



**Environment at the crossroads.
Aiming for a sustainable future.**
Gulbenkian Conference 2009
27 and 28 October

Europe, USA and China after the crisis: towards new growth models for sustainability?

Allan Larson

The present financial and economic crisis has exposed the unsustainability of the European, American and Chinese growth models. Policymakers and politicians are now facing a challenge as big, if not bigger than the one in the 1940s, when uniting for peace and rebuilding for prosperity was the daunting task.

Today, the challenges are four-fold: First, rescuing the financial system and reforming regulation. Then restarting the economy and rebalancing the global economy, tackling the huge imbalances between Asia and the US in saving and consumption and finally, restructuring the global energy systems for long term sustainability.

Will the three main economies – when they start to recover - go back to “business as usual” or will they seek new growth models and converge towards sustainability? The speech will present three scenarios and discuss the reform processes, aimed at new economic, social and environmental goals in each of the three leading global economies.



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Allan Larsson was appointed in February 2007 by the Swedish Government as Chief Negotiator for Sweden's offer to host ESS, a European multidisciplinary science facility. Currently he is Chairman of the University of Lund, Member of the Advisory Committee on Leadership, Governance and Management of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences, Member of President Barroso's High Level Group on Energy and Climate Change and Member of the Steering Committee of Jacques Delors Notre Europe.

Born in 1938 Allan Larsson has made a professional career in journalism and media, economic research, national politics and in public administration in Sweden and in the European Union. He has worked as news reporter for several newspapers and for Swedish Television. He has been editor-in-chief of a weekly magazine. Between 1974 and 1976 he was Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Labour.

From 1983 to 1990 he served as Director General of the National Labour Market Board. In 1990 he was appointed Minister of Finance and in 1991 he was elected member of the Swedish Parliament. He was a member of the Board of Governors of the Central Bank 1992-1994.

During his time in the Parliament he was appointed Chairman of the European Employment Initiative. He remained an MP until 1995 when he was appointed Director General in the European Commission in Brussels, responsible for employment and social affairs. During five years, from 1995 to 2000, he was in charge of the preparation and implementation of the European Employment Strategy.



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After retiring as Director General he served as Chairman of the Board of Swedish Television 2000-2005 and chairman of the Transatlantic Dialogue on Broadcasting and Information Society 2002-2005. He was also a member of the OECD Round Table on Sustainable Development in Paris 2001-2003 and personal representative of Director General Juan Somavia, ILO, to the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development. In 2001 he became a member of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's High Level Panel on Youth Employment. He was member of the Albright-de Soto Commission for Legal Empowerment of the Poor 2005-2008.