



THE HANAHOLMEN INITIATIVE

**Conclusions and Recommendations
for Strengthened Crisis Preparedness
in Finland and Sweden**



The Hanaholmen Initiative is a new program to strengthen cooperation between Sweden and Finland in preparation for and management of civil crises.

In recent years, Sweden and Finland have successfully established solid military defence cooperation. The cooperation has developed gradually, based on deeper mutual knowledge on defence structures, personal contacts between key persons, and trust.

The strengthening of civil crisis preparedness was the obvious next step in bilateral cooperation, bearing in mind experiences from earlier crises that have affected both countries, such as forest fires, floods, and pandemics.

In 2020, Hanaholmen took the initiative to organize a new cross-sector, bilateral crisis preparedness program, which aims to strengthen civil preparedness in Sweden and Finland. The program is carried out in collaboration with the Swedish Defense University and the Finnish Security Committee with support from both countries' governments.



The first civil preparedness course took place in September and October 2021. Ten participants from each country, representing public authorities, civil society, and industry, simulated actual crisis scenarios to identify improvement needs and development potential.

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THE HANAHOLMEN INITIATIVE – RECOMMENDATIONS

These are the key conclusions and proposals made by the high-level education course participants to strengthen civil crisis preparedness in Finland and Sweden:

1. Preparedness for and awareness of climate related crises
2. Bilateral cyber security contingency planning
3. Secure critical flows and supply chains vital to society
4. Hybrid threats/Hybrid responses
5. Improving shared sense making and strategic early warnings
6. Public, private, and civil society partnerships in crisis preparedness
7. Establishing a high-level joint education program

The recommendations are based on the strong belief in both Finland and Sweden that bilateral and cross-sector work are crucial to reduce vulnerabilities, build resilience and develop common crisis preparedness strategies.

The participants in the course develop answers to the vital questions of what, why and how, which are laid out in the different sections below.

In addition, at the end of the brochure, there is a list of priority recommendations, which cut across the seven themes.



1. PREPAREDNESS AND AWARENESS OF CLIMATE RELATED CRISES

What

Greater societal resilience as regards extreme weather conditions. Increasing awareness of climate change and its impact on society.

Why

Climate change is causing more extreme weather phenomena, such as flooding, heat waves, fires, and storms, which affect critical infrastructure, societal values, life-sustaining functions such as food production, and people's wellbeing.

We need to be able to address a crisis, protect our societies and keep our citizens safe. To be operative, a common situational awareness is critical. Now, people and societies are not prepared well enough for these types of crises.

A better general awareness forms the basis for being able to prepare before a crisis occurs, to handle it when it takes place and to rectify its effects once it has already transpired.

How

Scenario-based exercises, simulations, knowledge sharing, and common research efforts between Finland and Sweden. Universities, meteorological institutes, and other research institutions in both countries should increase cooperation and build on the existing cooperation between SMHI, MSB and their counterparts in the Nordics (concerning the Fire Weather Index).

2. BILATERAL CYBER SECURITY CONTINGENCY PLANNING

What

Ensure that there is contingency preparedness and planning across borders, sectors, and society if a cyber security attack affects critical infrastructure.

Why

The world has become increasingly complex, and wicked problems know no borders. Countries cannot manage them nationally. Both formal and informal structures of cooperation need reinforcement. We need to focus on the vital functions of society and protect economic, social, and political interests, thus increasing our resilience.

Digitalisation has made our societies more dependent on technology, and therefore our security, economics and social service systems are becoming increasingly vulnerable. A common situational awareness is critical to ensure the effectiveness of essential societal functions.

How

Finland and Sweden should share knowledge on legislation related to national security. They should ensure that relevant sectors are working together, including private companies. Public-private partnerships are crucial. An important tool needed to achieve improvement is the use of bilateral exercises between Finland and Sweden and the integration of cyber security in the proposed high-level education program.

Public-private partnerships in the field of cyber security will contribute to an improved resilience, and therefore a Finnish-Swedish research program should be established with stakeholders from both the government and private companies.



3. SECURE CRITICAL FLOW AND SUPPLY CHAINS VITAL TO SOCIETY

What

Uphold critical supplies and services for society to function in crisis situations

Why

Critical supplies and services are needed to uphold life and the health of people, as well as crucial infrastructure and production, democracy, and other societal values.

How

Identify partners in different sectors in Finland and Sweden with mutual interests and give them support to proceed within these sectors. This process should be derived from the already existing national security strategies.

In peace time, authorities should collaborate with the companies and actors who run businesses and ask them about their biggest dependencies, threats, and vulnerabilities. What do they need in times of disturbances to the flow? Discuss the responsibilities in making the flow work. The actors who really know and understand the flows and chains of critical supplies are the ones that handle this on a day-to-day basis.

Create models for information flow and -sharing, to increase situational awareness. Arrange education and exercises for all actors in the production chain. Engage households to prepare to cope independently for at least three days should a disruption occur.

Awareness raising and continuity planning in each company, particularly within the agricultural and food industries: farms, feed factories, dairies, meat processors, retailers. Use both legislation and contracts as tools. Funding by either state financing or taxes on critical societal services. In case of a crisis, establish preparedness and contingency planning consisting of different tools such as:

- **stockpiling**
- **sharing of resources (supplies, intellectual resources, work force)**
- **prioritizing**
- **building up reserve capacity that can be set up in a short period of time**
- **plan to use facilities for emergency production of products**
- **plan to use secondary raw materials**
- **awareness of public that things cannot be normal in difficult times**
- **priorities of certain flows**

Situation awareness and continuity planning would be a part of “business as usual”. Identifying international interdependencies and flows of critical resources is also required.



4. HYBRID THREATS/ HYBRID RESPONSES

What

The term hybrid threat refers to an action conducted by state or non-state actors, whose goal is to undermine or harm a target by combining overt and covert military and non-military means.

Why

We need an improved understanding of hybrid threats at all levels, from national to local to individual. We are better off by developing information collection and sharing, so that we can react faster to hybrid influencing. Together we have a stronger voice and can make better use of existing resources.

How

Finland and Sweden should increase co-operation regarding research, best practices, and counter measures. Both countries need to share knowledge and experience in different fields and sectors, such as municipalities, agencies, ministries, police, border guards, businesses, and associations. There also needs to be shared early warning mechanisms and joint political statements as well as joint responses to complex and multiple hybrid phenomena.

Increase the role of the Helsinki-based Hybrid Centre of Excellence to strengthen awareness and the joint capability to meet hybrid threats. Use different tools such as reports, scenario-based exercises, simulations, and joint research programs.



5. IMPROVE SHARED SENSE MAKING AND STRATEGIC EARLY WARNING

What

Finland and Sweden need mutual understanding of existing threats and actions taken, as well as knowledge of available results and forecasts. Collecting and analysing open-source intelligence (OSINT) and the flow of information to get better situational awareness is a necessity.

Why

A common understanding of the ongoing situation in both countries will increase the possibility of cooperation and lower transaction costs and improve efficiency. To be operative, a general situational awareness is critical. To detect upcoming crises earlier, we need to be faster in preventing, mitigating, and responding to changes taking place.

How

Establish a situation awareness and strategic warning capability reporting to both governments. This should be a structured, cross-sectoral, and regular network where you can mirror your counterpart and have common exercises. The strategic warning centre collects cross-border sectorial information, makes cross-border sectorial analyses, detects potential crises, and gives strategic early warnings to the governments.

6. PUBLIC, PRIVATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERSHIPS IN CRISIS PREPAREDNESS

Commission an investigation into the benefits of joint stockpiling and flexible production hubs to enhance Nordic preparedness

What

The early stages of the covid pandemic illustrated both the shortcomings of current stockpiling preparedness and the industrial potential of switching to “flexible production” of goods that were facing limited supply in relation to demand, such as PPE. Leading industrial companies have proposed building on this experience to develop flexible production hubs as part of a future preparedness structure.

Why

1) Common stockpiles may provide cost saving compared to purely national approaches.
2) Organizing preparedness production hubs appears to be a way of empowering governments to meet unforeseen increases in demand across a range of products during potential crises. The merits of the concept deserve to be investigated, as well as the possible benefits and cost savings when doing it as a bilateral SWE-FI initiative, or as a broader Nordic SWE-FI-NO initiative.

How

In reference to the February 2021 letter of intent between Finland and Sweden on strengthening cooperation and exchange of information in the field of civil preparedness, adding to, and further expanding the ongoing discussions within the Haga-cooperation and NORDEFECO, the Swedish, Finnish (and possibly Norwegian) governments should commission a joint inquiry to investigate the potential benefits of 1) common stockpiling, and 2) establishing flexible production hubs. The joint inquiry should also investigate potential financing models, and how a common Nordic approach may reduce total costs.

National Government Agencies such as The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) and The National Emergency Supply Agency (NESA), as well as industrial companies such as ABB, Mölnlycke, Saab, Volvo, and their Finnish counterparts, should be involved as expert actors to provide input to the joint inquiry.



7. HIGH LEVEL JOINT EDUCATION PROGRAM

What

An education program, where people working on crisis management issues can create networks, share best practices, create new ideas and solutions, and give peer support to each other concerning new threats and challenges related to the fast-evolving environment.

Why

We need a common understanding of the challenges and threats we face, and we also need situational awareness. In addition, we need networking and trust building as well as common methods to enhance Swedish-Finnish cooperation and develop a common way of working together. The education program provides an opportunity to strengthen our capabilities and to learn from each other.

How

Continuation of the Hanaholmen Initiative as a cross-sectoral education program. The themes vary each year, and the courses are in both Sweden and in Finland. Invite different areas of society, including private sector actors representing critical functions. Utilize existing national reports on crisis analyses, threats, and risks. Brand the course and arrange a high-level opening event. Maintain an alumni network to foster relations between the two countries within this area.



THE WAY AHEAD

The above recommendations stem from the 2021 high-level education course. The suggestions were born after extensive group work including scenarios, simulations, reflections, and discussions with and between the participants.

In order to further proceed with the detailed proposals laid out in the brochure, we need the following immediate actions:

- **Follow-up workshops** at Hanaholmen with the purpose of finding ways to implement the above proposals.
- **Establishment of a joint, independent crisis preparedness audit unit**, which follows the progress or lack of progress in strengthening the capacities in the field. The unit should report to the annual Hanaholmen summit and give public attention both to the achievements and the shortcomings. A regular progress report will put pressure on the national leaders to vigorously pursue enduring reforms.
- **Acknowledgement of the embeddedness of the bilateral reform work.** Many of the thematic conclusions noted above recognize that both Finland and Sweden are embedded in many international dependencies and are part of regional and global critical flows. Climate change does not honor national borders. Crisis preparedness capacities in Sweden and Finland will have to acknowledge a wider multilateral context. The audit unit should identify situations where bilateral efforts need to be complemented with wider international cooperation.
- **Ensuring that an alumni network** which can be part of the next education program in 2022 is established.





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