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Page: 1

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PAGE 01 STOCKH 00176 02 OF 02 241618Z

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	AC-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	PA-00	PM-00
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FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2790

INFO EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 STOCKHOLM 000176

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PHUM, PREL, PGOV, PTER, SW

SUBJECT: SWEDEN RELEASES REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN U.S.

SHE URGED ISRAEL TO "IMPROVE CONDITIONS FOR THE PALESTINIANS...AND FIND A TWO-STATE SOLUTION." DURING THE PRESS CONFERENCE, FM LINDH ALSO SINGLED OUT TURKEY, ZIMBABWE, CHINA AND COLOMBIA AS COUNTRIES OF PARTICULAR CONCERN. ANNE DISSMORR, SWEDEN'S AMBASSADOR TO TURKEY, ALSO SPOKE, UNDERLINING THE IMPORTANCE OF RECENT POLITICAL REFORMS: "THERE WERE A NUMBER OF SYMBOLIC REFORMS, SUCH AS THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH PENALTY AND CERTAIN REFORMS DEALING WITH THE FIGHT AGAINST TORTURE." KRISTINA SVENSSON,

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COMMENT

9. THE GOS CONSIDERS HUMAN RIGHTS TO BE A CORE ELEMENT OF ITS FOREIGN POLICY, AND FM ANNA LINDH HAS DEMONSTRATED A STRONG PERSONAL COMMITMENT ON THE ISSUE. THE SWEDISH

Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED

Page: 1

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: SHARON E AHMAD
 DATE/CASE ID: 26 OCT 2004 200303827

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DOS-002312

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UNCLASSIFIED

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Document Number: 2003STOCKH00176

Page: 2

Channel: n/a

DECISION TO PUBLISH ITS PREVIOUSLY INTERNAL REPORTS IS VERY MUCH IN KEEPING WITH SWEDEN'S AMBITIONS TO BE SEEN AS ONE OF THE FOREMOST HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES ON THE GLOBAL STAGE. HOWEVER, CRITICS CHARGE THAT THE NEW PUBLIC REPORTS ARE "TOOTHLESS" AND WATER DOWN THE MUCH MORE CRITICAL ASSESSMENTS MADE IN PREVIOUS CLASSIFIED REPORTS. ALSO, SINCE THIS IS THE MFA'S FIRST ATTEMPT TO PUBLISH A COMPREHENSIVE DOCUMENT, THERE ARE WIDE VARIATIONS IN STYLE, LANGUAGE, AND FOCUS DEPENDING ON THE PERSPECTIVES OF THE INDIVIDUAL DESK OFFICERS WHO WROTE THE NATIONAL REPORTS. THE REPORTS WERE ALSO ONLY PUBLISHED IN SWEDISH, WHICH GREATLY LIMITS THEIR UTILITY AS A "GLOBAL REFERENCE SOURCE" ON HUMAN RIGHTS. REACTION HAS ALSO NOT BEEN UNIFORMLY POSITIVE. A NUMBER OF EU MEMBERS ARE QUITE MIFFED THAT SWEDEN HAS ARROGATED TO ITSELF THE ROLE OF PASSING JUDGMENT ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS LAWS AND PRACTICES OF ITS FELLOW EU PARTNERS.

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PAGE 03 STOCKH 00176 02 OF 02 241618Z

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UNCLASSIFIED PTQ1143

PAGE 01 STOCKH 00176 01 OF 02 241618Z
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FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 STOCKHOLM 000176

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Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED

Page: 2

UNCLASSIFIED

DOS-002313

UNCLASSIFIED

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Page: 3

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SUBJECT: SWEDEN RELEASES REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN U.S.

SUMMARY

1. THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT PUBLISHED ITS FIRST REPORT ON THE STATE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AROUND THE WORLD ON JANUARY 13. THE REPORTS, TRADITIONALLY KEPT CONFIDENTIAL, ARE PART OF AN EFFORT TO DOCUMENT HUMAN RIGHTS WORLDWIDE. THE REPORT ON THE U.S. CONCLUDES THAT THE STATE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE COUNTRY "ON THE WHOLE IS GOOD," BUT IT IDENTIFIES THE DEATH
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PAGE 02 STOCKH 00176 01 OF 02 241618Z
PENALTY, POLICE BRUTALITY, AND OVERCROWDED PRISONS AS AREAS OF CONCERN. THE REPORT ALSO RAISES CONCERNS THAT THE U.S.-LED WAR ON TERRORISM HAS LED TO A CURTAILMENT OF CITIZENS' RIGHTS. THE REPORT IS PARTICULARLY CRITICAL OF U.S. HANDLING OF DETAINEES AT THE U.S. BASE IN GUANTANAMO. END
SUMMARY.

REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS WORLDWIDE

2. FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE GOS HAS ISSUED A COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, THE SWEDISH MFA HAS COMPILED ANNUAL CLASSIFIED REPORTS ON THE STATE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN MOST COUNTRIES. THIS YEAR THE REPORTS WERE PUBLIC, IN AN EFFORT TO ENHANCE THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON THE STATE OF HUMAN RIGHTS GLOBALLY. "IN TODAY'S TROUBLED WORLD, HUMAN RIGHTS RISK BECOMING A PERIPHERAL ISSUE, BOTH IN THE INTERNATIONAL DEBATE AND IN INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES... MY HOPE IS THAT THIS WILL HELP INCREASE KNOWLEDGE, STIMULATE PUBLIC DEBATE AND POINT TO WAYS OF IMPROVING THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION," SAID SWEDISH FOREIGN MINISTER ANNA LINDH.

3. THE REPORTS EXAMINE THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION WITH REGARD TO CIVIL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL RIGHTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE UN CENTRAL CHARTER ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

REPORT ON THE U.S.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STOCKH 00176 01 OF 02 241618Z

4. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE INTRODUCING THE REPORTS ON

Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED

Page: 3

UNCLASSIFIED

DOS-002314

UNCLASSIFIED

Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED
Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 2003STOCKH00176

Page: 4

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JANUARY 13, FM ANNA LINDH SEEMED TO BE EXPRESSING CONCERN THAT THE WAR ON TERRORISM AND THE POSSIBILITY OF CONFLICT IN IRAQ MIGHT BE PUSHING HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS INTO THE BACKGROUND. "MY IMPRESSION IS THAT AFTER WE STARTED THE VERY IMPORTANT WORK AGAINST TERRORISM -- WHICH I WOULD LIKE TO STRESS IS VERY IMPORTANT -- WE CAN SEE THAT HUMAN RIGHTS SOMETIMES DO HAVE A BIG PROBLEM" GETTING ATTENTION, SAID FM LINDH

5. THE REPORT ON THE U.S. CONCLUDES THAT "THE STATE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE U.S. ON THE WHOLE HAS TO BE REGARDED AS GOOD." NEVERTHELESS, IT HIGHLIGHTS ISSUES OF CONCERN, INCLUDING:

---FAILURE TO RATIFY IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS.

---THE DEATH PENALTY.

---POLICE BRUTALITY AND OVERCROWDED PRISONS.

---RESTRICTIONS OF CITIZENS' FREEDOM AND RIGHTS, THROUGH, FOR EXAMPLE, THE USA PATRIOT ACT OF 2001.

6. ADDRESSING RESTRICTIONS OF CITIZENS' FREEDOMS AND RIGHTS IN PARTICULAR, THE REPORT NOTES THAT, "THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM HAS BROUGHT AN INTENSIFIED DEBATE IN RESTRICTIONS OF CITIZEN'S FREEDOM AND RIGHTS. THE STATE'S AUTHORITY TO BUG AND DEPRIVE LIBERTY HAS INCREASED THROUGH HARSHER LAWS (USA PATRIOT ACT OF 2001). ABOVE ALL, THE TREATMENT OF

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STOCKH 00176 01 OF 02 241618Z
IMMIGRANTS' LEGAL RIGHTS HAS ATTRACTED MUCH ATTENTION. ALSO, TREATMENT OF AMERICAN CITIZENS' HAS BEEN QUESTIONED. THE MATTER OF PRINCIPAL IS THE BALANCE BETWEEN NATIONAL SECURITY AND THE PROTECTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL'S RIGHTS."

7. REGARDING THE GUANTANAMO DETAINEES, THE REPORT STATES "IN NOVEMBER OF 2001, THE PRESIDENT DECIDED TO ESTABLISH CERTAIN MILITARY TRIBUNALS...THIS TYPE OF AD HOC TRIBUNALS HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN USED IN WARTIME SITUATIONS. THE DECISION WAS MET WITH HEAVY CRITICISM...IN CONNECTION WITH THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN, THE USA TRANSFERRED MORE THAN 600 FOREIGN NATIONALS TO THE AMERICAN MILITARY BASE IN GUANTANAMO, CUBA. DURING THE YEAR, THE SITUATION OF THE PRISONERS HAS BEEN RAISED BY SEVERAL COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THEIR STATUS UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW. THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS HAS A PERMANENT PRESENCE IN GUANTANAMO."

Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED

Page: 4

UNCLASSIFIED

DOS-002315

UNCLASSIFIED

Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED
Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 2003STOCKH00176

Page: 5

Channel: n/a

HEAVY CRITICISM OF TREATMENT OF PALESTINIANS

8. THE COUNTRY REPORT ON ISRAEL WAS PARTICULARLY CRITICAL OF THE GOI'S TREATMENT OF PALESTINIANS. "EVEN THOUGH MANY COUNTRIES HAVE MADE PROGRESS ON HUMAN RIGHTS, MAJOR PROBLEMS STILL REMAIN, NOT LEAST IN THE MIDDLE EAST," SAID FM LINDH.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED PTQ1143

PAGE 01 STOCKH 00176 01 OF 02 241618Z
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 STOCKHOLM 000176

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PAGE 02 STOCKH 00176 01 OF 02 241618Z
PENALTY, POLICE BRUTALITY, AND OVERCROWDED PRISONS AS AREAS OF CONCERN. THE REPORT ALSO RAISES CONCERNS THAT THE U.S.-LED WAR ON TERRORISM HAS LED TO A CURTAILMENT OF CITIZENS' RIGHTS. THE REPORT IS PARTICULARLY CRITICAL OF U.S.

Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED

Page: 5

UNCLASSIFIED

DOS-002316

UNCLASSIFIED

Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED
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Document Number: 2003STOCKH00176

Page: 6

Channel: n/a

HANDLING OF DETAINEES AT THE U.S. BASE IN GUANTANAMO. END
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REPORT ON THE U.S.

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PAGE 03 STOCKH 00176 01 OF 02 241618Z

4. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE INTRODUCING THE REPORTS ON JANUARY 13, FM ANNA LINDH SEEMED TO BE EXPRESSING CONCERN THAT THE WAR ON TERRORISM AND THE POSSIBILITY OF CONFLICT IN IRAQ MIGHT BE PUSHING HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS INTO THE BACKGROUND. "MY IMPRESSION IS THAT AFTER WE STARTED THE VERY IMPORTANT WORK AGAINST TERRORISM -- WHICH I WOULD LIKE TO STRESS IS VERY IMPORTANT -- WE CAN SEE THAT HUMAN RIGHTS SOMETIMES DO HAVE A BIG PROBLEM" GETTING ATTENTION, SAID FM LINDH

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Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED

Page: 6

UNCLASSIFIED

DOS-002317

UNCLASSIFIED

Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED
Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 2003STOCKH00176

Page: 7

Channel: n/a

---POLICE BRUTALITY AND OVERCROWDED PRISONS.

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UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED PTQ1144

PAGE 01 STOCKH 00176 02 OF 02 241618Z
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Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED

Page: 7

DOS-002318

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED
Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 2003STOCKH00176

Page: 8

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Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED

Page: 8

UNCLASSIFIED

DOS-002319

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 STOCKH 00176 02 OF 02 241618Z

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Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED

Page: 9

DOS-002320

UNCLASSIFIED