



Anders Fogh Rasmussens indledende redegørelse på pressekonference om Muhammed-tegningerne

Taler

Anders Fogh Rasmussen
Statsminister

Dato

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Sted

Glassalen på Christiansborg

The violent arson attacks on several European embassies demonstrate that this is not a matter between the Muslim world and Denmark alone.

It has been a great comfort to my government and the Danish people to receive widespread international support in this difficult situation. We are working in close cooperation with friends and allies in Europe and the United States as well countries and organizations in the Muslim world.

I am happy to inform you that just a few minutes ago President Bush called me. The President called to express support and solidarity with Denmark in light of the violence against Danish and other diplomatic missions.

We agreed that the way ahead is through dialogue and tolerance, not violence. And we emphasized that freedom of press and respect for all faiths are crucial values.

We share with the Muslim countries a common interest in calming down the situation. We want cooperation, not conflict.

The European Union is now considering ways to re-establish a dialogue with countries in the region building on the long existing friendship between Europe and the Muslim world.

Today I want to appeal and reach out to all people and countries in the Muslim world: Let us work together in the spirit of mutual respect and tolerance. We need to solve this issue through dialogue, not violence.

We are today facing a growing global crisis that has the potential to escalate beyond the control of governments and other authorities. Right now, radicals, extremists and fanatics are adding fuel to the flames in order to push forward their own agenda. For that purpose they are portraying a picture of Denmark and European countries that is not true.

Today the people of Denmark witness with disbelief and sadness the events unfolding in the world. We are watching Danish flags being burned and Danish embassies being attacked. We are seeing ourselves characterized as an intolerant people or as enemies of Islam as a religion.

That picture is false. Extremists and radicals who seek a clash of cultures and religions are spreading it. I would like to emphasize: Denmark and the Danish people are not enemies of Islam or any other religion.

Danes have for generations fought for political liberty, human rights and democracy and for economic freedom, free trade and a free and civilized world. We will continue to do that. It is a part of our history and a fundamental part of our society today.

Denmark is one of the world's most tolerant and open societies.

We believe in freedom of expression

We believe in freedom of religion and we respect all religions.

We believe in dialogue between cultures.

We oppose violence and hatred.

And we believe in equal rights for everyone irrespective of gender, religious belief, political conviction or ethnic background.

_Let me remind you: It was a free and independent newspaper that published the cartoons. Neither the Danish government nor the Danish people can be held responsible for what is published in a free and independent newspaper.

Let me also remind you that the newspaper has already apologized for the offence caused by the cartoons.

I have also made it clear that the Danish government does not have any intention whatsoever to offend Muslims or believers in any other religion. On the contrary, we do respect people's religious beliefs.

I am appalled that we are in a situation where lies and misinformation not only tarnishes the image of Denmark but also spurs violence abroad.

But we are confronted by misinformation passed on by mobile messages and web logs at such high speed that it is picked up and acted upon before we have a chance to correct it. __So for the record let me re-iterate: There has been no burning of the Quran in Denmark. If any person attempts to do so the police

authorities will react immediately.

These are trying times for the Danish people. On several occasions I have appealed to the Danish people not to be provoked by the events abroad. I have called on all parties to abstain from any statement or action that will create further tension. I am proud to say that all people in Denmark have been acting with calm and dignity using their democratic rights to state their opinion.

I also welcome strongly the moderate statements from many Danish Muslims. They represent the vast majority of Muslims in Denmark, who day by day make an important contribution to the Danish society.

Tags

Politisk tale, Venstre

URI

<https://www.dansketaler.dk/tale/prime-ministers-opening-statement-at-the-press-conference>