



31.03.2016 – UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon applauded the Swedish government's "feminist foreign policy".

In the annual [Dag Hammarskjöld lecture](#) in Stockholm, Sweden, which took place on 30 March 2016, the Secretary-General said that "Swedes have lived and breathed the United Nations for almost 70 years. In few countries is support for the United Nations so entwined with its own national identity."

The Secretary-General noted that more than 80,000 Swedes have served in UN peacekeeping missions, including the Swedish troops that were recently deployed to Mali. He said that Swedes continued to play an important role in conflict resolution.

"I especially welcome Sweden's support for Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and the network of women mediators. Today, your feminist foreign policy is bringing new voices to the table."

Mr. Ban said that Dag Hammarskjöld had been an inspiration to him since he was a 6th grader in post-war Korea, and he and other pupils wrote a letter to the the Swedish Secretary-General on the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956.

"As the student chair, I read the letter to my entire school at an assembly. 'Dear Mr. Secretary-General,' we pleaded, 'help the people of Hungary so they can have freedom and democracy,'" Mr. Ban told the audience in Stockholm

"Today, it is I who receive the appeals that I once sent as a schoolboy. It is I who must do what Hammarskjöld did: defend the values enshrined in the UN Charter; direct our dedicated staff; and steer the Member States towards our common goals."

The plight of Syrian refugees was on the agenda when the Secretary-General met with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. Mr. Ban raised this issue in his lecture and said that Sweden should be proud of having accepted more refugees per capita than any other country in Europe.

Mr. Ban affirmed, "Dag Hammarskjöld famously said that the United Nations 'was not created to take mankind to heaven, but to save humanity from hell.'"

"These refugees have fled hell. They need our help in a spirit of shared global responsibility. I know there are tensions and difficulties with receiving great numbers of refugees."

"My message to Sweden is to keep striving for solidarity. Recognize the economic dynamism that migrants and refugees make possible. Take a stand against negative and nativist narratives. Lead the way to more understanding guided by the universal values set out in the UN Charter."

Photo: UN Photo