



Rad 1: Katarina Maaskant (HPA Ikea), Jan-Olof Jacke (President Astra Zeneca), Ylva Berg (CEO Business Sweden), Karin Apelman (Director EKN), Jens Spendrup (Chairman CSE), Mikael Damberg (Minister), H.M. Konung Carl XVI Gustaf, Veronika Wand-Danielsson (Ambassador), Jacob Wallenberg (Chairman Investor), Ira Thilén (VP Volvo), Carl Bennet (CEO Carl Bennet AB)

Rad 2 : Anders Nyrén (Chairman Industrivärden), Catrin Fransson (CEO SEK), Jonas Jakobson (Director Nordic Equities), Karl-Johan Holm (CEO Icomera), Leif Johansson (Chairman Astra Zeneca and Ericsson), Ulrika Hallesius (Director Visit Sweden), Christer Öjdemark (CEO ENVAC), Alberto Zanata (VP Electrolux)

Rad 3 : Robert Wentrup (Trade Commissioner Business Sweden), Hans Stråberg (Chairman Atlas Copco), Mats Gunnarsson (CEO SCANIA France), Morten Andreasson (SVP Gunnebo), Dag Andersson (CEO Diaverum), Håkan Buskhe (CEO SAAB), Martin Malmros (CEO Aura light), Jan Anetier (VP SHB)

## Several member companies in the Swedish Business delegation at the State visit to France

Actualités de nos membres | 15 décembre 2014

***“Sweden has a very good image in France and Swedish companies should take advantage of this”.***

The Swedish state visit to France with the King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden took place on December 2-4 at the invitation of President François Hollande.

As always a business delegation was invited to take part in the state visit. About 20 Swedish companies, for whom France is an important market, were invited to be part of the business delegation in conjunction with the Swedish state visit to France. The aim was to strengthen the trade relations between France and Sweden, initiate new contacts and promote investments and cooperation between the two countries. The main themes were sustainability, green growth, climate and energy, innovation and European competitiveness.

France is one of the largest economies in Europe and a very important market for Swedish companies. Jens Spendrup, Chair of the Confederation of Swedish enterprises, led the business delegation together with Ylva Berg, CEO of Business Sweden. The Chairman of the French Chamber of Commerce in Sweden, Johan Stenberg, also took part in the Swedish business delegation as well as the French Chamber board member Ira Thilén, VP Public affairs Volvo Group.

Jens Spendrup said before the visit that he hoped to discuss the problems of the EU and what can be done to dynamise the European economy. According to him the transatlantic free trade agreement TTIP is an important key to boost growth in the EU. France is an important part in the TTIP negotiations and the agreement would be beneficial for both French and Swedish companies, especially for small and medium size companies who would thanks to the agreement be able to export to the US.

Seven of the companies that took part in business delegation **are members of the French Chamber of Commerce**: Volvo Group, Gunnebo, Industrivärden, Nordic Equities, Handelsbanken, Envac and Aura Light.

The Swedish lighting company **Aura Light** is growing twice as fast as the rest of the lighting industry, confirming the increasing demand for innovative and sustainable solutions. The company is accelerating its international expansion. The French market is a key focus area where Aura Light already has important customers such as Carrefour, JCDecaux, Eurotunnel, City of Versailles and Lille metro.

**Nordic Equities** is an independent asset management firm with funds specialized on the Nordic markets. Their funds are authorized by the French financial authority AMF and France is an important market. The French Chamber had the opportunity to ask a couple of questions to the founder Jonas Jakobson, who took part in the business delegation.

**- Why was Nordic Equities part of the business delegation?**

*- We have been operating on the French market for many years and our job is to promote Sweden and the Nordic countries to investors. Sweden has a very positive image in France and Swedish companies should take advantage of this. For us, this was a great occasion to strengthen our trademark on the French market and reach new potential investors.*

**- What did you think of the program in France?**

- It was very good; very intense with a lot of interesting discussions.

**- What part of the program did you find most interesting?**

- The OECD conference in Paris, the round table meeting we delegates had with the King and Minister Damberg, to hear President Hollande speaking about the climate, the urbanization round table discussion we delegates took part in and of course the visit to Toulouse where we visited the very impressive Airbus site and met with the Nobel Prize laureate Jean Tirole. Toulouse is a very dynamic city with a competitive, innovation-driven industry and high growth.

**- Did the state visit give you a lot of new contacts that can be useful for your business development?**

- Definitely! Both French and Swedish. Through the visit I have now good contacts at both the French and Swedish embassies. It was also good to meet the Swedish Ministers who took part in the state visit (Mikael Damberg, Ibrahim Baylan, Ylva Johansson). Nordic Equities also took the occasion to arrange a lunch seminar on the strengths and attractiveness of Sweden and the Nordic countries in Paris on December the 5th, the day after the state visit. This was a great opportunity to invite our French clients and prospects.

For more information about the program and the companies participating in the business delegation, have a look at [the program homepage](#).

By Kristina Hulteberg, French Chamber of Commerce in Sweden [www.ccfs.se](http://www.ccfs.se)



Jonas Jakobson Nordic Equities and Jean Tirole Nobel laureate of prize in economic sciences 2014, Toulouse.