

BUDSKAP från SIPRI till Lanseringen av Boken VARBERG CALLING for Peace
-Dan Smith, Director, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)

"Building a more peaceful world requires action at multiple levels. At the global level, the UN's adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 has inserted peace into the formal international development policy framework. Alongside that, local initiatives, such as Varberg municipality's "work over the last year, have demonstrated the power of local communities in prioritising peace and mobilising for peaceful relations within and between societies.

Among the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Goal 16 calls for the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies, the provision of access to justice for all and the development of effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. As such, it offers individuals and communities the opportunity to take action in order to achieve an ambitious agenda.

The VARBERG CALLING for Peace initiative is one great example: It has effectively engaged local residents, businesses, civil society organisations, think tanks and artists in its cause. Drawing on Varberg's legacy as a focal point of the Swedish peace movement, the municipality has used lessons learned from past conflicts and their resolution to contextualise the threats of today.

In 2016, social cohesion and the physical security of peoples here in Europe and abroad are at risk. From individuals speaking out against divisive rhetoric, to inter-governmental action to control the proliferation of weapons, we all have a role to play promoting inclusivity and ending violence. Building on its historic and recent contributions to the peace movement, Varberg municipality has an opportunity to lead by example, encouraging other communities to join the call in the future. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, founded 50 years ago, celebrates Varberg's peace work and the part that all local peacebuilders play in supporting the global agenda. Congratulations on the launch of Peace by Piece!"

-Dan Smith, Director, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)