

**The Swedish Foundation in Support of Human Rights Watch
HRW Sweden Impact Report
(Effektrapport)**

HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH

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About The Swedish Foundation in Support of Human Rights Watch

Human Rights Watch Inc. (hereinafter “Human Rights Watch”) is one of the world’s leading independent organisations dedicated to protecting the human rights of people around the world. In September 2015, Human Rights Watch opened the office of its affiliated charity in Sweden, Insamlingsstiftelsen The Swedish Foundation in Support of Human Rights Watch (hereinafter “HRW Sweden”). HRW Sweden aims to increase awareness of the organisation’s work in Sweden, intensify advocacy to the public, the private sector, and the government on key human rights issues both in Sweden and around the world, and to continue and expand high-level research on human rights in Europe and elsewhere in the world.

The establishment in Sweden marks the first formal presence of Human Rights Watch in Scandinavia—a critical step in enlisting Sweden’s strong human rights culture to effect lasting improvements for victims of abuses worldwide.

To accomplish its aims, HRW Sweden organises several larger public and smaller private events throughout the year, assists in publicizing Human Rights Watch research in the Swedish media, support our Swedish-language website (<https://www.hrw.org/sv/about/get-local/sweden>), and engage with Swedish decision makers in government and in other sectors regularly as part of the organisations aim to improve human rights conditions around the world.

Human Rights Watch and HRW Sweden’s Work

Human Rights Watch is an independent, nonprofit, nongovernmental human rights organisation with a network of charitable affiliates and offices around the globe. Human Rights Watch currently has around 400 staff members worldwide including country experts, lawyers, journalists, and academics of diverse backgrounds and nationalities.

Established in 1978, Human Rights Watch is known for its accurate fact-finding, impartial reporting, effective use of media, and targeted advocacy, often in partnership with local human rights groups. Each year, Human Rights Watch publishes around 100 reports and briefings on human rights conditions in some 90 countries, generating extensive coverage in local and international media. With the leverage this brings, Human Rights Watch meets with governments, the United Nations, regional groups like the African Union and the European Union, financial institutions, and corporations to press for changes in policy and practice that promote human rights and justice around the world. For additional information about Human Rights Watch’s research on Sweden, please visit <https://www.hrw.org/europe/central-asia/sweden>.

How Human Rights Watch and HRW Sweden Work

We investigate. Human Rights Watch, and HRW Sweden, are committed to systematically researching and analysing human rights conditions worldwide in order to uncover and document human rights abuses. Researchers interview victims and witnesses to form an accurate picture of what happened. They also review media and academic reports, and domestic and international law and policy papers to gain a further understanding of the situation.

We expose. Human Rights Watch researchers, including those serving HRW Sweden, publish their findings in the form of reports and articles. These are then made accessible to the public as well as local authorities in order to raise awareness of the abuses. The publications are available in multiple languages and formats and are often referenced by traditional media around the world.

We make change. Following the identification and publication of human rights abuses, Human Rights Watch advocates closely with decision makers including government, local authorities and international organisations in order end to the abuses and promote accountability. The ultimate goal of all advocates in the Human Rights Watch network is to ensure that human rights are upheld worldwide and to promote justice and positive change.

Achievements in Sweden

Since opening the Stockholm Office in September 2015, HRW Sweden has hosted a range of events to grow its local community and further deepen its relationships with existing and potential supporters, as well as with key advocacy targets and media contacts. HRW Sweden was pleased to be selected as a beneficiary of the Swedish Postcode Lottery as of 2017.

Investigating Unaccompanied Migrant Children in Sweden

In June 2016, HRW Sweden in conjunction with Human Rights Watch released its first report on Sweden since its establishment. The report, *Seeking Refuge*, released in June 2016, documented the experiences of unaccompanied child refugees in Sweden. Many unaccompanied minors were not getting health checks or psychosocial counseling and support. Some children experienced delays in starting school, or having legal guardians appointed, who help children navigate Swedish society and government processes.

Sweden's media covered the report release, including full-page articles in the largest daily newspapers and extensive television coverage. The report's findings and recommendations contributed to the government making important legal improvements, including on guardian oversight.

The report also caught the attention of the Parliamentary Ombudsman (Justitieombudsman) overseeing the public authorities in the health and education sectors. Human Rights Watch Sweden was invited to brief the Ombudsman's office in September 2016 on the report's findings and recommendations. About a week later, the Ombudsman announced in a press release, referring to the findings of Human Rights Watch, that it would launch of a series of inspections in the health care and education sectors to ensure that the rights of unaccompanied asylum seeking children would be better respected. The inspections will run until 31 March 2017.

Advocating with Swedish Government Officials

In addition to the issue of unaccompanied migrant children, HRW Sweden raised a wide range of human rights issues with the Swedish government in more than 50 advocacy meetings since September 2015, including on a ministerial level. HRW Sweden focused on issues such as migration, conflicts in Iraq and Syria, and the environment and human rights.

In its foreign policy, Sweden can use its influence to secure rights-respecting laws and policies, and Human Rights Watch and HRW Sweden are well positioned to advance these efforts. Prime Minister Stefan Löfven invited HRW Sweden to brief him on human rights concerns in Jordan and Saudi Arabia, ahead of his travel to the region in August and September 2016.

HRW Sweden also arranged several important advocacy visits from leaders of the Human Rights Watch network, with the active participation of Sweden Director Måns Molander. When Human Rights Watch's Deputy Executive Director for Program, Iain Levine, visited Stockholm in September 2016, he urged Sweden to support accountability for war crimes in Yemen—an issue that Human Rights Watch has reported on extensively. Following his visit, Sweden supported a decision by the United Nations Human Rights Council to investigate these alleged war crimes—a move that was eventually endorsed by the European Union. Moreover, HRW Sweden also facilitated a meeting between Human Rights Watch's Deputy Executive Director Bruno Stagno Ugarte with Director General for Political Affairs Anna-Karin Eneström to raise human rights issues that Sweden should address in the context of the country's upcoming two-year term on the UN Security Council.

In addition, HRW Sweden arranged advocacy meetings in Sweden with visiting researchers from Human Rights Watch on Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, and Yemen.

Engaging Swedish Media on Human Rights

HRW Sweden has expanded coverage of Human Rights Watch's work in the Swedish media over the year. Human Rights Watch is now mentioned on an almost daily basis in the Swedish news, and more than 6,000 Swedish articles referring to Human Rights Watch were published in 2016. HRW Sweden continued to broaden engagement with the public on social media in Swedish, mainly through Facebook and Twitter platforms.

HRW Sweden also facilitated interviews by key radio and news outlets, which often sought out Human Rights Watch researchers and advocates to provide expert advice and a human rights perspective on current political affairs. For example, Sweden Director Måns Molander appeared on Swedish radio to speak about the French authorities' destruction of the immigration camp in Calais. TV4 also interviewed him for a documentary on prosecution of war criminals in Sweden. When researchers visit Sweden, HRW Sweden helps bring key human rights concerns to the attention of the Swedish public through the Swedish media, such as when Iraq researcher Belkis Wille visited Stockholm, generating coverage of the situation in Mosul.

Conducting Outreach from Stockholm

In 2016, HRW Sweden organised a number of public outreach activities with the participation of international and Human Rights Watch experts. For example, HRW Sweden hosted: a roundtable with 30 civil society representatives in June on unaccompanied migrant children; a seminar in November on Sweden and the UN Security Council with Bruno Stagno Ugarte; and a

presentation in September, where Human Rights Watch Emergencies Director Peter Bouckaert analysed strategies on digital storytelling.

In April 2016, HRW Sweden arranged the first Voices for Justice Dinner in Stockholm at the Fotografiska museet, which more than 90 people attended. Human Rights Watch Sweden also held a series of private dinners, breakfast meetings, and lunch meetings to deepen relationships with existing and prospective supporters in Stockholm.

HRW Sweden established the Stockholm Circle of Friends, which met in June and October 2016. This core group of local supporters currently has eight members. The Circle of Friends will support HRW Sweden as it conducts outreach to new constituents, broadens its networks in Sweden, and organises and plans events there. The group will assist with the next Stockholm Voices for Justice Dinner in May 2017 as well as smaller private events in connection with visiting researchers. Funds raised will help support the activities of HRW Sweden as well as further research and advocacy in the larger Human Rights Watch network that are relevant to the Swedish public and deepen local awareness of human rights issues globally.

Evaluation of HRW Sweden's Progress

Human Rights Watch and its affiliate in Sweden are committed to rigorous, transparent, and consistent monitoring and self-evaluation. When looking at impact, the Human Rights Watch network determines whether or not it has met its goals to bring about positive change for those facing human rights violations. Human Rights Watch and HRW Sweden consider input on progress from key interlocutors, local human rights partners, and critics. They gauge how effectively they have allocated resources. To ensure that the Human Rights Watch network reaches the highest standards of accuracy and objectivity in its research and achieves the greatest impact from its advocacy, it engages in self-evaluation throughout the year.

Often, since it takes a great deal of time to bring entrenched human rights abuses to an end, Human Rights Watch and HRW Sweden consider interim criteria for evaluation. These include whether they have succeeded in generating prominent Swedish press coverage about abuses they investigate; whether the Swedish or other governments act on Human Rights Watch revelations by protesting the abuses or exerting diplomatic or economic pressure on the abusive government; whether Human Rights Watch and HRW Sweden succeeded in building or protecting Swedish opposition to abuses; whether and how Swedish and other governments engage with the Human Rights Watch network or adopt and implement new policies to address the abuses it identifies and documents; and whether efforts are reflected in support from public media and Swedish donors.

Based on these criteria, 2016 was a year of considerable accomplishment. HRW Sweden arranged more than 60 advocacy meetings with key decision makers in Sweden and garnered over 6,000 Swedish media articles about the work of Human Rights Watch. HRW Sweden also held several events to raise funds and showcase Human Rights Watch researchers and their work, including its first Voices for Justice fundraising dinner in Stockholm. In addition, HRW Sweden sponsored ground breaking research on unaccompanied migrant children in Sweden that attracted significant media attention and prompted action by state authorities.

Human Rights Watch and its Swedish affiliate recognise the critical role of partnerships and beneficiaries in all of their work, including the planning and evaluation process. When the Human Rights Watch network evaluates its work it regularly speaks to victims, partner groups, advocacy targets, media, and others. Their feedback is invaluable in helping the organisation further improve its strategies on a project basis and design and implement subsequent projects to be undertaken by Human Rights Watch and its Swedish affiliate.