

**Sveriges anförande vid den trettionde Internationella röda korskonferensen
27 november 2007**

Departementsrådet Bosse Hedberg

Madam Chair,

Like several delegations before us, my delegation warmly welcomes the focus of yesterday's and today's debate on four fundamental challenges to our common humanitarian agenda: environmental degradation; international migration; violence in urban settings and emergent and recurrent diseases.

The overarching theme of this Conference - Together for Humanity - reminds us that we cannot even begin to address those challenges without acting in full partnership between governments, national societies, the Red Cross Red & Crescent Movement, the United Nations, regional organisations and civil society at large.

To borrow some words from President Kellenberger's impressive statement yesterday: an investment in the remedies to the challenges before us is an investment in future security.

The overarching theme of this Conference - Together for Humanity - also reminds us of the principle of the responsibility to protect, a principle to which Sweden attaches great importance, which emphasises human dignity and which places the rights of the individual at the centre. Although the primary responsibility to protect lies with the state itself, all participating states agreed at the 2005 UN summit that the international community not only has a right but also an obligation to react when a state is unwilling or unable to protect its population.

We need to be aware that conflict not only leaves physical scars but also destroys social infrastructure, which in turn undermines development. Security, development and human rights are mutually reinforcing. Societies that do not have democratic and accountable

institutions and are unable to deal with crises in a peaceful manner also lack the possibility to develop and prosper.

We continue to observe, on a daily basis, serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law which we - the international community, and particularly governments - must address in a much more concerted way. Our efforts against impunity must continue, through further support for the International Criminal Court, the strengthening of universal jurisdiction for such crimes and through other appropriate measures.

Madame Chair,

It is both timely and appropriate that climate change has been put on the agenda for this Conference. We already experience the direct humanitarian consequences of climate change, most of all among poor communities in developing countries.

As a sign of how seriously we take this issue, the Swedish Government recently launched an international commission on climate change and development. It comprises 12 distinguished international personalities representing different regions, constituencies and experiences and is chaired by our Minister for International Development Cooperation. Supplementing the processes that are already underway inter alia within the UN, the OECD and the EU, the new Commission will focus on the links existing between climate change and development in poor countries. It will present proposals for how development assistance can be 'climate-proofed' by integrating risk reduction and adaptation to climate change in the development and poverty reduction plans of poor countries. The Commission will deliver its report in the spring of 2009, a few months before Sweden assumes the Presidency of the European Union.

I thank you for your attention.