Margot Wallström: Planerat tal vid Arabförbundets utrikesministermöte

Talare
Margot Wallström
Politiker

Datum
9 mars 2015

Omständigheter
Planerat att hållas i Kairo, Egypten 9 mars 2015. Talet ställdes in pga konflikten med Saudiarabien.

Secretary General, Excellencies, dear friends,

It is a great honour for me to be standing here today. To be here in Egypt, in Cairo, in this building – the House of Arabs, is special. Egypt has always played an indispensable political, economic and cultural role in the region. And it is here that the Arab world, Africa and Europe meet.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Secretary General for inviting me to address this meeting. Your invitation is proof of the excellent relationship between the League of Arab States and Sweden – a longstanding relationship built on respect and commitment to serve the interests of the States and peoples that we represent, also in times of huge challenges.

In 1933, a time of crisis and depression for Europe as well as for the Arab world, a young Tunisian poet wrote about ”The Will to Live”:

”Those without passion to climb up the mountains,

must live forever among holes in the ground”

I have always been inspired by the passion and energy that I see in the many bright and highly motivated young people that I meet during my trips, especially in this region.

It is our responsibility, as leaders of our respective communities, to offer young members of our populations the means to fulfil their dreams and the possibility to live their lives in freedom, peace and security.

Excellencies,

The League of Arab States is a key partner for Sweden, as are your members. I highly appreciate the accreditation to the League of our Ambassador in March 2012.

The Swedish Government will put increased emphasis on the Southern leg of the EU Neighbourhood Policy that is being developed. North Africa and the Middle East are our neighbours and we will work together with EU partners and with you to make this shared region prosperous and peaceful.

Our destinies and paths are intertwined, through geographical proximity, history, economy and family ties. One fifth of all Swedes have a background outside the borders of Sweden. We have for example a large Iraqi diaspora – close to 2 per cent of our population – that is a vibrant part of our society.

Sweden is also extending a hand in development cooperation and humanitarian assistance throughout the region. Palestine, of course, is a case in point. So are those affected by conflict in Syria, Iraq, Libya, Yemen and elsewhere.

We have in relative terms received more asylum seekers from Syria than any other Western country – approximately 65 000 in the last three years. Yet, of course, this is nothing compared to many of your countries. I especially admire the responsible approach of Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey towards Syrians fleeing the war. Efforts of others are equally important.

Excellencies,

As you are all well aware of, as the first EU member state, Sweden recently decided to recognise the State of Palestine. The Swedish government took this decision with joy and pride.

Our decision to recognise Palestine fully complies with international law. It is a natural step to meet the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people to self-determination. The hard work of the Palestinian Government, state-building and reforms have made Palestine ready to perform the duties of a state.

The recognition aims at making the parties of the conflict less unequal. It aims at supporting moderate actors in both Palestine and Israel. And it aims to provide a positive injection to the Middle East Peace Process.

Some say our recognition was premature. I say it may have been too late.

Young women and men in both Palestine and Israel are about to lose hope. They need to see that there is an alternative to violence, to a depressing status quo and to a continuously negative development on the ground.

I am heartened by the fact that our step is inspiring a renewed debate in Europe and beyond on what the international community can do to provide them with preciously needed hope.

We are very concerned to see how the economy of Palestine is being squeezed from several ends. Jointly with other EU member states we will do our utmost to try to alleviate the burden and to convince Israel to change its actions, in particular to fulfil their legal obligations to transfer Palestinian money to the Palestinians.

And we will work hard, with other members of the EU and the international community, and with you, to do what we can to bring the peace process back on track and to arrive soon at a two-state solution with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security.

Excellencies,

Together we face growing extremism and radicalisation. ISIL or Da'esh is an example in the extreme. We need to work together to fight this scourge, to identify and deal with its root causes and to do this while paying full respect to human rights and international law.

I wish to express Sweden's solidarity with all innocent victims, in so many of the Member States of the League of Arab States, that every month, every week, every day – suffer from the brutal violence that Da'esh and other terrorist organisations create.

Terrorism and foreign terrorist fighters illustrate that the problems we are

facing have no boundaries. International cooperation is crucial while we still need to address these issues in parallel on local and national levels. Tirelessly.

Excellencies,

Democracy, security and economic development are interrelated. Without progress in one of these fields, sustainable results in the other cannot be expected.

Inclusive socio-economic development is particularly important. Educational and economic empowerment is the best antidote to radicalisation and terrorist recruitment.

Employment is crucial, especially for our youth. Youth unemployment is a key challenge, in Europe and in this region.

Excellencies,

Human rights are a priority in Swedish foreign policy. Freedom of association, assembly, religion and expression are not only fundamental rights and important tools in the creation of vibrant societies. They are indispensable in the fight against extremism and radicalisation. So is a vibrant civil society.

Yesterday was International Women's Day. This is a day to celebrate women's achievements, recognise challenges, and focus attention on women's rights, women's representation and their adequate resources. Our experience is that women's rights do not only benefit women, but society as a whole.

More than 20 years ago, in 1994, the International Conference on Population and Development met here in Cairo to discuss various issues, including education of women and protection of women from all forms of violence, including female genital mutilation and sexual harassment. Many of these issues are still very much in play today and I urge you to contribute to upholding the agreements made here in Cairo 20 years ago.

Excellencies,

Many of you here today have the privilege of representing large young

populations. They are a valuable asset. It is for their sake, and their children's sake, that all our efforts must be concentrated.

Many of them were not born 15 years ago when my predecessor and friend Anna Lindh came to inaugurate the Swedish Institute of Alexandria together with you, Secretary-General, in your previous capacity of Foreign Minister of Egypt. Let me invite you to commemorate Anna Lindh and celebrate 15 years of the Institute this autumn. It will be a great opportunity to strengthen our ties and make use of this unique platform for dialogue and instrument to dispel dangerous ignorance.

Let us together break the negative spiral of war, conflict and terrorism into a movement towards democracy, respect for human rights and socio-economic development. We have to continue to create hope.

Thank you. Shukran.

Källa
Manuskript hämtat från government.se (2025-09-23)

Taggar
Politiska tal, Socialdemokraterna

URI
https://www.svenskatal.se/tale/margot-wallstrom-planerat-tal-vid-arabforbundets-utrikesministermote