



Magnus Hartog-Holm  
Ambassador of Sweden to Switzerland  
and Liechtenstein since 2014

# H.E. Ambassador Magnus Hartog-Holm

By: Johan Mannerberg

**Since September 2014, Sweden has a new Ambassador to Switzerland and the Principality of Liechtenstein, Magnus Hartog-Holm. Magnus has a long and impressive career within the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs with postings in Estonia, Germany and Japan among other countries. In March 2015, he became a member of the SSCC Advisory Board.**

Magnus Hartog-Holm was born in 1963 and was raised in Stockholm. In high school, Magnus got interested in diplomacy and wanted to pursue a career within foreign affairs. After graduating from Uppsala University with a B.A. in Political Science followed by an MBA in Economics from the University of Bath, he joined the Swedish Trade Council in Paris for one year. In 1990, he moved back to Stockholm and worked as a journalist at the Swedish economic weekly "Affärsvärlden" for two years. He then applied for the Swedish Foreign Ministry's diplomatic training program and was accepted. Early on he realized that diplomacy was the right choice for him. Directly after graduating from the diplomatic training program in 1993, Magnus was posted in Tallinn, Estonia, where Sweden recently had opened the Embassy after the fall of the Eastern Bloc. The Swedish government led by Carl Bildt together with the US government played an important role in supporting the Baltic States maintaining their independence and to help building the infrastructure. Sweden invested vast amounts in financial aid to the Baltic States, as well as human capital and expertise supporting various projects. "It was extremely interesting to work in Estonia at that time considering the role Sweden played in supporting the Baltic States regaining their independence" Magnus says when I meet him at the

Swedish Embassy in Berne.

After three years in Estonia, Magnus returned to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm and joined the Political department, mainly working with the development of an increased European security and defense cooperation. At the same time in 1994, Sweden became a member of the NATO's Partnership for Peace Programme. "With an increased security and defense cooperation within the European Union and Sweden becoming a member of the peace programme, we were faced with many challenges in order to maintain Sweden's status as a military non-allied country, yet increase our cooperation" Hartog-Holm comments.

In the beginning of 2000, Sweden prepared to take over the presidency of the European Union (EU) for the first time and Magnus Hartog-Holm, was asked to work at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs as an exchange diplomat in Paris. France had the presidency at the time and Magnus was sent there to transfer experience back to Sweden. "It was a peculiar feeling to represent France at EU-meetings, talking French behind the French flag, with my Swedish colleagues seated next to me" Magnus says.

After a year in France, Magnus started working at the Swedish Embassy in Berlin as counselor with a special focus on political affairs. In 2006 after spending most of his time in Europe, Magnus was sent to the Swedish Embassy in Tokyo as Deputy Chief of Mission, being responsible for trade related affairs. "With an MBA in Economics and as a former employee at the Swedish Trade Council in Paris and economic journalist, the role suited me very well" Magnus says.

After five years in Japan, Hartog-Holm moved back to Sweden and took on the role as Ambassador for the Nordic Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs, working with the Swedish Minister for Trade and Minister for Nordic Cooperation Ewa Björling. The Nordic Council of Ministers include the five Nordic states and has 20 joint institutions and run over 1'000 projects. The Council was inaugurated in 1971 and is the official inter-governmental body for co-operation in the Nordic Region.

After four years in Stockholm, Magnus and his family wished to move abroad again and Magnus was offered the posting as Ambassador in Switzerland. "I have always liked Switzerland and was honored, being offered the role as Ambassador" Magnus comments.

In 2015, Sweden has had an Embassy in Switzerland for 100 years and one of the reasons for the Swedish government to establish an Embassy in Switzerland was to closely follow the actions of Switzerland maintaining their neutrality during the First World War, similar to Sweden.

Since then, the role of the Swedish Embassy to a great extent is about supporting the Swedish population in Switzerland together with the Swedish Consulates and to promote Sweden in Switzerland, often trade-related. "We have very strong and good trade relations with Switzerland and a good cooperation with the SSCC supporting us in promoting Swedish commerce in Switzerland along with Business Sweden" Magnus says. "I see many similarities between our countries, not the least with respect to our passion for innovations and entrepreneurship" Magnus comments.

The Embassy and Ambassador often uses social media as a mean of communications, encouraged by the Swedish government. "I use my Twitter account @hartogholm on a frequent basis for topics related to Sweden and Switzerland, a great way of communicating" Magnus concludes. ■