

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson of Sweden and an Exchange With Reporters

July 5, 2023

President Biden. Well, Mr. Prime Minister, it's great to see you. You're a valued, valued friend, and it's an honor to welcome you to the White House.

And Sweden is a capable and committed partner. Together, we're preparing our relationship for—even further, including advancing the bilateral partnership agreement we're talking about.

But we're also prepared for the NATO summit next week. And I want to reiterate: The United States fully, fully, fully supports Sweden's membership in NATO.

And the bottom line is simple: Sweden is going to make our alliance stronger and has the same value set that we have in NATO. And I'm really looking—anxiously looking forward for your membership.

And I know with that bilateral relationship, Sweden and the United States are taking on the challenges that matter most to our people, from taking on the climate crisis to preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific. So, across the board, we seem to be in agreement on most everything.

And we're stepping up to protect our shared democratic values, including providing security and humanitarian assistance to the people of Ukraine. And the generosity of the Swedish people has been extreme. You've done a great, great deal as the brave people of Ukraine defend themselves against Russia's brutality.

And together, our countries and companies are working in lockstep on emerging technologies, including—I want to thank you, Mr. Prime Minister, for your work on—to build a safe 5G and 5C network—6G networks.

And I want to thank you again for being here. We've got a lot to cover. And I yield to you, Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Kristersson. Thank you so much, Mr. President. Thank you so much. I really do appreciate to be here. Thanks for the kind invitation to come here. It is highly valued for us.

I believe that Sweden and the U.S., we share so many values and priorities since long, but not least right now. That goes for how to handle the war in Ukraine. I thank you for your leadership, the transatlantic unity that you have made so much to establish. That goes also to how to tackle the climate crisis, mitigating climate change. That goes for handling the transatlantic way the challenges that China creates for democracies.

And I also would like to say that we highly appreciate your strong support for Sweden's NATO accession. That means a lot to us. We do seek common protection, but we also do think that we have things to contribute with to be a security provider for the whole of NATO. So——

President Biden. That's clear.

Prime Minister Kristersson. ——I very much look forward to our talks here today. Thank you so much.

President Biden. Well, I'm looking forward to this getting finished because you're an extremely valuable and capable partner.

Prime Minister Kristersson. Thank you so much.

President Biden. So thank you.

Prime Minister Kristersson. Thank you.

[*At this point, several reporters spoke at once.*]

Q. Mr. President, what makes you confident that—[*inaudible*]?

Q. Mr. President, do you know how cocaine got into the White House?

Q. Are you working on a prisoner swap, Mr. President? Are you working on a prisoner swap, sir?

Q. How confident are you—[*inaudible*]?

Sweden/North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Q. Mr. President, how important is it for the U.S.—U.S. and NATO—and NATO to have Sweden as new members in the defense alliance?

President Biden. Very important.

Q. Very important? And how confident are you that this is going to be a reality soon?

President Biden. Come on, guys. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:09 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Kristersson, Ulf.

Subjects: Broadband and wireless technologies; Climate change; Indo-Pacific, economic and security cooperation; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Sweden, North Atlantic Treaty Organization accession bid; Sweden, Prime Minister; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes.

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