

# CONTROLOGIES OF ANNAL REPORT

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#### **ABOUT THE PALME CENTER**

The Olof Palme International Center is the Swedish labour movement's umbrella organisation for international solidarity and advocacy. We work for democracy, human rights, social justice, sustainability and peace in the spirit of Olof Palme. Through cooperation with civil society organisations, trade unions and progressive political parties in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America, we contribute to popular influence, global justice and common security. Through knowledge sharing, debate, joint actions and fundraising, we help to ensure that the Swedish labour movement has a global perspective and stands up for international solidarity.

**26** MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

**38** COUNTRIES

**190** LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

**44** EMPLOYEES

**2024** WE CARRIED OUT ACTIVITIES WORTH OVER SEK 185 MILLION

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# A NEW WORLD

We will probably look back on 2024 as a defining year in the course of history. A year when the world finally tipped over into a new and more dangerous era after years of international crises and increasingly authoritarian developments. Russia's unconstitutional war of aggression against Ukraine continued, while much of the West turned its eyes away from the Israeli government's gross violations of international law in the Gaza Strip following the Hamas terrorist attack the previous year. The impact on trust in international law has been devastating. Then Donald Trump was re-elected at the end of the year on an agenda that brings the world back to an era of the right of the strong and where international institutions should be challenged.

During the year, it therefore became abundantly clear that the period that began after the fall of the Berlin Wall, with its optimism and increased international co-operation, was in every way over. Perhaps we were also beginning to see the end of the period that, after the horrors of the Second World War, saw the construction of the rules-based world order.

The time when the United Nations was established and its Charter strengthened international law and prohibited wars of aggression. When the Universal Declaration of Human Rights laid the foundations for international courts and conventions on war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

We must now seriously recognise that we are in the midst of a crucial battle for our shared global values. A struggle between democracy and authoritarianism, between democracy and oligarchy. A battle where the civil society, democratic institutions and international law are systematically attacked, and people are deliberately set against each other.

When authoritarian leaders make common cause with powerful vested economic interests, they also swiftly end any effort to save the world from its existential threat. 2024 was the year when the Earth's average temperature for the first time exceeded 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels. When the number of armed conflicts was the highest since 1946, military spending the largest ever recorded, and the nuclear threat more topical than in decades.

It is apparent that there is now a need for clear political leadership in the world, leadership that can respond to developments and offer an alternative to the destructive vision of authoritarian movements. We must take on this leadership together. If we are to turn the tide, all the good forces need to come together.

During the past year, the Palme Center also took action and cooperated with many of our allies around the world. We have carried out 190 international projects, trained, communicated, advocated and repeatedly stood up for our values and solutions. We do not waver in our commitment, nor do our partners.

We must not allow ourselves to dwell a defensive and acquiescent position. The end of eras, when old structures break down and are replaced, also brings new openings and opportunities. We know that our democratic values, our vision of a socially and environmentally sustainable society, and international cooperation based on the need for common security, are more relevant today than ever before.

That's why we yet again need to look to the future. The world can be changed. A new world is possible.



Margot Walström Chairman of the Board



**Oscar Ernerot** Secretary General

# **THE SWEDISH LABOUR MOVEMENT MAKES ITS MARK IN THE WORLD**

The activities of the Palme Center and our member organisations play an important role in the Swedish labour movement's international solidarity around the world. They make a difference to the lives of many people.

#### **OUR FIVE POLITICAL AREAS OF PRIORITY**

 DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS EQUALITY AND WORKERS' RIGHTS GENDER EQUALITY • JUST CLIMATE TRANSITION PEACE AND DIALOGUE

#### **ON THE GROUND IN THE WORLD**

We have offices in Sweden. Albania, Chile, Democratic Republic of Congo, Philippines, Kosovo, Palestine, Serbia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. In addition, we have local staff in countries in which collaboration is confidential.

#### DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

GLOBALLY

6%

**GUATEMALA** 

#### **COSTA RICA**

COLOMBIA: Our partner VozEs has succeeded in establishing "Social Service for Peace" as an alternative to military service. An important step in giving young people an opportunity to contribute to society through peace-building activities rather than armed service.

COLOMBIA

NICARAGUA

AMERICA

BRASIL

LATIN

7%

#### BOLTVTA

PARAGUAY

CHILE

URUGUAY

ARGENTINA

#### WHERE FUNDS GOES **INTERNATIONALLY (BY REGION IN** PER CENT)

**UKRAINE:** The Palme Center's fundraising campaign for Ukraine has contributed to transport, relief and training through Ukrainian trade unions and civil society - for security, justice and a fair reconstruction.

BELARUS: Our partner, the social democratic youth organisation Molodaya Hramada, has been re-established in exile and become a favourite among Belarusian youth.

TUNISIA

#### WESTERN SAHARA

WESTERN SAHARA: The Olof Palme School's work in educating young women and men has resulted in increased acceptance of women working and a reduction in youth marriages.

DR CONGO: Our partner CAFCO's advocacy work and "Gender Barometer" tool have been crucial in promoting women's participation in political institutions. During the year, the number of women in the Senate increased by 57% to 28 of 108 members.

#### WE ARE THE OLOF PALME INTERNATIONAL CENTER

The 26 member organisations of the Palme Center represent the Swedish labour movement. We bring together our popular movements that work in civil society organisations, trade unions and political parties around the world.. Together we support people to organise and take power over their lives.



EASTERN **EUROPE AND** BELARUS THE WESTERN **BOSNIA AND** BALKANS UKRAINE HERCEGOVINA MOLDAVIA SERBIA GEORGIA KOSOVO **NORTH MACEDONIA** TURKEY ALBANIA SYRIA PALESTINE IRAQ MIDDLE EAST EGYPT AND NORTH AFRICA 0 AFRICA 25% SOMALIA DEMOKRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO MOCAMBIQUE ANGOLA ZIMBABWE NAMIBIA **ESWATINI** SOUTH AFRICA

**BOSNIA & HERCEGOVINA:** In an ethnically divided city, our partner ABF Busovača has been bringing people together under one roof to learn, collaborate and build a common future.

TURKEY: Our partner Zero Discrimination, which brings together Roma, Kurdish and LGBTQ+ youth, set up volunteer groups in Istanbul this year to highlight the protection of the rights of different groups.

**SYRIA**: Our partner Syrian Women's Network has been campaigning among Syrian refugees in Turkey on the vulnerability of divorced women, which sparked a debate and contributed to change perceptions regarding their situation in society.

PALESTINE: Our partner Al Marda has trained women and youth in leadership, empowering them in local politics and giving them the tools to identify social problems, propose solutions and drive change locally.

**ZIMBABWE:** Our partner, the Zimbabwe Institute, has rallied civil society around a common voice in criticising a new law that threatens to restrict their work. The advocacy led to the bill being stopped and sent back to the Senate.

**SOUTH AFRICA:** Following advocacy by our partner Cala DVU, a dedicated women's safe room for victims of violence has opened at the police station, with trained staff and immediate psychological and medical support, in the socially vulnerable town of Cala. MYANMAR

THAILAND

21%

ASIA

**PHILIPPINES:** From being unorganised, Kommunal (the Swedish Municipal Worker's Union) has supported transport workers to form a national union as well as on how to best negotiate with the Government.

## FUNDRAISING

The situation in the Gaza Strip this year was catastrophic. Tens of thousands of people were killed and nearly two million people were displaced without protection from indiscriminate bombing. At the same time, the Israeli government's illegal blockade of food, medicine and other supplies led to people starving and dying from diseases. At the beginning of the year, we therefore launched the



fundraising campaign for *Life*, *Peace and Freedom in Palestine*, to alleviate the humanitarian disaster through our local partners. In disaster situations, it is important that local civil society organisations are also involved. They have specialised knowledge and networks to deliver aid to groups with

different needs. The strong commitment of our member organisations contributed to raising more than SEK 1.5 million during the year, whilst more than 1,000 private individuals also donated money to the fundraising effort.

A more targeted fundraising was carried out in the autumn for the benefit of the Palme Center's and ABF's partner ABF Belarus. A new wave of repression swept over Belarus with mass arrests. When ABF Belarus' activities were categorised as extremist by the regime, SEK 166,000 was quickly raised to support their members who were in danger or who had been forced to flee.

## FINANCING

Our activities are largely funded by Sida's foreign aid allocations under various agreements. During the year, we had eleven agreements with external donors, eight of which were funded by Sida. Within these, the programme for support to the civil society internationally was the largest, and the programme for special support to democracy through Swedish partylinked organisations was the second largest.

To cover the conditions of own contribution in Sida's CSO agreement, our member organisations have generally contributed ten percent of the costs of the projects in which they have participated. Our member organisations also pay an annual membership fee.

91.6%

Other organisational fundraising comes largely from our member organisations. Fundraising from individuals comes mainly from monthly donors and other forms of general gifts.

Once an activity is completed, the use of the money is reported by our partners. We then report the results of the activities to the funding organisations. A well-functioning administration is essential in running a good and serious organisation. In 2024, the costs of administration and fundraising were 5 percent of our turnover.

Otherwise, our fundraising for the **Solidarity Fund** has mainly been used to cover the Palme Center's own contribution to international solidarity projects. An important part of this is made up of project support from member organisations, as well as gifts from the Fund's monthly donors. During the year, SSU was engaged to recruit new monthly donors around the country. Special mailings were also sent out to existing monthly donors in June, as well as in connection with the Christmas campaign in December, which was also published on social media. Furthermore, a number of fundraising activities were carried out during the year, not least digitally, and at the member organisations' major meetings.



FUNDR

4.3%

Uncertainty around government-funded contracts

MEMB

24%

(EU and the

Swedish

Institutel

The uncertainty in regard to the state-funded agreements continued in 2024. The development of the Government's new strategy for cooperation with civil society was characterised by abrupt and major changes in previous conditions. This created great uncertainty concerning our future possibilities to continued partnership in the strategy's implementation. However, at the end of the summer it became clear that we had passed all the preparatory steps to submit an application to Sida in early 2025.

The uncertainty surrounding a future CSO agreement, as well as its increased requirements for self-financing, led to the initiation of work to broaden the organisation's funding. Not least by developing internal capacity, actively seeking new co-operation agreements and starting to develop fundraising activities.

## **HOW WE WORK**







Photo: CDT

Photo: ATUSW

Photo: DRWC

#### PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENTS THAT CHANGE SOCIETIES AND PEOPLE'S EVERYDAY LIVES

By working together with the civil society organisations, trade unions and political parties, we contribute to positive developments in democracy, human rights, equality, gender equality, just climate change and peace. We also make our voices heard collectively and build opinion through seminars, campaigns, and advocacy.

#### **99 PROJECTS FOR DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

We support our partners in organising and working together. Stronger democratic organisations that together can organise and mobilise many people politically, thus promoting active popular participation and influence. Our focus is on broad democratic membership organisations and popular movements involving underrepresented and marginalised groups.

#### **65 PROJECTS FOR EQUALITY AND WORKERS' RIGHTS**

We work globally to reduce inequality, improve welfare and promote social justice. Through the Palme Center, people in precarious employment are supported to organise, even in countries where trade unions are discouraged. Trade union organisations are given the opportunity to develop their organising skills. Building fair societies also requires political reform. That's why we promote closer cooperation between the civil society, trade unions and political parties.

#### **65 PROJECTS FOR GENDER EQUALITY**

We promote cooperation between women organised in the Swedish labour movement and their global peers. By promoting gender equality reforms, we aim to increase women's participation in society, their influence over the economy and their participation in the labour market. Our support also empowers women to organise politically and to seek leadership positions. Gender equality and non-discrimination are perspectives that are integrated into all the Palme Centre's partnerships.

#### **21 PROJECTS FOR A JUST CLIMATE TRANSITION**

We work to strengthen the role of our partner organisations in the transition to sustainable development. With our support, civil society organisations, trade unions and political parties develop tools and training to enable them to make the transition and drive the work for a just transition. Through communication and advocacy, we put just climate change on the agenda, both in Sweden and internationally. All our projects are analysed from an environmental and climate perspective.

#### **32 PROJECTS FOR PEACE AND DIALOGUE**

We support the work of civil society organisations in conflict areas and engage the Swedish labour movement in peace and disarmament efforts. We create cross-border cooperation and use methods such as dialogue and mediation. A particular focus is on women's and youth participation in peace and dialogue processes. Our work for peace and dialogue builds inclusiveness and reciprocity in line with the conclusions reached by the Palme Commission on Common Security. Conflict and conflict sensitivity are perspectives that are integrated into all our co-operation projects.

# THE PALME CENTER 2024 THE YEAR THAT HAS PASSED

#### **JANUARY**

- » The year begins with tragic news. Nermeen, an employee with one of our Palestinian partners, has been killed along with her daughter in the Israeli bombing of Gaza.
- The Palme Center is joining 16 organisations in an international call to stop the transfer of arms to Israel and armed Palestinian groups.
- » The Palme Center joins 40 other organisations in writing an open letter to the Minister for Development Cooperation to not to jeopardise the ability for the civil society to operate.

#### **FEBRUARY**



- » A candle-lit demonstration for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza is held together with the Palme Center's member organisations in Stockholm.
- » Ihar Lednik, long-time member of the Belarusian social democratic party BSDP Hramada and political prisoner, dies on February

20th in a Belarusian prison.

» The International Day of Social Justice marks the launch of the Global Just Climate Transition – Not Just for the EU campaign together with Solidar and partners in Africa, Asia and Latin America.



- The second anniversary of Russia's illegal war of aggression is marked by a large demonstration in Stockholm.
- A delegation from the Palme Center travels to Palestine and Israel to meet local partners and representatives from the civil society and politics.

#### MARCH

 Margot Wallström, Anna Sundström and Jan Eliasson demand in Aftonbladet that the Government resumes its support for the Palestinian refugee organisation UNRWA.



- The high-level conference Africa SOTF Dialogue is organised in Nigeria by FEPS and the Palme Center, among others, to bring together African representatives ahead of the upcoming Summit of the Future at the UN.
- Demonstration for a ceasefire in Gaza is organised at Norrmalmstorg together with S-kvinnor, Tro och Solidaritet, Socialdemokraterna in Stockholm, SSU and S-studenter.

#### STÖD PALMECENTRETS INSAMLING FÖR CIVILBEFOLKNINGEN I PALESTINA!



- » The Palme Center launches the fundraising campaign for 'LIFE, PEACE and FREEDOM' in Palestine.
- » The Palme Center organises Littfest Umeå's theme day on democracy with over 4,500 visitors.
- Anna Sundström announces her resignation as Secretary General of the Olof Palme International Center.



» Joint call with foreign aid organisations, trade unions and experts for the European Parliament to vote in favour of an EU law on corporate responsibility for human rights, environment and climate.

#### APRIL

» Along with 250 other organisations, the Palme Center calls for a halt to all arms transfers to Israel and Palestinian armed groups.



» The Israeli-Palestinian peace network, the Two-State Coalition, visits Sweden to strengthen international efforts for a twostate solution.

#### RÄDDA DET Fackliga Biståndet!

#### MAY

» The Palme Center participates in the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) Congress and launches the campaign to save trade union foreign aid activities, which is threatened by the Government's new foreign aid policy.



- » In the run-up to the European elections, lunch-time dialogues on just climate transition are organised where all the political parties candidates' to the European election are questioned.
- » In cooperation with Solidar and ABF Skåne, a dialogue and lecture tour is carried out in Skåne district with lectures and debates on the EU election.
- » "Without nuclear guarantees, the DCA agreement becomes an existential threat". Margot Wallström and Anna Sundström write an opinion piece on the DCA agreement with the US.

#### JUNE

» The Palme Center launches a petition to put pressure on the Government to break its silence and protect the



- civilian population in Palestine.
- » "You can do better than this!" A review of the Government's global development policies is presented together with 49 other organisations.
- » On Domestic Workers' Day, the Palme Center pays tribute to its partner, the International Domestic Workers' Federation, and its important work in bringing about the Convention on the Rights of Domestic Workers.

» The Palme Center's Board of Directors appoints Oscar Ernerot as its new Secretary General.

#### JULY

- » The campaign "Movement to Movement: Honouring the unique role of the civil society in development" is launched.
- » The Palme Center supports a statement by the family of Narges Mohammadi following the attack on her in the Evin prison in Iran.

#### AUGUST



- » Shaadi Zamani from SSU Halland launches a campaign to sell
   Palestine pins. All proceeds
   will go to the Palme Center's
   fundraising for Palestine.
- Thailand's largest opposition party, the Move Forward
   Party, is again forced to be dissolved by a court order.
- » International solidarity is in focus when Global Bar organises the Global Festival in collaboration with the Palme Center.

#### **SEPTEMBER**

- » Over 70 participants from progressive parties in the Western Balkans and Sweden gather for dialogue and exchange in Korčula, Croatia.
- The course International Politics

   from Security Policy to Foreign
   Aid is launched for committed
   members of the labour movement.



» The Palme Center joins 117 other organisations in calling on the EU to stop allowing products deemed too dangerous for the domestic market to be exported to other countries. » A Pact for the Future is adopted by world leaders in New York. FEPS presents the report A New Global Deal in collaboration with the Palme Center and others.

#### **OCTOBER**

- Oscar Ernerot speaks at the Russia Out of Ukraine action group's demonstration at the Free Ukraine Square outside the Russian Embassy.
- » The Palme Center co-organises a demonstration at Sergels Torg against the violations of international law after the 7 October by reading the names of the children killed during the year.
- » Our partner and ABF's Belarusian sister organisation is classified as extremist by the regime. A flash appeal is launched to support members who are in danger or are forced to flee.
- » UN Day is celebrated with a major UN seminar on the progress of the global development goals, together with ABF Stockholm and the UN Association in Stockholm.

#### NOVEMBER

- » Pay, phase out and include. The Palme Center, together with 18 other Concord members, urges Sweden and the EU to push for a just climate transition during the COP29 climate summit.
- » Oscar Ernerot and Katrin Stjernfeldt Jammeh, chairman of the municipal board in Malmö, write in Sydsvenskan on the need for a global front for democracy and equality.
- » The Palme Day is organised in Malmö under the theme Dare More Democracy.

#### DECEMBER

- » The Palme Center calls on the Government to draw attention to the Turkish police's arrest of several human rights activists, trade unionists and partners of the Palme Center.
- » In honour of this year's Nobel Peace Prize winner, the grassroots movement Nihon Hidankyo, the Palme Center co-organise a Lucia procession for a nuclear-free world.
- The International Federation for Workers' Education and the Palme Center organise the Global Trade Union Programme Workshop in Cape Town.



# WE ACT AND CHANGE



Photo: GLASEN TEKSTILEC

Photo: GLASEN TEKSTILEC

#### **NORTH MACEDONIA: TRADE UNION LIBERATION - ON WOMEN'S TERMS**

After years of abuse, non-payment and discrimination in the textile industry, workers in Shtip took matters into their own hands. Under the leadership of Kristina Ampeva, Glasen Sindikat was founded - the first independent textile trade union in the country. In less than a year, it gathered 300 members, signed a collective agreement and resolved several labour disputes. This in a country where trade unions have long been associated with corruption and party politics, and where independent voices are excluded from dialogue with the state.

Behind this success is the long-term work of the Palme Center's partner Glasen Tekstilec which since 2017 informs workers of their rights, offers legal support, builds trust and challenges power structures. The association has received both financial and strategic support through its collaboration with the Palme Center and Handels in Gävle, and has handled over 400 legal cases over the years. The union is permeated by gender equality and is led by women. It is a clear example of how women's organisation can change working conditions and strengthen democracy.

Despite government attempts to exclude Glasen Tekstilec from national dialogues, the organisation has built strong networks internationally, received support from the ILO and generated media attention. They have also prioritised partnerships with local authorities where change is possible. Glasen Sindikat represents a new generation of trade union organisation - established at the grassroots and led by women who know what it's like to work in tough conditions. With their voices, workers are not only heard - they are also given real power to influence their lives.



#### **COLOMBIA: 140 ENVIRONMENTALISTS AGREE ON** A NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL DECLARATION

Colombia is the most dangerous country in the world for environmental activists, especially for those working in the Amazon, where armed groups, illegal mining and deforestation threaten both people and the climate. In 2023, nearly 80 people involved in environmental issues were murdered. Against this backdrop, the Palme Center's partner VozEs brought together 140 environmental activists, representing 50 environmental organisations in the Amazon, to the country's first national environmental convention.

The participants developed a joint declaration with their main demands, which they then handed over to representatives of the Government, Congress, the UN and the government's peace delegation in the dialogue with ELN. The fact that the environmental movement spoke with one voice and met the Government together for the first time was a historic step. The Convention has strengthened the movement's influence, contributed to concrete policy reforms and improved protection for environmental activists.

VozEs works to connect the civil society's work with public policy. Through digital meetings, networking and training, the Convention was thoroughly prepared. For many organisations, this was the first time they met and shared experiences. "It helped us coordinate our dreams and hopes," said one participant after the meeting.



EQUALITY &

#### **ESWATINI: UNION STRUGGLE PAVES** WAY FOR NEW LABOUR LAW

Despite being high on the list of countries with the worst conditions for trade unions and workers, the country's parliament has passed a new labour law that says workers have the right to work in safe and healthy conditions. The law gives workers the right to rest, reasonable working hours and paid holidays. Women will also have the right to breastfeed during working hours and three months' maternity leave. The Palme Center and the Swedish Trade Union Confederation's (LO) partner organisation, the Trade Union Congress of ESwatini (TUCOSWA), has played a key role in bringing about the new legislation.

TUCOSWA organises 19 affiliates and works to eliminate discrimination and exploitation in the labour market. Since 2022, it has been pushing for the modernisation of labour law, including demanding the abolition of temporary work agencies and precarious fixed-term contracts. It has also participated in tripartite talks with the Government and employers, and with the support of the Palme Center, strengthened its capacity to mobilise members and influence legislation. The new law is an important step towards greater equality and fair labour conditions in the country. It shows what trade union unity; long-term advocacy and international solidarity can achieve - even in a tough political context.



Meeting with the mayor of Vlora. Photo: Vlora Youth Centre

#### ALBANIA: YOUNG PEOPLE PUSH FOR MORE TRANSPARENCY IN THE MUNICIPALITY

In the city of Vlora, previously ranked as one of Albania's least transparent municipalities, young people from the Vlora Youth Centre have pushed for tangible changes. After a year of advocacy, the city council adopted a new transparency programme. An important step towards greater transparency and accountability.

Among other things, the programme requires the municipality to publish information on decisions, budget and contact details on its website. A special coordinator has been appointed and a working group of 13 officials has been set up to implement the programme. This shows how young people, with the right support, can strengthen local democracy. The Palme Center is working with the POP network, which includes the Vlora Youth Centre, to promote local democracy and increase citizen participation in decision-making in Albania's municipalities.



Julia Mickiewicz.

#### **BELARUS:** PROGRESSIVE OPPOSITION GROWS IN EXILE

Despite the regime's repression, the Belarusian opposition is growing - in exile. This year saw the appointment of its first Minister for Gender Equality, Julia Mickiewicz, who heads the Belarusian ABF. She is part of a Belarusian shadow government of people prepared to take over when dictator Lukashenko falls. A known feminist, she has been arrested and imprisoned by the regime in the past. ABF Belarus, which was built with support from ABF Gästrikebygden and the Palme Center, runs popular education, gender equality and organising in exile. At the same time, the Belarusian social democratic youth organisation Molodaya Hramada has been resurrected and become a unifying force for young people in exile. Previously the organisation had problems when its leadership was imprisoned but has now recruited new members and restarted its activities. SSU Värmland has started a co-operation with Molodaya Hramada.



#### BOSNIA AND HERCEGOVINA: EMPLOYEES NO Longer have to work on public holidays

After a decade-long campaign by the Trade and Service Trade Union (STBIH), the Parliament adopted a law during the year that will no longer require commercial employees to work on public holidays. A survey conducted by STBIH in the run-up to the decision showed that one in two commercial employees worked on Sundays and over 30% on public holidays. But only 10% were then compensated for working on public holidays. In Parliament, the nationalist parties voted against the Business Hours Act. The Palme Center and the Swedish Union of Commercial Employees have supported STBIH for many years. The last meeting before the law was discussed in the parliament was attended by Linda Palmetzhofer, President of the Swedish Union of Commercial Employees.



#### PHILIPPINES: GRASSROOTS LEADERS Challenge the power elite

In the Philippines, politics is controlled by an elite of two families. The Palme Center supports training in the country that enables a new generation of progressive political leaders and movements to grow. Leaders who dare to take their place in politics and challenge undemocratic structures. Through the social democratic movement Akbayan, they are given the tools to build grassroots movements and drive real change from below.

Babyluz Bador, with roots in local movements, is running for the post of vice mayor of Akbayan. "The training opportunities from Akbayan have been crucial in understanding how to build campaigns where people themselves can be part of the change," she says. For many years she has been organising marginalised groups and how they can become part of the change process themselves. "It's not about talking to people, but with them".

23-year-old John Vincent Galigao is another example. Through the Akbayan Youth Association's training programmes, he has gained the

courage to go from being a grassroot activist to entering municipal politics. There, he promotes issues of education, jobs and democratic influence for young people. "I have learnt that real change comes from the people themselves, and that collective action can create a more just society".

Our member organisation SSU has close relations with Akbayan's youth organisation and supports their activities.



#### DR CONGO: YOUTH MOVEMENT SCRUTINISES LOCAL POWER

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, political accountability has mainly been scrutinised at the national level, but rarely at the local level. The Palme Center's partner organisation Lutte pour le Changement (LUCHA) wanted to change that. In the provinces of Bukavu and Kolwezi, the movement has developed special 'governance barometers' that scrutinise the electoral promises, infrastructure projects and other pledges made by local leaders. When Bukavu residents discovered discrepancies in the governor's action plan, he could be held accountable. This is a clear example of how local engagement can drive greater accountability for decision-makers.

LUCHA is a youth-led movement founded in 2012. They are known for their peaceful mobilisation and fight for social justice and democracy. With support from the Palme Center, they have trained citizens to monitor and influence local decision-making, which both increases transparency and builds citizens' trust in the political system. Their work has not only brought to light the shortcomings of local politics - it has also empowered communities to stand up for their rights. LUCHA shows how change can start from below with young, organised citizens who refuse to accept corruption and inaction.



GAD hoto:

#### **ALBANIA: MARGINALISED WOMEN RECEIVE** SUPPORT TO START THEIR OWN BUSINESS

The Palme Center's partner, the Gender Alliance Development Center (GADC), has successfully lobbied the municipality of Tirana to expand support for marginalised women. The support targets rural women, single mothers and Roma women, with a particular focus on women who are victims of intimate partner violence. The women now receive a €6,000 start-up grant to develop their own business activities. They are also exempt from taxes for one year and will be offered mentoring and training to increase their chances of success. GADC's advocacy work has included meetings with the president of the municipal council and the head of the social services department. Empowering marginalised and vulnerable women to build their own livelihoods lifts families out of poverty and contributes to the development of society at large. This is particularly important for women who are victims of domestic violence in order to break the cycle of violence.



#### PALESTINE: AL MARFA PROMOTES NON-**VIOLENCE IN A VIOLENT ENVIRONMENT**

PEACE & DIALOGUE

In an area of occupation, oppression and high insecurity, Al Marfa works to promote mental health and enable people to organise themselves to help each other cope with their violent daily lives. Demand for support services is growing and there are currently only a few counselling centres available in the West Bank.

The behaviour of soldiers and settlers is unpredictable and attacks and shootings against civilians are common. The brutality and trauma spills over into Palestinian schools. Al Marfa has therefore been working to promote dialogue and non-violence in ten schools. Their goal is to create an environment where individuals feel a sense of belonging, hope and empowerment. It also acts as a powerful counterforce to extremist ideologies.

Evaluations show that young people who have participated in the programme feel that they can make a positive contribution, both at their school and in the local community. Many have become involved in various forms of activities, such as organising summer camps for children. The initiative has led to 40 young leaders forming a group to make a difference in the areas where they live. Through the Palme Center, Al Marfa is supported by Akademikerförbundet SSR.



#### THAILAND: BERRY PICKERS WIN **HISTORIC COURT CASE**

After three years of struggle, 104 Thai berry pickers who worked in Sweden have won a unique court order in Thailand. A businessman who hired out labour to Swedish berry companies through 15 different staffing agencies has been ordered to pay almost SEK 5 million in unpaid overtime compensation. The verdict is unique as it is the first time a Thai court has ruled in favour of the berry pickers. In previous attempts, the courts have always sided with the employer. Through the Solidarity Fund, the Palme Center has provided some of the financial support for the legal process.



#### PHILIPPINES: WOMEN RETURN AND BUILD GREEN BUSINESSES

Many Filipino women work abroad under difficult conditions. When they return, they often face unemployment and economic insecurity. Through the collaboration of the Palme Center and the Anna Lindh Memorial Fund with the Center for Migrant Advocacy, women are supported to organise locally and create sustainable, green jobs and businesses. For example, the organisations produce organic juices and jams, and they make carpets from recycled textiles - while at the same time they claim their right to receive public funding from the public gender budget. Under Philippine law, all government agencies must allocate at least five per cent of their budgets to fund activities that promote gender equality and women's rights. But this is far from always the case, and when it is, the money may go to a project led by a local mayor's wife. Through training, exchange of experiences and support for project applications, both independence and confidence in the future are generated.

#### **UKRAINE:** FOR AN INCLUSIVE RECONSTRUCTION

SD Platform is a grassroots social democratic movement with over 2,000 members. Their aim is to form a political party in the future, and in the meantime, they organise, build local chapters and train new members and leaders. With support from the Palme Center and the Swedish social democrats, they organise training programmes and develop policies focused on inclusion, equality and welfare. Their vision is a Ukraine without oligarchs - but with justice and democracy for all. When the war ends, Ukraine must be rebuilt - socially, politically and economically. Therefore, preparations are already underway to ensure that reconstruction is fair. The goal is a welfare society where resources are distributed fairly and those with the greatest needs get first priority.



Photo: PYALARA

#### PALESTINE: YOUNG PEOPLE WRITE Shadow report to un

For the first time, young people in Palestine have been involved in the preparation of a shadow report to the UN on youth rights. In 2026, the Palestinian Authority is to submit a report to the UN on how it fulfils resolutions on youth rights. With support from the Palme Center, the organisation PYALARA has trained young people to review legislation, follow up international commitments and formulate policy recommendations.

PYALARA has set up a human rights unit to develop policy documents on young people's right to freedom of expression and influence in political decisions that affect them and the right to live in peace.

They have also taken part in several national coalitions, including co-authoring a report on CEDAW and women's political participation. This strengthens the voice of young people in UN processes and shows how youth-driven advocacy in a complex context can contribute to democracy and human rights.



Swedish social democratic members of Parliament, Matilda Ernkrans and Azra Muranovic, meet SD Platform in Ukraine and discuss the role of strong institutions in a democratic society based on Swedish experiences. Photo: SD Platform

EQUALITY & Workers' Rights

#### DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: TRADE UNION CONSENSUS BEHIND NEW LABOUR LAW

In October 2024, the Government presented a draft for a new labour law - a direct result of the close cooperation between two previously competing trade union confederations. With the support of the Palme Center and The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO), they have developed a common policy, built trust and influenced decision-makers with a united voice.

The law includes several important improvements: regulation of teleworking, requirements for safe working conditions and rest, protection against dismissal during pregnancy, and clear working time limits for domestic workers. A previous trade union success from 2022, the decision to apply ILO Convention C189, now also looks set to become a reality.

What makes this particularly significant is how the project, with limited resources, has managed to unite the trade union movement and thereby increase its political influence. Cooperation is now so strong that the unions represent each other externally - a development that would not have been possible without the Palme Center's support.

Vera Grabe, the Colombian government's chief negotiator in the dialogue with the ELN being interviewed by journalists on the ground. Photo: Nelson Cárdenas





#### TÜRKIYE/ARMENIA: MISTRUST TURNS INTO UNDERSTANDING AND TRUST

PEACE & Dialogue

In a context where the land border has been closed since 1993 and relations have been characterised by historical mistrust and stereotypes, the Hrant Dink Foundation has worked intensively to create space for human encounters between young people and women from Türkiye and Armenia.

Culture has played a crucial role. The 2024 Music Dialogue Programme brought together experts from Armenia, choir directors from Istanbul and music teachers from Armenian minority schools. The conversations led not only to exchanges of knowledge – but also to friendship and continued contact. Young people who previously had no knowledge of each other's history now express curiosity, openness and a desire to understand.

At the same time, social media has been used as a tool to counteract prejudice. Through creative campaigns, postcards and videos, similarities between communities have been highlighted. It's all built on the basic idea that the border must first be opened in our minds.

#### **COLOMBIA:** QUICK ACTION SAVED DELICATE STEP IN PEACE PROCESS

#### PEACE & Dialogue

For several years, the Palme Center has contributed to the peace dialogue between the Colombian government and the ELN guerrillas by supporting the process of including women's perspectives, as well as the participation of women and the civil society in the dialogue. One example from 2024 is when the ELN guerrillas called an armed strike in the Chocó region at a critical stage in the peace negotiations. This effectively trapped 35,000 people in their villages. It also threatened the entire peace dialogue. The Government quickly decided to organise a major meeting in the region and to invite national and international media to raise awareness of the situation. The Palme Center stepped in with temporary financial support, enabling a large group of national and international journalists to travel to the region to cover and report on the situation. The media attention this meeting created contributed to a resolution of the tense situation and increased awareness of the dialogue and its challenges.



#### **PHILIPPINES: FROM VULNERABLE SELF-EMPLOYED TO COLLECTIVE POWER**

Jeepneys are jeeps converted into buses. They have become a kind of symbol of the Philippines that is well known to tourists. But they emit a lot of exhaust fumes, are uncomfortable and provide a poor working environment for drivers. Therefore, they need to be replaced. But as the Philippines modernises its public transport system, thousands of jeepney drivers risk losing their livelihoods.

With support from the Palme Center and Kommunal (the Swedish Municipal Workers' Union), the drivers have organised themselves into cooperatives and formed a national union, the National Confederation of Transport Workers Union (NCTU), which now negotiate directly with the Government. By organising, they have gained access to subsidised loans, purchased modern vehicles and have been able to be part of the transition and influence the design of the vehicles. A key issue is so-called service contracts - where co-operatives are paid for driving according to a schedule rather than per passenger. This creates more secure conditions for drivers, and better access to public transport even outside rush hour. With knowledge support from Kommunal, NCTU has been able to move from being a disorganised and vulnerable group to a strong social actor for a just climate transition.



#### **DR CONGO: SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR** A FORGOTTEN LABOUR FORCE

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, many women in the civil society and the informal sector lack access to health insurance and pensions. To change this, the Palme Center's partner Comité National Femme et Développement (CONAFED) initiated a mutual insurance solution. Through training, advocacy and dialogue with the Government, 54 people have come together to create a shared system whereby they contribute to their own health cover and, in the future, to their pensions. The model not only provides protection in the event of health crises but also strengthens women's financial independence and ability to plan for the future. The initiative is an important step towards a more inclusive social protection system that includes the most vulnerable. It shows that change is possible when people organise themselves, and it lays the foundation for social justice in a country where security has so far favoured very few.

> EQUALITY & WORKER'S RIGHTS



Kateryna Izmailova and Lidiia Naryzhniak are the Chair and Vice Chair of the Railway Workers' Union Youth Committee. Photo: Peter Gustavsson

#### **UKRAINE: SOLIDARITY AND** JUDICIAL RECONSTRUCTION

The Palme Center has continued to support Ukrainian partners fighting for security, justice and democracy in the midst of war through our Ukraine fundraising. The Trade Union Lifeline network has continued to deliver aid across the country, railway workers have transported both supplies and refugees, and at Nova Pochta unions have organised themselves despite terminals being bombed. Meanwhile, the civil society has begun to rebuild the country - with study circles, training and demands for greater transparency. The Palme Center supports trade union youth work, political engagement and social justice. A fair reconstruction begins now and is driven by those who refuse to give up.



Photo: VozEs

#### COLOMBIA: YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE AMAZON Shape the future of climate policy

In Colombia's remote Amazon region, young people have, for the first time, been invited to participate in political decision-making on the environment and climate. This is the result of the Palme Center's partner VozEs's work to empower young people, promote gender equality and create locally based solutions in a region that is crucial for the global climate. Through environmental academies, young people in Chocó and Cumaribo, among others, have been trained to influence environmental work in their home regions, in dialogue with mayors, governors and local leaders. The environmental academies have now been included in official development plans, which means that 3 220 young leaders will have received environmental training by 2027.

The Environmental Academies have also had a significant impact on indigenous groups such as the Kankuamo people. For the first time, young people, including young women, were able to have an open dialogue with their traditional leaders on both climate and gender equality issues never before raised in that forum. This is a crucial step towards making young people's voices heard in communities where their influence has long been limited.

The Palme Center has played a role not only financially but also as a strategic partner in the project's design, goal setting and implementation. Timing was crucial, policy decisions had to be made, and VozEs ensured that young voices were organised and present. Taken together, these efforts show how strategic work with young people can transform climate policy from the grassroots upwards.



Photo: DWRC

#### PALESTINE: TRADE UNION WORK Despite the chaos of war

#### DEMOCRACY & Human Rights

Despite Gaza being in ruins and tens of thousands of people killed by the Israeli military, the Democracy and Workers' Rights Centre in Palestine (DRWC) managed to keep trade union activities going during the year. In November, it brought together over 40 trade union and civil society representatives for a joint forum. This resulted in practical recommendations and a proposal to form a joint crisis committee to address labour issues in the emergency.

The DWRC, which works for a democratic and just trade union movement in Palestine, has with the support of the Palestine Centre's Palestine Fund, continued its activities in an area where most workplaces have been destroyed, and people are constantly forced to flee. In a reality where survival is the main priority, they have been able to distribute food parcels to workers and their families. At the same time, fundraising has enabled them to provide education to children aged five to seven with the help of 26 dedicated teachers and volunteers, as well as organising a summer camp for over 100 children. Successfully mobilising, organising and building confidence in such an extreme situation demonstrates the power and importance of the trade union movement - even when everything else is falling apart.



Irvin Boncacas, Secretary General of POWER and Dante Encina, President of the trade union at the SORECO electricity cooperative.

#### PHILIPPINES: UNIONS FIGHT FOR A JUST CLIMATE TRANSITION

Trade unions are essential in the green transition. To defend workers' rights, to safeguard good working conditions and ensure that people do not lose their livelihoods in the transition to a greener economy.

In the Philippines, the POWER trade union is fighting for both good working conditions and green energy. In the country, member-owned co-operatives in the energy sector are increasingly being squeezed out by private companies. The big energy companies are investing heavily in coal, which means that privatisation has promoted the construction of more coal-fired power plants rather than renewable energy. More than 40 per cent of the country's greenhouse gas emissions today come from burning coal and oil to generate electricity.

POWER is taking action against privatisation and for better working conditions. It is estimated that around 17,000 workers in the energy sector have temporary contracts that do not provide job security. Another major challenge is the fight for public funds. Without government support, co-operatives lack the necessary resources to establish renewable energy production facilities. Securing public funding for equitable energy transfer in rural areas is therefore also an important aspect of POWER's campaign. They are supported in their work by the trade union Seko.



#### **ALBANIA:** BREAKTHROUGH FOR UNIONISATION IN THE OIL SECTOR

EQUALITY & Workers' Rights

For the first time, workers at Albania's largest private oil company, Bankers Petroleum, have signed a collective agreement. The breakthrough was achieved by the Hydrocarbon Sector Union, founded in 2022 with the support of the Palme Center. In a short time frame, more than half of the workers have become organised, which is a historic breakthrough in an industry where unionisation has long been discouraged.

Despite strong pressure from management and several failed rounds of negotiations, the union persevered. When the conflict threatened to lead to a strike, both parties were called to new negotiations by the Albanian Ministry of Economy and an agreement was finally signed.

The agreement brings concrete improvements. 200 of the lowest paid workers have received pay rises, food allowances have doubled, and the union now has the right to renegotiate wages annually. This is an important step towards better working conditions, but also an example of what determination, organisation and international solidarity can achieve. The Palme Center's support has included capacity building and trade union mentoring through the trade union IF Metall.

This union's success has also become a source of inspiration for workers in other workplaces in Albania, proving that change is possible even where resistance is strong.



#### NAMIBIA: HISTORIC MINIMUM WAGE - A TRADE UNION BREAKTHROUGH

Starting in 2025, a national minimum wage will be introduced in Namibia for the first time. This historic decision means that no worker will be paid less than 18 Namibian dollars an hour - a major step towards social and economic justice.

Behind the change is, among others, the Metal and Allied Namibian Workers Union (MANWU) which, with the support of the Palme Center and IF Metall Blekinge, has played a key role in the advocacy work. Through interviews, surveys and a national study on wage conditions, MANWU collected data showing the extent of the wage gap between different sectors – especially for women and low-paid workers. The results were used to develop a strategy and demand change.

The union also initiated annual consultations between employers and employees, creating a new arena for dialogue and influence over labour market policy. The Government's decision to introduce a minimum wage is a clear example of how long-term and fact-based trade union work can yield great results.



Student protests in Serbia. Photo: Masina.rs

DEMOCRACY & Human Rights

#### SERBIA: ALTERNATIVE WEBSITE IMPORTANT IN PROTESTS

The Palme Center has been supporting the Serbian organisation Kontekst and its website Masina.rs for several years. It plays an important role for news that is not covered by other media. It has therefore become one of the main sources of information on student and citizen protests in the country. Not least the anti-government protests that took place after the roof of the railway station in Novi Sad collapsed, killing 16 people. This tragic event triggered strong student protests against the political corruption believed to have been the cause of the incident. Several other groups such as teachers, farmers, lawyers and cultural workers have joined the protests that have spread across the country. The website, with a small editorial team of four people, reports on the protest movement in a way that differs from the pro-government media. As the editorial team cannot cover all the protests, they often rely on material sent in by the general public. They also cover topics such as women's rights, environmental issues and culture.



A chain reaction: local leaders work to empower and mobilize other women. Each local leader creates groups of around 20-25 women. Local leaders in different districts also meet regularly, and a national network has also been formed. Photo: HDIP.

#### **PALESTINE: WOMEN CHANGING THEIR LIVES - AND SOCIETY**

The Palme Center's partner, Health Development Information and Policy (HDIP), works with women in rural areas of the West Bank. They support women to empower themselves and influence their local communities. For example, by pushing for political change and increasing the representation of women and young people in decision-making.

Nida and Latife are two women who have been empowered by HDIP activities and leadership trainings:

Nida Adra is from the village of Bani Naim in Hebron and works as a photographer. She has been part of HDIP's Women Can Change the Society project since 2021 and is now actively advocating for the ILO Convention C190 on violence and harassment in the workplace, as well as being elected as a board member of the village women's centre.

- I am a divorced woman and mother of two children. My story started when I made a mistake and married the wrong person, she says.

Nida's husband isolated her from family and friends. She describes it as being trapped in a cage and exhausted. When Nida tried to leave her husband, he demanded that she give up custody of her children in exchange for her freedom. Everyone around her protested against this decision. Then, after a year, she was able to regain her and her children rights in accordance with the law, and they have now been reunited.

- Through the project, I have gained the strength and determination to claim my full rights without anyone's interference, she says. Latife Amro, 22 years old from Hebron, has been taking part in the project since 2022. She learnt about HDIP's activities through Samira, who is an elected member of the local assembly. Samira, together with Fadiwa, a field coordinator at HDIP, were also the ones who convinced Latife's father to let her participate in the project when he initially opposed the idea.

- I remember that during the first session I felt ashamed because I didn't have communication skills and didn't know how to express my feelings. I listened to the young women who took part in the women empowerment programme and saw their personal development. But it was a challenge for me, says Latife.

- At the end of the meeting, I decided that I wanted to be like them, an outspoken and strong woman who can stand up for her rights and challenge the society.

Before Latife became active in the HDIP project, she had felt isolated and unhappy. She had been bullied at school to the extent that she failed her final exams. She saw no other way forward in life than to get married or die.

Today, she says, she feels part of the group and strong enough to speak in front of others and advocate for her rights.

- The women's group continues to encourage me to go back and finish secondary school. My plan for 2025 is to return to finish the last exams.



# **WE INFLUENCE AND ARE VISIBLE**

All the activities we carry out with our partners around the world contribute to influencing public opinion, decision-makers and social development. Despite a previous significant reduction of funding for our communication work, active communication and public opinion work has been carried out in Sweden and in the EU as well.

The year's work continued to be characterised by the wars in Ukraine and Gaza, as well as their negative impact on the international legal order. The humanitarian developments and the violations of international law in Palestine prompted the Palme Center to write a series of opinion pieces, launch petitions, organise seminars and international visits from the region to put pressure on the Government and decision-makers in the EU. Not least, we protested against the Government's withdrawal of support to UNRWA, the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and we called on the EU to freeze the Association Agreement with Israel.

Opinion-forming was often carried out together with other Swedish and international organisations in the form of joint debate articles, appeals and demonstrations. The anniversary of the Hamas terrorist attack on 7 October, and the start of Israel's war of retaliation, was marked, together with member organisations and other human rights organisations, by having the names of all of the



Anna Sundström is interviewed about the Super Election year 2024 in SVT news.



Oscar Ernerot, Secretary General of the Palme Center, speaks at Sergels Torg in Stockholm.

children killed during the year read out at Sergels Torg in Stockholm.

Opinion-forming work has also been carried out on many other pressing issues. In statements and at demonstrations, we have repeatedly protested against Russia's illegal war of aggression in Ukraine, the military dictatorship in Myanmar's increased repression, human rights violations in Türkiye, the dissolution of Thailand's largest opposition party, the new law on agents in Georgia and sextortion in the Democratic Republic of Congo, to give a few examples. We have also highlighted the need for a just climate transition and corporate responsibility for human rights and the environment. Moreover, ahead of the COP 29 climate summit, we have stated the need for rich countries to pay more for climate transition and to include those most affected by the crisis in decision-making.

We are increasingly collaborating with other international organisations in our policy and advocacy work. Not least with European partner organisations that are close to us. One example is the progressive think tank FEPS, with which we have highlighted the need for a feminist foreign policy and the need to reform the international community. Together with

#### Sverige måste öppna stödet till Unrwa igen

Wallström, Eliasson och Sundström: Det handlar om liv och död för hundratusentals palestinier



the progressive cooperation organisation for European civil society, Solidar, we have pushed for a just climate transition in the EU, as well as implemented a project to highlight progressive positions ahead of the European Parliament elections.

In Sweden, the focus has largely been on the threat to Swedish democracy and the civil society, the criticism of signing a DCA agreement with the US without including a binding ban on the introduction of nuclear weapons, the Government's dismantling of the global development goals, and a passive foreign policy that increasingly focuses on Swedish interests and Sweden's immediate neighbourhood.

The year also continued to be characterised by the Government's degradation of Sweden's development cooperation policy and the abrupt change in the Government's strategy for development cooperation with the civil society. Anna Sundström and Oscar Ernerot therefore participated in a large number of debate articles and media reports during the year. Not least, the threat to trade union foreign aid activities was highlighted in debate articles in the trade union media, as well as through the *Save Trade Union Foreign Aid* campaign which was launched at the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) congress and carried out on social media.

The summer saw the launch of the digital campaign Movement to Movement - Protecting the unique role of the civil society in foreign aid. This highlighted a large number of projects we have with our international partners to showcase that cooperation between civil society organisations is more than just a transactional channel for transferring foreign aid money. The Swedish civil society benefits from the grassroots, knowledge, drive and networks to which a government agency, or a large multinational NGO, does not have access.

During the year, we have also been active within the Concord network to respond to the Government's development cooperation policy through a number of debate articles, open letters to government representatives, and communication in social media.

#### AHEAD OF THE SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE AT THE UN

During the year, a new collaboration with FEPS was launched in the UNited for project. The aim was to help to strengthen and revitalise the role of the UN and its work towards a more just and sustainable global order. The project promoted progressive solutions to global challenges through research, policy proposals and engagement with decision-makers. The work was carried out in the run-up to the UN Summit of the Future on 22-23 September in New York, when world leaders adopted the Pact for the Future declaration. It includes themes such as peace, security, sustainable development and global governance. FEPS launched the report A New Global Deal and held two official programmes during the UN meeting.



#### The Africa we want - the UN we need

In the framework of the FEPS cooperation, the Africa SOTF Dialogue was also organised in Nigeria. The aim was to bring together and offer African representatives and partners an opportunity to meet to formulate their main challenges and a common African agenda ahead of the autumn UN summit. Ann Linde participated on behalf of the Palme Center.





Heléne Fritzon (Social democrat) during a candidate hearing. Photo: Rodrigo Arce

#### CLIMATE AND DEMOCRACY IN FOCUS DURING THE EU ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Active advocacy work was carried out ahead of the European elections. The Alliance for a Just Climate Transition (ARK), which the Palme Center coordinates, organised a series of seminars and political hearings during the spring. The EU has a major impact on what happens in the Union but also on the rest of the world. ARK therefore organised four seminars to strengthen the civil society's opinion-forming during the election campaign, give members increased EU knowledge and clarify their opportunities to influence policy towards a more ambitious and fair climate policy. Open hearings of all parties' EU candidates were also held, focusing on how they wanted to contribute to a green transition that is fair both within and outside Europe.

#### Dialogue tour in Skåne

A dialogue and lecture tour was also carried out in the spring to four locations in the Skåne district in collaboration with Solidar and ABF (Workers' Educational Association). The aim was to highlight the threat posed by right-wing authoritarian movements and raise awareness of the importance of the EU elections. The tour included lectures by author Lars Jederlund, two debates with party representatives, as well as four EU podcasts produced with, among others, Lisa Pelling, head of the think tank Arena Idé, and Jan Eliasson, former Swedish Foreign Minister.



#### **INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT IN SOCIAL MEDIA**

Alongside face-to-face meetings, digital communication is at the heart of the Palme Center's broad communication efforts. In 2024, we continued to be active on social media. Content that particularly engaged visitors included developments in Palestine and Israel, articles and content highlighting the peace issue, The Palme Day in Malmö and the summer campaign "Movement to Movement". The Palme Day



page was one of the most visited on the website during October-November, as was the Palestine fundraising page, which was among the most visited pages during the year.

The website was visited by around 1 400 unique visitors per month, which is lower than last year. The platforms where we are growing the most in terms of followers and where we have mainly increased our reach are Instagram (+ approx. 20%) and LinkedIn (+ approx. 19%). Collaborations with member organisations have been valuable during the year, and joint posts and initiatives were among the content that had the most impact. We also grew our Facebook following and the platform remains our largest with over 18,500 followers. We started to gradually move away from X and therefore created a Bluesky account at the end of the year as an alternative platform. Our digital presence will be assessed and developed in 2025.

#### Digital campaign with our partners

Over the summer, the aim was to engage our partner organisations to share stories about our partnerships and local projects on social media. The initiative was part of the

overall 'Movement to Movement' campaign. The aim was to highlight the value of the Swedish civil society's role and activities in foreign aid, which is threatened by the Government's new foreign aid policy. In the campaign 27 partners from countries including the Philippines, Albania, South Africa, Palestine and Türkiye participated in writing about our cooperation on their social media platforms. olidarity solidarity solidarity so





The Palme Day 2024: Dare More Democracy

#### Littfest in Umeå.

The Palme Center's programme activities help to create a large number of meetings and events around the world across all our policy priorities. Meetings that bring together experts, activists, decisionmakers and rights holders to exchange experiences, coordinate, act and create change. Active event work is also carried out in Sweden together with our members and other close partners. During the year a number of events were organised on both a large and small scale, through seminars, roundtables,

EVENTS THAT CREATED MEETINGS, MEANING AND ACTION

#### Littfest Umeå

The Palme Center participated as one of the organisers of the festival's Democracy Day. We coordinated the event and organised two talks of our own on the themes of Freedom in Danger and Shrinking Space for the Civil Society. Anna Sundström, Simona Mohamsson and Lisa Gastaldi were among the participants. In total more than 4,500 visitors attended during the day.

digital conferences and street manifestations.

#### Israeli-Palestinian peace movement visit Sweden

The Two State Coalition is a unique Israeli-Palestinian peace network comprising of 30 civil society organisations working for peace and a two-state solution to the conflict. During the spring, we invited the network to Sweden to meet government representatives,

members of parliament, the civil society, the labour movement and the Swedish public. Two events were organised, one in the Swedish Parliament for Members of Parliament and one for the public. It was held in a packed hall in the ABF building in collaboration with ABF-Stockholm and the Social Democrats in Stockholm.

#### The Palme Day 2024: Dare More Democracy

The Swedish labour movement's annual meeting place for international solidarity work, the Palme Day, was held on 23 November in Malmö together with the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO), ABF (Workers' Educational Association), SSU (The Swedish Social Democratic Youth League) and the Social Democrats in Skåne. During the day, members and activists had the opportunity to meet each other, central representatives and experts to discuss and exchange experiences. This year's theme was Dare More Democracy, and the need for a global offensive to address the crisis of democracy. During the day 1,386 people gathered to participate in ten seminars such as "How to Fight for Democracy in Working Life", "Super Election Year 2024 - How to Strengthen Democracy Globally", "Democracy and World Peace", "A Strong Civil Society - the Dictator's Worst Enemy", and "Democratic Economy - where the well-being of people and the planet is in focus".

#### FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY

The Palme Center is part of the European cooperation project, Feminist Foreign Policy Progressive Voices Collective, formed by FEPS to promote positive European and global development of feminist foreign policy. Ann Linde is the Swedish representative and leads the co-operation. Through various policy proposals, recommendations are made to decision-makers in the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament. The group consists of several European Ministers, MEPs, academics and

civil society representatives from the Global South and North. During the year, the network has presented five policy briefs and one



EMINIST OREIGN

OICES

policy recommendation. One of these briefs, A FFP approach to EU security and defence, dealt with security policy and recommended that the EU use a feminist lens in its policy work.

# **WE EMPOWER** PARTNERS AND MEMBERS

An important part of the Palme Center's activities is to offer our partners, members and other close collaborators opportunities for collaboration and shared learning. The Palme Resource Center and the Palme Academy are our platforms for exchanging experiences and developing methods for how we can work even better together to change the world. Here we offer methodological materials, organise training sessions and conduct other capacity-building activities.

An important part of the activities aims to strengthen our common knowledge to work within our five priority thematic policy areas: **Democracy & Human Rights, Equality & Workers' Rights, Gender Equality, Just Climate Change** and **Peace & Dialogue**. This is done not least through meetings, seminars, roundtables and conferences organised on an ongoing basis with and for our members and partners. During the year, a new training course on working from a rights perspective in one's activities was also launched by introducing a course on the Human Rights Based Approach on the Palme Center's digital course platform.

We also work continuously to develop our methods of change. How we can best create change through our activities. The Palme Center's methods of change are mainly popular and trade union organisation, organisational development and internal democracy, popular education and advocacy, and alliance-building. During the year, for example, special efforts were made to create a global trade union network. Within this network, particular emphasis was placed on the exchange of experiences and methods for trade union and political co-operation.

Furthermore, the environment and climate, gender equality, conflict sensitivity and anti-corruption perspectives must always be integrated into our



Palme Resource Center is our platform for exchange of experiences and method development.

joint activities. They are key areas for development and for everything we do. Highlighting them is therefore often part of the workshops and training sessions that are organised, not least in the workshops organised during the year with our partner and member organisations around the world. The aim was to work together on a new CSO application to Sida. They also worked practically with another important methodological area: how to programme, follow up on results, report results and assess risks. All the things that are important to be able to participate in an effective, goal-oriented and well-planned programme activities.





The year also saw the start of extensive work to develop all our tools and training courses on how best to work with gender equality in their organisations and activities. The aim is to make these easier to use for partners and members.



Photo: Bantu Nkwentsha, Ikhwezi

#### PARTNERS LEARN MORE ABOUT JUST TRANSITION

In Southern Africa, the Palme Center works with several grassroots organisations that provide support to women who are victims of domestic violence. Several of the organisations have noticed that women are increasingly vulnerable to men's violence in the wake of climate change. Floods and droughts affect people's livelihoods and reduce access to water and food. During crises, men's violence increases while women find it more difficult to leave violent situations.

They therefore decided to learn more about how they can weave environmental and climate issues into their work for gender equality. The Palme Center was able to help by organising a visit to our partner, the Trust for Community Outreach and Education (TCOE), which has worked for environmental sustainability and equitable access to water and land in the region for a long time. The exchange included partners from Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. The concept of just climate change transition was introduced to women's organisations, who had the chance to discuss how climate and environmental issues are linked to women's rights.

The exchange also highlighted the importance of empowering small-scale agricultural workers, most of whom are women, to earn a living and reduce their risk of violence. As a practical result, women's organisations Ikhwezi and CALA in South Africa and the Women Aids Support Network in Zimbabwe have now trained survivors of gender-based violence on how to create sustainable food gardens. These use traditional seeds from a seed bank developed by rural women to produce climate-resilient crops.



#### EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES BETWEEN DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL PARTIES

Democratic political parties around the world can learn a lot from each other's experiences and working methods. During the year, we therefore organised two global training courses within the framework of the Palme Academy. In the run-up to the EU elections, a training course was organised for around 50 representatives from social democratic and liberal sister parties in cooperation with the Liberal International Centre (SILC) and the Centre Party International Foundation (CIS). The aim was for participants to increase their knowledge of the democratic system in Sweden, how electoral systems work, how campaigns work and to offer a practical exercise in how election observation is carried out.

In December, the Organising for Change course was organised for 25 participants from sister social democratic parties operating in more vulnerable and authoritarian environments. Should the party stand in elections even if they are rigged? How to mobilise international actors to put pressure on the regime that rules the country? How to get people to engage with the party despite the risks involved? During the days, proposals were made for long-term strategies that participants could take home to discuss with their respective party leaders.





The Palme Center's policy and methodology advisor Cajsa Unnbom lectures on just climate policy at the international course of the labour movement.

#### MEETINGS, ACTIVITIES AND COURSES WITH OUR MEMBERS

We have been actively reaching out to our member organisations to give lectures, participate in seminars and highlight important international issues at various meetings that our members organise themselves. This can range from presenting political developments in one part of the world or another, to solidarity events, or organising a seminar or workshop in a particular field.

During the year, two rounds of the Labour Movement's International course were also held in collaboration with Viskadalens Folkhögskola, AiP Media and the think tank Tiden. The spring course was held on site at Viskadalen with around 20 participants, and in the autumn a digital course with around 50 participants. The courses aim to increase knowledge and commitment to international issues. They are mainly aimed at those active in the labour movement. The courses included lectures on the rules-based world order, the role of women in the world, Swedish defence and security policy, fair climate change and the development of Swedish development cooperation. A wide range of experts participated as lecturers, including the President of the Palme Center and former Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström, Jan Eliasson, former Deputy Secretary-General of the UN and Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Palme Center staff and experts.

# **MANAGEMENT REPORT & ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS** 2024

The Olof Palme International Center (the Palme Center) is a non-profit organisation whose main purpose is to work in the spirit of Olof Palme for democracy, human rights, social justice, sustainability and peace. The Palme Center is a collaborative body in international affairs for the Swedish labour movement, with the task of supporting the international activities of its 26 member organisations. The Palme Center was established in 1992 and, together with its member organisations, carries out advocacy and development projects around the world. The Board of the Palme Center is appointed by the member organisations at the annual Representative Assembly.

In 2024, the Palme Center's international activities were conducted partly under its own auspices and partly via its Swedish member organisations, which together with local partner organisations in the project countries plan, implement and report on the activities. Most of the project activities are financed by funds from Sida and the EU, but other donors are also involved. The financial contribution that the Palme Center needs to provide in most Sida-funded projects is financed through the organisation's fundraising activities.

#### SIGNIFICANT EVENTS DURING THE YEAR

As in 2023, 2024 has been characterised by uncertainty, challenges, change but also progress. The Palme Center sees a continued strong need and commitment to international solidarity work, but war and conflict as well as the uncertainty surrounding institutional funding of development cooperation have affected the Palme Center's focus and activities during the year.

#### Organisation

The main organisational focus of the Palme Center during the year was to develop its fundraising and resource mobilisation activities with the aim of diversifying the organisation's institutional funding and increasing its financial independence. To this end, additional resources have been added, and in 2024 the position of an Operational Developer was filled, and it was decided that a new dedicated Fundraising manager position be created. The initiative is expected to start delivering results in the latter part of 2025 and in 2026.

The Palme Center's Secretary General for the past seven years, Anna Sundström, left during the year and was replaced by Oscar Ernerot, former International Director at The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO). With Oscar Ernerot being appointed as the new Secretary General, Deputy Board Member Leif Isaksson replaced him as a regular member of the Board.

A review of the international strategy was carried out during the year and work on developing a vision for the organisation's work for the coming years was launched during the Palme Center's staff days in November 2024.

#### **Programme activities**

In 2024, there has been a strong focus on actively diversifying the funding of programme activities and developing a new civil society support programme to be presented to Sida CSOs. The current programme agreement was extended until 30 September 2025.

Great uncertainty on how the Government and Sida would handle the grants to Swedish civil society organisations from 2025 has created concern during the year about the future conditions for the organisation's activities. Since the Government chose to change the current system of strategic partner organisations, open up the grant for other stakeholders and raise the participating organisations' own contribution from 10% to 15%, the Palme Center has worked purposefully to create a competitive application and prepare the organisation to meet Sida's new contractual conditions.

In Eastern Europe, work continues to be dominated by the war in Ukraine and the Palme Center is continuing to develop programme activities in the region. In the Western Balkans, activities have proceeded according to plan and a new agreement with Sida Serbia covering SEK 15 million over three years was signed. The focus is on socio-economic rights and agreements have been signed with six local organisations.

In the Middle East/North Africa, the negative developments in Palestine and the war in Gaza continued in 2024. At the end of 2023, the Government temporarily froze all payments to Palestinian partner organisations. Operations have had to be adjusted to some extent, with a strong focus on supporting staff and partner organisations on the ground as far as possible.

In Türkiye, work has focused on promoting democracy, human rights, gender equality and peace and dialogue. The Palme Center's partners in the country are working on mapping human rights violations and advocacy. In the area of peace and dialogue, work is being done to actively build trust between women and young people from Türkiye and Armenia, two countries with a long history of conflict. The Palme Center's partners have also drawn attention to the situation of female Syrian refugees in the country through an extensive campaign. Syrian refugees are often subjected to discrimination and hate crimes, which have at times led to conflict and even violence.

In Myanmar, the civil society continues to operate under extreme conditions, with activists forced underground or into exile. Several partners have worked to collect and disseminate data on human rights violations and advocate, for example with the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar (IIMM) and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), for accountability, justice and reform in the country. In the Philippines, among other things, the Palme Center has continued to support training that enables a new generation of progressive political leaders and movements to grow.

In Southern Africa, work has proceeded according to plan. In ESwatini, the Palme Center's partner organisation, the Trade Union Congress of ESwatini, has played a key role in bringing about the new legislation that gives workers the right to work in safe and healthy conditions. In DR Congo, politicians and decision-makers at national level are more often held to account and scrutinised. The Palme Center's partner organisation Lutte pour le Changement has worked to hold politicians to account at regional as well as local level.

In Latin America, peace negotiations have been taking place between the Colombian government and guerrilla groups. For several years, the Palme Center has contributed to the peace dialogue by supporting the process of including women's perspectives, as well as the participation of women and civil society in the dialogue. For the first time, an environmental conference was organised in the country, bringing together 140 environmental activists to draft an environmental declaration. The fact that the environmental movement spoke with one voice and met with the Government for the first time was a historic step. The Convention has strengthened the movement's influence, contributed to concrete policy reforms and improved protection for environmentalists.

#### Policy and advocacy

In 2024, a major focus was on the war in Gaza and developments in Palestine. The Palme Center has worked actively to highlight violations of international law and to influence the Government and the European Commission through opinion pieces and social media campaigns. The Palme Center held a number of manifestations during the year. A candlelight manifestation for a ceasefire together with several member organisations, a petition calling for an end to arms deliveries to warring parties and a petition was implemented to put pressure on the Government to act to protect the civilian population in Palestine.

Opinion-forming work has also been carried out on many other pressing issues. In statements and actions, the Palme Center has repeatedly protested against Russia's illegal war of aggression in Ukraine, the military dictatorship in Myanmar's increased repression, human rights violations in Türkiye, the dissolution of Thailand's largest opposition party and the Foreign Agent Law in Georgia. The need for a just climate transition and environmental issues have also been actively highlighted in a number of initiatives.

A major focus has also been on monitoring developments in Swedish foreign aid and influencing the design of the future civil society foreign aid. Linked to this, the "Movement to Movement" campaign – Safeguarding the unique role of the civil society in foreign aid, was carried out in the organisation's digital channels. A large number of examples from our partnerships around the world were highlighted.

Trade union international development cooperation is further threatened by the Government's new foreign aid policy. As the world's largest social movement, the trade union movement has a key role in breaking the dangerous authoritarian trend. In response to this, the Palme Center carried out communication campaigns, debate articles, etc. in the spring as part of the "Save Trade Union Foreign Aid" campaign, which was also the main theme of the Palme Center's stand at the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) Congress.

In May 2024, there were elections to the European Parliament. A dialogue and lecture tour was also carried out during the spring to four locations in Skåne in collaboration with Solidar and ABF Skåne. The aim was to highlight the threat posed by the right-wing authoritarian political movements that are on the rise in Sweden and Europe, and to raise awareness of the importance of the European elections.

The Palme Day was held in November in Malmö under the slogan "Dare More Democracy" and how democracy and equality can be strengthened and how the labour movement can work for a world where the well-being of people and the planet comes first. Co-organisers were Socialdemokra-

Multi-year overview (TSEK)	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Revenue	185 254	164 697	196 540	180 164	166 578
Operating results	-5 122	-6 416	1 370	8 906	912
Profit after financial items	-4 458	-5 265	1 310	10 389	925
Balance sheet total	87 626	76 173	90 604	108 586	79 806

terna i Skåne, Socialdemokraterna i Malmö, SSU Skåne, ABF Skåne The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) Skåne.

#### **Fund Raising**

Systematic work to develop the ways in which the Palme Center's member organisations can be involved and participate in the organisation's activities began during the year. Not least, project activities will be packaged more clearly (thematic sponsorship, etc.) in order to increase accessibility and the willingness to participate and support the activities.

The Palme Center has conducted several campaigns. On 6 March, the Palme Center launched a fundraising campaign to help the civilian population in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank through our local partner organisations in Palestine. Together with SSU, a campaign was also launched in which members of their districts were invited to recruit monthly donors to the Palme Center. Starting at the end of October, a flash fundraising campaign for Belarus was also organised together with ABF. A new wave of repression swept across the country, with mass arrests and violence against the democracy movement. A fundraising campaign was urgently launched to support ABF Belarus members who were in danger or had been forced to flee.

#### SIGNIFICANT EVENTS AFTER THE FINANCIAL YEAR

In early 2025, Donald Trump was inaugurated as the new President of the United States and shortly thereafter USAID's activities around the world were stopped, which has directly or indirectly affected and will affect the work of the Palme Center in the future.

On 28 January 2025, the Palme Center submitted a CSO application, Solidarity in Action, to Sida for a total of SEK 400 million over 5 years. A decision is expected in June 2025.

At the beginning of April, the Palme Center was informed by Sida that the exemption from own resources that, according to the Government decision, applied in 2020 and 2021 cannot be fully applied. This means an unforeseen cost of SEK 4.5 million more than budgeted in 2024 for own contribution linked to programme activities in 2021.

In collaboration with Bantorget Finans AB, the Palme Centre has rebalanced the organisation's managed assets.

#### **RESULTS AND POSITION**

For the financial year 2024, the Palme Center reports a loss of TSEK -5,122 (TSEK -6,416) before financial items and after financial items of TSEK -4,458 (TSEK -5,265). The result is divided between the activities of the Solidarity Fund at TSEK -4,164 (TSEK 105) and TSEK 1,394 (TSEK -5,370) for other activities of the Palme Center. The year's withdrawals from the operational and investment fund totaled TSEK 1 689 (TSEK 3 671).

#### **EMPLOYEES**

The Palme Center's head office is located on Sveavägen 68 in Stockholm. During the year, the Palme Center employed an average of 33 (34) people. In addition, there were 11 (11) local employees in a number of countries of operation (Albania, Kosovo, Palestine, Serbia, South Africa, Democratic Republic of Congo). The total number of staff employed at the Palme Center during the year was 44 (45). All employees at the headquarters are covered by collective labour agreements. Local employees are covered by conditions as close as possible to collective agreements. The statistics on local employees only include people with employment contracts; a further 5 (4) people in our project countries are contracted via consultancy agreements.

#### SUSTAINABILITY DISCLOSURES

The scope of the Palme Center's activities and the possibility to work in a long-term and sustainable manner depends mainly on the funding situation. 2025 looks relatively stable, but for the last quarter there is uncertainty about what the CSO grant will amount to. The Olof Palme Center is looking at various scenarios to deal with a possible reduction in funding for 2026.

#### Future developments and significant risks and uncertainties

With a new US administration, further uncertainty is added to future developments in foreign and development policy. This makes it difficult to predict what will happen and to plan for the long term. Increased political polarisation, reduced space for the civil society, and war and conflict also mean that the situation in several of the Palme Center's countries of operation, and in Sweden, is under pressure. Both for partners, staff and member organisations. However, the Palme Center continues to see great commitment to and interest in international issues among our member organisations.

The overall funding situation for development co-operation looks much worse than before. Several institutional and bilateral donors, including the EU, the United States and the United Kingdom, are making or will make major cuts and reprioritisations in their development cooperation, both in terms of focus and funding levels. The Swedish government and Sida are also making significant changes and it is considered uncertain what Sida will focus on in the future. During 2024, work on developing other sources of funding, a prerequisite for maintaining the current size of the Palme Center's operations, has therefore been intensified.

New tougher regulation and uncertainty in the external environment also affect banks' willingness to take risks. The Palme Center is finding it increasingly difficult to transfer money to certain countries of operation, which makes the administration of its activities more cumbersome. The requirements for internal governance and control are gradually increasing, which means that an increasing proportion of internal resources need to be devoted to this.

#### Financial instruments and investment policy

The objectives of the Palme Center's asset management are to ensure continuous growth of the organisation's capital. The Palme Center is therefore working towards two targets: an annual direct return of a nominal 3% of the market value of the assets under management, and an annual total return (direct return plus value increase) of a nominal 5% of the market value of the assets under management.

The assets of the Palme Center and the Solidarity Fund may be invested in fixed income securities, equity funds and alternative investments with limited risk. Investments shall be made in a sustainable manner consistent with the values expressed in the Statutes of the Palme Center. Investments shall be made in accordance with the Palme Center's environmental and climate policy and the spirit of the section on sustainability in Bantorget Finans AB's and The Swedish Trade Union Confederation's (LO) investment policy.

In 2024, work began together with Bantorget Finans to re-balance the Palme Center's portfolio. From having been invested in several different financial instruments with relatively high management costs to more traditional equity funds with lower management costs. The Palme Center believes that this will provide a more secure and stable return in the long term and generate lower management costs.

#### Environment and climate action

The Palme Center strives towards continuous environmental improvements throughout its operations. Structured environmental management work is therefore carried out to reduce the organisation's negative impact on the climate and the environment, as well as to increase the organisation's positive impact by adapting the organisation to change. Since 2021, the Palme Center has been environmentally certified according to the Swedish Environmental Base Standard and works during the years 2020-2025 based on an established action plan for the environment and climate. The goals include integrating the climate and environmental perspective into programmes and projects, increasing knowledge and competence in environmental and sustainability issues, and reducing the environmental impact of business travel in particular, but also transport, suppliers and purchasing. In 2024, we ensured, among other things, that 100% of our staff in Stockholm received basic environmental training. During the year, at least 48 people active in the Palme Center's projects within partner or member organisations also participated in training on just climate transition. This included an exchange between environmental and women's organisations on how to act for both gender equality and a safe environment. The Palme Center's trade union partners have also had the opportunity to meet, share experiences and prioritise how they want to work in the future, and at these meetings, just climate change transition was an important issue.

The Palme Center's environmental report is available on request.

#### **OTHER INFORMATION**

More information on activities can be found on the Palme Center website www.palmecenter.se.

## **Annual Report and Accounts**

#### Statement of income and expense

Statement of income and expense TSEK	Note	2024-01-31 -2024-12-31	2023-01-31 -2023-12-31
The association's income			
Grants received	2	171 261	151 077
Funds raised/gifts/donations/ contributions to the Solidarity Fund		9 019	8 891
Membership fees		4 377	4 177
Other operating income		597	552
Total income of the association	3	185 254	164 697
Association expenses			
Foreign aid program costs	3, 4, 5	-181 255	-162 445
Fundraising costs		-3 674	-2 369
Administration costs		-5 447	-6 300
Total association expenses		-190 376	-171 113
Operating result		-5 122	-6 416
Financial items			
Other interest income and similar income	6	670	1 232
Interest expenses and similar income		-6	-81
Total financial items		664	1 151
Result after financial items	7,8	-4 458	-5 265
Result for the year		-4 458	-5 265

#### **Balance sheet**

Balance sheet TSEK	Note	2024-12-31	2023-12-31
ASSETS			
Fixed assets			
Intangible fixed assets			
Intangible fixed assets	9	90	180
Total intangible fixed assets		90	180
Tangible fixed assets			
Machinery and equipment	10	382	332
Total tangible fixed assets		382	332
Financial fixed assets			
Other long-term receivables	11	0	3 250
Total financial fixed assets	11	0	3 250
Total fixed assets		472	3 761
		-112	5101
Current assets			
Current receivables			
Trade receivables		736	1 398
Tax receivables		570	570
Other current receivables		1 948	8 418
Prepaid expenses and accrued income	9	845	604
Total current receivables		4 100	10 990
Short-term investments			
Short-term investments	12	47 532	20 599
Total short-term investments		47 532	20 599
Cash and bank			
Cash and bank		35 522	40 822
Total cash and bank		35 522	40 822
Total current assets		87 154	72 411
TOTAL ASSETS		87 626	76 173

#### **Balance sheet**

Balance sheet TSEK	Note	2024-12-31	2023-12-31
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
Equity capital	13		
Unrestricted equity			
Equity capital		28 943	33 401
Total non-restricted equity		28 943	33 401
Total equity		28 943	33 401
Current liabilities			
Trade payables		5 043	6 374
Debt to donors	14	46 860	23 703
Other current liabilities		1670	1 062
Accrued expenses and deferred income	15	5 110	11 633
Total current liabilities		58 683	42 772
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		87 626	76 173
Cash flow statement TSEK	Note	2024-12-31	2023-12-31
---	---------------	------------	------------
Current operations			
Operational results		-4 897	-6 417
Depreciation		281	294
Interest received and results of foreign exchange management		156	1 211
Dividends received		529	20
Interest paid and foreign exchange r	esults	-246	-81
Cash flow from operating activities changes in working capital	before	-4 177	-4 973
Increase/decrease in other current r	eceivables	6 896	-8 002
Increase/decrease in other short-ter	m investments	-26 939	104
Increase/decrease in trade payables		-1 331	3 079
Increase/decrease in other current l	iabilities	17 242	-12 244
Cash flow from operating activities		-8 309	-22 036
Investment activities			
Investments in intangible assets		0	172
Investments in tangible fixed assets	3	-241	-94
Investments in financial fixed assets	s 11	0	4 750
Disposal of financial assets		3 250	0
Cash flow from investing activities		3 009	4 828
Cash flow for the year		-5 300	-17 208
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year		40 822	58 030
Cash and cash equivalents at year-	end	35 522	40 822

## Notes

TSEK

## Note 1 Accounting and valuation principles

Olof Palme International Center's annual report is prepared in accordance with the Swedish Annual Accounts Act and the Swedish Accounting Standards Board's general advice BFNAR 2012:1 Annual Report and Consolidated Accounts (K3). The accounting principles are unchanged in comparison to the previous year.

## **INCOME STATEMENT**

## Operating income

Only the inflow of economic benefits that the organisation has received or will receive for its own account is recognised as income. Revenue is measured, unless specifically stated below, at the fair value of what has been or will be received. The following describes, for each revenue item, when revenue is recognised.

## Membership fees

Membership fees comprise payments for membership of the association. Membership fees are recognised upon receipt of payment from the member and recognised as revenue over the relevant period.

## Gifts and grants

A transaction in which the organisation receives an asset or service that has value without giving back the equivalent value in exchange is a gift or grant received. If the asset or service is received because the organisation has met or will meet certain conditions and if the organization has an obligation to repay the counterparty if the conditions are not met, it is a grant received. If it is not a grant, it is a gift.

## Gifts

Funds raised include gifts received mainly from individuals and organisations. Funds raised also include bequests and donations, the value of donated assets and income from funds raised with gift certificates. Gifts are generally recognised as revenue when received. Gifts are generally measured at fair value. Where the charity has provided consideration for the gift, the value of the gift is reduced by the consideration.

## Grants

Grants are recognised as revenue when the conditions for obtaining the grant are met. Grants received are recognised as a liability until the conditions for obtaining the grant are met. Grants received to cover certain costs (e.g. for administration) are recognised in the same financial year as the cost they are intended to cover. Grants related to a fixed asset reduce its cost. Grants received are measured at the fair value of the asset received or receivable by the Organisation.

## Operating costs

Operating costs are those costs directly related to the fulfillment of the organisation's purpose and statutes. This item includes costs for communication and program activities as well as costs for training, skills development, quality assurance, exchange of experience, etc. A separate breakdown of the operating costs has been made regarding grants paid to aid projects, grants paid to the Solidarity Fund and fundraising costs for the Solidarity Fund.

## Administration costs

Administration costs are those costs that are necessary to administer the organisation itself. Some general administration is required to ensure good internal control and the good quality of the organisation's reporting, personnel management, etc. This includes costs for administrative staff, rent, board meetings and similar costs. In cases where staff members work both on operational tasks and on area administrative tasks, the costs for these persons have been allocated between operational and administrative costs in relation to the estimated time spent in each area.

## Costs for foreign aid and communication programmes

Refers to disbursed grants for foreign aid projects where applied grants from Sida have been forwarded to member organisations after application to the Olof Palme International Center. In addition, they include direct costs incurred in foreign aid projects run by the Olof Palme International Center.

## Leasing

All the Association's leases are accounted for as operating leases, i.e. the lease payment (including the first rent increase) is recognised on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

#### **Employee benefits**

Ongoing employee benefits in the form of wages, salaries, social security contributions and similar are expensed as the employees are in receipt of these services. As all pension obligations are classified as defined contribution, an expense is recognized in the year in which the pension is earned.

#### Income tax

The association is exempt from income tax on its non-profit activities as it qualifies as a public benefit under tax legislation.

#### **BALANCE SHEET**

Assets, liabilities and provisions are valued at cost unless otherwise stated below.

#### Tangible and intangible fixed assets

Property, plant and equipment are stated at cost less depreciation. Cost includes expenditure directly attributable to the acquisition of the asset. Grants relating to the acquisition of property, plant and equipment reduce the cost of the asset. An item of property, plant and equipment that has significant components where the difference in consumption is expected to be material is accounted for and depreciated as separate units based on the useful life of each component.

Property, plant and equipment is depreciated on a systematic basis over the estimated useful life of the asset. In determining the depreciable amount of the assets, the residual value of the asset is taken into account where appropriate. The straight-line method of depreciation is used.

The following depreciation periods are applied:	
Computer equipment	3 years
Customised software	5 years
Other equipment	5 years

#### Financial assets

Financial instruments are accounted for in accordance with the rules in K3 Chapter 11, which means that valuation is based on cost.

At the time of acquisition, financial assets are valued at cost plus direct transaction costs. Subsequent to initial recognition, short-term investments are measured at the lower of cost and net realisable value at the balance sheet date.

Trade receivables are valued individually at the amount expected to be received. All assets held for risk diversification purposes are considered to be part of a portfolio of securities and are therefore treated as one item for the purposes of valuation at the lower of cost or market and impairment testing.

Receivables and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are valued at the closing rate.

## Liability for unpaid subsidies decided

In cases where the association has decided on the payment of a grant/allowance/subsidy and notified the recipient but has not made the payment, this amount is reported as a liability.

## Liability for unused subsidies received

When the association has received a grant but has not yet fulfilled the conditions, a liability is recognised.

## Provisions

A provision is recognised when the association has obligations that arise during the financial year or previous financial years and that are certain or probable at the balance sheet date but uncertain as to amount or as to the timing of their settlement. Provisions are valued at the best estimate of the amount that will be required to be paid.

#### Note 2 Grants from Sida and the EU

	2024-01-31 -2024-12-31	2023-01-31 -2023-12-31
The Association's income is distributed as follows*:		
Grants from Sida	161 545	134 950
Grants from EU	1 975	0
Other contributions received for operations	4 738	7 632
Contributions carried over from previous years	21 352	31 183
Contributions carried over to the following year	-18 349	-22 687
Total	171 261	151 077
Of which administration grants	13 033	10 736
Of which project management	20 266	19 090

#### Note 3 Operating leases - lessors

	2024-01-31 -2024-12-31	2023-01-31 -2023-12-31
Future minimum lease payments to be received relating to leasing contracts:		
Due within one year Due later than one but within five 5 years	0 0	0 0
Reading fees recognised as income during the period	0	0
Lease payments received during the period	0	112

The organisation rents part of the office space to a related organisation.

## Note 4 Operating leases - lessees

	2024-01-31 -2024-12-31	2023-01-31 -2023-12-31
Future minimum lease payments to be made		
in respect of leases:		
Due within one year	3 868	3 604
Due later than one but within five years	3 945	7 283
Lease payments expensed during the period	7 813	10 887
Total leasing charges expensed for the financial year	3 872	3 745

Operating leases essentially consist of rented premises, office services and photocopiers. The agreement for the lease of the premises for the office runs for three years, the final year being 2026. The lease agreement for photocopiers is for five years, with 2027 being the final year. The amount of future lease payments is recorded at nominal value.

## Note 5 Wages, salaries, other remuneration

and social security costs

	2024-01-31 -2024-12-31	2023-01-31 -2023-12-31
Number of employees		
OPC Headquarters Sweden	33	34
Local Office Albania	1	1
Local Office Serbia/Bosnia (one office in Belgrad)	2	2
Local Office Kosovo	1	1
Local Office Palestine	2	2
Local Office South Africa	4	4
Local Office Democratic Republic of Congo	1	1
Average number of employees	44	45

Of the 33 staff members at the headquarters, 17 were women and 16 men.

Of the 11 local staff, 5 were women and 6 men. The average number of employees for 2024 does not include employees who received remuneration of less than half a price base amount. Persons engaged on a consultancy basis are not included in the number of staff.

	2024-01-31 -2024-12-31	2023-01-31 -2023-12-31
Salaries and other remuneration: Board of Directors and Secretary General * Other employees Total wages and salaries	942 18 432 19 374	939 18 716 19 655
* No fees were paid to the Board of Directors in 2022 (0).		
Social costs	6 149	6 131
Pension costs Secretary General Other employees Total	126 1 651 1 777	255 1 644 1 899
Special payroll tax on pension premiums	431	471
Members of the Board of Directors and senior management Number of board members on the balance sheet date Women Men Total	7 4 11	6 5 11
Number of Secretaries-General and other senior managers Women Men Total	1 4 5	1 4 5

## Agreement on severance pay

According to the agreement, the Secretary-General has a notice period of 12 months in the event of dismissal by the employer, and 6 months in the event of his own resignition. For other members of the management team, the period of notice is 3–6 months depending on the length of service. In the event of own notice, 3 months.

#### Note 6 Other interest income and similar income

	2024-01-31 -2024-12-31	2023-01-31 -2023-12-31
Dividends	529	20
Capital gains on disposals	0	-7
Interest income bank	150	61
Interest income on investments	0	1 137
Exchange rate differences	-9	21
	670	1 232

## Note 7 Specification of the result for the year

Note i Specification of the result for the year	2024-01-31 -2024-12-31	2023-01-31 -2023-12-31
Profit for the year according to the profit and loss account		
Results of the Solidarity Fund	-4 163	105
Operations and Investment Fund	-1 689	0
Amount remaining for the year	1 394	-5 370
	-4 458	-5 265
Note 8 Solidarity Fund activities in figures		
	2024-01-31 -2024-12-31	2023-01-31 -2023-12-31
Revenue Solidarity Fund	5 366	4 198
Revenue Solidarity Fund Sponsorship income Solidarity Fund	5 366 2 519	4 198 2 968
Sponsorship income Solidarity Fund	5 366 2 519 1 133	4 198 2 968 1 766
-	2 519	2 968
Sponsorship income Solidarity Fund Return on capital	2 519 1 133	2 968 1 766
Sponsorship income Solidarity Fund Return on capital Own contribution Side project	2 519 1 133 -11 197	2 968 1 766 -6 459
Sponsorship income Solidarity Fund Return on capital Own contribution Side project Direct actions	2 519 1 133 -11 197 -1 414	2 968 1 766 -6 459 -846
Sponsorship income Solidarity Fund Return on capital Own contribution Side project Direct actions Funds collected carried over to the following year	2 519 1 133 -11 197 -1 414 -955	2 968 1 766 -6 459 -846 -809

Other information regarding the Solidarity Fund:

In addition to the direct return on capital shown in the accounts, there is also an underlying increase in market value. See difference between book value and market value in notes 11 and 12.

Not 9 Intangible fixed assets	2024-12-31	2023-12-31
Opening acquisition values	449	621
Purchases for the year	0	0
Disposals and scrapping	0	-172
<b>Closing accumulated acquisition values</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>449</b>
Opening depreciation	-269	-179
Disposals and scrapping	0	0
Depreciation for the year	-90	-90
<b>Closing accumulated depreciation</b>	<b>-359</b>	<b>-269</b>
Closing residual value according to plan	90	180

## Note 10 Tangible fixed assets

	2024-12-31	2023-12-31
Opening acquisition values Purchases for the year Disposals and scrapping <b>Closing accumulated acquisition values</b>	2 570 241 0 <b>2 812</b>	2 763 121 -314 <b>2 570</b>
Opening depreciation Disposals and scrapping Depreciation for the year <b>Closing accumulated depreciation</b>	-2 239 0 -191 <b>-2 430</b>	-2 322 287 -204 <b>-2 239</b>
Closing residual value according to plan	382	332
Note 11 Other long-term receivables	2024-12-31	2023-12-31
Book value Market value Difference book value-market value	0 0 0	3 250 4 459 1 209
Folksam endowment insurance	0	3 250
Closing book value	0	3 250
Note 12 Other short-term investments	2024-12-31	2023-12-31
Book value Market value Difference book value-market value	47 532 52 991 5 459	20 599 24 634 4 035
Swedbank equity funds	12 617	12 617

Closing book value	47 532	20 599
Shares	0	0
Corporate bond loans	0	0
Special deposits	34 915	7 982
Swedbank equity funds	12 617	12 617

## Note 13 Change in equity

Opening balance Result for the year Solidarity Fund Profit for the year from operations and	Solidarity fund 16 799 -5 853	Operational and investment fund 9 746	Balanced capital OPC 6 856	equity	
investment fund Remaining amount for the year OPC	1689	-1 689	1 394	0 1 394	
Closing balance	12 636	8 057	8 250	28 943	
Note 14 Debt to Sida and other donors		2024-12	2-31	2023-12-31	
Refund of appropriations for previous years Donor contributions carried over to the following year Interest payable		!	66 155 541 <b>762</b>	306 23 397 0 <b>23 703</b>	
Note 15 Accrued expenses and deferred income					
Vacation salaries Accrued social security contributions Prepaid appropriations Other items		26 (	2 <b>-31</b> 151 951 098 971 <b>171</b>	2023-12-31 3 187 926 6 003 1 517 11 633	

## Stockholm, May 5 2025

## Signatures of the Board and the Secretary-General, digitally signed.

Margot Wallström, SAP Chairman of the Board	Oscar Enerot Secretary General
Leif Isaksson, LO	Åsa Törnlund, LO
Karin Lindehoff, Handelsanställdas förbund	Martin Gunnarsson, IF Metall
Linnéa Wennberg, ABF	Gabriella Lavecchia, Seko
Christopher Lindvall, SSU	Morgan Johansson, SAP
Nina Unesi, S-kvinnor	Alma Hedmark, S-Studenter

## Our audit report has been submitted 2025-05-06 Auditor's notes, digitally signed.

Micaela Karlström Authorised Public Accountant MOORE Allegretto i Stockholm AB Mathias Tegnér, SAP

# **Auditor's report**

## **REPORT ON THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS**

#### Opinions

We have audited the annual accounts of the Olof Palme International Center for the financial year 2024. In our opinion, the annual accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Annual Accounts Act and present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Center as of December 31, 2024 and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the Annual Accounts Act. The Directors' Report is consistent with the other parts of the annual accounts.

#### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISA) and generally accepted auditing standards in Sweden. The auditor's responsibilities under these standards are further described in the sections Responsibilities of the authorised public accountant and Responsibilities of the elected auditor.

We are independent of the Center in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards in Sweden. As an authorised public accountant, I have fulfilled my ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinions.

#### Information other than the annual accounts

The Board of Directors is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the report of the Board of Directors (but does not include the annual accounts and our auditor's report thereon).

Our opinion on the annual accounts does not cover this information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the annual accounts, our responsibility is to read the information identified above and consider whether the information is materially inconsistent with the annual accounts. In making those risk assessments, we also consider the knowledge we obtained during the audit and whether the other information appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work performed on that other information, we conclude that the other information is materially misstated, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

#### Responsibility of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the annual accounts in accordance with the Annual Accounts Act. The Board of Directors is also responsible for such internal control as it determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, be that due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Board of Directors is responsible for the assessment of the Center's ability to continue as a going concern. They disclose, as applicable, matters related to the going concern assumption. However, the going concern basis of accounting is not applied if the Board intends to liquidate the Center, to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

#### Responsibilities of the statutory auditor

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the annual accounts as a whole are free from material misstatement, be that due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs and generally accepted auditing standards in Sweden will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs, I exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. In addition:

- » identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the annual accounts, be that due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for a material misstatement resulting from error, because fraud may include collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or override of internal control.
- » obtain an understanding of the Center's internal control relevant to my audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate under the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Center's internal control.
- » evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board of Directors.

- » I conclude on the appropriateness of the Board of Directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements. I also conclude, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Center's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am, in my auditor's report, required to draw attention to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion on the financial statements. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of the audit report.
- » I evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I must inform the board, among other things, of the planned scope and timing of the audit. I must also inform about significant observations during the audit, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I have identified.

#### The elected auditor's responsibility

I am required to carry out an audit in accordance with the Audit Act and thereby in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards in Sweden. My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the annual accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Annual Accounts Act and whether the annual accounts give a true and fair view of the Center's financial performance and position.

## REPORT ON OTHER LEGAL AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

#### Statements

In addition to our audit of the annual accounts, we have also audited the administration of the Board of Directors of the Olof Palme International Center for the financial year 2024. We recommend that the Council of Representatives discharge the members of the Board of Directors from liability for the financial year.

#### **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards in Sweden. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the sections Responsibilities of the authorised public accountant and Responsibilities of the elected public accountant. We are independent of the Center in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards in Sweden. As an authorised public accountant, I have fulfilled my ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### **Responsibilities of the Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors is responsible for the administration of the Center.

#### The auditor's responsibility

Our objective for the audit of the administration, and thereby our opinion on discharge, is to obtain audit evidence to assess with a reasonable degree of assurance whether any member of the Board of Directors has, in any material respect, taken any action or been guilty of any omission which could give rise to liability to the Center.

As part of an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards in Sweden, the authorised public accountant uses professional judgment and maintains professional skepticism throughout the audit. The examination of the management is primarily based on the audit of the accounts. The additional audit procedures performed are based on the professional judgment of the authorised public accountant and the judgment of the other elected auditors based on risk and materiality. This means that we focus the audit on those actions, areas and conditions that are significant to the operations and where deviations and non-compliances would have a particular impact on the Center's situation. We review and examine decisions made, supporting documentation, actions taken and other matters that are relevant to our opinion on discharge from liability.

As of the date of our electronic signature

Mathias Tegnér Member Auditor

Micaela Karlström Authorised Public Accountant MOORE Allegretto i Stockholm AB

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024**



Margot Wallström, Chair



Leif Isaksson, Swedish Trade Union Confederation, I N



Åsa Törnlund, Swedish Trade Union Confederation, LO



Martin Gunnarsson, Swedish Metal and Industrial Workers Union, IF Metall



Karin Lindehoff, Swedish Commercial Employees' Union, Handels



Linnéa Wennberg, Swedish Workers' Educational Association, ABF



Gabriella Lavecchia, Swedish Union for Service and Communications Employees, Seko



Morgan Johansson, Swedish Social Democrats



Christopher Lindvall, Swedish Social Democratic Youth League, SSU



Alma Hedmark, Social Democratic Students of Sweden, S-Studenter

## ALTERNATE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Cyrene Waern, Swedish Trade Union Confederation Sofia Eriksson, Swedish Municipal Workers' Union Niklas Skeppar, Swedish Workers' Educational Association

Paula Carvalho Olovsson, Swedish Social Democrats

Olle Thorell, Swedish Social Democrats

Christian Kaddik, Young Eagles

Jimmy Ovesson, Swedish Transport Workers' Union Monica Widman-Lundmark, Labour Movement Folk High Schools

Marie Nordén, Swedish Social Democrats for Faith and Solidarity

Dan Nicander, Swedish Union of Tenants



S-kvinnor

Mathias Tegnér, Swedish Social Democrats Micaela Karlström, certified public accountant

Nina Ünesi, Social Demo-

cratic Women in Sweden,

## **DEPUTY AUDITORS**

Lars Gäfvert, Swedish Trade Union Confederation Lars-Erik Engberg, certified public accountant

## NOMINATION COMMITTEE

Roger Hällhag, Swedish Social Democrats Elisabeth Brandt Ygeman, Swedish Trade Union Confederation Marianne Ericsson, Swedish Workers' Educational Association



**OLOF PALME** Photo: Olof Palmes Minnesfond

## **"THE DESIRE FOR PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IS COMMON TO ALL PEOPLES."** – OLOF PALME



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