

Inaugural speech by Pierre Schori at the Award Ceremony of the Olof Palme Prize, Stockholm, Sweden, 30 January, 2019

Dear all,

Very welcome to this 32nd celebration of the Olof Palme Prize and a special welcome to Daniel Ellsberg.

Let me begin by honouring the memory of Lisbet Palme, Olof Palme's wife, counsellor and life companion and a children's psychologist and chairwoman for UNICEF. Lisbet was a constant participant in our annual ceremony, always ready to hand over the prize diploma with warm and wise words.

She passed away last year, as did two of our previous awardees; Ljudmila Aleksejeva (2004), advocate of human rights in the Soviet Union and Russia and Kofi Annan (2006), UN Secretary General.

Our thoughts also go to Waleed Sami Abu al-Khair who received the 2012 Olof Palme Prize for his sustained struggle to promote respect for human and civil rights for both men and women in Saudi Arabia, against a regime that sends death squads and bone saws abroad and punishes its citizens at home with decapitation and torture.

Waleed was the head of the "Monitor of Human Rights in Saudi Arabia and was Sentenced in 2014 to 15 years in prison He is incarcerated in the Dahban Central Prison in Jeddah.

As Waleed was prevented from collecting the prize, his wife Samir Badawi replaced him. Last year it was her turn to be arrested, and Amnesty International reported recently that she and other women human rights activists have been tortured, sexually harassed and otherwise ill-treated during their detention.

We will not forget them!

On a happier note, we salute our 2008 awardee Dr. Denis Mukwege in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) for receiving last year's Nobel Peace Prize.

Ladies and gentlemen, friends!

You are many who have come to honour Daniel Ellsberg, from all walks of society, from government and parliament, diplomats, a vast number of civil society organizations and many peace activists of all ages. We are happy to see you here.

Allow me to acknowledge the presence of Sweden's Foreign minister **Margot Wallström** and her colleagues, ministers Hans Dahlgren, Matilda Ernkrans, Ardalan Shekarabi, Annika Strandhäll and Anders Ygeman.

Also here is last years' awardee Emerich Roth, who together with **Hédi Fried**, both survivors of the holocaust, received the Palme Prize last year for their life-long and exceptional educational work against Nazism, racism, violence and prejudice.

We also greet former foreign minister Hans Blix, the 2003 awardee who continues working against the spread of weapons of mass destruction and for common security on the basis of international law.

And, as usual, we welcome Sweden's former prime minister Ingvar Carlsson. And we have greetings to you Dan from the present prime minister, **Stefan Löfven**, transmitted to us from his wife Ulla, present here also.

Every year the Foundation sponsors scholarships and projects "in the spirit of Olof Palme" for about 2 million crowns, mostly to young people. Present here are some of the pupils from **Björkebyskolan** in Järfälla and their two teachers, Ingrid Carlson and Sara Kiesby who together, during three years, prepared their project in human rights, which included a visit to Auschwitz- Birkenau and a further commitment to promote solidarity and tolerance. A warm welcome to you.

Let me now turn to Daniel Ellsberg, a living legend, a walking encyclopedia, a world champion for peace and common security, and "the most dangerous man in America who must be stopped at any cost", as Henry Kissinger said.

He is the author of four books, among them *Secrets: A Memoir of Vietnam and the Pentagon Papers* (2002) and recently *The*

Doomsday Machine -Confessions of a Nuclear War Planner. Books that should be mandatory reading for members of parliaments and governments all over the world.

Daniel is also the grandfather of five grandchildren.

Dear Daniel Ellsberg,

You come to Stockholm accompanied by your wife Patricia and your daughter Mary. Mary has a special Swedish connection: you worked for the Swedish embassy in Nicaragua, which led to studies at Umeå University, where you graduated with a dissertation on gender-based violence in Nicaragua. Your academic opponent was Hans Rosling.

You arrive at a dramatic and very dangerous time.

Global security has deteriorated markedly according to 2018 SIPRI Yearbook.

World military expenditure is at its highest level since the end of the cold war.

At the start of 2018 nine states—the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea—possessed approximately 14 465 nuclear weapons, of which 3750 were deployed with operational forces. Nearly 2000 of these are kept in a state of high operational alert.

The military and technical evolution currently gives dominance to three nuclear armed states: US with 35 % of the world's military expenditures, China with 13 % and Russia with 3,8 %. But it is the US and Russia who stand out with 92 % all nuclear arms.

And five days ago, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists released its annual presentation of the Doomsday Clock, setting the clock at two minutes before the symbolic apocalyptic midnight. Only once before has the clock struck at a time so close to estimated global annihilation; in 1953, when the United States and the Soviet Union were in a nuclear arms race.

Why are we so close to destruction?

The answer: nuclear weapons and climate change. The same warning was delivered by Hans Blix in his speech at the peace research institute Sipri's annual meeting in May last year:

"The nuclear arsenals are enough to put an end to human civilization through rapid suicide, while at the same time adding the risk of slow suicide through global warming."

Dear Daniel,

You may take some comfort from the fact that you are now in a militarily non-aligned country, free from nuclear arms, with a recently formed government with a long history of diplomacy and dialogue, in search of *détente* and peace.

At the Sälen security conference on 15 January 2018, foreign minister **Margot Wallström** stated that "the risk that nuclear arms actually will be used is greater today than for a very much long time. Passivity is not an option".

And, at the same conference, prime minister **Stefan Löfven** underlined that "the threat of nuclear war is the singularly greatest threat to our common survival. Building security on threats of mutual destruction is untenable. We use diplomacy, international cooperation and confidence-building measures in our work for peace and *common security*".

Common Security was also the title of the 1982 report of the Palme Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, founded by Olof Palme in 1980, which gathered senior political leaders and experts from East and West, North and South, among them Giorgi Arbatov, Soviet Union, Egon Bahr, Germany, Gro Harlem Brundtland, Norway, Alfonso García-Robles, Mexico, Olesun Obasanjo, Nigeria, David Owen, United Kingdom, Soedjatmoko, Indonesia and Cyrus Vance, United States.

Palme defined the doctrine of common security in this way: "What has to be done is gradually to replace a security, which is dependent upon constantly increasing armaments, with a security which is basically political and which rests upon mutual trust. Political and ideological

opponents must, despite fundamental differences of opinion, work together to avoid nuclear war. They can only survive together – or perish together. There will be no winner in a nuclear war.”

This central theme was later picked up by US president Ronald Reagan at the UN in 1983 (“A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought”) and by secretary general Michail Gorbach (“There can be no victors in a nuclear war”). At their summit meeting in Geneva in November 1985 they said the following in a joint communiqué: “The sides have agreed that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought”.

Let me here recognize the presence of two key people behind the Palme Commission report: **Anders Ferm**, who was a member of the Commission and **Hans Dahlgren**, the executive secretary of the Commission.

Sweden’s commitment to an active peace policy started with Hjalmar Branting, who formed Sweden's first Social Democratic government ninety-nine years ago. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1921, which he shared with Norwegian diplomat Christian Lous Lange, for his advocacy for the peaceful solution of crises.

40 years later, in 1961, the so-called *Undén plan* was adopted by the UN General Assembly named after Swedish foreign *minister Östen Undén*. The plan was to create a ”non-atom-club ”in order to press upon the five nuclear states to agree upon a test ban treaty. In spite of strong opposition from the United States and their allies at the time, the plan probably influenced the adoption of the partial test ban treaty in 1963.

At the time, Sweden had an ongoing debate whether to arm its defense force with nuclear weapons or not. Olof Palme was the secretary of the committee which investigated the issue.

Later, in a speech at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, USA), in December 1980, he stated that the committee had decided that such a program would lessen Sweden’s security and

he concluded: "Therefore, for Sweden to acquire nuclear weapons would indeed be a destabilizing act, which would disturb the security arrangements in our parts of Europe".

This was in the late 60s and the most effective opposition to the Bomb came from the feminist peace movement and individuals like Barbro Alving, Åsa Moberg, Ingrid Segerstedt-Wiberg, Alva Myrdal, Inga Thorsson, and, later on, Maj-Britt Theorin (here present), Karin Söder, Anna Lindh and Margot Wallström.

In 1982 Alva Myrdal was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1982, together with Alfonso Garcia Robles.

A few men contributed also, like Östen Undén and already in 1956 Swedish author Harry Martinson wrote his epic space tale *Aniara*, which was made into an opera and this year also a film.

In his long poem Martinson wrote how "God and Satan, hand in hand, in a destroyed and poisoned land..fled from man, the king of ashes".

Let me also highlight Olof Palme's speech at the first United Nations conference on the human environment, here in Stockholm 1972. In his opening speech, the Prime minister raised in dramatically undiplomatic terms the US actions in Vietnam, which he termed "ecocide". "The indiscriminate bombing, the large-scale use of bulldozers, the use of herbicides, is an outrage," he said. The speech did not endear him to president Nixon's delegation.

Later, in 1980, referring to the *Undén plan*, he said that "today, more than ever, there is every reason to go on working for nuclear-free zones", and three years later Palme addressed the Paasikivi Society in Helsinki and argued for the possibility of creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Nordic region.

At this time he formed, upon a request from Parliamentarians for Global Action, what was called the Six-nation initiative. This was in a period where relations between the Soviet Union and the USA experienced their worse deterioration since the Cuban Missile Crisis. Nuclear war was narrowly averted on at least two occasions during this period of high conflict. In order to help re-instate dialogue and

reduce tensions between them, the leaders of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Tanzania and Sweden established the Initiative. Over the next few years, the leaders held joint meetings with the presidents and experts of the Soviet Union and USA and discussed proposals for a nuclear test ban, nuclear weapons freeze, risk reduction measures and nuclear disarmament.

In a meeting of the Initiative in New Delhi on 28 January 1985, Palme denounced the nuclear states for holding mankind hostage in a colonial manner by their possession of the doomsday weapons. "We the non-nuclear states also want to have a say on these matters of life and death".

In those days the nuclear states were five, today they are nine, who defy the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and are working on making the warheads more "effective".

The main question for Undén and Erlander, Myrdal and Palme then was the same as the one confronting all of us today: How to avoid nuclear holocaust.

It is not easy to confront military giants and nuclear powers, they can threaten and blackmail. During the Vietnam war the Nixon administration mobilised dock workers on the East Coast threatening not to unload incoming Volvo cars, if Olof Palme continued criticizing the war. Prime Minister Tage Erlander however stated that he stood by Olof Palme. Palme himself took the same stand when the Soviet Union protested against his repeated denunciation of the invasions of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Afghanistan in 1980.

And in 1995, a member of the Swedish government took a week of vacation to join the international protests against the resumed French nuclear tests at the Mururoa in the Pacific. When prime minister Ingvar Carlsson defended her right to protest, a furious President Chirac reacted by cancelling the planned official visit by the prime minister.

And today, from the other side of the Atlantic, also on a nuclear issue, we hear messages, "friendly advice". that could be perceived as blackmail or threats.

Dear Daniel,

This history is not history, it is very much alive in the present. Sweden was voted into the United Nations Security Council in 2016-2018 for its track record of international solidarity and independent and active diplomacy in global affairs.

This is a unique asset in the quest for peace and disarmament, it gives you credibility and freedom of action and, as we have seen demonstrated recently in the cases of Yemen and North Korea.

In presenting his new government on 21 January this year the Prime minister said: "Military non-alliance is our foundation. Sweden will not apply for membership of NATO".

The majority of Swedes are in agreement with the prime minister, and an even greater majority, 8 out of 10, want Sweden to ratify the Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty, which we voted for last year at the UN.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It should not be up to older generations only to be in the vanguard of saving the world from a nuclear extermination.

But let us take inspiration and guidance from a person who has seen the beast in the eye and who offers us unique information from the heart of darkness.

The motivation for the 2018 Palme Prize goes as follows:

When Daniel Ellsberg, a former military analyst and the world's most important whistleblower, exposed the U.S. Government's secret warplans for Vietnam in 1971, he was well aware of risking a long time in prison and a spoiled career. Regardless of such consequences, his decision led to the removal of a mendacious government, a shortening of an illegal war, and an untold number of saved lives.

More than four decades later Daniel Ellsberg again takes on the *Pentagon's secret war plans*. He warns us of a nuclear holocaust, caused by the refusal of the nine nuclear states to comply with the binding commitment of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to further the goals of a nuclear-free world.

The 2018 Olof Palme Prize goes to Daniel Ellsberg for his profound humanism and exceptional moral courage.



I now ask Joakim Palme to take the floor.