

Hans Blix
A Somewhat-Expanded Curriculum Vitae –
Revised and Updated from a text of
26 February 1997

Although much more personal than an ordinary CV this text does not report on 57 years of very happy marriage between Hans Blix and Eva Kettis (now retired ambassador, M.A. in business administration and M.A. in history), nor on their very able and successful two sons, Mårten (born in 1968 and Ph.D. in Economics) and Göran (born in 1971 and Ph.D. in literature) and their families.

Hans Blix

Born 1928 in Uppsala, an old university town one hour north of Stockholm. My father was a professor at the university. My grandfather was a professor at the university of Lund. Both were scientists in medicine.

Attended school and university at Uppsala. Devoted much time to student amateur theatre. Never became a good actor, but learnt to speak clearly, to be well heard and understood by an audience – an ability that has been very useful in politics and at international conferences.

Began to study law in 1946 with some thought of joining the Foreign Office to see the world – which was again opening up after the world war. Decided against the idea of a life in diplomacy, when asked if I wanted to be someone spending my life having lunch. Decided instead in favour of what then appeared to be a more serious path, namely the study of the law of nations. To someone who had seen the world war from the – shielded – corner of Sweden, the gradual building of a genuine international community with law and institutions seemed worthwhile in 1950 – and still does.

First contact with the United Nations in 1950, when a prize won in an international essay contest on the subject of the veto power in the Security Council gave me a month at UN Headquarters in Lake Success. This was the session of the General Assembly when the so-called Acheson Plan was adopted, giving the Assembly the possibility of making recommendations – even on the use of force – when the Security Council was blocked by a veto.

After a Swedish law degree in 1951 I spent two years at Cambridge, England specializing in and doing research in international law under one of the world's leading scholars in the field, Sir Hersch Lauterpacht, later Judge at the International Court of Justice at the Hague. Following those two years I spent another two years at the Law School of Columbia University under another great professor, Philip C. Jessup, later like Lauterpacht, Judge at the Hague Court. I assisted Jessup doing research for the book that he later published on "Transnational Law". I was also close

to another excellent Columbia Law School Professor, Oliver Lissitzyn. These years and a further few spent on thesis writing yielded a fairly solid knowledge of the existing international legal system, its potential and its fragility. They also resulted in a Ph.D. at Cambridge and an LL.D. at Stockholm. The law of treaties was my field of specialty within international law and my first research-based article was 'The Requirement of Ratification' (published in *British Yearbook of International Law*, 1953). The dissertation was entitled 'Treaty-Making Power' (London, New York 1960). I was all set to go for an academic career, like my father, and started to teach and do research at the Stockholm Law Faculty. I wrote a second book – 'Statsmyndig-heternas Internationella Förbindelser' (Stockholm 1964) about a little discussed but common modern problem -- how a foreign ministry can keep some central control over foreign relations, when practically all government departments and authorities have their own international relations.

Already at Uppsala University I had joined the youth movement of the Liberal Party, convinced that twenty years of Social Democracy was enough and that the distribution of power – all kinds of power – was desirable in order to maintain freedom and to spread risks. The Liberal Party accepted the idea of the welfare state and so did I, but the ever-increasing power in the hands of the central government seemed an unwelcome evolution. As an Associate Professor I was free to be active in the Swedish Liberal Party and in the World Federation of Liberal and Radical Youth, of which I was the President for two years. Through this work I also became somewhat involved in the World Assembly of Youth which was the umbrella for a large number of non-communist youth movements. This political work gave a good deal of training in discerning common denominators, in working out joint platforms, in negotiating and formulating and in dealing with people from the most varied backgrounds. The work also gave a few trips to various parts of the world.

The academic cum politics avenue came to an end, however, when the Social Democrat Swedish Foreign Minister, Undén, himself a professor and expert on civil and international law, asked me in the fall of 1961 to be a member of the Swedish Delegation to the General Assembly and to represent Sweden in the Sixth – legal – Committee. As of 1962 I became the Foreign Ministry's adviser on international law. First as a consultant but from 1963 until 1976 (when I became State Secretary for Development Cooperation) on a full time basis. In this capacity I took part in a great number of negotiations including those at the Geneva Disarmament Conference, where I advised Alva Myrdal.

I represented Sweden every year for 15 years in the Legal Committee of the General Assembly. In this capacity and through participation in many intersessional UN conferences and committees, I became very familiar with the UN structures and the application – and non-application – of fundamental UN rules.

Especially one intersessional committee was very instructive. It had the task of elaborating some of the basic principles of the UN Charter, including the non-use of force, non-intervention, peaceful settlement of disputes, etc. in the light of the UN's own interpretation of these principles. Over Soviet resistance I was elected

Rapporteur of this so called 'Friendly Relations Committee' at its first session in Mexico in 1964. The Russians later fully endorsed the – impartial – report which I submitted. To the East the exercise meant a codification of the legal principles of 'peaceful co-existence'. To the West this label was unacceptable, but the UN principles which formed – at least part of the doctrine -- were an acceptable subject. After a number of long sessions the Committee was able to agree on a declaration expounding the selected Charter principles and the General Assembly adopted the declaration by consensus in 1970. Even though there has obviously been a vast amount of UN practice interpreting and applying the rules since 1970 the Declaration has remained a valuable authoritative interpretation.

To learn – through discussions with lawyer colleagues – which principles of state conduct were commonly agreed and which were not and – not least important – what loopholes either side wanted to preserve, was partly encouraging, partly sobering. It showed that States do not like to stand in violation of legal principles; they prefer to take care in formulating principles so that they retain what they regard as a necessary freedom of interpretation and action. The lawyer's exact definitions had much to tell about the extent to which governments are willing to commit themselves – and not to commit themselves – to lofty principles. I still do not think this was a useless, academic exercise. Rather, in order to move to a "more civilized" international society, I believe States need to engage in a slow process of joint organization and disarmament coupled with an ever expanding fabric of law, including the rules that govern basic conduct. For instance, defining a border between legitimate ways for states to exercise international influence and impermissible intervention.

Law is often said to resolve conflicts, but even more law -- by the guidance it gives -- helps to prevent conflicts to arise! An example: for some time in the 1960s I represented Sweden in the legal subcommittee of the UN Outer Space Committee that worked out the 'Outer Space Treaty' (1967) with a number of basic principles. These have guided states and helped to avoid conflicts for a long time and it is only by around 2015 with ever growing civilian and military space activities that they begin to look insufficient.

In 1968 and 1969 I represented Sweden at the UN Conference on the law of treaties and was a member of the 'drafting committee' that examined all drafts before they went for plenary approval. Not a dramatic conference but anyone who understands the fundamental importance of the law of contracts in domestic law will understand the practical importance of an agreed codification of the customary law of treaties that governs innumerable compacts at the international level.

It is common that international law advisers of foreign ministries are drawn from the academic world -sometimes on a part time basis -- and continue research, teaching and publishing on a slow burner. Even though a foreign ministry official since 1963, I certainly felt that part of me remained in the university world of teaching and writing. Thus, in the summer of 1970 I gave a series of lectures on the always controversial subject of 'recognition' at the Hague Academy of International Law. It was published under the title 'Contemporary Aspects of Recognition' in

Receuil des Cours (1970). Before the conference on the law of treaties I was also engaged by the Hammarskjöld Foundation to lead two seminars preparing a number of young law officers from developing countries for the conference. Three of my many lectures were published under the title 'Sovereignty, Aggression and Neutrality' (1970). The Foundation also published a practical handbook authored by me and my able colleague Jirina Emerson: 'The Treaty-Maker's Handbook' (Stockholm 1973).

The first UN Conference on Environment took place in Stockholm in 1972. When Sweden, especially through its then permanent representative at the UN, Ambassador Sverker Astrom, took the initiative to this Conference, I was all in favour and the whole Conference and its excellent preparation under the superb leadership of Maurice Strong was a very positive experience.

Conscious of the role that I had played in the drafting and adoption of the UN 'Friendly Relations' declaration (1970) the Swedish government assigned me to work on the drafting and negotiation of the main Declaration of the conference. I wrote the first draft and shepherded it through a tough process of amendments and then to negotiations and adoption in Stockholm. Such documents are, of course, never one individual's work and I collaborated with several skillful diplomats and friends. It was a great joy for all of us when the declaration was eventually adopted without any negative vote. Of course, one can coldly ask oneself what a non-binding instrument like this means, containing as it does many ambiguous formulations that were necessary to avoid negative votes. I think that it did have considerable value to heighten awareness around the world and to identify points on which all governments agree. For environmentalists a declaration like this is something tangible and respectable to use in the daily debate. I treasure this negotiation, which took only a little over a year. It concerned a genuinely important matter, it was a difficult diplomatic task and it came to a positive, useful result. Much later I wrote a paper about the declaration for a conference at Stockholm University. It was published by the Center for Oceans Law and Policy in a book with the title 'The Stockholm Declaration and the Law of the Marine Environment' (2003).

During the preparation for the Stockholm Conference I learned much about acid rains and their destructive effect on lakes in Sweden and Norway. I think it was then that I first concluded that nuclear power – producing no acid rain – was a most welcome line of energy generation.

In the 1970s I spent much time at many conferences working out protocols on the modernization of the laws of war -- a subject that was urgent after the Viet Nam war. I have published comments on several key questions that were dealt with:

'Moyens et méthodes de combat' in *Les Dimensions Internationales du Droit Humanitaire* (UNESCO 1986)

'Area bombardment: Rules and Reasons' in *British Yearbook of International Law* (1980)

'War and Environment' ed. by the Swedish Environmental Council (Stockholm 1981).

One controversial subject that I pursued on behalf of the Swedish Government at the conferences on the laws of war concerned bans on use of particularly injurious weapons, like high velocity projectiles, antipersonnel laser and incendiary weapons, like napalm. Despite much resistance a separate framework convention was adopted to which protocols were attached for specific weapons and to which more could be (and were) attached in the future. A description of this work and its result is found in a report that I presented to the Royal Swedish War Academy in 1980: 'Förbudet att använda vissa vapen' (Kungl. Krigsvetenskapsakademins Handlingar 1980).

The Helsinki Conference in 1975 was a watershed in East West politics marking *inter alia* that existing borders in Europe were recognized and could not be altered with force and that respect for human rights were matters of legitimate concern to all. I was summoned to Helsinki to help reach agreement on some points. The Declaration of the Conference spells out agreed principles in words that often are identical with those that we had used in the Friendly Relations Declaration (1970). I spoke about this subject in a Cairo lecture entitled 'The Helsinki Declaration on Principles Guiding Relations Between States in Europe'. It was published in the Egyptian Journal of International Law (1975).

In the 1976 Swedish election three non-Socialist Swedish parties attained majority and for the first time in forty years a non-Socialist government was formed. With much hesitation I accepted the offer to become Under-Secretary in the Foreign Ministry to be responsible for foreign aid (development assistance). I hesitated because I had never dealt with these questions. Since I had spent most of my professional foreign office life in the field where East-West relations dominated, the switch to the field where North-South dominated was a broadening experience. I enjoyed dealing with less abstract questions. To see a vocational school emerge thanks to our aid or to see village forests being planted thanks to some aid stimulation was – stimulating.

In the late fall of 1978 the three-party non-Socialist coalition broke up on disagreement over nuclear policy. A Liberal minority government was formed by the Minister I served and he asked me to be Foreign Minister, which I gladly accepted. For a very long time I had taken part in policy issues in the Ministry and the new role did not involve much new, apart from – and that was quite a difference – more exposure, more media coverage. As a civil servant – even as an Under-Secretary – you don't have very many given adversaries. As a Minister you have opposition parties who will try to snare you and watch every tiniest slip you may make. The media will be there like a swarm of flies. If a slight wound is not infected from the outset, their participation will achieve this in no time. I did not have bad relations with media, but I learnt that this part of the work was difficult.

The glory of government office was brief. In the fall of 1979 the elections brought a renewed – narrow – non-Socialist majority and a new three-party coalition was formed. In a somewhat unusual step, I went back to my previous job of Under-Secretary – for development aid. I had no thought of leaving the Foreign Ministry and

the Foreign Minister, Ullsten – leader of the Liberal Party – was a close friend with whom I would work easily.

In the spring of 1979, the Three Mile Island accident had occurred and after some convulsions Sweden decided to hold a referendum in the spring of 1980 on the future of nuclear power. Essentially the decision was engineered by the Social Democrats to take the issue out of the election campaign in August-September 1979. Somewhat taken by surprise I agreed, in January 1980, to be Liberal campaign leader for an option which pleaded for the implementation of the full Swedish program of 12 reactors – but no more. The twelve would form the “nuclear parenthesis” in Swedish energy. Fortunately we won. The anti-nuclear option advocated a phasing out of all Swedish nuclear power by 1990.

My major motivation for accepting to campaign was my conviction that nuclear energy was far preferable to oil and coal from an environmental viewpoint. Some 20 000 Swedish lakes had no more fish because of too high acidity. Less hydrocarbons and more nuclear was – and is – my conclusion. The view of the green that conservation and renewable energy could save so much energy that you could skip oil, coal and nuclear never convinced me. All energy generation carries some risk. Many miners die in coal mines. Hydro dams burst and drown villages downstream. Gas pipelines explode and kill. Oil tankers pollute the seas. The Chernobyl accident contaminated large tracts of lands for a long time. While we do our best to reduce the risks, we must compare them and perhaps rank our fears. I worry more about changes in the world climate – global warming – in the next hundred years than I do about the risk of leakage from a nuclear waste disposal site some thousands of years from now or even the risk of another nuclear accident.

My engagement in the nuclear referendum in Sweden in 1980 led me in 1981 – after some soul-searching – to make myself available as a candidate for the director-generalship of the IAEA. While this Agency seemed to me to have a terribly specialized mandate compared to what I had been dealing with, there were some special features that attracted me. First, the organization administers the world’s only on-site inspection system, the IAEA safeguards, which send inspectors to nuclear plants all over the world. This appeared to me as a kind of prep school for on-site inspection which had always been such a stumbling block in disarmament talks in Geneva. Secondly, the organization promoted nuclear power which I saw as the environmentally most important alternative to coal and oil. Thirdly, the Agency had a small but interesting program for the transfer of nuclear techniques to developing countries. For instance, in medicine and agriculture. These features seemed attractive and corresponded to my interests. It also seemed a good idea to be abroad for a few years to give my children a chance to learn English and German.

My election was by no means easy sailing. However, coming from a neutral country with considerable nuclear power, having dealt much with development aid, especially in Africa, and having a pro-nuclear record helped to get me elected. As of December 1981 I began working for the IAEA as Director General. I tried to consolidate, expand and strengthen safeguards, to expand technical assistance and to increase the role of the Agency in promoting the safe and effective operation of

nuclear installations and the safe effective management and disposal of nuclear waste.

At a time when international organizations generally have been the target of criticism, the IAEA – which has long enjoyed a good reputation among governments – could register a number of positive events. In 1983 Foreign Minister Gromyko declared in the UN General Assembly that the Soviet Union – like earlier the UK, the US and France – would invite the organization to perform safeguards inspection on some peaceful nuclear installations on its territory. (The first inspections took place in the summer of 1985). In 1984 China joined the organization and declared – in 1985 – that it, too, would invite Agency inspection. In today's world this may not sound so remarkable, but at the time when these offers were made, the Soviet Union and China were still closed societies and the offers were very early harbingers of thaw in huge frozen societies.

As Director General I lacked the scientific-technical knowledge and understanding that my distinguished predecessor – Dr. Sigvard Eklund – possessed. This was a handicap. My political-diplomatic experience, on the other hand, was an asset. Long training in identifying common denominators in different political positions is useful when one has to promote joint action by over one hundred governments.

For sixteen years I worked in Vienna, being re-elected three times after unanimous recommendations by the Board of Governors and approval without a vote by the General Conference. In 1997, when the IAEA celebrated its fortieth anniversary, I was 69 and resigned. During the General Conference of that year, the Agency expanded nuclear related law in important ways. Politically crucial was the adoption of the so called 'additional protocol' that laid down a more effective safeguards inspection regime than that which before 1991 had enabled Iraq to conceal its program of enriching uranium. It also adopted the first internationally agreed rules on the controversial subject of nuclear waste, the 'Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management'. A third legal instrument was adopted in the long sought convention on liability in case of damages following a nuclear accident. This being an anniversary of the IAEA I was very pleased that we could publish a book –not a brochure –about the history of the Agency and another book with reminiscences by persons who had played interesting roles during this time. The history of the UN has been described and analyzed by many, which is good, but I felt and feel that we need to know also about the organizations in the UN family.

I am dedicated internationalist and the IAEA is an important and exciting place to promote practical internationalism. In a way it does not matter whether one strives for a better organized and regulated international community from the vantage point of a State or an international organization except, of course, that as an international civil servant one must dissociate oneself from any national interest and act so as to retain the confidence of all members. It is a challenge to help ensure the good functioning of one of the institutions vital to the international community, to make it operate in a practical cost-effective way to do what it was set up to do. The IAEA has

the great advantage of a very specific mandate. It knows what its job is. This helps to avoid digressions.

In my work at the IAEA there were three issues that figured prominently in the media: Chernobyl, Iraq and the DPRK (North Korea). The common denominator of the Agency's work in these issues was the safe and peaceful use of the atom. Although the Chernobyl accident occurred in a type of nuclear reactor that existed only in the former Soviet Union (and, in a modernized version, in Lithuania) it strengthened opposition to nuclear power globally. In the IAEA we took swift action to help establish the causes and consequences of the accident. Invited by the Soviet Government, I and two experts from the Agency were the first outsiders to visit Chernobyl shortly after the disaster, to watch the destroyed reactor from a helicopter and to be extensively briefed. At a world conference that we organized in Vienna the Russians then surprised the world's nuclear experts by the wealth of information that they provided. These were among the first significant steps toward the new openness --glasnost. The Agency further took steps for the elaboration and adoption – in the record time of three months – of two major conventions: one on the early notification of a nuclear accident, the other on emergency assistance in case of such an accident.

The cases of Iraq and DPRK in the beginning of the 1990s showed that although all States in the world – excepting the five nuclear-weapon States and the “threshold States” India, Pakistan and Israel – have committed themselves to non-proliferation, the commitment might not be respected by all. IAEA inspections in Iraq after the Gulf war in 1991 showed that Iraq had worked to produce a nuclear weapon program. The DPRK that had invited me to a visit in 1992 to mark the country's acceptance of IAEA inspection had not shown our inspectors all its nuclear material. Our and member states' understanding that the safeguards system had important weaknesses led to the intensive and comprehensive effort to the strengthen the verification system to give it greater capacity to discover any clandestine nuclear activities and, thereby, to deter such activities. That system is now in operation in most non-nuclear weapon states.

My work at and for the IAEA yielded hundreds of speeches, interviews, lectures and articles. At least the speeches are recorded on a disc that is kept together with most of my private files in the Hammarskjöld Library in Uppsala. An article about 'The Role of the IAEA in the Development of International Law' was published in the Nordic Journal of International Law(1989). A report on the role of the IAEA in non-proliferation of nuclear weapons was published by the Swedish Royal War Academy (1995).

Although my work at the IAEA, especially during certain periods, became very intense, I still had time for some private life. Many week-ends I went to Geneva or Brussels where my wife, Eva, worked. Many other week-ends I joined friends for hiking. In the winter, membership in the Agency's Ski Club allowed me to join outings that started by a bus-ride from the office at the end of the Friday and ended late on

Sunday after many hours on the skis and much socializing with staff. I had time for making my own marmalade and cooking an occasional dinner for friends. Reading was mostly documents and periodicals. However, travelling often allowed visits to art galleries around the world. This was an enormous privilege: Lucas Cranach, Brueghel, Goya, Turner, Diego Rivera and Rousseau Le Douanier were and remain favourites. I also fell in love with the world of oriental carpets.

I started my professional career expecting to become an academic analyst of international law, but came to spend most of my professional life participating in international governance, administration and law-making – declaring principles of international law, codifying rules of international law and drafting conventions containing new rules for acceptance by the UN community. I thus worked in the fields of the law of treaties, the basic principles of State relations, international humanitarian law (laws of war), environmental law, disarmament law and nuclear law. At the time of my retirement from the IAEA in 1997 I planned to return to analysis and to write about the IAEA relations and safeguards in North Korea and the inspection work in Iraq under UN Security Council mandate from 1991 to 1997. It did not quite turn out that way.

I did spend in a good deal of time on a study presented in the context of the 1999 celebration of the 100th anniversary of the First Hague Peace Conference. It was entitled 'International Law relating to Disarmament and Arms Control' and was published in 'The Centennial of the First International Peace Conference' (edited by F. Kalshoven, 2000).

Then, in January 2000, when I and my wife were on a tourist journey to the Antarctic, UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, reached me to ask me to head a new UN inspection authority for Iraq -- the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC). After being appointed by the UN Security Council I spent the next three years in New York. As Iraq refused to admit any inspectors we had time for two years to analyze what we wanted to inspect and to train inspectors. During four months from November 2002 some 700 inspections were carried out. Some conventional weapons and some missiles of forbidden range were found, but no weapons of mass destruction were found by us, nor by the IAEA that inspected the nuclear sector. In March 2003, the US, the UK and some other states in the 'coalition of willing' nevertheless invaded and occupied Iraq. Our inspectors were withdrawn. As there were no weapons of mass destructions, the occupying forces – like the UNMOVIC before them –did not find any weapons of mass destruction. I resigned my post as Chairman of UNMOVIC and returned to Sweden. I have described my work at UNMOVIC in a book entitled 'Disarming Iraq' (2004). My speeches as Chairman of UNMOVIC are all on a disc and can be found among the files that I have given to the Hammarskjöld library in Uppsala.

Upon my return to Sweden in the summer of 2003 it was natural for me to engage in the questions of how the world can tackle the dangers relating to nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. Foreign Minister, Anna Lindh, asked me to form and lead an international

commission to explore ways of eliminating weapons of mass destruction. The commission (WMDC) of fourteen experts presented a unanimously agreed report 'Weapons of Terror' in May 2006.

Since 2006 I have participated in a great many non-governmental level conferences on arms control and disarmament and given innumerable speeches and lectures all over the world. A few were compiled and presented in a small book, 'Why Nuclear Disarmament Matters' (MIT 2008). A lecture given at Stockholm University in 2015 in honour of Hilding Eek and entitled 'UN Security Council vs. Weapons of Mass Destruction' was published in the Nordic Journal of International Law.

I now (2019) spend most of my time working on a book exploring 'restraints on the use of armed force between states' -- like deterrence, diplomacy, norms and institutions. Whether I will be able to finish the book is uncertain but I enjoy the work enormously. Some of the ideas that I have on the subject I presented at a seminar that the Utrikespolitiska Institutet in Stockholm arranged in my honour as I turned 85. It was published together with a number of comments by friends and colleagues by the Stockholm University Law Faculty in 2014 under the title -that I did not choose -- 'Hans Blix och världsordningen'. Central ideas in the book I am working on went into a SIPRI lecture that I gave on 28 May 2018 -- a month before I turned 90. It was published in 2018 by SIPRI under the title 'Is the world on the road to peace or war?'

Further data about my person and past is found, for instance, in Book of RIVB, Class of 1946 at the Uppsala Cathedral School.
'Sommar' in Swedish Radio program 1 in the summer of 2003.
Hans Elfving möter Hans Blix 30 Dec.2008 in Swedish Radio program 4.
'Min Sanning' in Swedish TV 28 April 2014.