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**Concept Note:**

**Geopolitical Risk Working Group**

**Background**

The world order continues to become more complex, globalized and interdependent. The ongoing economic, political and military shift toward Asia, coupled with EU’s preoccupation with internal challenges, and significant reevaluation of US foreign policy ambition – all together set a new strategic context for countries like Sweden, i.e. small nations highly dependent on foreign markets. At the same time the post-Cold War honeymoon has been rudely interrupted by Russian aggression, the reversal of global democratization, and the rise of populist forces that could threaten the West’s unity and preeminence, and thereby its ability to uphold the present global order.

**Ambition**

The working group seeks to contribute to enhancing Sweden’s strategic capacity to navigate this new geopolitical risk environment. Primarily through:

1. Creating a network of professionals focusing on geopolitical risk, with participants from both private and public sectors.
2. Enhancing the target audiences’ understanding of the challenges posed to Sweden’s strategic interests and continued national competitiveness, and appropriate policy response options to address identified key challenges.
3. Identify key geo-strategic risks and opportunities for Swedish export companies and key implications for their value creating business activities.

**Target Audiences**

1. For membership of the network and invitation to events: corporate strategists and decision makers whose work is affected by geostrategic developments, as well as relevant civil servants.
2. Advocacy audience: elected officials and civil servants focusing on issues of relevance to geostrategic risk.

**Proposed actions 2017/18**

**Seminars**

Invite foreign thought leaders to provide their perspectives on global developments. In order to enrich our understanding with alternative perspectives we propose starting with speakers from non-Western powers. We propose starting with participants from:

* Russia, a natural candidate considering its geographic proximity and strategic relevance for Sweden.
* China, on course to become a global power, currently the world's second largest economy with growing investments abroad, and increasingly active in its foreign policy
* India, the world’s fastest growing major economy and an IT service powerhouse, is relevant from a pure business perspective, but alongside Israel it is also the democracy with the longest experience in combatting Islamic terrorism.

**Thought leader conference**

Collecting a small and select group of representatives from business, government and academia/NGOs for an off-site meeting, tasked with identifying the key strategic challenges ahead, and how to address them.

Rather than passively listen to seminars, participants will be broken up into themed workshops, tasked with identifying key threats and opportunities, and suggested Swedish responses. The outcome of the conference will be published as a report.

**Policy position document**

The working group should help identify Swedish key national interests from a “Sweden Inc.” perspective. What are the key issues, which ones can/should be addressed, and how? A draft policy position document should be prepared for the consideration of the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise. As a next step these could be used in advocacy efforts towards government and elected representatives.

**Members of the working group**

Andreas von der Heide, Consilio International

Erik Melin, SAAB

Annika Tisell, SEB

Rene Summer, Ericsson

Kristina Sandklef, Sandklef Asia Insights

Andreas Svenungsson, Volvo

Karl Lallerstedt, Svenskt Näringsliv