**Anförande inför ss Janses deltagande i *Brave Defenders at Risk – Placing Human Rights at the Core of the Peace Process in Colombia* i Riksdagen den 16 maj kl 13-14.30**

**ANFÖRANDE (782 ord, ca 6,5 minuter)**

* *Members of Parliament,*
* *Excellencies,*
* *winners of the National Human Rights Award in Colombia 2023,*
* *Ladies and Gentlemen,*
* It is a pleasure to be here today. It is so for at least two reasons.
* First: It is not a small thing to celebrate 150 years of bilateral diplomatic relations between Sweden and Colombia. 150 years. That means our bilateral ties go back longer than we have had electric lights, cars, movie theatres, air conditioning, airplanes and TV-sets. They date back much longer than the UN charter, with its enshrined human rights.
* Which brings me to the second reason. It is an honour and a pleasure to be here to acknowledge the Human Rights Defenders recognized in the National Human Rights Award in Colombia 2023 – all present here today;
* Richard Moreno Rodríguez from the Afro-Colombian National Peace Council,
* Elizabeth Moreno Barco from Foro Interétnico Solidaridad Chocó and
* Sonia Milena López Tuta from the Joel Sierra Human Rights Foundation of Arauca.
* Congratulations.
* I applaud your dedication to the defence of human rights. I salute your work to defend the rights of ethnic communities, providing vital support to victims, and overcoming impunity by denouncing serious human rights violations.
* Your commitment, and your courage in the fight for human rights serve as an inspiration for many in these difficult times.
* The international human rights system is one of humanity’s greatest achievements. Maybe now more than ever, it requires our sustained support in order to continue to function.
* Because we do live in a time of a multiple human rights crises.
* The global order is nearing a tipping point. The present threat to democracy, human rights and a rule-based world order is the product of 16 consecutive years of decline in global freedom.

* And in general, there is a pattern. The lack of respect for democracy and human rights leaves a trail of human suffering. And the human suffering tends to sow discontent, instability, and ultimately crisis. So the vicious circle is fed - with more human rights abuses in order to suppress the discontent and try to handle the instability.
* It is essential that we push back to and defend freedom and human rights. It is essential that defenders of democracy and the human rights work to protect our rights and our freedoms.
* And for your work in this field, we all owe you a wholehearted thank you.

Ladies & gentlemen,

* As I mentioned, this year marks the 150th anniversary of bilateral diplomatic relations between Sweden and Colombia. 150 years of fruitful collaboration.
* The ties between our two countries are many. Swedish companies, government agencies, academia and civil society organizations have been engaged in Colombia for decades.
* Sweden has also supported the peace-building process in Colombia for over 20 years. Something that we are very proud of.
* Sweden was involved during the FARC-process, and today we have a specific role in monitoring the implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement between the Colombian government and the FARC.
* Our commitment to durable and sustainable peace in Colombia continues. Sweden is today an accompanying country for the ongoing peace talks between the Colombian government and the ELN.
* We appreciate the trust given to us.
* Sweden is also very proud of the cooperation between our countries within other important areas such as trade, research, defence, aerospace technology and cybersecurity.
* We value the Colombian government’s ambitious leadership in issues such as biodiversity, environment, and the climate.
* In addition to this, Sweden and Colombia share many fundamental values and hold very similar views on a host of issues on the multilateral agenda. These include a dedicated commitment to the rules-based international order, democracy and human rights, equality, peace, and sustainability.
* Together we contribute to a freer, greener, and more secure future for both of our countries. Together we are great partners also for the greater good.
* It is with confidence and trust we look forward to developing our ties further, in the coming decades.
* In trade, in tech.
* Through investments, cultural ties and tourism. The sky is the limit.
* Thank you.