
FOLKETINGET



Dansk Interparlamentarisk Gruppens bestyrelse

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Vedlagt omdeles den tale, som Jens Christian Lund (S), næstformand for delegationen, holdt under generaldebatten med temaet "Parliamentary accountability: Living up to people's expectations" under IPU's 124. Assembly i Panama 15.-20. april 2011.

Med venlig hilsen

Mette Vestergaard,
Delegationssekretær

My name is Jens Lund.

I am a member of the Danish parliament.

I am a member of the opposition in Denmark so I am not talking on behalf of the Danish government. I am talking as an elected member of parliament.

The Danish group here in Panama consists of 50 % from the parties supporting the government and 50% supporting the opposition.

Let me reveal a secret: politically we are certainly strongly disagreeing, as the population of Denmark expects us to. On a personal level however, we are very good friends, which people in Denmark also expects. I really hope that all of you sitting in this room understand this. It is a disaster when an election of a president or of a parliament results in a civil war or other kind of violence between different groups of the society.

Before I was elected by the people of Denmark to the parliament I was a soldier for 42 years and ended up being a Colonel and commanding officer of a regiment counting more than 2000 soldiers and civilians. As a soldier, my primary task was to ensure my country's sovereignty.

The people knew that in addition to this role of being a soldier, we the soldiers would never question the democracy of Denmark. We would never accept to be used in a supporting role for either the government or the opposition. We would never raise our weapons against our fellow Citizens. To be honest, a lot of countries should learn from this.

It is a disaster to see dictators, religious regimes and other regimes using soldiers and policemen to kill their own people, who want to express their opinion against the government, the dictator or the regime. Camp Ashraf is also a disaster.

We, the soldiers in Denmark accept as all other citizens do, that our country is ruled by the government appointed by the parliament, where the members are elected in fair and free elections.

We, the soldiers and the rest of the population support efforts for freedom and equality.

We respect and accept other people's political and religious opinions. We have in my country a strong feeling for freedom of speech. Yes the freedom of speech is so liberal, that it occasionally can be experienced as a bother to other groups.

In Denmark we don't accept death penalty, and read my lips, it is so inhumane that it should not be acceptable for any democracy.

We rely so much on human rights, that we will do everything possible in our power to prevent any violation of human rights even outside our own borders.

We do not stand by watching passively if dictators and violent governments kill, dishonour and torture their own people or refugees. That is the reason we are involved in North Africa.

All members of parliament in Denmark, whether we support the government or the opposition agree that we will support poor people in other countries, so the people in these countries get the opportunity to live a life in their own country in freedom and with the necessary supplies for living. We really hope to avoid that poor people are forced to flee from their countries to survive.

The opposition in Denmark wants this support increased. The parties supporting the government are of the opinion that the present support is enough - it is one of many political disputes.

We hope that we can promote democracy in the world by supporting women's rights, the rights of the minorities, religious rights and the right to fair and free elections.

Concerning terror "War on terror" is a misleading way to express this problem because we cannot characterise terrorists attacking civilians as anything else than common criminals.

Criminals we do not respect, but as any other criminals they must be caught, convicted and put to prison.

Personally I use a lot of resources to discuss democracy, human rights, fair and free elections in many nations when I work as an election observer. Until now I have supported democracy by monitoring elections in 15 countries, an important task which has given me a lot of satisfaction. I have used a lot of time to discuss with members of opposition groups trying to convince them that democracy is a better alternative when you want to avoid a violent regime killing its own people.

We cannot and must not accept regimes led by dictators, violence groups or religious fundamentalists, no matter how convenient it is.

I hope all of you my colleagues and friends throughout the world that you together with me will live up to the following:

- We the parliament members are the legitimate Representatives of the people
- We are the guardian against governments making mistakes
- We are the opposition against violence and inequality
- We are the guarantee for equality between women and men and between different groups and minorities.
- We are the guardians of the population to protect them from being killed and tortured.

I also hope that in the future we will use more resources for a peaceful development of the world avoiding the use of military confrontation. Let the population be proud of us and let us stop dictators, religious and mad regimes and other undemocratic regimes.

Let us promote the hope of all hearts in the world.