet att påverka de som är i gråzonen om vi säger så, det tror jag verkligen. Men att få konkreta bevis för det, att vi kan göra det är väldigt väldigt svårt att veta. Det kan man kolla i exempelvis statistik som berör, studenter som kommer till Sverige, turism har den gått ned? Eller så liksom, det ser vi inga belägg på överhuvudtaget. Sen måste man vända på det också, vi släppte en rapport förra veckan som handlar just om bilden av Sverige efter flyktingkrisen och där var vi nyfikna om Sverige associerades med migrationsfrågor, om det var top of mind så att säga bland medborgare i europeiska länder och att vända på det där så såg vi också att Sverige lyfte sin status till följd av Sveriges hantering av flyktingkrisen. Så går också att se det från det perspektivet. Och det är väldigt svårt att veta, det är väldigt många olika faktorer som vi egentligen inte har kontroll över som påverkar bilden av Sverige väldigt mycket.

L: Jag tänker att SIs jobb är viktigare än någonsin pga av den tid vi lever i. NI måste förhålla ert till ett helt annat sätt att nå ut än vad ni gjorde för bara 10 år sedan.

J: Ja men så är det nog verkligen. Det är väldigt många mer abstrakta utmaningar tror jag. Tidigare kanske det fanns konkreta utmaningar om man säger så, men med det abstrakta handlar det om vilka värderingar som hotas, alltså de demokratiska värderingar hotas. Att det är en ny situation då och demokratiska värderingar är det som präglar vår kommunikation och det som vi vill nå ut. Men de senaste 2-3 åren har det kastats om lite skulle jag säga vilket gör det väldigt mycket mer problematiskt självklart. Det kanske fanns för 10 år sedan, det gjorde det säkert fast kanske fungerar det inte riktigt på samma nivå. Visst det är en ny utmaning som vi står inför tror jag. Jag tror inte man har sett konsekvenserna av det ännu. Vi kommer komma med en studie nu som påbörjas nu i veckan men det är en väldigt omfattande studie över hur just bilden av Sverige i USA, för det är just där det ligger och väger just nu känner jag. Och hur den ser ut där, vi har vissa belägg att den inte är speciellt god. Men återigen det vet vi inte, det är möjligt att filterbubblor existerar där man diskuterar Sverige inom begränsat antal människor som inte når ut till allmänheten. Ja, eller troll och botar som sprider väldigt mycket material och bilden blir väldigt skev av Sverige på sociala medier. Så det är väldigt svårt att veta, men jag tror utmaningen handlar väldigt mycket om USA just nu om det existerar någonting nytt där. För traditionellt sätt så har Sverigebilden varit väldigt positiv där.

L: Om den här rapporten visar att amerikaner har en mer negativ bild av Sverige, gör ni någonting åt det då?

J: Det beror på hur pass omfattande det är tror jag. Men om det visar sig att den är väldigt negativ då får vi nog klura ut någonting i hur vi kan kommunicera på ett bättre sätt i landet. Och hur det skulle se ut det vet jag inte, jag tror ingen vet det. Det är det som är grejen, hur ska vi hantera ett sådant problem? Det är som du säger, det är ett relativt nytt problem, även

för SI. Även om bilden av Sverige alltid har präglats av olika nidsbilder och stereotyper och på 50 och 60-talet fanns det en bild av att Sverige hade högst självmord per capita, vilket inte stämde. Det säger lite av bilden av Sverige.

L: Det känns som den bilden fortfarande existerar.

J: Ja den kanske fortfarande existerar, det är fullt möjligt. Men jag tror inte att, med tanke på att så som världen ser ut när migrationspolitik har blivit det definierade området för hur staten ska agera eller för deras inrikespolitiska diskussion. Jag menar migrationspolitik är liksom väldigt ofta topp tre bland i alla fall västerländska demokratier skulle jag tro.

L: Tror du att eftersom vi har fått så mycket uppmärksamhet på grund av migrationen att Sverige på något sätt tar in all kritik som omvärlden projicerar på Sverige? Och kanske ändrar sin invandrapolitik?

J: Nej det tror jag inte.

L: Tror du svenskar kan bli påverkade av utlandsbilden?

J: Ja det tror jag verkligen, där finns det indikation på, hur ska jag säga det här, ja det är en komplex fråga, men ja visst det tror jag verkligen. Jag menar, internet är ju inte landsbegränsat om man säger så. Och jag tror att det finns en risk där i att specifika bilder av sverige som sprids på sociala medier, även sprids i sverige. Och möjligtvis kan engagera specifika människor. Så visst det är en möjlighet. Men det är det som är problemet med det här, det är också att folk reagerar på specifika filmer som sprids på youtube, som sprids på olika, eller väldigt specifikt enstaka innehåll som sprids från sverige förstoras upp väldigt väldigt dramatiskt. Det är en tendens även i Sverige skulle jag säga. Även medier rapporterar väldigt flitigt om, eller har rapporterat flitigt om bilden av sverige som en följd av specifika filmer som finns på youtube. Det säger lite om bilden av sverige men det kanske säger mer om medieklimatet på youtube. Vad som funkar där säger lite om bilden av sverige. Men det finns en tendens där helt klart, att det som sprids utanför sveriges gränser och görs populärt där och görs populärt på grund av politiska intressen. Så får det också en spridning här i Sverige, det tror jag också.

L: Jag har inga fler frågor, men finns det något som du skulle vilja prata om mer? Något som vi inte har pratat om? Tillägga? Finns det något jag inte har frågat som du tycker att jag borde frågat?

J: Det är en bra fråga. (tystnad) Nej jag tror att, vi har varit inne på två saker, dels desinformationen som finns mot Sverige och falska nyheter som sprids om Sverige är i sin linda, skulle jag säga. Jag tror att vi inte vet konsekvenserna av det riktigt och det är för tidigt att säga att varumärket Sverige, om hur det påverkas. Det finns en risk att det gör det, men den kanske är stor. Än så länge så tror jag inte att det finns belägg för att de påverkar det som vi anser är väsentligt. Att det skulle påverka turism, att det skulle påverka att företag etablerar sig i Sverige, eller att forskare kommer till landet eller att studenter kommer till landet. Jag menar den typen av aspekter är väsentliga egentligen. En viktig del av det i alla

fall. Det tror jag är för tidigt att säga och vi får se hur det går med det där. Sen är det en helt annan grej om starka makter försöker påverka svenska val till exempel, så man ser i USA. Det är en helt annan aspekt som berör myndigheter utanför SI. Försvarsmakten och den typen av organisationer. Men det som vi jobbar med, främjandet, få folk intresserade av att komma till Sverige och underlätta för samtal utomlands. Där tror jag inte att än så länge, jag kanske får äta upp det här, men att än så länge tror jag inte vi har kommit dit än. Och jag vill också understryka att, det som vi var inne på, börja nånstans att, det är viktigt att när vi pratar om bilden av Sverige utomlands att man måste se det som en väldigt komplex situation där väldigt många olika faktorer spelar in. Det finns väldigt många bilder av Sverige, och det är viktigt att påpeka. Det finns inte en Sverigebild det finns flera mediebilder av Sverige, det finns flera uppfattningar om Sverige och så vidare. Det är väldigt svårt. På samma sätt finns ju Sveriges varumärke som består av flera delar. Som olika människor tar emot, vissa fokuserar enbart på jämställdhetsfrågan bara, att Sverige bara kopplas till eller associeras med jämställdhetsfrågan. Vissa ser oss fortfarande som ett socialistiskt land och så vidare. Det är mångbottnat och nyanserat. Det tror jag är viktigt just när man diskuterar bilden av Sverige.

L: Yes, ska vi sätta punkt där?

J: Ja det kan vi göra.

Interview Olle Wästberg

Phone Interview, 26th of May, 2017. Olle Wästberg

L: (intro) Jag använder mycket av Simon Anholt's teori, du vet säkert vem det är.

O: Simon Anholt, oh ja, jag känner honom väl.

L: Du känner honom personligen?

O: Ja personligen, jag pratade med honom senast några dagar efter Trumps tal för då ställde jag frågan, hur tror du att detta påverkar Sverige-bilden, så att ja just det.

L: Ja, vad intressant, för det är Anholt jag baserar mestadelen av min teori på.

O: Ja men han är ju den främste inom nation branding så att säga.

L: Precis. Jag har lite frågor som jag vill ställa till dig.

O: Ja, kör igång.

L: Vilken bild har Sverige i utlandet?

O: Det varierar lite grann i olika länder måste man komma ihåg. Alltså vi har traditionellt en väldigt stark bild i Tyskland och framför allt Nordtyskland och den bilden baserar delvis på historien, dels på Gustav den andre Adolf och dels av mycket på grund av Kungafamiljen och liknande. Så ganska närstående oss, de har resor som ordnas där man kan få följa Henning Mankell i fotspåren och så, det är också oftast tyskar. Så det kan man säga är en traditionell Sverige-bild. I Västra Ryssland finns det också en stark Sverige-bild som mycket präglas av Astrid Lindgren men också av historien. I USA har ju Sverige-bilden varit relativt social och politisk alltid. Vi har använts ända sen 30-talet, i politiska argumentation och det beror framför allt på den här boken som heter "Sweden the middle way" av Marquis Childs som kom 1936 och som då låg högst i topp på New York Times bästsäljande i flera år och den citerades av Franklin Roosevelt och liknande och det satte bilden av just Sverige som 'the middle way'. Så att det ser olika ut i olika länder naturligtvis. Men man ska komma ihåg att Sverige inte är ett land med en dominerande bild, vi är inte så väldigt välkända. Jag brukar skoja om när var generalkonsul i New York så fick man finnas sig i att folk ringde och ville ha visum till Switzerland och då då hände det att folk ringde och ville ha visum till Swaziland.

L: Oj haha. Roligt. Skulle du vilja säga att bilden av Sverige i utlandet är positiv?

O: Ja den är grundläggande positiv. Men alltså det finns ganska, det har alltid funnits det här som delvis varit positivt som tex om Sverige som ett oerhört sexuellt frigjort land och har funnits. Sen finns det nu någonting nytt och det är inom det multikulturella och invandringen och sånt, och det är någonting som har kommit de sista halvåret ungefär där det spelar en inte oväsentligt roll att aktivister i Sverige som är emot den svenska politiken också

använder sig av olika medel utomlands för att skapa en bild. Vi har ju Sverigedemokraterna som har skrivit i info wars som agerar på olika sätt. Jag menar en sak är ju efter det här Trump-uttalandet i februari, "even Sweden" så skrev ju Jimmie Åkesson och Mattias Karlsson i wall street journal där de försvarade Trump och sa att han i grunden har rätt och den artikeln delades mer än fyra miljoner gånger. Och sen svarade Morgan Johansson och hans artikel delades 8000 gånger så det är en väldig skillnad, det finns ett starkt nätverk på det högerpopulistiska området, och där har vi en annan spridning så det är mycket möjligt att det kommer att kunna påverka. Men traditionellt sett är den positiv.

L: Okej. Om du personligen skulle beskriva Sverige med bara ett fåtal ord, vilka ord skulle du välja?

O: Ett är progressivt. Ett annat är sekulärt. Ett tredje är icke-korrupt, pålitligt. Det här grundar sig på de undersökningar som gjorts om man tittar just på Simon Anholt's undersökningar visar dom att Sverige är ganska svagt när det gäller kultur och turism och sådär. Vi har inga vykortsmotiv riktigt som typ, ja Eiffeltornet eller liknande. Men däremot är vi starka när det gäller det som kallas för, när det gäller att vara ett fungerande samhälle. Där är vi topp i världen när det gäller Anholts mätningar. Så att det spelar en mycket stort roll. Sen har det ju, traditionellt spelat en roll då vi varit neutrala, under kalla kriget sådär. Och det har en del uppfattat som positivt men det är ju inte egentligen aktuellt nu när vi inte riktigt har en självständig utrikespolitik.

L: Hur tycker du Sveriges varumärke är i jämförelse med andra länder?

O: Ja det är ett förvånansvärt starkt i förhållande till hur små vi är. Både ekonomiskt och befolkningsmässigt. Om man jämför med USA så är Sverige till ytan lika stort som Kalifornien och har ungefär lika många invånare som New York och har lika stor BNP som New Jersey, så vi är egentligen ett väldigt litet land, och förhållande till detta är vi förvånansvärt välkända och det spelar en stor roll därför det innebär att om en svensk berättar om en produkt eller tjänst, (kan inte höra i inspelningen). Vi har ett starkt varumärke, det har Sverige, då slipper man spendera tiden på att berätta om Sverige. Jag kom ihåg en gång då jag talade på en speditörkongress och det var det någon som sa att 'ja om det kommer exakt samma paket från Pakistan eller från Norge så tar det bara någon timma att få det över gränsen till Norge och det kan ta flera timmar att få det in i Pakistan', så ja det spelar också roll. Det är positiv roll man har och ja ett positivt varumärke som också då.

L: Hur tycker du att bilden av Sverige i utlandet stämmer överens med Sveriges riktiga identitet?

O: Jo det stämmer överens med den bild som vi vill att den ska vara. Sen är ju alltid en bild av ett land rätt komplext naturligtvis.

L: Finns det något som skiljer sig mellan Sveriges riktiga identitet och den identitet som landet vill ha?

O: Ja, det vet jag inte. Jag menar v är ju naturligtvis mer komplexa och splittrade än vad ett varumärke alltid är men det kan väl också sägas att jag talade med Simon Anholt efter Trumps tal och då sa jag 'har inte det här ändå påverkat Sveriges varumärke?', och då sa han 'nej ett varumärke tar årtionden att bygga upp och kommunicera och därför kommer dessa saker som en bekräftelse på att detta är ett undantag som bekräftar regeln, när det händer sådana här saker och därför har det inte påverkat varumärket'. det här vet vi ju inte, men lite grann stämmer det för jag kommer ihåg att för en stund sen 2014, så hade new york times ledarrubriker två gånger "even sweden". Första gången var när Sverigedemokraterna kom in i riksdagen och då skrev man att 'också Sverige har fått in ett främlingsfientligt parti i sin riksdag'. och andra gången var efter självmordsattacken på drottninggatan, det som inte skadade någon annan än självmordsbombaren. Och så skrev man 'even sweden' har drabbats av ett terrorattentat. Så att, den är nog relativt stark den här basen av självbilden.

L: Vad skulle kunna skada Sveriges varumärke?

O: Jo men jag tror nog att det är flera saker som gör det. Jag menar det finns några historier. Du kanske har hört denna, när Göran Persson var i New York och jag var general konsul och jag gjorde som man skulle göra, jag ringde till secret service och sa att nu kommer den svenska premiärministern och då sa dom 'okej, vi ställer upp, vi ses på flygplatsen då och då' och då visade det sig att de hade ett antal bilar, de hade stängt av en fil i lincoln tunnel så att vi kunde köra femti i konvoj till hotellet och när vi hade lämnat av persson på hotellet sa jag, frågade jag secret service chefen att 'gör ni såhär med varenda statsminister som kommer?' 'no, sa han' och tittade i sina papper. 'Only the risky countries' då sa jag 'sweden is a risky country?' och tittade han igen i papprena och sa 'you've had two political murders, one still unsolved' och det är klart att sådana här saker som mordet på Palme och Anna Lindh som terrorattacker och annat, det nöter ju så småningom ner Sverigebilden. Så jag tror det kommer att påverka på sikt och till det kommer USA nämligen, att eftersom vi är med i EU jämnas det ut, överhuvudtaget alla nation brands, att i denna globaliserade och digitaliserade värld så blir länder mer lika varandra och dessutom så har vi inte längre någon självständig politik på en hel rad områden då vi är med i EU, så det kommer nog att ändras successivt.

L: Om jag frågar motsatt då, vad tror du kan stärka varumärket Sverige?

O: Ja, dels är det om det går bra för Sverige, om vi klarar integrationsproblemen, så att det inte blir en bas för att använda oss som verktyg. Vi har alltså använt som exempel och verktyg rätt mycket. Bara om vi går tillbaka till valkampanjen i USA så använde både Bernie Sanders och Hillary Clinton Sverige som förebilder och dessutom så används nu effekten av svensk invandringspolitik också som motsatsen till en del, så att vi klarar integrationsfrågorna betyder en del och sen också att vi bedriver en active promotion av sverigebilden.

L: I vårt informationssamhälle som vi har nu, tror du att sverige kan ha svårt att kontrollera sitt varumärke?

O: Ja, (ohörbart). Det finns åtskilliga, jag vet inte om jag gav dig mailadresserna till ett par personer på UD?

L: njaaa.

O: det kanske inte jag gjorde? Det finns i alla fall en kille på Uds informationsavdelning som sitter med hur Sverige omskrivs på nätet och det visar att vi har ju där volymer som man aldrig hört talas om förut. Och det gör ju att det är nästan omöjligt att kontrollera, det är saker som sprids på olika sätt.

L: Ja, precis. Hur viktigt är det för ett land att ha en utrikespolitik som går ut på att marknadsföra nationen?

O: Jag tror att det är mycket viktigt, de allra flesta länder har ju olika sorters public diplomacy enheter och så och det här har ju då. Det finns två skäl, det ena är då att public diplomacy, det är kan man säga ett sätt för en regering att tala med ett annat lands befolkning. Jag menar för att ta ett väldigt konkret exempel, när jag var på svenska institutet så ville vi påverka de då relativt nyligen fria tidigare sovietstyrda länderna i europa att skriva på FN:s barnkonvention. Och det är klart att det där skedde ju genom att ambassadsekreterare i huvudstäderna från de svenska ambassaderna pratade med departementsekreterare i de här länderna och så. Men vad vi gjorde då från svenska institutet, var att vi gjorde en utställning om Astrid Lindgren som var väldigt uppskattad, om hennes böcker och figurer och den gjordes som en svepande skärm kan man säga, lång skärm, och där barn kunde gå och se och titta där nere och för föräldrarna där uppe så stod det om barnkonventionen och material om det. det där var ju ett sätt att försöka påverka folkopinionen i ett annat land direkt. Och det är ju ett sätt man kan göra och det gör vi med andra länder på olika sätt. Tex USA, deras biträdande utrikesminister sköter public diplomacy och Norge har någonting som heter advantage norway som jobbar både med hur Norgebild och turist promotion och annat, så det är viktigt och inte minst för att få turism och investeringar. Det hänger samman alltihopa. Vi åker inte till ett land som verkar läskigt.

L: Nej precis. Tycker du att Sverige som varumärke är en framgångsrik utrikespolitik?

O: Ja hyggligt framgångsrik, jag tycker att man har tonat ned den här delen av sin utrikespolitik på senare år vilket är lite synd. Man har gjort det mer, man satsar i hög grad på ekonomisk promotion, exportrådet och lägga grunden för Sverige som utrikes-nation, och investeringsnation men jag tycker att man borde göra lite mer för sånt man rustat ned en del som tex kulturen och sverigebild och det tror jag vore viktigt.

L: Ja, tror du att ha ett starkt varumärke för Sverige är viktigt för att få mer soft power?

O: Ja det tror jag är viktigt. Ja du känner till varifrån begreppet kommer och allt sånt, Nye, Joseph Nye han säger att USAs soft power är Hollywood och Harvard, alltså att man har de bästa universiteten i världen och man dominerar tv-serier och annat över hela världen och det är klart att det där spelar en väldig roll. Sveriges soft power är viktigt för Sverige, eftersom vi tycker att det är väsentligt och vi ska kunna driva mänskliga rättigheter och

liknande saker och då måste vi kunna finnas en grund i att vi betraktas på ett positivt sätt. Därför kan det vara viktigt för Sverige bilden med soft power. Sen finns det ju en för sveriges del, en del saker som hänger ihop med sveriges soft power och vår militära chans, det är så att skulle vi komma i ett riktigt allvarligt militärt krisläge så skulle vi bli beroende av hjälp utomlands och för att andra länder och andra människor ska vara beredda att riskera sina liv för sverige, ja då måste det finnas en mycket positiv bild av den svenska demokratin.

L: Precis, något som jag undersökt är hur mänskliga rättigheter är väldigt viktigt för sverige som utrikespolitik. Varför är det så?

O: Ja det är inte så att vi bara har direkt satsat på det utan sedan alla de år har vi tyckt att det är väldigt viktigt rent ideologiskt att människor ska kunna leva i frihet och yttrandefrihet och liknande. Vi har alltid reagerat för detta, jag menar Palme talade om dessa 'satans mördare' till exempel, när det gällde invasionen i Tjeckoslovakien. Så att, så har det egentligen alltid varit kan man säga för Sverige och det är naturlig del av att vi är en demokrati.

L: jag har också tittat på hur Sverige balanserar sina mänskliga rättigheter med handelsintressen, eller värdegrunden och handelsintressen. Hur tycker du sverige balanserar denna balansgången?

O: Där finns det naturligtvis åtskilliga exempel på hyckleri. Å ena sidan talar vi om mänskliga rättigheter, jämställdhet och å andra sidan vapen till saudiarabien och försöker stötta våra kontakter med saudiarabien. Det är ett exempel av det slaget så det har inte noll konsekvens vårt sätt att agera, och det har det aldrig varit. Även Palme ägnade sig i hög grad av att sälja vapen till Indien bland annat och så.

L: Jag har också tittat på hur vårt varumärke påverkar landets legitimitet. Tror du att sverige som varumärke påverkar legitimiteten?

O: Du menar legitimiteten hos oss? Eller i utlandet?

L: Både ock, men främst i utlandet.

O: Ja naturligtvis i yttre världen. Jag menar det är ju det att om vi, om det finns en positiv uppfattning om Sverige, som är man mera beredd att lyssna på oss när vi talar om saker som mänskliga rättigheter så att det påverkar i hög grad legitimiteten. Jag tror att det spelade en roll för, även om det var andra saker också som säkert spelade roll, att vi kom in i säkerhetsrådet. Att vi ändå hade en ganska positivt varumärke, så det påverkar i allra högsta grad legitimiteten. Sen finns det ju sådana här, nu är vi väldigt intresserade av hur vi uppfattas utomlands och när det står om sverige i utländska medier så speglas det alltid i svenska medier i allra högsta grad. Det där kan säkert påverka en svensk regerings legitimitet i vårt land och ja vi ser där också på många andra områden, även på generalkonsulatet i new york att svenska musiker kom och ställde upp på nån pub och spelade för 30 människor och så blev det tydligt i svenska medier att de hade slagit igenom i new york, så att vi är väldigt intresserade av hur vi uppfattas i andra länder.

L: Ja, om vi går tillbaks lite till vapenexporten. Tror du att sverige skulle uppfattas som mer legitimt om vi förbjöd vapenexport? Om vi hade mer strikta vapenlagar?

O: Ja, man får skilja mellan just dom sakerna. Inte nödvändigtvis om vi förbjöd vapenexporten men om vi var lite mer konsekventa och logiska och hade striktare regler så skulle jag kunna tänka mig att det skulle öka legitimiteten, ja. Framför allt då kring mänskliga rättigheter och liknande.

L: Ja, precis. Tror du att vapenexporten är väldigt viktig för sverige ekonomiskt och politiskt?

O: Ja, politiskt kanske mindre, men den är viktig ekonomiskt. Det är del av ekonomin. Plus att vi har en egen vapenindustri och det är klart att den svenska militären är inte tillräcklig för att ta an den uppgiften, att man måste kunna fördela utvecklingskostnader på flera enheter och så vidare därför så spelar vapenexporten en viss roll, det gör den ju. Därmed är det inte sagt att den till saudiarabien spelar roll.

L: Tror du möjligtvis saudiskandalen, att den kan ha påverkat sveriges legitimitet?

O: Ja, det kan jag tänka mig, jag har inga siffror på det men man kan tänka sig det i alla fall. Och den kan ju alltid utnyttjas mot sverige, de som tycker om att kritisera, om de tycker att de inget har att komma med då kan de utnyttja det. Inte sett att det har skett, men det kan det ha gjort.

L: ja absolut. Jag har inga mer frågor, finns det någonting som du skulle vilja prata mer om, något som jag inte har frågat eller sådär?

O: Nej, jag tror vi fick in det mesta måste jag säga. Möjligtvis kan jag tillägga att Sverige bilden är ju långt mer än vad bara en regering och staten gör. Jag tror ju egentligen att IKEA spelar större roll för sverige bilden är egentligen de flesta statliga insatser. Det faktum att man har dessa blågula varuhus över hela världen, som säljer köttbullar och har svenska namn och liknande och dom har ju också broschyrer och skrifter om sverige och sånt på varuhusen. Jag tror att det är mycket annat som gör det. Om man tittar på vilka de kändaste svenskarna är, ja då är det Raoul Wallenberg är den som har blivit historiskt sett mest uppmärksammas av nobel och sen har vi sånt som ABBA och Björn Borg och namn som också spelar roll för att knyta Sverige till saker.

L: Ja, precis det var den artikeln du skickade till mig om IKEA. Intressant, jag tror jag kommer ha användning av den när jag skriver.