



Judgment in historic impeachment trial



Jon Lauritzen
Partner

On Monday, 13 December 2021, judgment was delivered in the 6th impeachment trial in the history of Denmark, with 26 judges convicting former Immigration and Integration Minister Inger Støjberg of violating the Danish Ministerial Accountability Act. She was sentenced 60 days unconditional imprisonment. A fair judgment, according to Prosecutor and DLA Piper Partner Jon Lauritzen, who conducted the trial together with Anne Birgitte Gammeljord of Rovsing & Gammeljord.

"It has been an extremely interesting case, and I am honoured that I was given the opportunity to prosecute. It is an extensive and complicated case that has required very thorough preparation, and we are very excited now, after almost a year, to successfully bring this case to a close", says Jon Lauritzen, who in December 2020 provided a legal opinion on the report by the so-called Instruction Commission, which subsequently led to the 6th impeachment trial in the history of Denmark.

The court hearings took place in the months of September, October and November, and then the Court of Impeachment was to determine whether Inger Støjberg had violated the Danish Ministerial Accountability Act by issuing an instruction in February 2016 to separate married asylum seekers if one or both spouses were younger than 18 years. For the prosecution side, Jon and Anne Birgitte claimed unconditional imprisonment for Inger Støjberg's violation of the Act by initiating and maintaining an illegal administrative practice from 10

February 2016 to 12 December 2016, the prosecutors being satisfied that Inger Støjberg herself took the initiative to the administrative practice although she had been warned that the practice would be illegal.

“We are very pleased that 25 out of 26 judges agreed on the question of guilt. The case concerned a minister’s unlawful misconduct, and the Court of Impeachment has found that we have discharged the burden of proving that it was a criminal offence that was perpetrated back in 2016. We are therefore very satisfied with the outcome of the case”, says Jon Lauritzen, who is looking forward to spending more time on his other clients before taking a well-deserved Christmas break.

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