Evolving Threats, Timeless Values: The United Nations In A Changing Global Landscape

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This is the text of the annual Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture given by Ban Ki-moon at Stockholm City Hall on 30 March 2016.

The Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture 2016 was organised by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and Uppsala University.

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Preface

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, delivered the 2016 Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture, the 18th honoree to do so since the series was instituted two decades ago. Created in memory of the United Nations’ second Secretary-General, the Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture is an annual event given in recognition of the values that inspired Hammarskjöld as a statesman and in his life – compassion, humanism and commitment to international solidarity and cooperation. In selecting speaker, the guidelines state that this rostrum will be offered to a person who, in significant and innovative ways, contributes to a more just, peaceful and environmentally sustainable world through valuable achievements in politics or research.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was chosen by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and Uppsala University to present the 2016 Dag Hammarskjöld lecture. This was in recognition of his outstanding efforts as Secretary-General of the United Nations, for stewarding the adoption of the Paris agreement – the framework Convention of Climate Change, as well as for his continuous efforts in relation to the investigation of the plane crash in Ndola 1961 that took the life of Dag Hammarskjöld and 15 others.

Ban Ki-moon delivered the lecture on the topic “Evolving Threats, Timeless Values: The United Nations in a Changing Global Landscape”. He started by going back 60 years in time when he was still a school boy and formed an own special relationship to Dag Hammarskjöld. The class had learnt about Hungary’s problems in 1956 and decided to write to Hammarskjöld, urging him to solve the situation, a letter that student chair Ban Ki-moon read out to the entire school assembly. Even though he did not know Hammarskjöld, he sensed his power as a world leader and approachability as a servant of humankind. Now that he holds the same office, the Secretary-General still receives the same kind of appeals from all
Peter Wallensteen and Ban Ki-moon.

Henrik Hammargren, Executive Director of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation.
over the world. 'Around the world, we are being tested in old ways that Hammarskjöld would have recognized – and in new ways for which his example can remain our guide', he said.

The Secretary-General addressed four areas where stronger joints efforts are still needed. The refugee crisis and the question on human mobility, advancing a more sustainable world, enhancing peace and security where we can build on Hammarskjöld’s legacy, as well as working together to ensure the strongest possible United Nations. 'Together, let us continue to build a world of greater joy and lesser sorrow. Together, let us strive to narrow the gap between the world as it is, and the world as we know it can be', he stated.

Due to the fact that the University main auditorium, the Aula Magna, is under renovation this year's lecture was delivered in the Blue Hall of the Stockholm City Hall. The programme also included a song in Korean by the choir Allmänna Sången and an opportunity for student questioning. The audience of the event also included Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Victoria, the Prime Minister of Sweden and the President of the City Council of Stockholm.

Uppsala, March 2016

Henrik Hammargren
Executive Director
Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation

Peter Wallensteen
Senior Professor
Peace and Conflict Research
Uppsala University
Ban Ki-moon delivering the 2016 Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture.
I thank the Government and people of Sweden for a very warm welcome. It is a singular honour to be in this magnificent and legendary City Hall among this most distinguished audience to deliver a lecture named for a towering hero of humanity.

Dag Hammarskjöld was Swede through and through, but he also belonged to the world.

I feel both privileged and humbled to be serving in the role he once filled so masterfully.

I also feel blessed to be serving the United Nations. During the Korean War, the United Nations was our lifeline. We survived on food from UNICEF. We were schooled with textbooks from UNESCO. We were protected by the troops of many nations serving under the UN’s blue flag.

Sweden was among the nations that responded to the call of the Security Council for Member States to support Korea in 1950. More than 1,000 Swedish doctors and nurses served in the Swedish Red Cross Field Hospital,
and treated 19,100 UN personnel and 2400 Koreans. I greatly appreciate this strong show of international solidarity. Following the war, Sweden continued to help promote peace and prosperity on the Korean peninsula through its involvement in maintaining the armistice as a member of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission.

Every day, I think of Dag Hammarskjöld in the course of my duties as Secretary-General. But you may be surprised to know, I did so even as a boy. Sixty years ago, I was a sixth grader in rural Korea. It was 1956, and people in Hungary were facing a violent suppression of their aspirations. We wondered: What could we do? How could we best express support from our far-off corner of the world? Then it came to us. We will write to Dag Hammarskjöld!

As the student chair, I read the letter to my entire school at an assembly. 'Dear Mr. Secretary-General,' we pleaded, 'help the people of Hungary so they can have freedom and democracy.' I did not know Dag Hammarskjöld. Yet, half a world away, more than half a century ago, I sensed both his power as a world leader, and his approachability as a servant of humankind. He did not simply preach these qualities. He lived them with passion and compassion. Hammarskjöld reached people's hearts, because he strived to understand people's minds – their hopes and dreams and fears and aspirations. He did so through the arts – music and poetry, literature, sculpture and photography. He did it through spirituality and quiet contemplation. Above all, he pursued it through his lifelong mission – an active life devoted to 'selfless service'.

In October 2006, in addressing the General Assembly of the United Nations upon my election as Secretary-General, I shared the story of a boy who had once sent a letter to Dag Hammarskjöld. I expressed the wish that I would not receive such letters from children around the world. Sadly, today, I do receive the appeals that I once sent as a schoolboy. It is I who must do what Hammarskjöld did: defend the values enshrined in the UN Charter; direct our dedicated staff; and steer the Member States towards our common goals.
The world is changing—dramatically, rapidly. We are more connected than ever before. More people than ever live in cities. New economic powers are rising. There are more than three times as many members of the United Nations as there were in Hammarskjöld’s day.

New threats have emerged—climate change above all. And the human family has a new profile: more than half the earth’s people are under the age of 25. Our shared challenge is to shape this new world for the better—to build a landscape of opportunity and peace, while conquering persistent injustices, from hatred to hunger. Around the world, we are being tested in old ways that Hammarskjöld would have recognised – and in new ways for which his example can remain our guide. Massive displacement – the most since the Second World War. Terrorism. Atrocious crimes that defy all norms of humanity. At such times, the United Nations relies on its strongest supporters to step up, speak out and stay true.

Swedes have lived and breathed the United Nations for almost 70 years. In few countries is support for the United Nations so entwined with its own national identity. More than 80,000 Swedes have served in UN peacekeeping missions. Most recently, Swedish troops have deployed to Mali, and I welcome your efforts to increase the number of Swedish police who take part in our operations. Swedes continue to support UN efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts through mediation and other peaceful means, continuing the noble tradition of Folke Bernadotte, Gunnar Jarring, Olof Rydbeck and Olof Palme. I especially welcome Sweden’s support for Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and the network of women mediators. Sweden was the first country to appoint a female Permanent Representative to the United Nations – Ms. Agda Rössel, in 1958.
Today, your feminist foreign policy is bringing new voices to the table. At a time when humanitarian needs are escalating and the funding gap is widening, you remain the world’s leading donor on a per capita basis. Even with the increased spending needed to address the needs of refugees, you have admirably maintained your commitment to development aid. Sweden has consistently upheld human rights and universal values, including as one of the largest donors to the United Nations Democracy Fund. And your commitment to people is equalled by your care for the planet – from the 1972 Stockholm conference on the environment, to the work of people like Bert Bolin who served as the first chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, to your commitment to be one of the world’s first fossil free countries. You are also helping to mobilise action to safeguard the health of our oceans – a pressing yet often neglected challenge.

I see Sweden’s contributions every day, from my encounters with young Swedish staff members in Haiti or South Sudan – to the outstanding commitment of the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General, Jan Eliasson, who I am privileged to have serving by my side. I am also grateful for the efforts of Sweden’s Royal Family. King Carl XVI Gustaf is a champion of climate action; Queen Silvia is an advocate of children’s rights; and I am especially pleased that Crown Princess Victoria has just agreed to be one of our Sustainable Development Goal Advocates – and I welcome her enthusiastic engagement.

All of this leads me to one conclusion: Sweden is a superpower of solidarity, dialogue and cooperation. In the process, you are showing that leadership in the United Nations and the European Union are mutually reinforcing – as you excel at one, you advance the other – and benefit from both. The world needs Sweden’s global citizenship more than ever. Today I would like to highlight four areas where your contributions are crucial and where I would like for us to work together to be even more ambitious: first, addressing the refugee challenge; second, advancing a more sustainable world; third, enhancing peace and security; and fourth, ensuring the strongest possible United Nations.
Let me start with one of the leading trends of our time: human mobility. Sweden - like many countries today - is facing the challenge of refugees and migration. Sweden - like few countries today - is setting an example of generosity and values-led action. You have accepted more refugees per capita than any other country in Europe. You should be very proud of this.

I have just come from a visit through the Middle East. I met with refugees in Jordan and Lebanon. At least one out of four people in Lebanon is a Syrian refugee. I heard moving tales of horror, suffering and loss. Dag Hammarskjöld famously said that the United Nations 'was not created to take mankind to heaven, but to save humanity from hell.' These refugees have fled hell. They need our help in a spirit of shared global responsibility. I know there are tensions and difficulties with receiving great numbers of refugees. But I have been deeply moved by the many stories of Swedish hospitality and goodwill. My message to Sweden is to keep striving for solidarity. Recognise the economic dynamism that migrants and refugees make possible. Take a stand against negative and nativist narratives. Lead the way to more understanding guided by the universal values set out in the UN Charter. As Jan Eliasson has said, 'Sweden is a part of the global community - but the world is also part of Sweden. An open and tolerant Sweden is a richer Sweden. Building strong and fair communities is a contribution to international peace and security.' I completely agree. Making the most of the blessing of diversity is the winning strategy of the 21st century.

That leads me to the second area where we need Sweden’s leadership – building a sustainable world. Around the continent, and around the world, I have urged leaders and citizens to avoid the siren songs of those who sow fear, hate and division. This cannot be a world of 'us and them' – it must be a world of 'we the peoples'. That is the spirit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, the SDGs. This is a 15-year blueprint to end global poverty approved by world leaders last September. It embodies a commitment to leave no one behind. In many respects, it is a global Declaration of Interdependence.
I know Sweden is very familiar with the SDGs and the principles underlying it. That is because you were at the forefront in shaping it and in bringing peace, development and human rights together under one umbrella. Sweden also understood something else from the start - that while promises read well on paper, it takes political action to deliver on the ground. I want to commend Prime Minister Löfven for convening a high-level support group of world leaders to sustain the political momentum for implementation. You have realised these goals are crucial for your own country’s progress - and, once again, the Prime Minister has led the way in mobilising ministers to drive progress. You understand a sustainable world will be a safer, more prosperous and equitable world. As Hammarskjöld said and as we all know, there will be no development without peace. This is the third area where we can build on the Hammarskjöld legacy. In Syria, the cessation of hostilities has now held, by and large, for more than a month. This has given us greater humanitarian access and opened up space for diplomacy. Talks are making progress and will resume in 10 days. These are being led by my Special Envoy, Staffan de Mistura, another distinguished peacemaker with strong Swedish roots.

We are also moving towards a cease-fire and peace talks in Yemen, where civilians have borne the brunt of Coalition aerial attacks and other violence. From South Sudan to Mali and Afghanistan, we must resolve the conflicts that are causing so much displacement and destruction. We must also do more to heed a long-known lesson: prevention saves lives and money. We are now taking forward the recommendations of recent reviews of UN peace operations and peacebuilding that highlighted the need for greater emphasis on prevention.

Our Human Rights up Front initiative is a further effort to identify, and act on, the earliest signs of exclusion and other violations. Earlier this month, we marked the 10th anniversary of the Human Rights Council – a major institutional reform that has fortified this key UN pillar. One of the architects of the Council was none other than Jan Eliasson, who served as President of the General Assembly session that brought it into being.
The terrorism and violent extremism we are seeing today is a direct assault on human rights. There can never be any justification for such acts. To tackle this challenge, we need to examine the underlying drivers. That means addressing discrimination, ensuring good governance, and providing access to education, social services and employment opportunities. In launching a plan of action to prevent violent extremism, we must also avoid responses that violate human rights and thereby feed the problem we are trying to solve.

Ending impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern is a crucial part of our work for peace. With the International Criminal Court, international and UN-assisted tribunals and courts, and other mechanisms, the world has entered an age of accountability. Prosecutions may still take a long time; not all perpetrators have been brought to trial; but the trend is unmistakable: more justice for societies and more support for the victims. The conviction last week of Radovan Karadžić for genocide in Srebrenica, as well as for crimes against humanity and war crimes, was a further welcome step in this direction. Our goal is a reckoning for the crimes of the past – and a deterrent to the crimes of the future. Across our agenda, the United Nations must lead by example, and that means ensuring we are fit for the 21st century. That is the fourth and final area where I believe we must continue to make greater progress.

As I said on my first day in office, we reform the United Nations because we believe in its future – and I will continue to act on that conviction until my last day in office. I publicly issued my financial disclosure statement on day one, the first Secretary-General to do so. I have strengthened results-based management and linked senior appointments to performance. I have streamlined and harmonised UN contracts, and am very proud of the many glass ceilings that have been broken at the United Nations. I have appointed more women to senior positions than at any time in UN history. We have been strengthened by the contributions of dynamic Swedish leaders such as Foreign Minister Margot Wallström, who served as my first Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and Ann Marie Orler, the first woman to serve as “top cop” of the United Nations.
Nations – leading more than 10,000 UN Police worldwide. But I also know reform is never-ending. My team and I feel a strong sense of duty to work from within to transform the Organisation – and to face our failings when we fall short.

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There is nothing more outrageous -- there is no greater violation of trust – than sexual exploitation and abuse by those who have been sent to a country to protect innocent people. I am sickened and shamed that the unspeakable acts of a few have tainted the valiant work of many thousands, and caused some to see the UN’s blue helmet as a symbol of fear. As I told the Security Council earlier this month, to all the victims and their families, I profoundly apologise. Any abuse of power by peacekeepers betrays the very people they have been sent to protect. It also betrays the values of the United Nations. Under my leadership, we are taking unprecedented action.

• We are improving oversight so that troops with known histories of abuses will never be deployed.
• We are strengthening investigations so that individuals or entire contingents that commit abuses will be sent home.
• We are naming names and withholding payments.
• We are establishing a trust fund to better support victims.

Last year, I relieved one Special Representative of his command – and I have appointed a special coordinator to deepen our work to protect people and uphold the highest standards of professionalism. My message to all UN peacekeeping leaders is clear: report allegations immediately, and act decisively. Of course, the United Nations does not have criminal jurisdiction over troops, so my message to the countries that contribute forces is equally clear:
• Promptly investigate the allegations.
• Quickly punish the perpetrators.
• Hold your personnel accountable.
• Zero tolerance must be the rule.
• Sexual exploitation and abuse have no place — least of all in the United Nations which stands for the rights of women and children.

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In all of our work, Dag Hammarskjöld remains a touchstone for courageous, principled action. When I visited his gravesite in Uppsala on the 50th anniversary of his death, I laid a wreath in honour of his life and reflected on the timeless example of his service. It is in recognition of that devotion that the medal we give to the families of fallen peacekeepers is named in his honour. Hammarskjöld was a private person who lived the most public of lives.

We know, for example, that he carried a UN Charter with him at all times. We also know some of his innermost thoughts, as set out in 'Markings', his own personal code of conduct.

But there is one thing about Hammarskjöld that remains a mystery: the circumstances leading to his death — and the deaths of those who accompanied him. We are doing everything to find out what happened. Last year, a UN panel considered new information, including by interviewing eyewitnesses who had not been interviewed before in official inquiries. The Panel concluded that some of the new information was sufficient to warrant further consideration of whether aerial attack or other interference may have caused the crash. I want to use this platform today to urge Member States with intelligence or other material in their archives to provide that information without delay. We must do everything to finally establish the facts and get to the bottom of this tragedy once and for all.
Dag Hammarskjöld often met with United Nations staff. In 1958, the gathering began with a song that he had asked the UN choir to learn – one of his favorite Swedish folk tunes.

It inspired a poem that concludes by asking: 'Will the day ever come when joy is great and sorrow is small?' Hammarskjöld reminded the staff that the United Nations is tasked to inch the world closer to such a day. But then he added an even deeper personal observation. He noted that whenever we are carrying out a duty 'well fulfilled and worth our while', we can already see joy as great and sorrow as being small. I see those twin messages rooted in the Swedish character: to both work for a better world and to find ultimate meaning and reward in doing so.

That is the Swedish mission, the Swedish purpose. In so many ways, you are more than a country, you are an example. You are a champion and a role model.

Together, let us continue to build a world of greater joy and lesser sorrow. Together, let us strive to narrow the gap between the world as it is, and the world as we know it can be.

Tack så mycket. Thank you very much.
Mrs and Mr Ban, Peter Wallensteen, Eva-Louise Erlandsson Slorach and Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden walking through the Golden Hall.
Henrik Hammargren, Executive Director of Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation presented the medal to the Lecturer.

Your Excellency
Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon,

You are the 18th in line to have delivered the Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture

We thank You and congratulate You.

His excellency, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was chosen by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and Uppsala University to deliver the 2016 Dag Hammarskjöld lecture for his achievements as Secretary-General which in the last year alone, amongst others, encompassed the historic adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the unprecedented Paris Climate Change Agreement.

In today’s turbulent and increasingly interconnected world it is clear more than ever that we need a strong United Nations and the Secretary-General has continued to lead the UN with a steady hand, working tirelessly to overcome the challenges to international peace and security. In this way he reflects and furthers Hammarskjöld’s efforts to ensure that the UN Charter is applied in situations of armed conflict and that the UN is successful in carrying out its fundamental role to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. In tribute to his predecessor he has also been a steady champion of the work surrounding the investigations into the conditions and circumstances resulting in the tragic death of Dag Hammarskjöld and of the members of the party accompanying him.

Your Excellency, as the Dag Hammarskjöld lecturer, you will also be invited to join the International Honorary Committee of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation.
The University has found it appropriate to institute a special medal, which is only bestowed upon the Dag Hammarskjöld lecturers. The medal has been created by the artist Annette Rydström and is cast in bronze. Its obverse shows Dag Hammarskjöld’s portrait and the reverse a handshake, the old symbol of Concordia, here representing Hammarskjöld’s diplomatic efforts. In the Latin inscription Uppsala University dedicates the medal to the memory of its disciple for his outstanding achievements.

Your Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, I now invite You to receive the 18th medal, with Your name engraved on the rim, from the Vice Chancellor.
Ban Ki-moon is the eighth and current Secretary-General of the United Nations. His priorities have been to mobilise world leaders around a set of new global challenges, from climate change and economic crises to pandemics and pressures on resources, such as food, energy and water. He has sought to be a bridge-builder, to give voice to the world’s poorest and most vulnerable people, and to strengthen the Organisation itself.

The Secretary-General has been actively involved in the climate conferences, notably Paris 2015, as well as the development of Agenda 2030, decided on by the General Assembly 2015. He has advocated women’s rights and gender equality as seen in setting up the UN Women in 2010, and LGBT rights.

Ban Ki-moon holds a master’s degree in public administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and has a long career in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, notably as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2004-06. He took office as Secretary-General on 1 January 2007. On 21 June 2011, he was re-elected and will continue to serve until 31 December 2016.

*Adapted from www.un.org.*
Dag Hammarskjöld (1905–1961) was a world citizen. During his period as Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), from 1953 until his death in 1961, he became known as an efficient and dedicated international civil servant.

Dag Hammarskjöld emphasised that a major task of the UN is to assert the interests of small countries in relation to the major powers. He also shaped the UN’s mandate to establish peacekeeping forces. Before he was appointed UN Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld held high positions as a civil servant and became a non-partisan member of the Swedish Cabinet.

Dag Hammarskjöld also had strong cultural interests and was a member of the Swedish Academy. His book *Markings* (Vägmärken) was published after his death. Most of Dag Hammarskjöld’s childhood and adolescence were spent in Uppsala, Sweden, where his father was the provincial governor.
Dag Hammarskjöld painted by Bo Beskow and
Ban Ki-moon delivering the 2016 Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture.
Uppsala University, founded in 1477, is the oldest and best-known university in Scandinavia. Famous scholars such as Olof Rudbeck, Anders Celsius and Carl Linnaeus were professors at the university. Eight Nobel Prize laureates have been professors at the university, among them Archbishop Nathan Söderblom, who was also the University’s Pro-Chancellor. He received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1930.

Dag Hammarskjöld completed his studies at Uppsala with a bachelor’s degree in Law. He began his studies in 1923, received a degree in Romance Languages, Philosophy and Economics in 1925 and took a further post-graduate degree in Economics early in 1928.

The University’s international studies library is named after Dag Hammarskjöld and, in 1981, the Swedish Parliament established the Dag Hammarskjöld Chair of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University (www.pcr.uu.se), to commemorate that twenty years passed since the death of Dag Hammarskjöld.
The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation was established in 1962 by the Swedish government as an independent organisation in memory of the second Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Foundation’s mission is to catalyse dialogue and action for a socially and economically just, environmentally sustainable, democratic and peaceful world. In the spirit of Dag Hammarskjöld, the Foundation aims to generate new perspectives and ideas on global development and multilateral cooperation. The Foundation builds bridges between actors and provides space for those most affected by inequalities and injustice.

The work of the Foundation is centred around five different programme areas.

- UN Development System Renewal
- Building Peace
- Agenda 2030
- Global Disorders – Global Governance
- Dag Hammarskjöld's Legacy

More information about the Foundation at www.daghammarskjold.se.
The Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture is given in memory of Dag Hammarskjöld, and in recognition of the values that inspired him as Secretary-General and generally in his life – compassion, humanism and commitment to international solidarity and cooperation.

The invited speaker should be an outstanding international personality who in significant and innovative ways contributes to a more just, peaceful and environmentally sustainable world through valuable achievements in politics or research. Further information about the annual Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture including the full list of previous lecturers, can be found online at www.daghammarskjold.se.
Other Dag Hammarskjöld Lectures available in print:

José Ramos-Horta, *Preventing Conflicts, Building Durable Peace*, 2015

Helen Clark, *The Future We Want - Can We Make It A Reality?*, 2014

Margot Wallström, *Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict*, 2013

Tarja Halonen, *Women's Participation in the Sustainable World*, 2012


Francis Deng, *Idealism and Realism – Negotiating sovereignty in divided nations*, 2010


Martti Ahtisaari, *Can the International Community Meet the Challenges Ahead of Us?*, 2008

Sture Linnér and Sverker Åström, *UN Secretary-General Hammarskjöld – Reflections and personal experiences*, 2007

Hans Blix, *UN Reform and World Disarmament – Where do we go?*, 2005


Lakhdar Brahimi, *The Rule of Law at Home and Abroad*, 2002


Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden and Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Prime Minister of Sweden before the Lecture.
The medal which Uppsala University has produced in memory of Dag Hammarskjöld is awarded to the Dag Hammarskjöld Lecturers. It is designed by Annette Rydström and cast in bronze. The obverse shows a portrait of Dag Hammarskjöld and on the reverse a handshake and a text in Latin which reads: ‘Uppsala University to its disciple in memory of his outstanding achievements.’

Photo: Jan Eve Olsson, Kungl. Myntkabinettet