

ATHENA

FOREIGN POLICY SPEECH

MSc Course

"The EU and the Post-Soviet Space"

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Context:

The year is 2030, the war in Ukraine ended 5 years ago as President Trump together with President Putin brokered a peace deal that ceded over 70% of Ukrainian territory to Russia in order to end hostilities and to save the American taxpayers from funding yet another war far overseas somewhere in Europe? Now a new special military operation looms on the horizon, as Russian military personnel and equipment have been amassing south of Odessa near the border of Romania over the past year. NATO Intelligence analysts are warning member states that Russia is preparing to mount a new offensive that could happen any day now. Over in the peaceful nation of Sweden, talks within the Social Democratic government led by Prime Minister Olof Palme have been raging concerning the long-held principle of neutrality. As war appears to be imminent, Olof Palme arranges for an announcement to be broadcast live for all nations to see....

Speech

Fellow citizens of Sweden, neighbors in Europe, and people around the world,

Today, I speak to you not only as Sweden's Prime Minister but as the voice of our enduring values—peace, justice, and the commitment to independence. In these uncertain times, when war threatens once more to engulf our continent, these values must guide us as they always have.

Five years have passed since the war in Ukraine ended, now, war looms again. Russian forces mass near the Romanian border, and whispers of a new offensive grow louder each day. NATO, an alliance built on fear and confrontation, stands on edge, searching for a response. But here in Sweden, we must ask ourselves: *What role do we wish to play in the face of this crisis?*

When Sweden joined NATO in 2024, it was a decision born of fear—fear of what Russia might do next. We believed, or were led to believe, that security could only come through military alliances. But history has shown us that alliances can entangle

nations in conflicts that are not their own, that promises of protection can come with demands that compromise our independence.

Today, I say to you: Sweden's neutrality was never truly abandoned. Even as a NATO member, we stood by our belief that peace cannot be built through militarization. We championed dialogue and diplomacy, but membership in a military bloc was never compatible with our identity.

It is time for clarity. I announce today that Sweden will leave NATO. We will return to the policy that has safeguarded us for decades—alignment in peace and neutrality in war. This is not a retreat, nor is it isolationism. It is a declaration of independence and a reaffirmation of our role as a voice for peace and reason in a world too often consumed by rivalry and aggression.

At the same time, neutrality does not mean indifference. We will stand in solidarity with nations whose sovereignty is under threat. Sweden will continue to work for peace in Europe, to support efforts to de-escalate tensions, to provide aid and solidarity to those in need.

To my fellow Swedes, I call for unity and resolve in this decision. To our European neighbors, I extend a hand of friendship and collaboration. And to the great powers, I urge restraint and dialogue. Let us not repeat the mistakes of history. Let us build a future where neutrality is not weakness but a courageous stand for peace and justice.

Sweden will remain steadfast. Sweden will remain free. Sweden will remain a voice for peace.

Thank you.