

THE UNKNOWN WEAPON CONFRATERNITY – SWEDISH MILITARY COLLABORATION WITH ISRAEL

A report by the Palestine Solidarity Association in Sweden (PGS)

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1. INTRODUCTION

The fact that Sweden and Israel have entered into a wide variety of trade agreements is not an unknown fact to the Palestine Solidarity Association in Sweden. From a Swedish point of view Israel is held in high regard as a valuable trade partner offering a wide variety of good products to acceptable prices.¹

At the same time it is obvious that the military cooperation with Israel is looked upon as something delicate, something the Swedish authorities are not keen to comment on. In a letter from the Swedish Department of Defence the bilateral cooperation with Israel is said to be limited and governed by heavy restrictions. Is this really the case?

This report confirms the suspicion that Sweden has a wide and extensive military cooperation with Israel concerning technical expertise, import, export, marketing of war equipment and products of double use (PDA), training, exercise, visits and research with regards to biological and chemical weapons.

1.1 METHOD

This report highlights the answers of Swedish authorities to a number of questions and compares them to the official Swedish standpoint. This method clearly shows a number of instances where these answers and the official standpoints not only are incoherent but utterly contradict each other. International conventions and agreements entered into by the Swedish Government are central to these investigations. The report focuses on material and answers gathered for the period of 2000-2006.

Due to the nature and classification of the information gathered, the report touches upon a great variety of issues. We have used material from different organisations and been in contact with all authorities involved in the defence sector and foreign affairs. We have scoured the Internet, searched through archives, requested official documents, been in contact with companies producing war equipment and products of double use and also consulted individuals with knowledge and information on the subject. We have not only carefully studied the coherence between Swedish legislation, international conventions and agreements but also studied the level of compliance to these regulations among Swedish companies and authorities.

2. SWEDISH LEGISLATION

There are a number of laws, formal regulations, international agreements and conventions governing Swedish international politics and defence policy. Every authority, in any way concerned with national security, the defence sector and foreign affairs, have referred us to these laws and regulations, never mentioning the lack of ethics and moral standards in the reasoning and motives for their actions.

¹ This has been confirmed by the Swedish Defence Material Administration (FMV). The Law on War Equipment (1992:1300) clearly states that the acquirement of war equipment shall be decided by the price and quality unless there are sanctions or embargoes in effect preventing such affairs.

There are currently no regulations or laws in place to govern the import of war equipment and PDA. The Law on Public procurement deals with the import of defence material and states that the “Import of defence material is governed by need, the goals and the awarded funds of the Swedish National Defence. The first priority is to provide for national interests in an appropriate way, to purchase adequate material of an adequate quality, to the lowest possible price under businesslike terms. If the commercial and technical terms are met the bid with the lowest price shall be taken.”

The Law (1992:1300) on War Equipment regulates the treatment of products classified as war equipment. In accordance with the first paragraph, the second passage of the law permission to export war equipment can only be granted should there be security or defence reasons motivating it, and no obstacles are raised by Swedish export policy.²

There is also legislation that regulates the conduct and decision making of the civil servants. The Law (2000:130) regarding Defence Intelligence Activity is an example of this type of legislation.³ These laws provide only a wide framework and do not regulate how receiver countries shall be treated or how human rights shall be interpreted. The gaps in these legislative acts are amended by international conventions and agreements such as the European Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and the legislative acts of the European Union. Unfortunately, the legislative acts and the amendments relate more to political obligations and they are generally not binding for the individual civil servants in his or her dealings with a state such as Israel.

3. THE LEGISLATIVE ACTS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

In 1999 the member states of the European Union adopted a Code of Conduct in Weapon Export. This code is politically binding for the member states but each country has their own legislation governing trade and export. The Code consists of eight criteria aiming to create common guidelines in the export of weapons for European Union member states. The first criterion deals with the respect for international sanctions, such as the United Nations sanctions. The second criterion deals with the respect for human rights. License to export weapons must be revoked when there is suspicions that the receiver country may use the war equipment to oppress human rights or if the receiving country violates human rights. The latter criterion is conditioned by the nature of the products that are to be exported. The fourth criterion relates to the promotion of peace, security and stability. Member states must refrain from granting export licence where there is great risk that the receiving country will use the war equipment “in an aggressive manor or to make territorial claims through the use of force”.⁴ Member states are to report all granted export licenses to the EU working group POLARM. The code does not appear to be effective since many of the member states simply do not adhere to it.

² The Swedish Parliaments Investigatory Service (RUT), Memo, 2004: The Weapon Collaboration Between Sweden and Israel (Stencil 4).

³ The Swedish Inspectorate for Strategic Products (ISP), 2004 (Stencil 5).

⁴ The Swedish Inspectorate for Strategic Products (ISP), 2004 (Stencil 5).

4. THE SWEDISH DEFENCE RESEARCH AGENCY (FOI, former FOA)

The Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI, former FOA) is an authority working under the Swedish Department of Defence. Its main activity is research, development of methods, technology, investigations of use to the defence sector and the Swedish national security.

In the beginning of the 1990's the Swedish Defence Research Agency cooperated with Israel concerning civilian defence against biological and chemical weapons. This cooperation was based on the Israeli fear for long distance missiles, i.e. Scud missiles, during the Gulf War 1990. The program specifically concerned the quality control of protection masks manufactured in Sweden. The program also concerned the development of medical treatments in the wake of civilian nerve gas exposure. Eventually this led to the dispatching of a delegation from the Swedish Defence Research Agency (former FOA and SRV), to visit the Israeli Defence Ministry to learn about Israeli civilian protection. The visit resulted in a corresponding visit by Israeli officials to Sweden.

During the period 1998-1999, FOA was regarded a confidence building institution in so far that it participated in the discussions concerning a cooperation between Israel and Jordan. The cooperation concerned the development of a system for gathering and exchanging seismic information between the two countries.

During the 90's, FOA also cooperated with an Israeli university with regards to scientific research in the area of catalytical antibodies. The research aimed at proving the effective use of catalytical antibodies as a counteragent to nerve gas. The result of this research has not yet been made available to the Palestine Solidarity Association in Sweden.⁵

In the year of 2000 FOA presented documentation to substantiate the need for a security agreement between Sweden and Israel. In this documentation FOA pointed out the significant Israeli competence in the area of military research and technology and stressed the need for a cooperation on technical and scientific merits alone. FOA claims that it has been participating in scientific conferences arranged in Israel and that it has been cooperating with the Weizman Institute with regards to the research of catalytical antibodies. These circumstances ought to be the foundation of a mutually beneficial security agreement between Sweden and Israel.⁶ Another letter from the Swedish Department of Defence emphatically denied all military cooperation between Sweden and Israel after 1992. Henrik Ohlin with the Swedish Department of Defence also denies the existence of any military scientific research cooperation between Israel and Sweden since 1992. The claims denying such a cooperation appear conspicuous in the light of the FOA documentation which advocates the creation of a security agreement between the two countries.

5. THE SWEDISH DEFENCE MATERIAL ADMINISTRATION (FMV)

The Swedish Defence Material Administration (FMV) is a civilian and governmental authority under the Swedish Government. It controls the design, the appropriation and the

⁵ This information was gathered from the Swedish Department of Defence, 2000 (Stencil 9, 10, 11) and The Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOA), 2000 (Stencil 15).

⁶ The Swedish Defence Research Agency (FMV), 2000: Concerning the security agreement with Israel (Stencil 8). This information was however denied in an unofficial interview with Dick Sträng (FOI). Dick Sträng informed us that the person who wrote this letter no longer is an employee of FOI.

adjustment of new material to the future network based Swedish National Defence. The Swedish National Defence is thus the largest client of the Swedish Defence Material Administration which also acts to promote the overall operational ability of the Swedish National Defence. The Swedish Defence Material Administration does also provide support and advice to other Swedish authorities in areas pertaining to export of war equipment.

The official administrator Agneta Ängman found 84 documents concerning Israel between the years 2000-2005. Twelve of these are classified but the vast majority of the documents have been acquired and answer is still pending with regards to the classified documents. Five of the classified documents deal with the security agreement between Sweden and Israel and seven other documents concern export and import of war equipment involving Swedish companies such as Nammo LIAB AB, Saab and Saabtech. Some of the documents also pertain to the sending of classified documents to suppliers of IRST and CESM. A multitude of abbreviations does however complicate the reading of these documents. According to these documents Swedish officials have made a trip to JAI in Israel concerning the Eagle 2002. The only other piece of information that can be extracted from the document is that the project leader was Stefan Tenor.⁷

Below are some short summaries of the official documents. Their content clearly suggests that the military collaboration between Sweden and Israel has been both varying and encompassing.

In 2002 the Swedish Defence Material Administration performed a test flight with an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) in the northern parts of Norrland in Sweden. According to Henrik Ohlin with the Swedish Department of Defence the Swedish Defence Material Administration wanted to demonstrate “a future Swedish ability for advanced aerial reconnaissance using Swedish sensors”. This aerial service was later purchased by a French company in the EADS-group. Henrik Ohlin has informed us that the French company later hired an Israeli UAV for these tests. He proceeds by guaranteeing that the Swedish Defence hasn’t been testing or performing any operation on instructions from Israel. On 4th of November 2004 The Swedish Parliaments Investigatory Service (RUT) sent a list of objects, material, date of order and purchase prices of Israeli origin since 2000.⁸ The costs of the studies performed in relation to the Unmanned Aerial Vehicles test flight and of the Early warning systems (EW-systems) in aircrafts amounts to 780 499 Swedish Crowns. If these studies were not performed in relation to the test flight in Norrland, the Swedish Defence Material Administration must have had dealings with Israel pertaining to the development of the UAV on other occasions. If the studies were performed in connection to the test flight, the information provided to us by Henrik Ohlin appears to be faulty or inconclusive.

In 2002 the Swedish Defence Material Administration purchased an anti torpedo weapon system from the Israeli company Raphael. Henrik Ohlin does however maintain that Raphael personnel never took part in the testing of these systems but that they participated in the clearance prior to testing.⁹ The distinction does not appear to be clear and must be regarded in the light of the frequent visits of Israeli military technical personnel to in e.g. Muskö Naval Base.

⁷ The Swedish Defence Material Administration (FMV), 2002 (Stencil 36).

⁸ The Swedish Parliaments Investigatory Service (RUT), Memo, 2004 (Stencil 4).

⁹ Henrik Ohlin quotes the Swedish Minister of Defence speech. Also: The Swedish National Defence, Headquarters (Stencil 41) and The Swedish Defence Material Administration (FMV), 2001 (Stencil 48).

There are a number of documents concerning foreign visits by Swedish officials to the Swedish Embassy in Tel Aviv, in e.g. courses and seminars arranged by the Israeli Defence.¹⁰ These courses are normally arranged to provide training and instalment instructions for the buyer of war equipment as a normal stage of any purchase. One example is the 2002 purchase of radar equipment (ATK) for use on naval corvettes.¹¹ The visit to Raphael in 2000 resulted in the purchase of radar equipment. The documents clearly show that the visits also aimed at initiating commercial negotiations, demonstrating hardware and software, the manufacturing process and the evaluation of quality and delivery routines.¹²

Another example of visits, revisits and participating in studies was the Swedish National Defence ambition to purchase Warning and Counteraction Systems. The goal of the visit to Israel was to investigate the demand for future purchase of Warning and Counteraction Systems to the Swedish National Defence combat vehicle units. Because Israel was considered to be leading in this war equipment area and because the Swedish Law on official appropriation made this purchase possible, negotiations on a project bound security agreement was initiated with the Israeli weapons manufacturer Raphael.¹³

In nearly every document procured from Swedish authorities we find information about Swedish participation in Israeli military seminars. These seminars deal almost exclusively with product development for old and new customers. John Hart with The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), section of questions regarding weapons of mass destruction and non-proliferation, has pointed out a new trend in military cooperation which can be described as information exchange or the exchange of non-tangible objects. This cooperation does not rely on material collaboration but rather upon advisory collaboration and expertise cooperation.

Security agreements regulate the level of security and confidentiality that should be in effect between two countries involved in negotiations. The meaning and importance of a security agreement varies but generally signifies a high level of trust between two countries. The entering into a security agreement is not common and does normally only exist between two countries with a highly developed diplomatic and defence related cooperation. The existence of more than a dozen documents pertaining to security agreements with Israel is evidence of a mature, developed and intimate collaboration.

Below are some examples of documents concerning security agreements.

In 2000 Dan Ohlsson with the Swedish Defence Department invited a number of Swedish authorities to respond to the Swedish Department of Defence concerning a security agreement between Sweden and Israel. In this letter he states that the question of a Swedish-Israeli security agreement was raised in relation to a visit by the undersecretary of State in the beginning of 1997 where a decision to initiate such an agreement was made. The Department of Defence immediately started to work on a draft which was later refused by Sweden. The letter from Dan Ohlsson stated the need for a security agreement and demanded that all authorities immediately reply with an opinion. This letter was sent to the Swedish National

¹⁰ The Swedish Defence Material Administration (FMV), (Stencil 22, 23, 26, 27 and 28).

¹¹ The Swedish Defence Material Administration (FMV), (Stencil 44).

¹² The Swedish Defence Material Administration (FMV), (Stencil 16).

¹³ The Swedish Government, The Swedish Department of Defence, 2002 (Stencil 25); The Swedish Inspectorate for Strategic Products (ISP), 2002 (Stencil 29); The Swedish Defence Material Administration (FMV), 2003 (Stencil 31 and 34).

Defence, The Swedish Defence Material Administration, The Swedish Defence Research Agency, The Swedish Aeronautical Research Agency and various individual officials with the Department of Foreign Affairs. The opinion of the Swedish Defence Research Agency was positive to the creation of a security agreement. The former Minister of Defence Björn von Sydow wrote on behalf of the Swedish Government, authorizing the Swedish National Defence in cooperation with the Swedish Defence Material Administration to negotiate a security agreement with Israel since the need for such a document was deemed necessary.¹⁴ The import of war equipment from Israel amounted to roughly 150 million Swedish crowns from 2000-2004.¹⁵ This fact must have contributed to the Swedish standpoint concerning the need for a security agreement.

A general security agreement between Sweden and Israel would certainly have had a great impact on the information exchange between the two states because it was believed to create a stable framework for negotiations concerning the Swedish defence in e.g. for the future purchase of war equipment, the development of JAS 39 Gripen, the development and installation of optical parts in the operative sections of the Swedish National Defence. The fact that the Swedish Defence Material Administration shares confidential information with Israeli companies and business offers for products and parts classified top secret is a clear sign of its high level of trust in the Israeli Defence Industry and Israeli authorities.¹⁶

Other types of security agreements touch upon the handing out of confidential information to Swedish companies that enter into negotiations with Israeli companies. During the years 2003-2006, the Swedish Inspectorate for Strategic Products (ISP), in cooperation with the Swedish Defence Material Administration, gave SaabTech AB the permission to hand out confidential information prior to giving an estimate on the purchase of a new sensor to the guiding system CETRIS and to enter into agreements concerning document confidentiality with Israeli authorities.¹⁷

On a number of instances Sweden has offered Israel war equipment as a loan. In one of the Swedish Defence Material Administrations documents we found an application for a permission to export helmets to the Israeli company IT Lasers Ltd, as a loan. What this resulted in has not yet been established.¹⁸

6. THE SWEDISH NATIONAL DEFENCE

Matthias Landström with the international branch of the Swedish National Defence Headquarters claims that the Swedish National Defence has been participating in international defence related exhibitions and seminars held in Israel on a few occasions. According to him, there is currently no bilateral training exchange between Sweden and Israel. A low degree of exchange may have occurred through the multilateral exercises and educations arranged by NATO or the UN. The question is whether this is an accurate description of the level of

¹⁴ The Swedish Department of Defence, 2000 (Stencil 17 and 18).

¹⁵ The Swedish Department of Defence, 2000 (Stencil 11).

¹⁶ The Swedish Department of Defence, 2000 (Stencil 25); The Swedish Inspectorate for Strategic Products (ISP), 2002 (Stencil 29); The Swedish Defence Material Administration (FMV), 2002 (Stencil 31, 32, 33 and 34).

¹⁷ The Swedish Defence Material Administration (FMV), 2005 (Stencil 33). Similar agreements exist regarding the handing out of information concerning JAS 39, 2004 (Stencil 24).

¹⁸ The Swedish Defence Material Administration (FMV) and the Swedish Inspectorate for Strategic Products (ISP), 2001 (Stencil 37).

exchange? We have acquired several documents that deal with the training of Swedish military personnel in Israel in the martial art Krav Maga. This project was initiated 2004 and is still active. The motive for the project is to train instructors to carry out further training in the Swedish National Defence and the Swedish Police Service. The project does not aim at providing specific training for Swedish UN troops or other international missions.¹⁹

The Swedish National Defence is the authority that registers all visits and official journeys relating to the Defence sector. Officials from the Swedish National Defence have made a great number of trips to Israel, in e.g. the weapons manufacturer Raphael.²⁰ The register of the Swedish National Defence confirms the information in all documents acquired from the Swedish Defence Material Administration, including the costs of all trips and training not included in the purchase statistics.

Three officials from the Swedish National Defence have been participating in a conference on Low intensity conflicts (LIC) amounting to a cost of at least 60 000 Swedish crowns. The Conference aimed at providing information to military personnel on the various aspects of Low intensity conflicts.²¹

On 7th of July 2005 a delegation from the Swedish Defence Material Administration and the Swedish National Defence together with the German company KMW, made a trip to Israel to visit the Israeli company Kinetics. The object of this visit was to observe the heater, cooling and NBC-power supply unit for combat vehicle REMO 122 and the overall performance of Merkava 4.²² The result of these trips is yet to be disclosed.

7. THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT AND THE SWEDISH DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE

According to Mattias Wallén, with the Unit for Security and International Questions, there are two settlements touching upon the issue of security agreements between the Swedish National Defence and Israel. These settlements consist of request Fö2000/66/MIL and confidential request Fö2000/1131/MIL. These two matters resulted in the Government decision No: 2, 2000-09-21. It entails a permission for the Swedish National Defence to enter into negotiations concerning a security agreement with Israel. Due to the unstable situation in the region at that time, the agreement was put off. This does not however signify that no other negotiation was initiated at a later date. Wallén concludes that the Swedish Defence Material Administration has had five other matters between the years 1998-2001 concerning similar questions.²³

According to Henrik Ohlin the military collaboration between Sweden and Israel only amount to a limited import of defence equipment. The word "limited" is hardly an adequate description of war equipment import amounting to 150 million Swedish crowns during a five year period.

¹⁹ Stencil 38.

²⁰ There are roughly 40 documents pertaining to agreements and negotiations between the Swedish National Defence and the weapons manufacturer Raphael.

²¹ The Swedish National Defence, 2005 (Stencil 50).

²² The Swedish National Defence, 2002 (Stencil 53) and the Swedish Defence Material Administration (FMV), 2005 (Stencil 54).

²³ The Swedish National Defence, (Fö1998/873/MIL), (Fö2000/1519/MIL), (Fö2001/256/MIL), (Fö2000/2194/MIL) and (Fö2001/2230/MIL) and the Swedish Department of Defence, 2002 (Stencil 7).

Ohlin underlines the traditional Swedish standpoint not to import war equipment from a country that is the object of international or Swedish sanctions and embargoes. Israel is not the object of such sanctions. Ohlin continues by stating that sanctions and embargoes should be a final measure only when all other alternatives have been exhausted. The Palestinians and the Israelis had entered into a dialogue and such measures would allegedly only hinder the peace process.²⁴ It is difficult to see how refraining from import of war equipment and continued martial art training, from one of the parties in an armed conflict, could ever endanger a peace process.

Due to the burden of work for the military attaché in Turkey and the development in the Middle East, the Swedish Government deemed it necessary to appoint a military attaché to Israel. This decision was motivated by “the Swedish Governments renowned commitment to conflicts in the Middle East and crisis management in the region”. The object of this appointment was said not to be that of material collaboration but rather to be based on “the need for military competence in the watch on security policy”.²⁵ Our documents clearly show that the Swedish military attaché in Turkey has acted as an intermediary in an extensive material collaboration between Sweden and Israel.²⁶

The Swedish Department of Defence official Annika Elmgart has informed us that the normal tasks of a military attaché is to:

Monitor and evaluate the military development affecting the Swedish National Defence.

Act as an aid to Swedish defence authorities in matters concerning the purchase or sale of equipment and services.

Take part in the planning of visits to Sweden by military authorities in the host country.

Gather and spread information in accordance with the intelligence needs established by the Swedish Supreme Commander.

From these observations it is obvious that the Swedish military attaché to Israel would engage in a military material collaboration.

8. THE SWEDISH PARLIAMENTS INVESTIGATORY SERVICE (RUT)

In a letter from Peter Strand with the Swedish Parliaments Investigatory Service (RUT) to Lotta Nilsson of the Swedish Green Party the cost of Swedish war equipment import from Israel amounts to 146 million Swedish crowns for the period 2000-2004. Sweden has purchased scotopic equipment at the cost of 90 million Swedish crowns, studies of Unmanned aerial vehicles and EW-systems in aircrafts at the cost of 800 000 Swedish crowns, x-ray equipment for ammunition clearing at the cost of 1,5 million Swedish crowns, ammunition (25 mm) at the cost of 7 million Swedish crowns, ECM-systems at the cost of 22 million

²⁴ The Swedish Department of Defence, 2005 (Stencil 11) and the Swedish National Defence, 2005 (Letter B).

²⁵ The Swedish Department of Defence, 2005 (Stencil 11).

²⁶ The Swedish National Defence, Headquarters, 2005 (Stencil 55).

Swedish crowns and torpedo counter measures with additional equipment for tests and training at the cost of 25 million Swedish crowns.²⁷

The Swedish Parliaments Investigatory Service also informs us that the Swedish aircraft JAS Gripen was displayed at the aeronautical exhibition in Paris 2003 with weapon from the Israeli weapons manufacturer Raphael.²⁸ This collaboration has also occurred at other exhibitions in e.g. Brasil, France and the United Kingdom. According to Anders Annerfalk with Gripen International, the purpose of these demonstrations are “to show various weapon alternatives, and foremost, to call attention to the aircrafts unique capability to carry a multitude of weapons from different manufacturers and countries”. He adds that it is a great competitive advantage for the aircraft to show a multitude of alternatives. The object of the display is to promote the sale of Gripen on its own, thus the cooperation between Gripen International and the Israeli weapons manufacturer pertains only to the marketing section. This is an acknowledgement of a cooperation with the Israeli weapons manufacturer Raphael. The cooperation was initiated during the 1990’s and is now a formalized agreement between the two companies. Anders Annerfalk emphasizes the fact that this arrangement lacks economic obligations on either side. This should not draw attention from the plausible scenario that a buyer of JAS Gripen would also invest in Israeli weapon.

9. THE SWEDISH INSPECTORATE FOR STRATEGIC PRODUCTS (ISP)

The Swedish Inspectorate for Strategic Products (ISP) is a government authority with control of the export of war equipment and other strategic products, such as products with double fields of application. Since there is no legislation regulating the import of such products there is no real need for a governmental authority to control this import. As a consequence it is entirely a question for the Swedish Defence Material Administration to decide which countries Sweden should import strategic products from, with the exception of countries that are the object of sanctions or embargoes.²⁹

The Swedish Inspectorate for Strategic Products is positive to the proposition of the Swedish Governments official report on war material, aiming at regulating the import of strategic products.³⁰ This proposed regulation does however aim at preventing the spread of weapons in the Swedish society and is thus national in character. It does not introduce new regulations with regard to democratic standards and human rights in receiver countries.

There is an obvious need for a Swedish authority with information and statistics regarding the Swedish war equipment import. It is impossible for the Swedish Inspectorate for Strategic Products to have such a function with the current legislation. Statistics Sweden (SCB) has information concerning the Swedish import of weapon and ammunition. The content is however classified.³¹

The Swedish Inspectorate for Strategic Products denies that Sweden has exported war equipment to Israel.³² Contrary to this, the Swedish National Board of Trade has statistics

²⁷ The Swedish Parliaments Investigatory Service (RUT), Memo, 2004 (Stencil 4).

²⁸ <http://www.caat.org.uk/information/publications/companies/saab.php>

²⁹ This does however assume that the rules of official appropriation are followed.

³⁰ <http://www.isp.se/documents/public/se/pdf/KRUT-yttrande.pdf>

³¹ Statistics Sweden (SCB), 2005 (Letter D).

³² The Swedish Inspectorate for Strategic Products (ISP), 2005 (Letter G).

corroborating Swedish export of war equipment to Israel.³³ The Swedish Inspectorate for Strategic Products claims that this limited export does in fact pertain to repairs of Swedish war equipment. Are these repairs perhaps carried out on old products and materials exported to Israel?

Christer Ljungqvist, head of the legal branch with the Swedish Inspectorate for Strategic Products, informs us that he is aware of the fact that Swedish affiliated companies abroad may export war equipment to countries that Sweden normally wouldn't accept. Unfortunately, Swedish legislation does not have extraterritorial applicability and can in no way stop such transactions. Export of products and equipment, originating from a foreign partner country to a third country, should be accepted within the framework of the partner countries export regulations.³⁴ Christer Ljungqvist does point out that many Swedish companies are unaware of these regulations. The aforementioned regulations only apply to the export of war equipment and not to the export of products with double fields of application, since they often fall outside the definition of war equipment. Many Swedish companies do in fact sell products with double fields of application to Israel.

10. THE SWEDISH MINISTER OF DEFENCE DOES NOT PROVIDE AN ACCURATE PICTURE OF THE SWEDISH-ISRAELI MILITARY COLLABORATION

According to the former Swedish Minister of Defence Leni Björklund, the Swedish-Israeli military collaboration is entirely acceptable because "our military cooperation with Israel is restricted to a limited import of defence material" (The Swedish Parliament 9th of June 2005).

This report proves her statement to be incorrect. The Swedish-Israeli military collaboration does not solely amount to an import of Israeli war equipment at 30 million Swedish crowns a year (roughly 150 million Swedish crowns during the period of 2000-2004). It is a collaboration that extends well beyond mere import.

The answers by Leni Björklund in 2005 do simply not provide an accurate description of the Swedish-Israeli collaboration:

From the answers provided by Leni Björklund one gets the impression that military exchange visits ended after the Swedish supreme commanders trip to Israel in 1998. The fact that a visit to Sweden by the Israeli supreme commander was planned for the year 2000 is not mentioned. Neither does she mention the frequent military exchange visits between Sweden and Israel during the period. According to the diary of the Swedish Defence Material Administration there are over forty Swedish visits to Israel registered during the period of 2000-2004. There are no records available of all the Israeli visits to Sweden and the Swedish visits to Israel arranged by other authorities. We have evidence that there have been visits pertaining to the purchase and sale of war equipment, to training and seminars in the military sector.

The Israeli participation at the military technical testing of an unmanned aerial vehicle must have been coincidental according to Leni Björklund. "We have chosen a French company to deliver an unmanned aerial vehicle. This company chose an Israeli product". The documents

³³ According to statistics from the Swedish Chamber of Commerce Sweden exported weapons and ammunitions at 700 000 Swedish crowns during the period 2003-2004, (Stencil 1).

³⁴ The Swedish Parliaments Investigation Service, Memo, 2004 (Stencil 4); Thomas Tjäder.

from the Swedish Parliaments Investigatory Service, clearly show that the Israeli participation was planned as early as 2000 and that the test flight was carried out in 2002. The Israeli participation can hardly have come as a surprise to the Swedish authorities. Would the order have been cancelled should the Israeli participation been known at an earlier stage? The former Swedish Minister of Defence does not even hint at this. In the light of this the excuse seems pointless.

With regards to the military cooperation with Israeli weapons manufacturer Raphael, Leni Björklund stresses that “personnel from Raphael has participated in the clearing of tests but not in the actual testing. The results of the tests have been classified and never made available to the contractor or Israeli authorities”. The Palestine Solidarity Association in Sweden do however question whether Israeli military technicians from Raphael, shuttling Muskö naval base and other highly sensitive Swedish military installations, have not in fact been able to make a great deal of assessments and observations of interest to the Israeli military complex? The security agreements permitting the exchange of information with Israeli authorities must have entailed material of military interest.

The former Minister of Defence does admit to some research cooperation occurring in the past. She claims that no such cooperation exists between Sweden and Israel today. We can present information, concerning the participation of a Swedish military staff doctor in an Israeli conference on medical issues related to armed conflicts, contradicting her statement. Where does the Swedish Government draw the line between “research” and “scientific cooperation” in this regard? The Swedish Government has left no conclusive statement to the effect that all cooperation with Israel in areas of military importance has ceased.

With regards to the cooperation between Israel and Sweden concerning JAS Gripen, the former Minister of Defence appears to believe that this also was a coincidence. “We have not equipped JAS Gripen with Israeli weapon. We needed a target acquirement capsule and this was appropriated by Saab, who delivered it, from the German company Zeiss. It later became evident that this equipment was based on a construction from an Israeli subcontractor”. If we take into consideration the recurrent and frequent Swedish-Israeli marketing cooperation, proved abundantly clear in his report, the description of the Israeli origin of the target acquirement capsule as a coincidence does not appear credible.

According to the former Minister of Defence the appointment of the Swedish military attaché to Israel was motivated by “the need for military competence in the watch on the security situation and not by the need for war equipment cooperation”. The documentation we have acquired show that copies of the vital documentation regarding war equipment matters between Sweden and Israel often has been sent to the military attaché in Turkey. This function has now been permanently established in Tel Aviv. Military attachés normally provide assistance to Swedish authorities at the purchase of war equipment. We have received no information to the effect that the Swedish Government has left specific restrictions to the Swedish military attaché in Tel Aviv regarding appropriation of war equipment. It appears more likely that the appointment of a military attaché to Israel is a sign of an extended military collaboration.

On a number of issues the former Minister of Defence avoided to comment on Swedish-Israeli collaboration:

Leni Björklund neglected to comment on the Swedish participation at conferences and training in methods used to counter civilian and armed resistance to military occupation in e.g. the LIC-conference and Krav Maga-training.

She further avoided the issue of Swedish participation in Israeli conferences on the conflict in the Middle East without representatives from the Palestinian side.

The former Minister of Defence never commented on the fact that Swedish authorities and companies exchange confidential documents with Israeli companies and authorities within the framework of security agreements.

In an interpellation on 12th of January 2006 the Swedish member of parliament Gustav Fridolin from the Swedish Green Party, asked the former Swedish Minister of Defence Leni Björklund four questions:³⁵

“Does the Minister of Defence intend to clarify the inappropriateness in Swedish military personnel taking part in courses in Israel concerning so called Low intensity Conflicts, where they are taught how civilian and armed resistance against an occupation can be crushed?”

“Does the Minister of Defence intend to clarify how the security agreement currently active between Sweden and Israel give Israel access to Swedish confidential military information?”

“Does the Minister of Defence intend to issue a specific protocol for the Swedish military attaché in Tel Aviv that explicitly states that he cannot act in matters concerning the trade in war equipment or in any other way assist Swedish companies that have or aspire to have a military technological collaboration with Israel?”

“Do the Minister of Defence and the Swedish Government intend to clarify that Israel, from a military technological standpoint, is not to be considered a country with which Sweden has any collaboration?”

Here follows a short summary of what former Minister of Defence Leni Björklund answered in the interpellation debate on 27th of January 2006.

The former Minister of Defence stated something that she reiterated later on, namely that the Swedish military cooperation with Israel couldn't be characterized as either “extensive” or “intensive”. It should rather be characterized as “normal [and] [...] confined to the import of small amounts of military products from Israel”.

Subsequently the questions posed by Fridolin were dealt with and the answers from the former Minister of Defence can be summarized in this manner.

“Participation in international conferences in different areas is an important part of the training and development of the Swedish National Defence.” The opinion that Sweden has the need for the types of “less than lethal weapons” discussed at the conference, in our arsenal was put forth by “very upset” soldiers to the Minister of Defence after the armed uprising in Kosovo in the spring of 2003. Before such weapons can be acquired “[...] sufficient

³⁵ The Swedish Parliament Interpellation 2005/06:197.

knowledge on their usage is required [...] it is thus important to study countries that use them. This does however not mean that we sympathize with their way of using these weapons”.

“Sweden has no comprehensive general security agreement with Israel”. Four project specific security agreements do exist established by the Swedish Defence Material Administration. These agreements have been made in connection to the purchase from Israeli companies or when the Israeli industry has been of interest as a subcontractor to other industries. These agreements from the period of 2000-2003, stipulate how classified information shall be treated.

The former Minister of Defence also stated that “[...] the motive for the decision to place a military attaché in Tel Aviv was not that of material collaboration”. When Fridolin posed the question whether the Swedish military attaché does assist when Sweden purchases weapons from Israel, the former Minister of Defence answered that this never had occurred but “[...] that I would never say that it couldn’t occur in the future”.

The answer to this question by the Minister of Defence was basically a repetition of Swedish rules regulating import and export of military supplies. “Export of military supplies to Israel is not considered in coherence with the Swedish guide lines”. Import however, is only governed by the need, the goals and the future funding of the Swedish National Defence. A guiding principle is “[...] the appeasement of Swedish interests [...] to the lowest cost and according to common business practices” Israel should therefore be considered as a potential trade partner in the same manner as any other country.

The debate touched upon two other matters, visiting exchange and coherence:

To claim, as The Palestine Solidarity Association in Sweden and Fridolin does, that military and military technical personnel shuttles between Israel and Sweden is highly exaggerated according to the former Military of Defence. A certain visiting exchange is necessary because Sweden uses Israeli products in its defence organisation. All of the visits “[...] are performed to motivate the investments and the development we need for matters pertaining to the Swedish National Defence”. She added that no visits on top level in e.g. Supreme Commander, have taken place “since the conflict [in the Middle East] gained renewed intensity, after a period that promised to provide a more peaceful development in the region”.

On several occasions Fridolin maintained the principle of coherence, according to which Swedish principles and policy in one area of politics should cohere to principles and policies in other areas. While coherence is something the Swedish government aims to fulfil Fridolin pointed out that Sweden appears to have two parallel policies: “one official policy, where we condemn crimes against international law on human rights, and an unofficial policy of collaboration with states that are in violation of international law and human rights”. To put the matter more to the point, Sweden officially refuses to sell weapons to Israel but has no objections towards buying weapons from Israel.

The former Minister of Defence only comment to this was that although coherence is an important principle, adherence to it is not her responsibility. Her duty is only to see to the interests of the Swedish National Defence and this might give rise to conflicts with the principle of coherence in some cases. This is one of the reasons why the Minister of Defence does not have the Governments responsibility in export issues.

11. THE NEW AGENDA OF THE SWEDISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

In Swedish legislation there is a clear distinction between the rules governing the export and the rules governing the import of war equipment. The rules pertaining to export are thoroughly regulated in the law and ordinances of war equipment. Export is only allowed if it is not in violation with Swedish foreign policy and when there are security and defence motives for it. How this should be interpreted is further described in the governmental “guidelines for the export of war equipment and other foreign joint actions”. The guidelines state that:

Approval of export of war equipment [...] should not be consented to if it concerns a state where encompassing violations of human rights occur [or] that state is currently involved in armed conflict, [...] international conflict [...] or is experiencing armed internal unrest.

Accordingly, the export of war equipment to Israel is not compatible with the Swedish guidelines and has not been approved since early 1950's.

Rules, governing import of war equipment, however is basically non-existent and there are currently no regulations in place. The Swedish Defence Minister appears to recognize only one outlined principle and that is not to import war equipment “[...] from a country that is the subject of international sanctions or embargos or where a Swedish sanction is determined”. She adds that “Israel is not the subject of any such sanction”.³⁶

Sweden has the possibility, in accordance with the wishes of The Palestine Solidarity Association in Sweden, to interrupt all trade of war equipment with Israel and adopt sanctions towards Israel. The proposal has been put forth in the Swedish Parliament but has inexorably been refused.

Another alternative would be to alter the legislation on import and export regulations so that they are brought in harmony with each other.

In the Swedish Social Democratic Parties International Policy Program “A just world is possible” from 2005 trade in arms and defence products are mentioned in broad terms. The text hints at a more restrictive approach to the trade in war equipment.

“All trade in arms and defence materials must be controlled with strict international rules. Sweden must be a forerunner in this regard by having strict regulations for the Swedish export and import of weapons and war materials. The legitimate procurement of weapons in the interests of self defence and military ability to maintain the rule of international law must be made clear.”³⁷

“Non-democratic regimes and those countries that violate human rights cannot be given the same legitimacy in the procurement of arms. When it comes to export, consideration must be given to the risk of war or if the state violates human rights. The rules for import of war

³⁶ Leni Björklund, <http://www.riksdagen.se/webbnav/index.aspx?nid=101&bet=2005/06:63>

³⁷ The Swedish Social Democratic Party International Policy Program, *A just world is possible*, Adopted by the 35th Ordinary Congress 29th October – 3rd November 2005, pp. 28-29

materials should also be drawn up in line with the same principles that apply for the export of the same type of products.”³⁸

The official standpoint of the Social Democratic Party is that the same rules that govern the import of war equipment should govern the export of war equipment. This standpoint is however not in coherence with current legislation and the suggestions of the Governments official report on war material (KRUT) which entail suggestions to reformed rules concerning the trade in defence material.³⁹

11. THE OFFICIAL REPORT ON WAR MATERIAL AND THE GOVERNMENTS POSITION

On 15th of February 2005 the official report on war material published its final report in accordance with its mandate to “...investigate the Swedish law concerning war material”. The official report has sustained heavy criticism for being influenced by a high degree of free trade thinking, considering economic aspects but overlooking the moral issues at stake in trade with countries that violate human rights, such as Israel.

Amnesty International, Diakonia, The Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society, The United Nations Association of Sweden and The Red Cross have submitted a very critical consideration with regards to the suggestion. An implementation of the suggestions presented in the Official report on war material, would break up the already inadequate regulations governing the trade in war equipment.

The former Social Democratic Government never left a forthright answer to whether the suggestions of the report would be implemented. The Swedish member of Parliament Veronica Palm of the Swedish Social Democratic Party made a tentative effort to explain the governments opinion stating that “[...] the report is good” and that “there is no need for a new report” but adding that “There are many matters we wish to change in the report” one of these matters being “[...] legislation governing import”

The attitude of the Social Democratic Government remained unclear and the new Government of the non-socialist parties has yet to declare their position in this critical matter.

³⁸ The Swedish Social Democratic Party International Policy Program, *A just world is possible*, Adopted by the 35th Ordinary Congress 29th October – 3rd November 2005, pp. 28-29

³⁹ SOU 2005:9, <http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/108/a/38919;jsessionid=a8jsd-NrDUwa>

12. CONCLUSIONS

Despite the obvious attempts by Swedish authorities to make light of, it is obvious that the material presented in this report proves an encompassing military technological and security collaboration between Sweden and Israel on different levels and in many shapes.

The obvious confidence emanating from the documents is truly remarkable. One is given the unambiguous impression, that all concerned authorities and companies regard the occupying power Israel, convicted on numerous occasions for crimes against human rights by the International Court in Hague, as an ordinary, normal and democratically decent country with which it is entirely natural for Swedish authorities and companies to have a professional and personal collaboration and exchange military secrets.

The military collaboration between Israel and Sweden is unprecedented. Sweden has no similar cooperation with any of Israels counterparts in the Middle Eastern conflict e.g. PLO, the Palestine authorities and other Arab countries that borders to Israel (two of whom have peace agreements with Israel). From a military technical standpoint and the viewpoint of an outside observer, Sweden must appear to be an ally to Israel. This does not correspond with the officially declared Swedish attitude in the Middle Eastern conflict.

According to the logical conclusion that Swedish weapon export reinforces the Swedish National Defence, Israeli weapon export contributes to the reinforcement of the Israeli military strength.

The Palestine Solidarity Association is both chocked and outraged at the findings of this report. We knew that some import of Israeli war equipment did occur but could never imagine the magnitude of the military collaboration between Sweden and this country, holding a world record in contempt for UN and UN-decision. The impression is, without a doubt, that Sweden and Israel form a weapon confraternity in a sort of common struggle.

This arrangement is shameful to Sweden and makes a mockery of the Palestinian people, who are the victims of harassment and abuse from an Israeli military power that Sweden helps to reinforce.

Sweden shall not form a weapon confraternity with an occupying power. Sweden shall not directly and indirectly contribute to the reinforcement of the Israeli military strength.

The Palestine Solidarity Association in Sweden feels that the Swedish military collaboration with Israel must seize.

We do hereby leave this material to the scrutiny of the public eye and those authorities affected by it with the hope of debate and action.

The Palestine Solidarity Movement in Sweden

October 2005

Per Gahrton, Chairman