

Joint statement
by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden
on Nordic foreign and security policy cooperation –
building security in a comprehensive manner

Nordic cooperation on foreign and security policy continues to deepen and widen in scope. Many of the proposals in the report, which we asked Thorvald Stoltenberg to present in 2009 on enhanced cooperation, have now largely been implemented. As a manifestation of the importance of Nordic cooperation the Nordic countries agreed upon a declaration on solidarity in 2011. Most recently, in December 2013, the Nordic countries adopted a vision on Nordic Defence Cooperation.

The Nordic countries form a unique political entity based on shared values and on well-established intergovernmental and parliamentary cooperation. The Nordic model, which combines high level of equality and social security with dynamic economic performance, is a joint asset that can be used in our international relations and for promoting our joint values.

The Nordic countries are strong contributors to international security, individually and as a group. Nordic cooperation both strengthens security in our own region and increases the weight and influence of the Nordic countries as active contributors and partners in international security. Our efforts to further enhance cooperation in foreign and security policy are based on a **comprehensive concept of security**.

For decades the Nordic countries have engaged in various forms of military cooperation, in spite of different affiliations to international organizations. The Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEF) is a unique instrument and can serve as both an example and inspiration for other countries and regions. The military cross-border training exercises in the Nordic region is a good example of the benefits of close cooperation.

In today's world it is essential that security policy focuses on **building security** through enhanced conflict prevention and resolution, crisis management and long-term cooperative efforts in building democracy, the rule-of-law, respect for human rights and gender equality.

The Nordic countries see development based on **environmental, social and economic sustainability** as an integral part of global security. Cooperation in combating climate change, management of energy and water resources, addressing population growth and migration is vital, as are joint efforts to eradicate poverty.

Our cooperation should also be pursued to **counter threats** caused by terrorism, infectious diseases, organised crime, drug and human trafficking and cyber attacks.

The Nordic countries are strong advocates of **multilateral cooperation** and institutions and international law. In today's world, characterized by increasing interdependence, effective multilateralism remains a key in order to achieve sustainable development and address challenges to comprehensive security. The Nordic countries are among the top contributors to many UN funds and programmes and work together to further strengthen the ability of the UN to meet new challenges. The Ministers stress their whole-hearted support for Sweden's candidacy, which is also a Nordic candidacy, for a seat at the United Nations Security Council 2017-2018.

The Nordic countries agree that building comprehensive security requires the **use of a wide range of instruments**, including foreign policy, trade and economic ties, development policy, civilian and military crisis management, mediation, humanitarian assistance, arms control and promotion and protection of human rights.

To this effect the Nordic countries will further strengthen foreign and security cooperation with particular importance given to, inter alia, the following areas:

- Expand cooperation in civilian and military **crisis management**, including in Nordic contributions to UN peacekeeping operations. Continue coordination in foreign policy issues, in particular with regard to conflict situations. Enhance Nordic cooperation in the field of mediation.
- Further **develop Nordic defence cooperation** as outlined in the vision of the Defence Ministers of 4 December 2013.
- Continue to coordinate our views in **multilateral organizations**, including international financial institutions. Continue to promote our common values and further strengthen the UN, for instance through joint candidatures, joint statements and joint resolutions, and through coordination in the governing bodies of UN funds and programmes and specialized agencies.
- Make sure that development policies and programmes contribute towards accomplishing the Millennium Development Goals and actively engage in the deliberations on a **post-2015 sustainable development agenda**.
- In the fight against impunity, coordinate further and seek dialogue with third countries in support of strengthening the role of the **International Criminal Court**.
- Join forces in tackling issues related to **climate change**, such as conservation and sustainable management of natural resources, sustainable consumption and production, sustainable energy, financing for climate and sustainable development and green economy transition.
- Seek to reinforce our dialogue on **Arctic issues**; strengthen capacity, coordination and exercises to implement the agreements related to search and rescue operations, cooperation on marine oil spill preparedness, and investigate what Nordic capacities are available for possible future Nordic maritime surveillance in the Arctic.
- Strengthen our cooperation on **cyber issues** and further improve our readiness to deal with cyber security challenges. Enhance political cooperation on international norm building in multilateral fora in the areas of freedom, security and development of the internet. Maintain effective operation of the secure Nordic communications network that connects our Nordic Computer Emergency Response Teams.
- Retain the promotion and mainstreaming of **human rights, democracy and the rule of law** at the center of Nordic cooperation. Give particular emphasis to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Actively look for partners in promoting these issues and push for the implementation of Security Council Resolutions on women, peace and security.
- Further **our relations with partner countries**. Nordic-Baltic cooperation remains important. The Ministers also welcome the new Nordic-US Security Dialogue, which complements the ongoing Nordic-Baltic engagement with the US through the Enhanced Partnership in Northern Europe (E-pine).
- Continue to deepen the **cooperation between the Nordic Foreign Services**, by e.g. expanding co-location of diplomatic missions that already exists in some thirty locations around the world.