Foreign Powers Threatening Sweden

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According to the Swedish Security Service website, the nation's security is threatened by numerous illegal intelligence activities and actions by foreign powers seeking to influence and destabilize the country. Among these, **Russia, China, and Iran** are the main actors involved in activities that compromise Sweden's political sovereignty and security. Their operations range from **espionage to sabotage and political influence**, aimed at achieving strategic objectives in global geopolitical contexts.

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Sergey Naryshkin, director of the SVR, the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service

Russian Security Activities: An Increasingly Dangerous Offensive

Russia is considered the greatest threat to Swedish security. Despite strengthening Sweden's total defense and joining the NATO treaty, Russia has intensified its intelligence operations against the country. **Russian activities primarily aim to weaken cohesion within NATO and among Western countries**, as well as to hinder Western support for Ukraine and evade

international sanctions.

Russia is particularly interested in **acquiring Western technology**, using Sweden as a transit point to procure dual-use components and technologies. Additionally, Russia has developed an increasingly aggressive approach, using sabotage methods and clandestine activities through recruited agents, even among the European population. Such operations aim to create social unrest, reduce Western support for Ukraine, and destabilize internal order.

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Chinese Intelligence Activities: A Long-Term Strategy

China, with its global ambitions, has developed a series of methods to influence foreign states and gather vital information. Its intelligence activities in Sweden focus on acquiring technologies, **influencing the Chinese diaspora and infiltrating strategic economic sectors**, such as defense and technology.

Chinese advocacy activities in Sweden are primarily directed at the Chinese community, but also at opposition groups and minorities. China is concerned with shaping the country's image in the West, exerting political pressure to influence political decisions and public opinions. Collaborations between China and Russia in various sectors, including technology, pose an additional risk for Sweden, as the information gathered could support Russia's military capability.

Furthermore, **China uses cyberattacks as a tool to gather sensitive data**, putting the security of Swedish advanced technology companies, including those in the defense sector, at risk.

Iranian Intelligence Activities: A Conflict Arena in Sweden

Iran is active in Sweden with the goal of protecting and strengthening its regime, primarily aiming to protect itself from external threats and evade international sanctions. A fundamental part of these activities involves monitoring and repressing opposition movements, as well as influencing people belonging to the Iranian diaspora.

In recent years, the Swedish Security Service has detected an increase in Iranian activities, including the use of criminal networks to carry out acts of violence against targets deemed hostile, such as Israeli interests and opposition groups. Iran has also sought to acquire technology and knowledge through Swedish universities and other institutions, in an attempt to circumvent sanctions and obtain dual-use technologies.

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Conclusions: The Importance of Continuous Vigilance

The increasing activity of foreign powers in Sweden raises concerns about the country's security and stability. Intelligence operations, sabotage, and political influence represent concrete threats that require a coordinated and timely response from Swedish authorities. International cooperation, particularly within the NATO context, and strengthening internal security measures are essential to protect Sweden from the dangerous activities of foreign powers.

Foreign powers continue to use a variety of tools to pursue their strategic objectives. Sweden must remain vigilant and ready to defend its sovereignty, while also protecting its critical infrastructure, economy, and the security of its population from these emerging threats.

News link: https://sakerhetspolisen.se/om-sakerhetspolisen/publikationer/sakerhetspolisens-lagesbild/sakerhetspolisen-2024-2025/hotet/sakerhetshotande-verksamhet-fran-frammande-makt.html