

**Leeds Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Leeds Beckett University, Mayors for Peace & Leeds Peace Links present:  
The 2022 Olof Palme Peace Lecture**

# **“Common Security – the way forward for a failing world?”**

**by Anna Sundström**

**Secretary General,  
Olof Palme International Center, Stockholm.**



Anna Sundström is Secretary-General of the Olof Palme International Center in Stockholm. She has previously worked as Head of Operations at the Center, international secretary of the Social Democratic Women’s Organization, as international secretary and policy advisor in the Swedish Parliament and as a policy advisor at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Earlier this year, Anna co-authored a new “Common Security 2022” report published by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), the International Peace Bureau (IPB) and the Olof Palme International Center. It was issued to mark the 40th anniversary of the original report by Olof Palme’s “Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues”. Presented at the height of the Cold War, the 1982 report developed the concept of Common Security – the idea that nations and populations can only feel safe when their counterparts feel safe.

Now, with the international order faces severe challenges and the world stands at a crossroads. It is faced with a choice between an existence based on confrontation and aggression or one to be rooted in a transformative peace agenda and common security. Political will, people power, and responsible policies can lead to change. Can a positive and common approach to security make people and governments feel safe without the threat of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear deterrence, military force, and violence?

The Meeting will be chaired by Professor Dave Webb, Chair of Yorkshire CND.

**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

**7.00pm Online**

**Register via Eventbrite [here](#):**

## The Leeds Annual Olof Palme Memorial Peace Lecture



*Olof Palme 1927-1986*

Currently, Leeds Beckett University, Leeds City Council and Leeds Peace Links Group work together to organise the annual Leeds Olof Palme Memorial Peace Lecture.

The lecture was first established in 1987 by then Labour Euro-MP for Leeds, Michael McGowan in memory of Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme, a peace campaigner and outspoken opponent of apartheid in South Africa. The lectures were originally organised from Michael's Leeds European Office with support from the Socialist Group of the European Parliament. Later, the City Council became formerly involved thanks especially to Sean Morris from Peace and Emergency Planning and Leeds Peace Links, and Leeds Beckett (then Metropolitan) University followed around the time of the establishment of a Peace Studies section there.

Olof Palme became prime minister of Sweden in 1969 and, although he lost his parliamentary majority in 1971, he managed to carry out major constitutional reforms. He was a widely recognised political figure and he openly criticised and opposed apartheid in South Africa, the Franco Regime in Spain, the United States' role in the Vietnam War and the crushing of the Prague Spring by the Soviet Union. He was also active in campaigning against nuclear weapons proliferation.

Born in Stockholm, on 30th January 1927, Olof Palme joined the Social Democratic Labour Party. He studied at Kenyon College, Ohio from 1947-48 and after hitchhiking through the USA, he returned to Sweden to study law at Stockholm University where he was elected president of the United Students Union in 1952. Palme was recruited to the secretariat of Tage Erlander, the prime minister of Sweden in 1953 and in 1955 he became leader of the Social Democratic Labour Party youth movement. The following year he was elected as an MP to the Riksdag.

Over the next few years he held several ministerial posts including Minister of Communications and Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs, eventually becoming prime minister in 1969. Although he lost his parliamentary majority in 1971 he managed to carry out major constitutional reforms. In 1976 he was defeated over his plans to increase taxes to pay for Sweden's welfare state.

He was returned to power in 1982. However, on 28th February, 1986, he was shot dead as he left a cinema in Stockholm with his wife Lisbeth.

Olof Palme was briefly a student in Leeds University in the 1950s and these lectures have been held to remember his work for promoting peace and security in the world.