

MF Inger Støjbergs tale i forbindelse med IPU's 128th Assembly i Quito, Ecuador 2013

Thank you very much Mr. President

It is a very important debate that we have at this session.

In my point of view, sustainable growth cannot be achieved without actual freedom. Freedom for the individual with property rights, a free society with a right to assemble and a free market. That is the basis for wealth and weelbeing.

Of course, a country can be blessed with rich natural resources and harvesting those natural resources and in that way secure a high standard of living in a country for a time. But for real and actual sustainable growth to be obtained, you need real freedom.

And the point that I want to make is this: Freedom both leads to growth and wellbeing for the individual.

Wellbeing is the ability to be the captain in your own life. To make your own choices.

Government can and should provide a safety net and help those in need. But wellbeing is not something that can be driven by a decision that someone takes for you.

The government can't guarantee wellbeing, but it can support it.

Government can't create happiness, but it can pave the way for it – and equally important - government, can be the largest obstacle to wellbeing and happiness.

So let me be clear: To those of you who deny your people real human rights like freedom of speech, freedom of religion, the freedom to assemble and property rights: You're in the way of your peoples wellbeing.

I come from Denmark. A nation that is ranked as the happiest nation on earth. We are not happy because we are a rich. We are a rich nation, because our happiness stems from one thing: Trust.

Trust in each other. And trust in our government and our political system.

Trust isn't something that you can build from one day to the other. But over time you can create a culture of trust in your country.

By rule of law.

By allowing a free society to flourish.

That is the real foundation to achieving wellbeing for all citizens in the world.

And we should start with ourselves.

Nothing is as fundamental for a politician than the right to stand up for her or his beliefs and make the case for them without fear of reprisal from the government.

I myself am so privileged that I was born and raised in a country and in a time when everyone has the right to state their political beliefs.

Democracy has actually been a truism for my generation of Danes. In a lot of countries – including some in this room – this is unfortunately not the case.

I recently met a 23-year-old woman who struggled daily for the right to state her opinion and take part in political work. Her story is printed in my mind, and after I met her, I promised myself that I would fight for her and everyone's right to state their opinions, fight for their political beliefs and participate in political activities.

That is my pledge. To keep fighting. For her freedom. For free societies. And for freedom, wealth and wellbeing to spread around the globe.

Thank you very much.