

24 MR. GORAN LENNMARKER: Thank you for this. I think it's  
25 important for all of us to learn from experience. I  
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1 have a piece of experience that I think is important  
2 from a Swedish or European general perspective as well.  
3 There was a tsunami in the Indian Ocean Christmas 2004,  
4 and it affected Sweden very much. 543 were killed in  
5 that tsunami. Most of the outside -- from outside  
6 countries, tourists. Of course there were hundreds of  
7 thousands that were affected in Indonesia and (Check  
8 tape.) And we went through this very, very thoroughly.  
9 We were helped by another commission that looked on the  
10 broader picture because our task was to scrutinize the  
11 cabinet and the ministers' action there. I will go  
12 through that, but one reflection that I think is very  
13 important. That was to see how we organized society,  
14 particularly the public part of society. We wish to  
15 make an efficient public administration. We want to  
16 decentralize, to give specific responsibilities to even  
17 smaller units in that sense make a rather efficient  
18 day-to-day administration. We want to have  
19 responsibility not only on the top but to spread it out.  
20 And that's good. Perhaps 99 percent of the time. Then  
21 something happens, and then you need to have resources  
22 and not to take decisions between days and weeks. That  
23 is usually the democratic society. We have meetings and  
24 you have a week in advance and you have an agenda and  
25 all that. You have to take decisions within hours,  
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1 perhaps even minutes. And how do we do that? Because  
2 when we scrutinized the cabinet and the government at  
3 large and their response to the tsunami, we found that  
4 it was too late in many respects. Critical resources  
5 were never used or used far too late. And the  
6 difficulty was how do you get access to resources within  
7 a few hours when those responsible for those resources  
8 are not there? Because what is it? Three quarters of  
9 the time is not office hours. We don't work around the  
10 clock. We have holidays. We have vacations, et cetera.  
11 And people are away also during office hours. If I take  
12 Sweden, for example, a lot of people are away. Some are  
13 in Brussels. That's the ordinary workday. And suddenly  
14 you should grab the resources belonging to someone  
15 without the knowledge of the one who is responsible for  
16 it. That is one of the things that struck me. How do  
17 we organize this? That we can go into a direct -- let  
18 us take a director general with her or his budget, and  
19 they are careful, I can tell you, jealously guarding  
20 that budget, and they know what can go into that because  
21 you plan for at least a budget year. And suddenly you  
22 need to take resources that are needed without the  
23 consent of the responsible. That is a thing that I  
24 think we have to go through. I found during the tsunami  
25 that perhaps the budget issue, money, was the real  
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1 problem that made it difficult to take the sound  
2 decisions that Sunday morning. It was a Sunday morning,  
3 Boxing Day, Annandag Jul in Swedish, and of course a day  
4 when everyone was away on vacation and family life as it  
5 should be. And this is one of the crucial things we  
6 have to do. This is not only between agencies. You  
7 described, Mr. Speaker, about the Coast Guard and the  
8 Navy. And there are of course many such examples. It's  
9 also about that we have different layers of government.  
10 Inside Sweden, for example, or inside Europe now we have  
11 27 members of the European Union, and how should we then  
12 divide responsibilities? And the difficult thing is  
13 that there is no standard solution because a catastrophe  
14 can be a big one involving a huge part of government; it  
15 could be rather smaller affecting just a few. So we  
16 don't have a standard recipe for this. And this is I  
17 think one of the most difficult things for us to go  
18 through. How to divide responsibilities and how to see  
19 to it that we can grab the resources that are there  
20 early on? Now we are in the process in the European  
21 Union, we have 27 countries, 5 hundred million people,  
22 and this is a very special day, the 2nd of October 2009,  
23 because there is a referendum in Ireland which will  
24 decide whether we have a new treaty, a Lisbon Treaty. I  
25 have myself the privilege of being part of writing that  
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1 treaty in the convention of the future of Europe. And  
2 if that treaty is in place, which will probably be by  
3 the first of January next year, the Union will have some  
4 more possibilities to make decisions and take more  
5 responsibility when it comes to crisis management. That  
6 is of course particularly difficult because, unlike the  
7 United States, where you have in a way you said you have  
8 a rather -- your population is very diverse. On the  
9 other hand your legal system is rather similar. In  
10 Europe we have rather different administrative  
11 traditions. Even very different administrative  
12 traditions. And we need them to find mechanisms to  
13 harmonize these aspects without necessarily making our  
14 countries similar. We are proud that we are rather  
15 different and we have no ID and no intention to sort of  
16 streamline Europe. But in some aspects we need it  
17 because that was another of the reflections after the  
18 tsunamis, that you had Swedish activity there of course  
19 because there were a lot of Swedes there, there were  
20 Italians, there were Germans, there were other European  
21 countries, and at that moment it was a tendency that we  
22 only looked after our own instead of saying that we are  
23 in this together. Why should we, coming from the other  
24 side of the globe, from Europe, not work together? The  
25 Italians were perhaps the best at least in some aspects  
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1 reacting to this, and I think now it's time for us to  
2 learn from each other, see how we have to do this  
3 together. Why should we confine that to Europe? We  
4 have also over the Atlantic the possibility to sometimes  
5 help and support each other and to learn from each  
6 other. One of the things that we in Europe can  
7 certainly learn from the United States is this how you  
8 work together in different layers of government. I was  
9 chair of the defense commission for (unintelligible)  
10 visiting the Los Angeles area. We had I think it was 85  
11 different municipalities and three or four counties and  
12 then the state government, State of California there,  
13 and then of course a federal level as well. And they  
14 had a lot of what I say catastrophes of various sorts.  
15 Natural things, fires for example, affecting sometimes  
16 13 municipalities and two counties, and another time it  
17 was 38 municipalities and three counties, all with  
18 different configurations. But they had developed a  
19 technique so they could use resources that were  
20 appropriate from the type of event that you had to  
21 count. And I think we must learn from that because it  
22 seemed to be a rather smart way of handling it and not  
23 least also the rules when it comes to paying for it.  
24 What is it? FEMA you call it, the federal, and I asked  
25 what could they do? They had the most important part of  
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1 it. It was a checkbook. After a certain period -- I  
2 forgot now how many days -- but the federal agency  
3 stepped in and paid for certain things, which made it  
4 much more easy then to get the resources in when it was  
5 of a certain magnitude. Not early on, not the first  
6 days perhaps, but after a while. I think we have in  
7 Europe, and in Sweden as well inside, to find these type  
8 of mechanisms to make it easier to have these varied  
9 responses to catastrophes and events of different sorts.  
10 And we from parliamentary side have an important role to  
11 tackle this because this goes back a lot to legislation.  
12 The ability to share information, for example, to  
13 cooperate, also cooperate budgetwise, not to jealously  
14 guard your own money always, but to be able in a given  
15 situation to find a solution that must be found.  
16 Because the strange thing is -- and that was a definite  
17 experience after the tsunami -- that we had a lot of  
18 resources. They were there. They were prepared. Some  
19 were well trained. They were not used or used far too  
20 late. And that was a real problem out of that. It was  
21 not a question about resources. It was not a question  
22 about intelligent people had foresight or training for  
23 that, or realizing that something could happen, but  
24 actually to see that the mechanics were there so that we  
25 could use it in an efficient way and again in a short  
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1 time frame take decision within I would even say minutes  
2 or at least hours, because time is often very critical  
3 if you could save lives. I don't have to say that to  
4 you because you know this as well. So that's a great  
5 challenge for us parliamentarians, not least in Europe,  
6 when we are trying to build a more common Europe on  
7 exactly those aspects where we need to support and help  
8 each other and see also that we can receive help from  
9 others or give help to others. Sometimes also that  
10 could be a problem because our national legislations  
11 have not -- are not adapted to that. We haven't  
12 understood that when we wrote the legislation or some  
13 legislation that has been made years ago when we just  
14 had a purely national perspective on everything. So I  
15 thank you, Mr. Speaker Hastert, Mr. Secretary of the  
16 Homeland Security Committee, which I think is very  
17 important. I think that we in Europe will have great  
18 experience and follow what you are doing. We look  
19 forward to a closer cooperation over the Atlantic  
20 because we can help, do a lot together, not least  
21 getting ideas which are perhaps the most important  
22 commodity when it comes to tackling different forms of  
23 challenge that we've got in our society. Thank you very  
24 much for this session.