

# Chapter I

## Articles

### ABSTRACTS IN ENGLISH AND DANISH

#### The International Situation and Danish Foreign Policy 2006

*Ulrik Federspiel*

This is an outline of Danish foreign policy 2006 provided by the Permanent Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Throughout 2006, developments caused by globalisation posed huge challenges to Denmark. The cartoons crisis and the conflict in Lebanon were the most obvious ones. Confronted with these challenges, Denmark managed to pursue a pro-active foreign policy. Interrelated issues such as energy security, climate change, failed states and weapons of mass destruction became increasingly important. These issues must be addressed with different instruments ranging from diplomacy and multilateral cooperation to trade policy and development cooperation. They illustrate the need for new tools in foreign policy such as public diplomacy, which has gained further importance in the globalised and network-based system of international relations. In addition, the need for horizontal coordination has increased. The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a major globalisation study in 2006, recommending how Denmark can cope with the challenges of globalisation.

*I artiklen analyserer Udenrigsministeriets direktør dansk udenrigspolitik i 2006. I løbet af året medførte globaliseringen enorme udfordringer for dansk udenrigspolitik. De mest iøjnefaldende var tegningssagen og krisen i Libanon. Ikke desto mindre for-*

*måede Danmark at føre en proaktiv udenrigspolitik med henblik på at håndtere udfordringerne. Indbyrdes forbundne emner såsom energisikkerhed, klimæændringer, svage stater og masseødelæggelsesvåben fik stigende betydning. Emner som disse må imødegås med en række forskellige instrumenter, herunder diplomati og multilateralt samarbejde, handelspolitik og internationalt udviklingsamarbejde. De illustrerer desuden behovet for nye redskaber i udenrigspolitikken som f.eks. 'public diplomacy', der har fået yderligere vægt i et globaliseret og netværksbaseret internationalt system. Derudover er behovet for horisontal koordination blevet større. Udenrigsministeriet lancerede i 2006 en globaliseringsanalyse med anbefalinger til, hvordan man fra dansk side bedst kan håndtere globaliseringens udfordringer.*

## **Denmark's Membership of the UN Security Council: What Came out of it?**

*Ellen Margrethe Løj*

In this article, ambassador Ellen Margrethe Løj reports and elaborates on the Danish membership of the UN Security Council 2005-06. She focuses, in particular, on four major tasks that Denmark undertook: (1) The chairmanship of the Counter-Terrorism Committee was a big and important challenge. The Danish ambition was to revise the focus from process and information sharing towards enhancement of states' actual readiness to combat international terrorism. (2) Chairing also the Sanctions Committee for Liberia, remarkable cooperation was established with the new government in Monrovia. (3) Furthermore Denmark, together with Tanzania, chaired the negotiations on setting up the new UN Peacebuilding Commission. The establishment of the Commission was among the most notable Danish achievements. (4) Denmark was also an active player in the efforts to bring the Sudan tragedy to an end. However, Sudan remains an unsolved issue on the Security Council's agenda.

*I artiklen afdækker Ambassadør Ellen Margrethe Løj resultater og erfaringer fra Danmarks medlemskab af FN's Sikkerhedsråd i perioden 2005-06. Der fokuseres særligt på fire store opgaver, som Danmark var involveret i: (1) Formandskabet for Komitéen for Terrorbekæmpelse var en vigtig udfordring. Ambitionen var at skifte*

*fokus fra processer og videregivelse af information til styrkelse af staternes faktiske beredskab over for international terrorisme. (2) Under dansk formandskab for Liberia-sanktionskomiteen etableredes et betydningsfuldt og konstruktivt samarbejde med den nye regering i Monrovia. (3) Endvidere ledede Danmark sammen med Tanzania oprettelsen af FN's nye Fredsopbygningskommission. Oprettelsen af kommissionen og den målrettede danske indsats i relation hertil var blandt de mest iøjnefaldende danske resultater. (4) Danmark spillede ydermere en aktiv rolle i forsøget på at bringe tragedien i Sudan til ophør. Sudan er imidlertid fortsat et uløst problem på Sikkerhedsrådets dagsorden.*

## **The Cartoons Crisis in Danish Foreign Policy: A new Balance between the EU and the US?**

*Henrik Larsen*

The article examines the attempts by the Danish government to involve international fora and partners during the cartoons crisis. Specifically, the aim is to assess, whether the attempts to involve the EU and the US can be said to express a particular view on the general balance between these two pillars in Danish foreign policy. The article also analyses the response of the US and the EU to the crisis. On this background, then, it looks at the way the crisis, including the response of the partners, may have shaped the official discourse about the balance between the EU and US in Danish foreign policy. The main conclusion is that there has not been a fundamental reconceptualisation of their role in Danish foreign policy, although the emphasis on the significance of the EU has increased in some contexts. In spite of the official understanding of the episode as the most serious crisis since 1945, it has not led to a new discourse on the role of major international fora and partners in Danish foreign policy.

*Artiklen belyser den danske regerings forsøg på at multilateralisere tegningesagen ved at skaffe opbakning fra primært EU og USA. Formålet er at vurdere, hvorvidt bestræbelserne udtrykker et særligt syn på balancen mellem disse to hjørnesteine i dansk udenrigspolitik. Artiklen analyserer endvidere EU-landenes og USA's holdning i tegningesagen. På denne baggrund undersøges det, hvordan krisen har påvirket forståelsen af*

*balancen mellem EU og USA i dansk udenrigspolitik. Hovedkonklusionen er, at der ikke er sket nogen gentænkning af deres rolle, selvom betoningen af EU's betydning i nogle sammenhænge er øget. Skønt den officielle forståelse er, at krisen var den alvorligste i dansk udenrigspolitik siden 1945, har den ikke affødt nogen ny diskurs om EU's og USA's rolle i dansk udenrigspolitik.*

## Drawing the Line: The Cartoons Controversy in Denmark and the US

*Helle Rytikøen*

The article compares the unfolding in Denmark and the US of the Mohammad cartoons controversy. Despite obvious differences between the two countries, the US government gradually came to accept that the crisis was about free speech being threatened by fundamentalist Muslims, as argued by the Danish Prime Minister. Both Denmark and the US thereby reconsolidated the notion of the West as a protector of fundamental human rights and religious tolerance. This discourse has historically served as a legitimizing pretext for European civilizing projects. However, it also, ironically, silenced those Muslims in Denmark who had, supposedly, come to a society characterized by free speech. Finally, the article interprets one of the cartoons, which offers a less reductive view of what it means to be a Muslim in the West.

*Artiklen sammenligner, hvordan tegningesagen udspillede sig i Danmark og USA. Trods tydelige forskelle mellem de to lande kom den amerikanske regering efterhånden til at godtage den danske statsministers udlægning af krisen som en kamp om ytringsfrihed, der var truet af fundamentalistiske muslimer. Både USA og Danmark cementerede derved forestillingen om Vesten som beskytter af fundamentale menneskerettigheder og religiøs tolerance. Denne diskurs har historisk legitimeret vestlige civilisationsprojekter. Men den kom, ironisk nok, til at lukke munden på de danske muslimer, der angiveligt var kommet til et samfund med ytringsfrihed. Artiklen afsluttes med en fortolkning af en af tegningerne, som udtrykker et mere nuanceret syn på, hvad det vil sige at være vestlig muslim.*

# The International Situation and Danish Foreign Policy 2006

Ulrik Federspiel<sup>1</sup>

The challenges that result from globalisation were at the very centre of Danish foreign policy in 2006. Political, economic, cultural and environmental issues related to globalisation influenced the Danish foreign policy agenda. And Denmark witnessed a series of crucial foreign policy events. Overshadowing them all was obviously the so-called “cartoons crisis”. But there were also other important developments, for example the conflict in Lebanon and the subsequent evacuation, serious challenges in conflict-ridden societies and the multilateral trade negotiations (within the Doha Development Round) as well as increased focus on energy security as a foreign policy tool. Throughout the year, Denmark pursued a pro-active foreign policy with a view to handle the challenges posed by globalisation.

## NEW FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS FOR FOREIGN POLICY

Globalisation creates new framework conditions for foreign policy. This is, obviously, not a development that suddenly happened in 2006. But a number of international events made it clearer than ever that the framework conditions for foreign policy have been fundamentally altered.

Most importantly, there is a tendency that the basis of the nation state system as it has been known since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 is breaking up. Rather than a world organized into clearly defined states, the world

1. Ambassador Ulrik Federspiel is the Danish Permanent Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

is now moving towards a global network society. In a global network society, non-state actors are becoming more and more influential on the global scene – with some global companies whose turnover exceed the economies of many states. The privileged role of states in international affairs is challenged, Hizbollah and Al Qaeda being extreme examples. Furthermore, we see more and more decisions are made and even carried out inside informal structures rather than through well-established formal procedures. And boundaries between domestic and foreign policy are blurred as cross-border problems grow in intensity. The development of a new framework from a nation-based system to a more network-oriented system leads to new issues and new challenges that have to be dealt with in the 21st century. That was certainly the case in 2006.

## TWO EXAMPLES OF GLOBALISATION AFFECTING FOREIGN POLICY

### The Cartoons Crisis

To many Danes, 2006 will be remembered for the shocking news-images of Danish diplomatic missions in Damascus, Beirut and Teheran on fire. It will be remembered for the angry crowds in Pakistan and the West Bank burning the Danish flag and effigy of the Danish Prime Minister. In short, the cartoons crisis catapulted Denmark onto the stage of world politics in a way nobody had imagined possible.

It has been said that the cartoons crisis represented the biggest crisis in Danish foreign policy since the Second World War. Handling the crisis was a crash course in dealing with a global situation involving a myriad of international and national state and non-state actors; many of whom were unknown to most Danes before the crisis.

It is still impossible to pinpoint one or two exact triggers to the cartoons crisis. The cartoons were a case with potential appeal to around 1.5 billion Muslims worldwide. The anger and reactions aroused by the cartoons were fuelled by different motives and channelled in various directions according to the agenda of the eyes of the beholder. There were those, a majority, who were simply genuinely hurt and offended, and who wished to protest through peaceful means, through protest mails, consumer boycotts and

demonstrations. And there were those, a minority, who perhaps made the most noise. The situation was only further aggravated by the media that – according to their own interpretation – finally had a visual image of the much debated “clash of civilizations”.

Furthermore, modern technology allowed people around the world with access to a cell phone or pc “log on” to the crisis or leaving his or her individual touch and contribution to the continuing course of events. During the tensest of times, one text message – sent from a random person in Denmark wrongfully claiming that the Holy Quran was being burned on the town hall square in Copenhagen – had the potential of spurring violent demonstrations in many parts of the Muslim world.

At the height of the crisis, Denmark was under a virtual cyber attack. Millions of chain-emails bombarded ministries and embassies, threatening to shut down servers. Hackers broke into ministries’ and newspapers’ homepages. Rapid circulation of text messages rallied and coordinated the masses in the streets all over the world, and Arab satellite channels with a global outreach kept spreading wrong information about Denmark.

In this environment, there was never one quick fix that could have made the crisis pass faster or with less damaging effects. The cartoons crisis introduced the traditional diplomacy to a new diffuse and asymmetrical challenge where conventional rules and remedies no longer applied. It required a concerted effort of and coordination between different authorities. And it required the use of a multi-faceted collection of instruments, monitoring and reaching out to media, governments, religious authorities, the corporate community etc. In other words, a major public diplomacy effort was set in motion to all identifiable official and unofficial centres of popular influence in the Muslim world. At the same time, there was a need to speedily upgrade the knowledge of Islam and the numerous variations of how the religion is interpreted and implemented by its many adherents. And a need to better understand and communicate in Arabic in order to get our version of events through to the media, opinion leaders and others.

International support for Denmark, in particular from the US and the EU, was essential in stabilising the situation. By late 2006, Denmark’s bilateral relations with governments of Muslim countries had generally been restored. Focus had moved away from Denmark and the cartoons crisis

towards broader and more fundamental issues seen in a global context. For example, at the first session of the new UN Human Rights Council several issues were discussed, including religious intolerance. In other international fora such as the UN General Assembly and the OSCE, the efforts of the EU focused on promoting mutual understanding through dialogue across cultures and religions. The EU is engaged in a continuous dialogue with the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) on these issues, while underlining that dialogue and action must be based on the equal promotion and protection of all human rights, including the freedom of religion or belief and the freedom of expression.

The cartoons crisis clearly illustrated a number of lessons about diplomacy in a globalised world: That foreign policy in the global era is as much about handling the media and non-state actors as it is about relations to other governments. But the traditional need to cultivate allies to protect your interests internationally remains unchanged in the new global framework of foreign policy.

Some scholars have argued that Denmark's room for manoeuvre at the general foreign policy level has been reduced as a result of the cartoons crisis<sup>2</sup>. They have argued that Denmark would have to redefine its ambitions and its active foreign policy. However, other events in 2006 clearly showed that the decline of Danish soft power and Denmark's international standing did not materialise as predicted.

### **The conflict in Lebanon**

Only a few months after the cartoons crisis, the conflict in Lebanon erupted. In July 2006 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs faced another large crisis management challenge. Several thousand Danes were visiting Lebanon when the sudden outbreak of armed conflict between Israel and Hizbollah left them stuck in the war zone. Consequently, appeals for help in the form of evacuation and repatriation to Denmark reached the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in very large numbers. Immediate action was required. Several hundred employees from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other relevant Danish

2. See in particular Nikolaj Petersen's article on this issue (Petersen, 2006) as well as the comment on Nikolaj Petersen's article in the Danish Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee by the Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs (Folketinget, 2006).

authorities were mobilized – in the middle of the Danish holiday season – to reinforce Consular Services and the embassies in Lebanon, Syria and Cyprus. The operation was led by a task force (International Operational Staff - IOS) chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Denmark succeeded in bringing around 5,000 Danes back from Lebanon during the first five days of the actual crisis. Almost 6,000 were evacuated in total. A catamaran ferry, 30 airplanes and more than 100 buses were chartered to transport evacuees back to Denmark via Cyprus and Syria. High priority was given to public information and communication ensuring broad popular support and efficient contact with Danes stranded in Lebanon as well as their relatives in Denmark. Daily press briefings ensured widespread information about developments. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' telephone hotline answered some 10,000 telephone calls from the public. Communication in text messaging to Danes in Lebanon proved to be very efficient. Overall, the swift and efficient Danish evacuation attracted international attention.

Despite the heated events earlier in 2006, Danish authorities received impeccable support from local authorities during the crisis. The close cooperation with the authorities in Lebanon, Syria and Cyprus was vital to the success of the operation.

The Lebanon crisis clearly showed that globalisation, with ever increasing numbers of travellers, has made consular services an increasingly important task. With the considerable rise in global travel activity and man-made as well as natural disasters, the need for assistance to nationals in emergency situations and monitoring of incidents such as natural catastrophes, acts of terrorism and other types of unrest will imply new demands on a Foreign Service.

Overall, the situation in Lebanon had gradually worsened since 2005 as a result of the terrorist killing of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri. Denmark supported the establishment of an independent UN-investigation commission and supported the Lebanese government's wish to establish a special tribunal for Lebanon to bring to trial those suspected of the Hariri-murder. This included secondment of relevant staff. Through its UN Security Council membership, Denmark played a proactive role during the intense diplomatic negotiations. Numerous contacts were initiated

during the confrontation between Israel and Hizbollah in August 2006 that ultimately lead to the unanimous adoption of resolution 1701, which paved the way for the cessation of hostilities.

Following the crisis, Denmark pledged a total of DKK 55 million to Lebanon in humanitarian aid and in support of the implementation of resolution 1701. As another concrete manifestation of Denmark's commitment to a sovereign and independent Lebanon, Denmark contributed two ships to the enhanced UNIFIL-force authorized by resolution 1701. Finally, Denmark – acting with the encouragement of a number of Arab countries – was instrumental in ensuring that the broader Middle East situation was discussed in a constructive and forward-looking debate in the Security Council in September 2006.

## **GLOBALISATION: TRENDS AND CHALLENGES IN 2006**

Other events during 2006 bear testimony of the impact of globalisation, whereby the traditional perception of international relations – and the role of the nation states in international relations – is challenged. With globalisation, a major change is taking place in current international power structures and cooperation patterns. The historical division between domestic and foreign policies is being blurred, creating new demands for diplomats and foreign ministries. New issues become more pre-dominant in international affairs and issues that previously could be handled separately are now becoming more and more interrelated. This means an increased need for horizontal coordination. Energy security, climate change, failed states and weapons of mass destruction were among the issues that gained increased importance in 2006.

### **Energy and Climate Change on Top of Foreign Policy Agenda**

During 2006, energy security and climate change were among the issues moving to the top of the national and international political agenda. Several events during 2006 sharpened the attention on climate change and energy issues as increased evidence of the impacts caused by climate change appeared. Especially in the Arctic region and in developing countries where the

negative consequences of climate change are already observed. Moreover, in January 2006 Europe witnessed a dispute over the price of gas between Russia and Ukraine. Even though the cut off in gas supplies to Europe only lasted a few days, the dispute was a wakeup call for the EU. It was a reminder of the EU's dependence on imported fuel, and of the relationship between energy and security policy.

At the United Nations Climate Change conference in 2006, former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said that climate change should be considered a challenge of the same magnitude as traditional threats such as conflict, poverty and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The challenges of ensuring energy security and at the same time avoiding serious consequences of climate change should be addressed in a broad political context. A series of foreign policy instruments has to be used in addressing the challenges, including diplomatic channels, trade and export relations, and international development cooperation. Denmark supported such an approach during the UN Climate Conference in Nairobi in December 2006 and consequently argued for ambitious internationally binding climate change agreements.

With a strong tradition for renewable energy and energy efficiency, Denmark is leading the way towards sustainable use of energy. Diversification of supplies as well as research and development should be central elements in a renewed answer to the challenge. Furthermore, increased collaboration with developing countries – including China and India – is a central part of the Danish foreign policy agenda with focus on access to renewable energy, efficient use of energy and initiatives to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

The EU plays a central role in establishing a common energy policy to ensure sufficient and reliable energy supplies for Denmark and other members of the EU. Denmark fully supports the development of an ambitious, coherent and strong European Energy Policy. To this end, Denmark presented a comprehensive input at the informal EU summit in Finland in October 2006. A strong internal EU energy policy is seen as a precondition for an effective external EU policy on energy, including the use of all relevant instruments and improved dialogue and partnerships with major producer, transit and consumer countries.

## Challenges from Conflict-affected Countries and Failed States

Global prosperity has never been greater, yet at the same time global cohesion has come under steadily increased pressure because inequality is still widespread in the world. While about 400 million people around the world have been lifted out of absolute poverty during the last few decades, the number of poor people in Sub-Saharan Africa has doubled. Where approximately 160 million people at the start of the 1980s lived on less than one US dollar a day in Sub-Saharan Africa, this figure has risen to more than 320 million at the start of the 21st century. Many of these are young women and men with little access to education and employment.

Fighting poverty and its many faces, such as inhuman living conditions, the spread of infectious diseases and conflicts is the key challenge facing Danish development policy. In order to break out of poverty, it is crucial that the poorest developing countries also attain the benefits of globalisation. Many developing countries will need massive assistance for many years to come, especially in Africa. A massive effort against poverty is also an effort against radicalisation and extremism – and against national or regional conflicts.

Many of the world's poorest people live in countries coming out of crisis and conflict where stabilisation and recovery are immediate priorities. The use of force alone cannot achieve sustainable stability in countries with security problems. Development assistance should be seen as closely connected to security policy efforts in order to avoid that failed states become fertile grounds for terrorists, fanatics and criminal international networks. Denmark provides substantial support to programmes in several conflict-affected countries. During 2006, Denmark – through both bilateral and multilateral means – emphasized the need to improve civil-military coordination and to ensure that civil action in areas like police operations, the rule of law, security sector reform, good governance and development programmes are seen as essential and indispensable in conflict and crisis management, for instance in Afghanistan, Iraq and Sudan.

### *Developments in Afghanistan*

By the end of 2006 the situation in Afghanistan remains difficult. The year, however, started well for Afghanistan. In January 2006, the Afghanistan

Compact was agreed upon in London and endorsed by the United Nation's Security Council in February 2006 (Resolution 1659). The new agreement between the international community and the Government of Afghanistan explicitly states that genuine security remains a fundamental requisite for achieving stability and development in Afghanistan. Security must be reinforced by reconstruction and development. In London, apart from reconfirming and strengthening the international military presence, the international community pledged approximately USD 10.5 billion to Afghanistan for a five-year period. The agreement is an important element in assisting the Government of Afghanistan to extend its authority throughout the country and thus realising the ultimate objective of the international community's efforts in Afghanistan.

A number of remarkable developments were achieved in Afghanistan in 2006. The Parliament began its very first session in January and has since impressed with its vigorous work. The reform process of several ministries gained speed, and several laws aiming at improved investment climate were passed in parliament and the growth rate in 2006 was nine percent.

Despite the positive achievements a number of crucial challenges lie ahead. The security situation in especially the South and East is very complicated with Taliban, warlords and other opposing forces posing a vibrant threat to the Government of Afghanistan, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and forces from Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF).

Despite the difficult situation Denmark has continuously played a substantial role in assisting with the implementation of the London compact and the stabilisation of Afghanistan. The long-term reconfirmation of Danish financial assistance has been well received by the Afghan government. Denmark has been praised as a model donor based on a long-term commitment, focus on Afghan priorities and a willingness to finance activities through Afghanistan's own budgets.

Militarily Denmark continued to play an active role at the frontline in 2006. Denmark has presently deployed approximately 400 soldiers to Afghanistan, who are mainly taking part in ISAF's operations in the south. Furthermore, Denmark was instrumental in NATO's decision at the summit in Riga in November 2006 to adopt a comprehensive approach involving

both civilian and military actors to address the situation in Afghanistan. The importance of a broad approach cannot be underestimated: The Afghan population need to see positive results of the international military presence if they are to continuously support the nascent democracy and the international presence.

### *Developments in Iraq*

The situation in Iraq remains a major issue on the international and Danish agenda. Whereas 2005 was characterised by elections and some optimism in Iraq, 2006 was unfortunately marked by rising sectarian violence, exacerbated by the bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samarra in February 2006. The unity government formed in the spring presented a Government Programme and soon after Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki presented a Peace and Reconciliation Plan. However, the plan was only partly implemented.

One of the main problems remains the increased role of unauthorised militias. Some militias are infiltrating government institutions and even operating as death squads against perceived sectarian enemies. Needless to say, such militias have no role in democracies. Spread of the sectarian violence or a break-up of Iraq would be disastrous for the Iraqi people, for Iraq's neighbours and for the stability throughout the region and further abroad.

In addition to these security issues, other difficult issues such as full implementation of the Reconciliation and Peace Plan, a fair division of Iraq's oil wealth, the need to reconsider the de-baathification campaign, a review of the constitution and provincial elections to enhance local leader's legitimacy remain to be solved successfully – hopefully in 2007.

Throughout 2006, Denmark continued to provide a substantial contribution to the promotion of a free and democratic Iraq. The Danish/Iraqi cooperation comprised a Danish battalion (approximately 450 soldiers) co-located with the British troops in the Basrah-province, up to 11 civilian Danish police trainers and seven Danish civilian advisers. Danish reconstruction efforts amounting to DKK 500 million (2003-2008) were concentrated in the Basrah-province and included humanitarian activities, a major irrigation scheme which will benefit up to 220,000 Iraqis, and minor projects selected and implemented by local councils.

*Developments in Sudan*

The ongoing humanitarian crisis in Darfur continued in 2006, despite the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) by the Government of Sudan and the Minni Minawi faction of the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army in May 2006. A number of key parties to the conflict still stand outside the agreement and the DPA implementation is behind schedule. At present 3.5 million people in Darfur rely on humanitarian assistance, and the upsurge in fighting still causes new displacements. In the EU and as a member of the UN Security Council in 2005-2006, Denmark has actively and consistently worked for coordinated international efforts to solve the conflicts in Sudan.

Denmark has supported international demands for unhindered humanitarian access to the civilians, containment of the government supported armed militias, deployment of a robust peacekeeping force to Darfur, and a reinvigoration of the political process led by the AU to include the non-signatories.

In September 2006, in an effort to take the process further, Denmark and the US organised a high level meeting to coordinate international diplomatic initiatives to get Sudanese acceptance of a strengthened peacekeeping operation in Darfur. Ministers from the 15 members of the Security Council and a number of African and European countries participated. The meeting set out a strategy to influence the Sudanese government drawing on efforts by key actors including China, the African Union, and the Arab League.

Finally, in December 2006, the Sudanese government approved in principle the UN's plan for a three-phased support programme to the current African Union peacekeeping force (AMIS). The UN plan to support AMIS will gradually build up AMIS' overall capability, as each phase is deployed and will eventually allow for a significantly improved peacekeeping operation with an AU-UN hybrid force. The Government of Sudan has recently signalled its willingness to facilitate the light and heavy support packages, however, its position on the hybrid force remains, at best, ambiguous. Full deployment of an AU-UN hybrid mission in Darfur is not likely to happen without continued and strong pressure from the international community on the Government of Sudan. Hence, Denmark continues to be actively engaged in the matter.

## GLOBALISATION AND MULTILATERAL COOPERATION

The new challenges posed by globalisation often require solutions that individual countries cannot implement on their own. This applies, for example, to the efforts to combat poverty, terrorism, cross-border environmental problems, and the struggle to ensure respect for human rights. It is a high priority for Denmark that such problems are solved via strong multilateral cooperation. With more and more problems being of transnational character, an increased need for internationally negotiated solutions arises. But opposite trends may occur. On the one hand, international law, based on nation states as key actors, is challenged by the increased role of non-state actors. On the other hand, with globalisation and the growing importance of cross-border issues, relations with other countries, including through international agreements and alliances, become more important to foreign policy. It is, obviously, necessary that international organisations are geared to meet this challenge. If not, they risk losing their legitimacy. We already see how other forms of international cooperation are emerging on issues where existing international organisations or regimes have not been able to deliver.

### Denmark in the UN Security Council in 2006

Denmark ended its two-year term as a non-permanent member of the Security Council on 31 December 2006. The main focus of Denmark's work in the Security Council has been on strengthening global security through multilateral solutions based on four priorities: The fight against terrorism, conflict resolution, Africa and strengthening of international law. During the two-year term important decisions and progress were made on all four priorities and Denmark played a very active role in this regard. Important decisions were also made on Sudan, Iran, North Korea and Lebanon. For more detailed information and views on Denmark's membership of the UN Security Council 2005-06, see the following article by Ambassador Ellen Margrethe Løj, former Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations 2001-07.

### A Quiet Year for the EU

The EU increasingly represents the most important international framework for Denmark in handling some of the major challenges presented by

globalisation, such as climate change, environment, energy, migration, terrorism and free trade. But compared to previous years, 2006 was a rather calm year for the EU. The “Reflection Period” continued with vivid debate in some countries on the Constitutional Treaty. Enlargement was a major issue on the political agenda in the second half of 2006, and the EU was heavily engaged in international crisis management such as Lebanon.

### *The Constitutional Treaty on Hold*

Throughout 2006, the Constitutional Treaty was on hold as member states launched national debates concerning the future of the European Union and possible ways to solve the impasse surrounding the Treaty. However, it was clear from the outset that member states approached the reflection period differently. Not surprisingly, the member states that had ratified the Constitutional Treaty were less inclined to start a new public debate about European issues. France and the Netherlands, who had just concluded intense debates in the run-up to their referenda, had similar concerns.

In Denmark, the Parliament in co-operation with a number of national NGOs organised an ambitious dialogue with the public about the future of the EU. Numerous debates, public hearings and seminars took place across the country. The Parliament’s EU Information Centre established an excellent website providing easy access for citizens that wanted to take part in an event or wishing to express their views interactively. A public hearing organised late April by the Danish Parliament (Folketinget) and Danish TV2 was a great success. The event gave a clear sense of the expectations and concerns of the Danish population in relation to the future development of the EU. The results of the reflection period in Denmark were subsequently evaluated by Parliament, which adopted a resolution calling on the government to promote specific Danish priorities within the enlarged EU.

At the European Council in June 2006, agreement was reached to carry the results of the various national debates into a two-track approach. Firstly, the 25 Heads of State and Government decided to increase on-going efforts to achieve tangible results having a direct impact on the daily life of European citizens in areas such as the fight against terror and organised crime, consumer protection, energy, research and the environment. Secondly, it was decided to continue efforts to find a solution on the

Constitutional Treaty. The German Presidency in the first half of 2007 was tasked to prepare a roadmap that will help the EU accomplish this aim no later than the second half of 2008.

### *Enlargement of the EU*

While no new rounds of accession negotiations with individual countries were initiated or no new Members States acceded to the EU in 2006, it nonetheless proved an important year for the EU's enlargement. Preparations for Romania and Bulgaria's EU-membership from January 2007 were finalised. And after the official opening in October 2005, accession negotiations with Turkey and Croatia were initiated in substance during the year.

During the second half of 2006, however, it seemed as if relations between the EU and Turkey were headed for a crisis as Turkey failed to honour its commitment under the "Ankara Protocol" to allow direct traffic and trade between Turkey and the Republic of Cyprus. By being able to reach a difficult decision that included as a central element a suspension of accession negotiations on eight of 35 chapters with Turkey, the EU Foreign Ministers managed to dismantle the crisis and avoid a break down in negotiations.

At the December Summit 2006, the Heads of State and Government of the EU had a thorough discussion of the EU's strategy for enlargement. It was firmly established that enlargement had historically been a tremendous success and that the EU would continue to stand by its commitments to candidate and other countries, notably in the Western Balkans. And it was established that the Union's capacity to absorb new members, first mentioned in conclusions from the Copenhagen summit in 1993 would remain a priority throughout the continued enlargement process.

### *The EU as a global player*

In 2006, the EU maintained its foreign policy ambitions and achieved concrete results. Focus was on achieving concrete results within the existing institutional framework. First of all, the EU's missions – within the EU's Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) – assisted in significant achievements, such as the successful peace-process after 30 years of fighting in the Aceh province in Indonesia and the first democratic elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo since independence. Secondly, progress was made to

improve strategic planning and coordination between the Council Secretariat, the Commission, Member States and international organisations in the field of foreign policy and crisis management. Thirdly, a substantial increase of the CFSP-budget for 2007-2013 was agreed upon, which makes it more likely that the EU's foreign policy ambitions can be successful in the future<sup>3</sup>. Lastly, the EU managed to speak with one voice on a number of important foreign policy issues, for instance Kosovo, the Lebanon-crisis, Iran, Sudan and energy-security issues.

### Transformation high on NATO Agenda

NATO remains the key actor in the area of security policy for Denmark and is the primary multilateral framework for deployment of Danish armed forces in international operations. At the end of 2006, approximately 700 out of 1300 Danish troops engaged in peace support operations served under NATO command. In addition to troop contributions, Denmark has been playing an active role in shaping the future orientation and working of the Alliance. NATO's Summit in Riga in November 2006 was a key event in the ongoing transatlantic political dialogue and transformation process. From a Danish perspective, two results of the Summit stand out.

Firstly, building on positive experiences from cooperation between Danish governmental and non-governmental actors where Danish forces are deployed, Denmark has played a leading role in putting the merits of a more proactive approach to civil-military cooperation high on NATO's agenda at the Summit in Riga.

Secondly, NATO is increasingly involved in security sector reforms and interoperability development in a wide range of partner countries across Europe, South Caucasus, Central Asia and the broader Middle East. Moreover, partners such as Sweden and Finland as well as countries outside NATO's main partnership programmes – for instance Australia and Japan – are contributing significantly with military forces and/or various forms of civilian support to NATO's operations and missions. Denmark is a strong supporter of these ongoing efforts to adopt a more global and flexible NATO approach to partnership

3. The CFSP-budget will gradually increase from EUR 159 mio. in 2007 to EUR 340 mio. in 2013.

## Suspension of Trade Negotiations within the WTO

The high global economic growth continued during the course of 2006. But at the same time, the tendency in many countries towards increased protectionism continued. The time schedule for finalising the Doha Development Round before the end of 2006 – paving the way for a better integration of developing countries into the global economy – could not be kept and negotiations were suspended in July 2006.

The suspension of the multilateral trade negotiations gave new impetus to the drive for entering into bilateral free trade agreements. And in October 2006 the Danish Foreign Minister officially announced that Denmark was in the process of developing a strategy for a new assertive trade policy. The aim is to reduce the barriers that hinder the access of Danish companies to the growth markets and ensure fair and transparent conditions. When finalised, the strategy will consist of three tracks: The multilateral track in the WTO, the bilateral/regional track within the EU, as well as the company track. The trade negotiations in the Doha Development Round should remain the number one priority despite the present deadlock. If the efforts fail, the integration of the developing countries into the global economy would suffer irreparable damage and the progress, which had been achieved in the negotiations, would be lost.

## CHALLENGES IN 2007 AND BEYOND

In 2006, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched a major study on how globalisation affects the role of diplomacy and the tasks of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The study concluded that the Danish Foreign Service must further increase the focus on the key challenges of globalisation, such as terrorism and failed states, poverty, environmental issues and the interaction between civil and military efforts in crisis management.

Furthermore, open and vibrant partnerships in Denmark and abroad have to be established in order for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to become a forger of partnerships and serving as a center for the gathering and exchange of information on global issues – for early warning of international trends, discussions and international policy making. This implies enhanced cooperation with civil society, private companies, organisations

and other authorities. But also with regional institutions and organisations, the media, and in some cases cultural and religious groups.

Finally, the study concluded that the Foreign Service has to be present in the hot spots of globalisation. The focal points of the world are changing. Economically from Europe and the US towards Asia where growth rates are high. Politically with increased challenges from the Middle East. The manner in which these regions handle globalisation is of decisive importance for the rest of the world. This makes direct presence in the hot spot of the global dynamics more valuable and essential. The confidential and close relations needed in order to access and influence policy processes are best build up through personal presence in capitals and other political, economic, and cultural centres of the world. This means opening of embassies in Latin America, Australia, the Middle East and reinforcement of embassies in Asia.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is now in the midst of implementing the recommendations from the study enabling Denmark to continue to pursue an active foreign policy in 2007 with the aim of promoting international peace and development, stability, democracy, human rights and trade<sup>4</sup>.

For smaller countries such as Denmark, globalisation and soft power presents new opportunities. Compared to the “old days” of the Cold War, Denmark has better possibilities now to participate in the shaping of the global network society in a way that Denmark finds morally and politically viable. Globalisation is a tremendous opportunity – if seized in time. In just a few decades it has lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty. But it is crucial that everybody is given the opportunity to benefit from globalisation. Economic and political globalisation has created both winners and losers. It is our job to ensure that more people and regions are included on the winning side.

Globalisation is an enormous challenge to diplomacy and to nation states. But it is equally a great opportunity. As Joseph Nye of Harvard University, who was on the Advisory Board of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in preparing the globalisation study, has stated, the “soft power” of nation states is of increasing importance. Diplomacy is to a very large extent all about “soft power”. The use of “hard power” is a consequence of the failure of diplomacy.

4. The study and its 123 recommendations (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2006a), as well as an executive summary in English (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2006b), was made public in October 2006.

## REFERENCES

- Petersen, Nikolaj (2006), 'Efter Mohammad: Handlerummet for den borgerlige udenrigspolitik', *Militært Tidsskrift*, vol. 135, no. 2: 153-185.
- Folketinget (2006), *URU alm. Del – Svar på Spørgsmål 79*, September, Copenhagen. Online, HTTP: [www.folketinget.dk] (Accessed 28-03-2007).
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2006a), *Den Grænseløse Verden – Udenrigsministeriet og Globaliseringen*, October, Copenhagen. Online, HTTP: [www.um.dk] (Accessed 28-03-2007).
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2006b), *Diplomacy in a Boundless World – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark*, October, Copenhagen. Online, HHTTP: [www.um.dk] (Accessed 28-03-2007).

# Denmark's Membership of the UN Security Council: What Came out of it?

Ellen Margrethe Løj<sup>1</sup>

In 2005-06, Denmark served as one of the ten elected members of the United Nations Security Council<sup>2</sup>. When Denmark was elected to the Council, her Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Per Stig Møller, called it an international civic duty. For two years we shared responsibility with other members for handling international conflicts with the aim of strengthening global security through multilateral solutions.

This was the fourth time Denmark served on the Council<sup>3</sup>. Since the last time, in 1985-6, the agenda and climate on the Council had changed considerably. Indeed, the last two years were packed with action, providing clear evidence that, despite its well-known shortcomings, the United Nations remains the main forum for issues of international peace and security. In addition to Denmark's priorities, which included African issues, the fight against terrorism, strengthening international law and conflict resolution, we found ourselves participating in far-reaching decisions on issues involving Sudan, the Middle East, Iran and North Korea.

This article describes some of the high points of Denmark's recent tenure on the Security Council, as well as instances in which the results did not

1. Ambassador Ellen Margrethe Løj was Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations 2001-07.
2. Apart from the five permanent members, the other members of the Council in 2005 were Algeria, Argentina, Benin, Brazil, Denmark, Greece, Japan, Philippines, Romania and Tanzania; and in 2006 Argentina, Congo, Denmark, Ghana, Greece, Japan, Peru, Qatar, Slovakia and Tanzania.
3. Denmark was also a non-permanent member in 1953-4, 1967-8 and 1985-6.

quite live up to our expectations. The Security Council is a microcosm of the world. Just as on the global playing field, the big players clash, their hidden agendas being forced out into the open, and it becomes painfully obvious that good intentions and hard work are not sufficient to ensure success in international politics.

## THE ARENA AND ITS ACTORS

In many ways, the Security Council is unique. Of the 192 UN member states, a small core of 15 members is vested with vast powers through sitting on it. The primary responsibility of the Council is the maintenance of international peace and security. Since the end of the Cold War, the Council has widened the interpretation of its mandate and thereby vastly expanded its agenda, for example, to include thematic issues such as the protection of civilians and the rule of law.

The five permanent members, of course, play the predominant role because of their special status, power and resources in world politics. The veto gives them the power to prevent decisions from being taken, but not to ensure that something will be done about a particular problem. Their diverse and sometimes conflicting interests mean that they are not always able to agree among themselves. This gives the elected members ample opportunity to play influential roles.

That being said, in recent years the Council has proved a remarkably consensual body, and the divisions that emerged during its discussions on Iraq in 2003 are fast disappearing. During the past two years, the Security Council adopted 158 resolutions, all but eight by unanimous vote (the eight resolutions not adopted unanimously are listed in an annex to this article). Only two vetoes were cast, both by the United States to block resolutions pertaining to the Middle East. Consequently, in 2005-6 the atmosphere was less confrontational than might have been expected, and far more cooperative.

During Denmark's two-year term, European views were strongly represented on the Council, five of the 15 seats being held by EU member states. The five Europeans voted in favour of every resolution adopted in 2005-2006, proving the strong unity between them in regard to priorities and direction<sup>4</sup>. Denmark consistently advocated unanimity of the Council as the

best way to achieve maximum impact and increase the prospects of full implementation.

On the Council, France and the United Kingdom are known as particularly hard-working members, and they drive the agenda on a number of issues. Apart from the close cooperation with our European partners, not least France and the United Kingdom, Denmark enjoyed very close relations with another strong ally, the United States.

One of the Council's main functions is to authorise and monitor peacekeeping operations. Most of them are led by the United Nations, some by, for example, NATO, the African Union or the European Union, and the operation in Iraq are being run by an international coalition. The number of blue-helmeted soldiers serving in United Nations peacekeeping operations has grown exponentially. Today, United Nations is running 18 peacekeeping operations around the world with more than 100,000 military and civilian personnel. During Denmark's tenure of a Council seat, the Security Council authorised two operations in Sudan, UNMIS<sup>5</sup> and AMIS<sup>6</sup>, as well as a significant increase in the number of troops for the UN-led operation in southern Lebanon, UNIFIL. In the pipeline, when Denmark left the Council, were operations in Darfur, involving up to 20,000 personnel, and in Chad, involving up to 11,000. Furthermore, in February 2007, the Security Council mandated an African Union operation in Somalia with 8,000 soldiers. UN-led operations are funded by assessed contributions, and the annual budget for 2006-07 is USD 5.28 billion. This is a considerable amount, but given the number of troops, United Nations-run operations are fairly cost-effective. The United States and Japan pay almost half the costs of UN peacekeeping and therefore also keep a close eye on expenditure.

## PREPARATIONS AND PRIORITIES

The ten non-permanent seats on the Security Council rotate among the UN's member states. As a result, for most countries having a seat on the

4. Denmark abstained on the two resolutions vetoed by the United States, as did the United Kingdom and Slovakia. France and Greece voted in favour.
5. The UN Mission in Sudan monitors the implementation of the comprehensive peace agreement between north and south Sudan agreed in Naivasha in January 2005.
6. The African Union Mission in Sudan monitors the situation in Darfur.

Council is a rarity. Typically, terms for smaller states are twenty years apart, meaning that there is little institutional memory in any state on which to base preparations and little overlap regarding the issues on the UN's agenda. The rotation of ten out of the 15 seats further serves to amplify the role of the permanent members, and elected members have to accept that the Council will continue to operate with or without their participation.

The present level of cooperation on the Council forms a contrast to Denmark's last term in 1985-6, when only 34 resolutions were adopted and 15 vetoes cast. International affairs may have been simpler during the Cold War, but the Council served more as a forum for highlighting disagreements than for solving problems. In those days, the Council met infrequently: in 2005-06, by contrast, it convened almost every day.

Consequently, no formula exists for preparations as an elected member, except to be ready to hit the ground running, brace yourself for the unexpected and stay well informed on all items on the agenda. To meet these demands, we relied on the network of Danish embassies around the world and established close contacts with the NGO community, as well as with partners on the Council. Working in close collaboration with colleagues in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Copenhagen, the Danish Mission in New York was responsible for the day-to-day activities on the Council.

The Danish Government set four overall priorities at the outset of Denmark's term on the Security Council to guide the work. The cross-sectoral themes were a logical continuation of Danish foreign, security and development policy priorities:

- New threats, with a focus on terrorism. The objective was to improve UN performance on counter-terrorism efforts and, through the chairmanship of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, which is subordinate to the Security Council, to reinvigorate the Council's activities.
- United Nations conflict prevention and conflict management. The objective was to integrate the approach to conflict management and peace-building by establishing a coordination mechanism anchored in the UN.
- Africa. With more than half the Council's activities relating to conflicts in Africa, the objective was to make use of Denmark's long experience of African issues and encourage stronger involvement by the Security

Council on the continent, as well as stronger cooperation with African partners.

- Strengthening the Security Council with a focus on the international legal order. The objective was to highlight the importance of international law and respect for it when dealing with conflicts.

The Council is mainly preoccupied with specific conflicts, but as developments are difficult to predict, it is not easy to set specific goals on how to help resolve a given conflict. Denmark applied her horizontal priorities to specific cases, as well as in the execution of three tasks entrusted to her: the chairmanships of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Sanctions Committee for Liberia, and the role of facilitator in negotiations on establishing the Peacebuilding Commission. These are described in more detail in later chapters.

Besides political priorities, the road to influence is through partnerships and alliances. No elected member achieves anything on its own, and often not without the support of one or more of the permanent members (P5). Multilateralism is about shared goals, joint efforts and common solutions. Our goal was to be a serious partner and to work closely with those members who shared our values and objectives. The Security Council agenda reflects the pivotal position the Council continues to occupy in the international community's discussions about key security policy challenges. Denmark pushed for Council action in order to change and improve the situation for people in need. We did not take radical and uncompromising positions, but tried to work constructively and persistently to influence decisions within the realm of what was possible. The Council's efforts are based on teamwork, and Denmark aspired to be a solid team player. For that we gained respect and managed to make a difference.

It has been argued that Denmark's participation as a coalition partner in Iraq and the emergence of the cartoons crisis half way through her membership of the Council limited her opportunities to influence affairs. Nothing could be further from the truth. At the UN, policy disputes are a daily occurrence and honest disagreements on the best way to achieve a certain objective are respected. States are rarely judged on the basis of a single position alone, but rather on overall perceptions of the values and policies

they stand for. Denmark enjoys a reputation as a consistent, long-term supporter of multilateralism, the peaceful settlement of disputes and human rights, as well as being a generous donor. After two years on the Council, this reputation is still intact and perhaps has even been strengthened.

## RESULTS

Our assessment of these two years on the Security Council must not be based solely on decisions made and crises solved. Is the world a more peaceful place than it was two years ago? This is not a question that is easy to answer, and, indeed Security Council resolutions alone do not provide peace and security. In judging Denmark's impact, the total web of activities she is involved in globally must be taken into account.

Space does not allow all the big issues that were discussed on the Security Council in 2005-06 to be discussed here. Below, however, are some of the main issues to which Denmark contributed.

The crisis in Lebanon in July and August 2006 stands out as the only armed conflict during these two years that arose suddenly and where the Council speedily reacted to stop the hostilities. A month must have seemed like an eternity for those who suffered through the crisis in Lebanon itself, but in retrospect it must be considered one of the Council's most prompt and successful interventions. The resolution<sup>7</sup> was negotiated in close consultation with Lebanon and Israel, and acknowledging their support was vital for implementation.

On the Middle East, the Council's main contribution was the endorsement of the steps taken by the Quartet<sup>8</sup>, but clearly the issue must be settled through direct negotiations between the parties supported by the Quartet. Iraq and Afghanistan were discussed on a regular basis. On the military side the role of the UN is limited in both countries, but the organisation's involvement remains a priority, given its provision of added value on the political and development sides.

7. Resolution 1701 (2006).

8. The Quartet on the Middle East is a foursome of nations and international as well as supranational entities involved in mediating the peace process in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Quartet includes the United States, Russia, the European Union, and the United Nations.

Kosovo was another high-priority issue and one of the few European conflicts left on the Security Council agenda. Our compatriot, Søren Jessen Petersen, served as the head of the UN administration (UNMIK) until the Fall 2006. During his tenure, the Kosovars came a long way towards implementing the standards for ethnic co-existence. The Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the future status of Kosovo, Marthi Ahtisaari, had not finished his work by the end of 2006. When the time is ripe, hopefully later in 2007, a difficult decision awaits the Security Council.

Iran and North Korea both threatened to undermine confidence in the international non-proliferation regimes, and 2006 was the time for Security Council action. Agreeing on sanctions proved very difficult, given the different interests of the permanent members of the Council, but the lengthy negotiations finally came to fruition. The ability of the Security Council to address these matters in a determined and concerted fashion has made the prospects of finding durable solutions to threats to non-proliferation more likely. Against this background, Denmark regards the unanimous adoption of both resolutions<sup>9</sup> by the Security Council as significant achievements.

On Africa, actions by the Council have been numerous. Progress was achieved in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Liberia, while the situations in the Ivory Coast, Somalia, and between Ethiopia and Eritrea proved more difficult. Denmark has been involved in developing a comprehensive approach to Africa's conflicts, and to ensuring solid African ownership through the active involvement of the African Union, as well as providing support for African mediation efforts in dealing with conflicts, for example, in the Ivory Coast and Sudan. Denmark has worked to ensure a smooth transition following the withdrawal of UN forces from Sierra Leone and Burundi through the establishment of innovative peace-building offices. A later chapter covers the situation in Sudan, by far the most sensitive African issue on the agenda.

Denmark has persistently worked to ensure that the Council upholds and promotes international law. In June 2006, under the Danish Presidency, the Council agreed to a number of central principles of international law and underscored the imperative of fighting impunity for the most serious

9. Resolution 1718 (North Korea) and Resolution 1737 (Iran).

violations of international law. It also underlined the need to uphold the procedural rights of individuals under sanctions regimes. In December 2006, the Council took the first step towards establishing a framework for complaints against individual sanctions.

Strengthening international law is a fine example of how we tried to influence affairs beyond our term of membership. Another is the protection of women and children during conflicts, which we pursued on every occasion, not least when negotiating mandates for peace operations. For this, we gained a reputation, and, hopefully, managed to heighten awareness of this issue for the future.

Finally, the selection of the new Secretary General took place in 2006. Denmark participated in the unanimous nomination of Mr. Ban Ki-moon.

### **Counter-Terrorism Committee**

Over the years, the Security Council has established a number of subsidiary bodies. Most of them are sanctions committees tasked with implementing the sanctions regimes imposed by the Council. When we joined the Council it had eight sanctions committees. During our tenure, sanction committees for Sudan, North Korea and Iran were added to the list. Other subsidiary bodies include the Counter-Terrorism Committee and several working groups, for example on conflict prevention in Africa and on peacekeeping operations. All 15 members participate in the work of the subsidiary bodies; most of them are chaired by the non-permanent members.

The challenge in an institution like the United Nations, where process often prevails over substance, is to ensure that the process leads not just to more process, but also to outcomes and results. The Security Council can take pride in the fact that it is by far the most proactive and effective of the main organs of the United Nations. In the subsidiary bodies, however, the reality is often somewhat different. That has been the case for the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), despite its limited membership, high priority agenda and, at the outset, strong political backing among the UN membership at large. Denmark chaired the CTC from March 2005 and throughout 2006.

The CTC was created in the wake of the terrorist attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001, with the stated purpose of enhancing states'

readiness against the threat from international terrorism. With a dual-purpose mandate, the CTC's role is to monitor and promote states' implementation of the multiple obligations mandated by resolution 1373 (2001)<sup>10</sup>, as well as to facilitate technical assistance to states to help them develop the capacity for implementation. While these objectives are results-oriented, the CTC instead quickly became focused on process and information-gathering. Denmark's ambition as chair of the CTC was therefore to refocus its work on producing results. Intense activity on the CTC, which met almost every week, kept the momentum going.

The first task was to streamline procedures. That meant changing procedures for handling incoming letters and requests, leaving paper work to the chair, and encouraging the Committee to focus on matters of substance rather than process. Another issue was the CTC's dialogue with states to enhance their implementation and address any needs for assistance. Part of this work was left to the secretariat<sup>11</sup> in the form of visits to states to discuss problems and solutions. In order to produce results, the CTC was involved in preparing the visits and the follow-up. The change in the working methods of the CTC was intended to transform it into a trusted and resourceful partner for states trying to fight terrorism.

The next step was to develop a comprehensive and even-handed tool for measuring implementation of the resolution by member states. The original reporting requirements had created a significant pool of information. Never before in the history of the UN had all states fulfilled their reporting requirements, and in the case of CTC, many states had reported four, five and even six times, producing more than 600 reports. To put the data to use, the CTC developed an analytical tool encompassing all aspects of the resolution to allow the identification of possible gaps, and to focus the Committee's dialogue with memberstates on areas where improvement was needed.

Facilitating technical assistance turned out to be one of the most difficult tasks. The CTC did not administer funds per se, and was not designed

10. Adopted shortly after 11 September 2001.

11. The Committee received technical support from a secretariat, the Counter Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), which was established during the second half of 2005.

to do so. Instead, it was envisaged as a facilitator among recipients, providers and donors by identifying and prioritizing the needs for assistance and cooperating with member states to ensure local ownership. Guidance was developed alongside specific step-by-step implementation plans. With a solid record in development assistance in general and a commitment to fight terrorism, Denmark was well placed to guide this work. We launched several initiatives that expanded on existing programmes to enhance institution-building, which helped states increase their anti-terrorism capacity. Still, in this field more needs to be done.

To achieve results, it was necessary to enhance cooperation with international and regional organisations. Relations with key European and American institutions had been developed in the early years. With that accomplished, the CTC decided to strengthen relations with many African, Caribbean and Pacific organisations that were beginning to develop counter-terrorism agendas. Information from various organizations on “best practices” on counter-terrorism was compiled by the CTC to provide an overview of advice available to member states in their implementation efforts.

Finally, it was essential for Denmark to include human rights concerns in the CTC’s assessment method. While the CTC is not a human rights body, it must address human rights concerns to avoid endorsing anti-terrorism strategies that conflict with human rights obligations. The CTC did provide guidance on how to take human rights into account in its work and routinely considered the potential human rights impact of states’ implementation strategies.

Denmark left the CTC having revised working methods that should lead the Committee to achieve more concrete results. Unfortunately, political will has not always been forthcoming.

It is up to current members to decide how to move the agenda forward. Anywhere in the United Nations, results require proactive and creative efforts, combined with political will.

## **Liberia**

The chairmanship of the Sanctions Committee for Liberia proved to be another huge challenge. The sanctions regime against Liberia is one of the

most wide-ranging to be imposed by the Security Council. The main part of the recent sanctions regime was introduced in December 2003 after the signing of the peace agreement between the conflicting parties. Apart from an arms embargo, the sanctions covered all imports of round logs and timber products as well as rough diamonds from Liberia. Illegal trade in these commodities represented the main source fuelling further conflict in Liberia and West Africa. The resolution also laid down the conditions for terminating the sanctions, thus giving the government of Liberia a clear road map for the necessary reform. Most importantly, the government had to make sure that revenues from the trade in timber and diamonds were not diverted to fuel conflict, but instead used for legitimate purposes for the benefit of the Liberian people.

Resolution 1521 (2003) established the Sanctions Committee with a mandate to monitor implementation of the sanctions and the Liberian government's performance. To assist the Committee, a panel of experts regularly reported on the relevant issues, including violations of the sanctions regime. The Committee met approximately once a month, but more frequently around submission of the biannual reports to the Security Council by the Committee chair. In between, the task of the Danish chair was to follow events in Liberia attentively. Our goal, in close cooperation with the government of Liberia, was to have them meet the conditions and terminate the sanctions.

The sanctions regime went to the very heart of the Liberian economy. Without trade in timber and diamonds it was difficult for the economy to grow. When Liberia's new president, Ms. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, was elected in late 2005, she expressed her support for the sanctions and promised to work with the Security Council to meet the requirements for their termination. The cooperation established with President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and her government was remarkable and provided a fine example to follow. It proved the value of sanctions as a means to further stabilisation and to achieve genuine progress politically as well as economically.

In my capacity as Chairperson of the Committee, I visited Liberia on 5-9 April 2006. The purpose of the visit was to discuss with individuals both within and outside the government, not least the president, implementation of the sanctions and the progress that had been achieved to date in meeting the

conditions for their lifting. I also wanted to demonstrate in person to the new government in Monrovia the support and commitment of the Committee by discussing the purpose and function of the sanctions. Finally, the visit provided an opportunity to assess the impact of the sanctions in the context of Liberia's humanitarian and developmental challenges.

Most meetings were very constructive and productive, but some were less pleasant, like those with people who were subject to individual sanctions (travel bans and asset freezes). The visit served its purpose well. Sanctions should never be an end in themselves but only a means to an end. Dialogue with countries subject to sanctions is extremely important, and with Liberia the cooperation was especially fruitful because the government benefited from the sanctions in its endeavours to reform the economy. The visit and the hard work of the new administration in Monrovia in the months that followed made it possible for the Security Council to lift the timber sanctions in June 2006 during Denmark's presidency, though only on condition that a new forestry law would be signed into law within ninety days at the latest. That requirement was met on target. The diamond sanctions will remain in force until June 2007, but ongoing efforts in Liberia should enable the Council to lift them soon.

Prior to my visit, Denmark had been actively involved in another important event for Liberian politics – the arrest in March 2006 of the former president, Charles Taylor, and his transfer to the Special Court for Sierra Leone. After the end of the civil war, Taylor had been forced into exile in Nigeria. That same year the Special Court for Sierra Leone indicted him and charged him with crimes against humanity in respect to his role in the civil war in Sierra Leone. Denmark worked closely with the United States on a resolution requesting the UN peacekeeping force in Liberia to arrest Taylor at the first opportunity upon his return to the country. A resolution to this end was adopted in November 2005<sup>12</sup>. Upon her election, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf submitted an official request to Nigeria for the extradition of Charles Taylor. Once on Liberian soil, Taylor was briefly kept in custody by the UN forces before his transfer to the Special Court for Sierra Leone in Freetown. Taylor is now in The Hague standing trial before the Special Court for Sierra

12. Resolution 1638 (2005).

Leone. For many people in West Africa justice is finally within reach. For Denmark the trial represents an important step in the fight against impunity.

### Peacebuilding Commission

Denmark became a member of the Security Council when the preparations for the World Summit<sup>13</sup> in September 2005 started to take off. In December 2004 the Secretary General's High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change presented its report<sup>14</sup>. In March 2005, Kofi Annan proposed a very ambitious agenda for reform of the UN<sup>15</sup>. From the outset, Denmark and the rest of the EU members supported Kofi Annan's reform agenda. The Summit certainly did not deliver on all of the Secretary General's ambitions, but one particular item of Danish interest became one of its main achievements: the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). The intentions behind the PBC were to bridge security and development and ensure a more comprehensive approach by the international community to rebuilding nations ruined by conflict by establishing a dedicated institutional locus to this end.

Already prior to the World Summit, Denmark was making a targeted effort to establish a coordination mechanism in the UN for peace-building efforts. A high-level seminar in Copenhagen in 2004 provided input to the work of the High Level Panel, and during the Spring of 2005 Denmark, in partnership with Tanzania, held a number of workshops in New York to discuss implementation of the recommendations. In May 2005, under the Danish Presidency of the Security Council, a debate chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and with the participation of the President of the World Bank further highlighted the need for closer coordination, and the Council was united in recommending the establishment of the PBC. After the Summit, and as a result of our preparatory work and our memberships of the Security Council, Denmark and Tanzania were charged by the President of the General Assembly to chair the negotiations on the setting up of the PBC. The major UN Member States were confident that we would be able to

13. Held September 2005 in New York.

14. UN, 2004.

15. UN, 2005.

balance the many considerations that had to be taken into account to establish a Commission capable of producing results.

Following long and hard negotiations in the autumn of 2005, resolutions were adopted in both the General Assembly and the Security Council in December<sup>16</sup>. That was one of the first concrete outcomes of the Summit follow-up and a major achievement in UN reform. The PBC's task is to gather all relevant actors – local, regional and international, civilian and military – to coordinate efforts to bring post-conflict countries safely out on the path towards a solid foundation for long-term development. Burundi and Sierra Leone are the role models in the initial stage. Both countries have had UN peacekeeping operations and have been closely monitored by the Security Council. The World Bank, the IMF and the European Commission are among the participants, besides a number of states involved with the two countries. As an advisory body, the PBC will give guidance to the Security Council and other UN bodies. Most importantly, the members on the PBC should be guided in their efforts in the field by the strategic discussions. The establishment of the PBC and the targeted Danish efforts to that end were among our most notable achievements. In 2006, Denmark was one of the Security Council's seven members of the Commission, and in 2007 Denmark is continuing to participate in its Burundi discussions.

### **Sudan and lessons learned**

The conflict in Sudan has been the most significant single issue on the Security Council agenda. The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement on 9 January 2005 ended more than 20 years of conflict between the north and south of Sudan and subsequently led to the deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation (UNMIS). Denmark participated in the initial deployment of UNMIS with 45 soldiers. It turned out to be far more difficult for the Security Council to agree to a referral of the Darfur situation to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague. The negative American attitude to the ICC was well known. The United States exerted huge pressure on all Council members to prevent referral to the ICC, but it became evident that there were no viable alternatives short of an expensive ad hoc solution.

16. General Assembly Resolution 60/180; Security Council Resolution 1645 (2005).

A determined effort among the supporters of the ICC, Denmark included, paved the way for the first ever referral of a situation to the ICC by the Security Council<sup>17</sup>. The resolution obtained the support of 11 members of the Council<sup>18</sup>. In February 2007, the prosecutor at the ICC, Moreno Ocampo, presented the first two cases before the Court.

Growing international pressure led to the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement in May 2006, but it did not put an end to the violence. Darfur remains a dark spot on the Security Council's agenda. Denmark has contributed to supporting the African countries' efforts and the pressure they have brought to bear on the government in Khartoum and its supporting allies. Together with his American counterpart, the Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs personally took the initiative in calling a meeting in New York in September 2006, at which foreign ministers from a number of key countries discussed the way forward. The meeting is the most prominent example of how Denmark has used her seat on the Security Council to take initiatives for the purpose of promoting peace and security through dialogue and collaboration.

Sudan epitomizes several of the lessons we have learned while serving on the Security Council.

Firstly, the role played by the permanent members (P5). While the United Kingdom, France and to some extent the United States wish to use the Council to promote a normative agenda of international involvement in crisis resolution and crisis management, China and Russia look more closely at the wider ramifications – not least domestically – of any decision before they sign up. The threat of veto gives them leverage, but is often used not so much to prevent decisions as to influence them. On Darfur, the P5 found common ground in supporting a UN peace operation, but not on how to apply pressure on the Sudanese government. As a consequence, the government of Sudan has wrongly interpreted as optional resolutions on Darfur that did not command all fifteen votes on the Council and has acted accordingly. The decisions on Iran and North Korea prove how the impacts of Council decisions increase when the Council acts in a united fashion. Therefore, negotiations to bring all P5 along do serve an

17. Resolution 1593 (2005).

18. China, USA, Brazil and Algeria abstained.

important purpose, despite the inevitable costs in terms of speed and clarity.

Secondly, the usefulness of sanctions. In Sudan's case, the decision to authorise sanctions was not unanimous<sup>19</sup>. China and Russia resisted a tough regime, using their traditional arguments to promote results through dialogue and not pressure. The implementation of the sanctions regime was left to a sanctions committee under the Security Council operating by consensus. Despite thick reports and numerous committee meetings, the results were minimal. When Denmark left the Council, only three Sudanese had been singled out and subjected to travel restrictions and assets freezes, and there has been no reaction to the Sudanese government's breach of the arms embargo for Darfur. Still, the threat of individual sanctions is considered a behaviour-modifying instrument, along with the fear of standing trial before the ICC.

Thirdly, difficulties in setting the agenda. It took the Security Council several years to acknowledge the conflict in Sudan as a threat to international peace and security. This was not due to ignorance of the facts on the ground, but to the strict interpretation by some member states of the principle of non-interference in matters that fall within a member state's domestic jurisdiction<sup>20</sup>. Russia and China are both proponents of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of states and particularly are wary of setting international precedents that could backfire on matters of their own national interests. It was not until 2004 that Sudan became a household issue on the Council's agenda. Denmark fought hard to put the situations in northern Uganda and Burma on the agenda, and in cooperation with strong partners on the Council we succeeded. Ideally, for the Council to serve as the main forum for the maintenance of international peace and security, any issue that poses a direct or potential threat should be open to discussion in the Council, even if decisions are unlikely.

Fourthly, the inclusion of all relevant actors. On Sudan, the close involvement and lead taken by the African Union have been crucial for the progress made. The notion of African solutions to African problems should not

19. Resolution 1591 (2005).

20. UN Charter Article 2,7 codifies this principle.

be taken to the extreme, as the African Union needs our full support and assistance. But when solutions emerge from African efforts, implementation is easier for the Security Council to address, and Council action is considered less controversial, if not hard to dismiss. The March 2005 decisions in the Council on Sudan were in support of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement already facilitated by the African Union, and on Darfur the Council has been able to express support for African Union decisions to pave the way for difficult negotiations to improve the situation on the ground.

## CONCLUSIONS

The next time Denmark is likely to take a seat on the Security Council is 2025-6 at the earliest. Yet again it will be a new experience, and there will be a different agenda. Our pious hope is that the impact we made on the Council during 2005-06 will last beyond our membership and help shape the agenda in the years to come. The work we did on peacebuilding, counter-terrorism and international law no doubt left a mark that will last beyond 2006. The two presidencies held by Denmark, in May 2005 and June 2006, were put to effective use by moving the agenda forward on post-conflict peacebuilding and in promoting an international legal order.

We made our influence felt not only as constructive partners, but also as advocates for neglected issues such as the inclusion of women in the peace processes and closer collaboration with regional organisations, not least the African Union. Denmark was generally viewed as a very active, insightful, constructive partner on the Council. We worked extremely closely with powerful allies: France, the United Kingdom and the United States, and at times also with others like China (in relation to North Korea) and Russia (in relation to the CTC). They may have had the upper hand, but it takes nine votes and no veto to pass a resolution in the Council.

Work in the UN is characterised by small steps forward, and one has to be in it for the long haul. Many find it tedious and frustrating, especially in the host country, the United States. However, this is the reality of an organisation that brings together all the countries of the world with very divergent views and at the same time works on the principle of consensus.

Consensus is more often a sign of hard work and difficult compromises than of easy decision-making. There are no shortcuts to achieving success – only persistent dialogue and negotiation.

In the UN, we are witnessing the outlines of a new world order: a China progressing dynamically with more and more global interests, especially in Africa; an increasingly self-confident India, whose influence is bound to grow stronger; a Russia that is regaining its foothold; and a United States that has in fact actively pursued multilateral solutions through, among others, the Security Council. We have had the very encouraging experience of witnessing a far greater African involvement in the solution of conflicts in Africa. This raises hopes for a continent that remains home to most conflicts, and which also in the future will still be the main area of activity for the UN. Nothing we have seen the last two years indicates a weakened role for the UN and the Security Council in the future. Multilateralism is still going strong, because nobody – not even the strongest power on earth – can hope to overcome the daunting challenges of the 21st century on its own<sup>21</sup>.

21. Information on Denmark's participation on the Security Council and all decisions adopted was made available through a special Security Council website: [<http://www.sikkerhedsraadet.um.dk/en>]. Bimonthly newsletters were prepared for the Danish Parliaments' Foreign Policy Committee. A more substantial report analysing our experiences during our two-year Security Council term was published in March 2007 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2007).

## REFERENCES

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2007), *Danmarks Medlemskab af Sikkerhedsrådet 2005-2006. Erfaringsopsamlingsrapport*, March, Copenhagen. Online, HTTP: [www.netpublikationer.dk] (accessed 18-04-2007).
- UN (2004), *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*, December, New York. Online, HTTP: [www.un.org] (accessed 28-03-2007).
- UN (2005), *In Larger Freedom*, March, New York. Online, HTTP: [www.un.org] (accessed 28-03-2007).

## ANNEX

### Resolutions in 2005 without unanimity

1. S/RES/1591. Decision to establish the Sanctions Committee for Sudan. 12 votes in favour, 3 abstentions (Algeria, China and the Russian Federation).
2. S/RES/1593. Decision to refer the situation in Darfur to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. 11 votes in favour, 4 abstentions (Algeria, Brazil, USA and China).
3. S/RES/1646. Decision to permit P5 being permanent members of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission. 13 votes in favour, 2 abstentions (Argentina and Brazil).

### Resolutions in 2006 without unanimity

1. S/RES/1672. Imposition of a travel ban and assets freeze on named persons impeding peace in Darfur. 12 votes in favour, 3 abstentions (China, Qatar and the Russian Federation).
2. S/RES/1680. Encouraging the Government of Syria to respond positively to the request made by the Government of Lebanon to delineate their common border. 13 votes in favour, 2 abstentions (China and the Russian Federation).
3. S/2006/508. Condemnation of all military assault being carried out by Israel in the Gaza Strip. Not adopted (*veto* – USA), 10 votes in favour, 4 abstentions (Denmark, Peru, Slovakia and the United Kingdom).

4. S/RES/1696. Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and the decision to demand Iran's suspension of all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development. 14 votes in favour, 1 against (Qatar).
5. S/RES/1706. Decision to expand the mandate of UNMIS Sudan. 12 votes in favour, 3 abstentions (China, Qatar and the Russian Federation).
6. S/2006/878. Condemnation of the military operations being carried out by Israel, in the Gaza Strip, in particular the attack that took place in Beit Hanoun on 8 November 2006. Not adopted (*veto* – USA), 10 votes in favour, 4 abstentions (United Kingdom, Denmark, Japan and Slovakia).

### **Three resolutions were adopted without a vote in 2006**

1. S/RES/1691 recommending the Republic of Montenegro to be admitted to membership of the United Nations.
2. S/RES/1715 regarding appointment of the new Secretary General.
3. S/RES/1733 expressing gratitude to former Secretary General Kofi Annan.

# The Cartoons Crisis in Danish Foreign Policy: A new Balance between the EU and the US?

Henrik Larsen<sup>1</sup>

For most, if not all analysts, the cartoons issue was perceived as a crisis for Danish foreign policy and for Danish international trade. Indeed, the Danish government characterised the episode as the most serious crisis in Danish foreign policy in the post-1945 era<sup>2</sup>.

Since the end of the Cold War, the importance of the EU in Danish foreign policy has grown. Whereas the dominant official discourse during the Cold War had understood Danish foreign policy as being based on four functionally separate cornerstones, in the post-Cold War period the functions of these cornerstones were increasingly understood as coming together in the EU. The transatlantic link with the US, however, also remained important<sup>3</sup> and was further strengthened towards the end of the 1990s<sup>4</sup>.

Since the coming to power of the Liberal-Conservative government in November 2001, the role of the US in Danish foreign and security policy has increased considerably<sup>5</sup>. The clearest example of this is the Danish government's ardent, early and continuous support for the US in relation to the war in Iraq and its aftermath. In a significant article in the daily newspaper *Berlingske Tidende*, published in 2003, Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen expressed doubts as to the ability of the EU to serve as a foun-

1. Henrik Larsen is a lecturer and Jean Monnet Professor at the Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen.
2. Minister for Foreign Affairs Per Stig Møller quoted in 'Forsigtig optimisme hos udenrigsministeren', *Berlingske Tidende*, 14 February 2006.
3. Larsen, 1999, 2000a, 2000b, 2005.
4. Jakobsen, 2000.
5. Petersen, 2004, 2006; Rynning, 2006; Mouritzen, 2006.

dation for Danish security<sup>6</sup>. Most analysts agree that the post-2001 government has emphasised the bilateral relationship with the US more strongly than its predecessors<sup>7</sup>. At the same time, though, the dominant discourse in official documents has continued to attribute a central role to the EU in Danish foreign policy in formulations such as: "...The EU is the key to Denmark's ability to influence the world around us...", in a 2003 government paper on priorities in Danish foreign policy<sup>8</sup>. Thus although the importance of the US in Danish foreign policy has clearly grown since 2001, the EU continues to be understood as "the key to influenc[ing] the world around us" in official documents. Links with the US are frequently presented as going through the EU<sup>9</sup>.

The cartoons issue, then, was defined by the government as a crisis for Danish foreign policy and Danish international trade. In the light of the general understanding of the US in Danish foreign policy since 2001, it is important to examine the government's attempts to use the EU and the US in its management of the crisis. The balance struck between the EU and the US in the government's attempts to manage the crisis could be said to be indicative of the relative weighting of the two different fora or partners in Danish foreign policy. But at the same time, as most definitions of a crisis by an actor imply an understanding of the risk of severe damage or harm if nothing is done, the definition of a situation as a crisis can be expected to lead to all possible means being exploited to resolve the situation; therefore it does not necessarily imply the particular weighting of one particular forum over others. The long-term consequences are arguably more important than the short-term use of particular fora. The way the responses to the crisis of Denmark's two partners, the US and the EU, were understood or read by Danish political actors, including the government, could be expected to have repercussions for political understandings of the balance between the different fora in Danish foreign policy. It may also have implications for the conceptualisation of remaining unilateral and bilateral components in Danish foreign policy.

6. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, 'Hvad kan det nytte?', *Berlingske Tidende*, 26 March 2003.

7. Petersen, 2004, 2006; Rynning, 2006; Mouritzen, 2006.

8. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2003.

9. Henrik Larsen, 'Skal EU udfordre USA?', *Weekendavisen*, no. 28, 7-13 July 2003.

In the light of the above, the aim of the article is first to examine the Danish government's attempts to involve international fora and partners during the crisis, in particular the EU and the US in order to assess whether its use of these two fora can be said to express a particular view of the balance between these two pillars; then the article will discuss the responses of the US and the EU to the crisis. Finally, an analysis will be presented of the way in which the crisis, including the response of Denmark's partners, may have affected the discourse about the balance between the EU and US.

The cartoons crisis could be examined from a great many angles. In the present article, the focus is very much on the diplomatic aspect. Hence I focus on the Danish government's actions and the responses of EU partners and the US, paying little attention to disagreements within Denmark, the US and the EU member states. I only examine the crisis from its emergence on the international scene in October 2005, although one could go further back. I do not discuss how the issue came to be defined as a crisis but take as my point of departure the Danish government's definition of the episode as a crisis.

The article will begin with a brief outline of the key elements of the crisis. It then presents the Danish attempts to involve the US and the EU in the crisis. Following on from this, it goes on to study the response of the EU, its member states and the US. Did the Danish government obtain the kind of support that it was hoping for from the two key partners in Danish foreign policy? And did their support come readily? On the basis of this, we consider what the cartoons case can tell us about the role of the EU and the US in Danish foreign policy. Central here is the official discourse on this relationship as it has developed in the aftermath of the crisis. The question is raised as to whether the crisis has played any role in shifting the basic conceptual elements of Danish foreign policy. If the government's understanding of the events was that it was the most serious crisis since the Second World War, then it may have the potential of being the kind of formative moment which could reshuffle the conceptual pieces of Danish foreign policy.

## THE CRISIS: A BRIEF OUTLINE

The cartoons crisis has its roots in the publication of 12 cartoons of the Prophet Mohammad in the Danish daily newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* on 30

September 2005. The publication of the cartoons was almost immediately followed by protests from parts of the Muslim Community in Denmark against what they saw as a lack of respect for the Muslim faith. The issue was discussed in bilateral Danish-Egyptian talks on 12 October and the case mentioned in the Egyptian media. In a letter dated 12 October 2005, the ambassadors of 11 Muslim countries brought the issue to the attention of the Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen. In the letter, they placed the cartoons of Mohammad in the context of what they saw as an ongoing smear-campaign in the Danish public sphere and media against Islam and Muslims. The ambassadors urged the Danish government to: “take all those responsible to task under the law of the land in the interest of inter-faith harmony, better integration, and Denmark’s overall relations with the Muslim world”, and requested an early meeting with the Danish Prime Minister<sup>10</sup>. The letter was followed by a letter from the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) on 15 October to the Danish Prime Minister in which the Danish government is asked to take all necessary measures to prevent further escalation of the situation<sup>11</sup>. The Danish Prime Minister answered the ambassadors in a letter of 21 October 2005 (and sent an identical letter to the OIC). In the letter, it is stressed that the Danish government had no means of influencing the press, but that an offended party might bring blasphemous or discriminatory acts or expressions before the courts. No offer was made of a meeting with the Danish Prime Minister, a point that was seen by many as the root of the later disagreements. Thus, from mid-October, the disagreements surrounding the publication of the cartoons acquired an international dimension. In mid-October, Iran and Egypt protest at the governmental level, although the protests were not made public. Protests were also made by The Islamic Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (IESCO). The Danish OSCE ambassador received a letter from

10. Published in Larsen & Seidenfaden, 2006: 324-7. In fact the Danish government received two letters with different wordings, one sent to the Prime Minister, the other to the Foreign Minister. In one of the letters (the draft), the prospect of possible unrest in Denmark was raised. This created some confusion with regard to the government’s answer which the government may have based on the draft rather than the original. The importance of this for the development of the crisis is uncertain. In the internal Danish debate, this mistake played a considerable role in the critique of the government’s handling of the crisis (Ibid.).

11. Published in Ibid.: 328.

the personal representative of the OSCE President in October asking him to account for the government's handling of the crisis and the conditions of Muslims in Denmark. The story was reported in several international media, but was given low priority in the Islamic world<sup>12</sup>.

In November, criticism of the Danish government was voiced by the governments of Iran, Pakistan, Egypt, Bangladesh and India. In Pakistan, it was reported that a youth organisation had promised a reward for the killing of the 12 cartoonists. On 14 November, the case was discussed in the OSCE in the presence of the OIC General Secretary who criticised the cool reaction of the Danish government to the ambassadors' letter. The Danish response was that the Danish government was not taking a stance on the cartoons as there was a free press in Denmark; only the courts could judge whether the cartoons broke the law.

In the middle of November, there was a change of tack, as Egyptian criticism of the Danish government's handling of the crisis, previously made only through diplomatic channels, was made public. The French weekly *L'Express* characterised the events as a diplomatic crisis without precedent between Denmark and the Muslim world<sup>13</sup>.

In December, the UN entered the stage when the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbor commented on the situation. On 7 December she stated that she understood the concerns of the Muslims and regretted all acts that could be seen as showing a lack of respect for other religions. The EU also entered the stage when Justice Commissioner, Franco Frattinni, stated on 23 December that the Mohammad cartoons were within the limits set by the principle of freedom of expression, but that they still represented a thoughtless insult. The next day, the spokesman for the European Commission stressed firstly that Frattinni had spoken on his own behalf and, secondly, that the Commission defended freedom of speech but did not identify with all that was said in the name of freedom of expression. In the Arab world, reactions now became public. For example, the cartoons were condemned at the OIC's summit in Mekka on 8 December. On 27 December, ISECO threatened to propose a boycott of Denmark by its 50 member states, unless Denmark issued an official apology. On 29

12. Ibid.: 57-67; Hansen & Hundevad, 2006: 60-75; Thomsen, 2006: 34-93.

13. Op. cit; Larsen & Seidenfaden, 2006: 67-70; Hansen & Hundevad, 2006: 77-109.

December, the Arab League expressed its surprise and disgust over the Danish government's handling of the crisis<sup>14</sup>.

In the New Year statement of the Danish Prime Minister, the theme of religious tolerance and freedom of speech was taken up in general terms. The Prime Minister said that he: "... condemn(s) any statement which demonises groups of people on the basis of their religious beliefs or ethnic background", but, at the same time, stated that: "... we should be able to speak freely and express our views about each other in a direct manner"<sup>15</sup>. He also mentioned the need to exercise responsibility with regard to the use of freedom of speech so as not to incite hatred and threaten the cohesion of the Danish society. This was the first time that the Prime Minister had brought up the topic of religious tolerance in a major political statement in relation to the case. However, no direct references to the case were made, let alone any kind of apology<sup>16</sup>. Following the New Year statement, all the signs were that Egypt, which had been the prime mover amongst the Muslim states, seemed intent on closing the case, although, in a statement of 1 January 2006, the OIC urged a boycott of the Danish cultural promotion, *Images of the Middle East*. That the case was about to come to a close was also the main conclusion of discussions between the Danish Foreign Minister and the General Secretary of the Arab League in early January<sup>17</sup>.

However, following the publication of the cartoons in a Norwegian newspaper on 10 January, the main scene changed to Saudi Arabia where there, up until then, had been little reaction. The OIC condemned the Norwegian publication in a press release on 18 January. In Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, several Imams proposed a trade boycott against Denmark and Norway during the Friday prayer on 20 January, and the government-appointed Grand Mufti demanded an apology from *Jyllands-Posten*.

On 26 January, Saudi Arabia calls its ambassador to Denmark home for consultations. A comprehensive boycott of Danish products in Saudi Arabia started which the Saudi government, if anything, encouraged, albeit not

14. Ibid.: 90; Thomsen, 2006: 114; Larsen & Seidenfaden, 2006: 57-72.

15. Quoted in Ibid.: 76 (author's translation).

16. Op. cit..

17. Ibid.: 78; Hansen & Hundevad, 2006: 126; Thomsen, 2006: 121-5.

officially<sup>18</sup>. After a few days, the boycott had spread to Kuwait and Yemen followed by the rest of the Middle East and, shortly afterwards, Africa (including Nigeria). It also spread to Egypt on 30 January encouraged by the organisation the Muslim Brotherhood, and state-controlled newspapers, before finally spreading to South East Asia. The boycott was encouraged by advertisements in Arab newspapers placed by individuals and corporate units. Demonstrations took place in Iraq and other countries, where the Danish flag was burned and individual Danes threatened. Libya withdrew its ambassador and the parliaments of Yemen, Bahrain and Syria condemned the cartoons, as did the Afghan Prime Minister, on a visit to Denmark.

The crisis had, by now, reached the global media. The Danish Prime Minister went on Danish television on 30 January 2006 and, for the first time since the publication of the cartoons in September 2005, publicly puts forward personal views: the Danish newspapers are free to publish what they want, but he would never personally depict religious figures in a way which might hurt other people's feelings. On 2 February, the Prime Minister gave an interview to *Al Arabiya* in which he restated many of the same points. The line was conciliatory. He stressed that he would never personally publish drawings of that character and mentioned Jyllands-Posten's apology for having hurt religious feelings unintentionally. But the interview was generally not perceived in the Arab states as providing an apology for the cartoons<sup>19</sup>.

In early February 2006, the extent and level of violence of the demonstrations increased. The Danish embassy in Syria was burned down by demonstrators on 3 February, and, on 4 February, the General Consulate in the Lebanon suffered the same fate. In Iran, the Revolutionary Guard and Basij Militia stormed and ransacked the embassy on 6-7 February. In Turkey, puppets depicting the Danish Prime Minister were burned by demonstrators outside the consulate in Istanbul. In Indonesia, demonstrators attempted to storm the Danish embassy on 3 January, but were stopped by guards. Both here and in Pakistan, the embassy staff were withdrawn. In the Yemenite capital, San'aa, there were demonstrations by 80,000-150,000

18. Ibid.: 128; Larsen & Seidenfaden, 2006: 82-4; Hansen & Hundevad, 2006: 131-8.

19. Ibid.: 171-2; Thomsen, 2006: 154-6; Larsen & Seidenfaden, 2006: 90-106. Strictly speaking, he did not break with the government's refusal to comment on the drawings, as he expressed his personal views (Ibid.: 90).

people. The Danish flag was burned in several cities in Iraq. In Nigeria, the Danish and Norwegian flags were burned by Members of Parliament. In Afghanistan and Pakistan, several people died in clashes between police and demonstrators<sup>20</sup>.

## THE ATTEMPTS OF THE DANISH GOVERNMENT TO INVOLVE THE EU AND THE US

In the period after the cartoons became an international issue in October 2005 and until it was perceived as a crisis by the Danish government at the end of January 2006, the Danish government made few attempts to involve the EU and no attempts to draw in the US<sup>21</sup>. The Danish Foreign Ministry sent information about the cartoons issue and the Muslim ambassadors' letter to its EU partners in the COREU network in November 2005 in the context of the COHOM working group. There was also some exchange of information with the EU countries in the OSCE in November 2006, when the case was brought up as part of the routine EU coordination between the EU ambassadors within the OSCE. But, on this occasion, it was not seen as a big or threatening issue by Denmark's EU partners nor presented as such by Denmark.

However, interestingly, the Danish Foreign Ministry made bilateral inquiries with France and the UK in autumn 2005, asking for their assessment of the cartoons issue and the manner in which it ought to be handled based on what was seen as the greater experience of these two former colonial powers in the field of ethnic and religious tensions. The answer Denmark received was that the case should be dealt with, not ignored, although more precise suggestions for action were not given.

This advice did not lead to Danish attempts to raise the issue in the EU or indeed with the US in the autumn of 2005. But it contributed to the pres-

20. Ibid.: 107-10; Hansen & Hundevad, 2006: 173-84; Thomsen, 2006: 159-84.

21. It is of course impossible to establish with certainty that Danish representatives did not consult with the EU or the US at other levels than the ones mentioned or in informal contexts. However, the very low level of consultation before the situation escalated in late January 2006 does fit with the Danish government's understanding of the situation in autumn 2005 and the general interpretation below of partners' support for Denmark on this issue.

sures on the official policy line. Pressure was also augmented by the publication by 22 former ambassadors in the Danish Foreign Service of an open letter in December 2005, criticising the government's policy on the cartoons issue. The central point of criticism was the Prime Minister's refusal to meet with the ambassadors from the Muslim countries which they felt was against the basic rules of international society and diplomatic principles. The official line, as presented by the Prime Minister, was that the Danish government had nothing to apologise for in relation to the drawings but, also that there was a general need for mutual respect between religions<sup>22</sup>. Thus the discourse on which the government's line was based weighed freedom of expression over respect for religion. The Prime Minister's assertion of the need to exercise responsibility with regard to the application of the principle of freedom of speech in his New Year message on 1 January could be seen as an expression of adaptation, if slight, to other views in Danish society, and central ministries, in particular the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Significantly, there were no attempts by the Danish government to use the EU or the US actively until the end of January 2006. The government's international policy so far had been to defuse the situation through (bilateral) contacts with the Muslim world. It was not the dominant understanding that a serious situation was building up, although, as has been extensively shown<sup>23</sup>, considerable foreign policy activities were directed against Denmark by Arab countries, the OSCE and the UN, beginning in October 2005. The above-mentioned low-level consultations with London and Paris by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, suggests that some parts of the civil service did see the situation as sensitive and risky. However, the dominant understanding was that it was neither necessary nor appropriate to request assistance from the EU or the US at that point in time. At the same time – and somewhat paradoxically – the Danish People's Party, part of the government's parliamentary majority, complained of the lack of support from the US and the UK given Danish support in Afghanistan and Iraq. This stemmed from the Danish People's Party's view of the cartoons issue as the

22. See reply to the 11 ambassadors and to the OIC and the Danish Foreign Minister's letter of 8 November 2005 to his Egyptian counterpart, published in Jerichow & Rode, 2006: 28-34.

23. Hansen & Hundevad, 2006; Larsen & Seidenfaden, 2006; Thomsen, 2006.

expression of a clash of values and an imminent threat to social cohesion within Denmark; Denmark deserved the support of those it regarded as its closest allies<sup>24</sup>.

From the end of January 2006, when the perception of threats to Danish trade and Danish political relations with the Muslim world multiplied, the Danish government attempted to halt and reverse the process by using four different strategies<sup>25</sup>:

First of all, the Danish government attempted to make verbal concessions to Muslim concerns. Central here were the two media appearances of the Prime Minister, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, in which he stressed that he, personally, would not have published the cartoons. As the government's line had hitherto been that it could not and would not comment on the appropriateness of the cartoons, this can be seen as a concession aimed at meeting the concerns of the Muslim world. Second, attempts were also made to communicate to religious and political leaders in the Middle East that Denmark respected Islam in spite of the present disagreements<sup>26</sup>. Third, the Danish government entered into dialogue with governments in the Islamic states, stressing that they too had a responsibility for the unfolding and escalation of the crisis. Fourth, it sought political support from the US and the EU<sup>27</sup>.

There appeared to be limits as to how much the government would and could concede with respect to the first strategy, with the Prime Minister going no further than stressing that he would not have published the cartoons himself. The government's position from autumn 2005 was that it would not criticise the cartoons due to the need to respect the right to freedom of expression in Denmark. Although the third strategy mentioned above was also attempted, it was not likely to be successful as long as the Muslim governments did not want actively to call off or condemn the measures against Denmark. However, it was felt that the support of the US and the EU might bring diplomatic, and, in the case of the EU, economic, pressure to bear on the Muslim governments. An official boycott of goods would be against WTO-rules, and it was therefore important for the EU to show its

24. Party leader Pia Kjaersgaard quoted in Jerichow & Rode, 2006: 67.

25. The points 1, 3, and 4 are taken from Petersen, 2006.

26. Jerichow & Rode, 2006: 95.

27. Petersen, 2006: 167-8.

willingness to invoke the WTO settlement mechanism vis-à-vis the Muslim countries and if necessary retaliate<sup>28</sup>. Although the EU could do little against the semi-official consumer boycott, it could stop the elevation to the state level of economic sanctions and it could confront the Muslim world with the prospect of being faced with the trade power of the entire EU rather than just Denmark. Consequently, both support from the US and the multilateralisation of the crisis through the EU became the most important priority for the Danish government at the end of January<sup>29</sup>.

We will now turn to the Danish attempts to involve the EU and the US after 26 January 2006. In the case of the EU, the Danish Prime Minister Fogh Rasmussen contacted the Austrian EU President, Chancellor Wolfgang Schlüssel, and the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, on 29 January. The fact that the issue was not dealt with as a normal part of the preparation of the GERC agenda by the EU ambassadors suggests its urgent and unexpected character as seen by the Danish government and the Presidency. Denmark, supported by Sweden, asked for the case to be dealt with at the EU External Affairs Council on 30-31 January 2006. Following the meeting, the Danish Foreign Minister, Per Stig Møller, declared that there was: "... full support for Denmark's intensive endeavours to find a diplomatic solution. It has now become an EU issue"<sup>30</sup>. The Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Møller met with the US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, on 31 January 2006 in London and attempted to obtain US support on the issue.

Following the burning of some Danish embassies on 3-4 February, the main aim of Danish diplomacy was to make others in the EU, NATO and the US aware of the extent of the crisis, and, of course, to obtain support for Denmark. The Danish Foreign Ministry became aware that only Copenhagen knew about the extent of the crisis, or, to put it differently, that Denmark's partners did not have the kind of knowledge or understanding of the scale of the problems which would allow Copenhagen to claim that this was an issue on which it needed support. The Danish Foreign Ministry's perception was that a lot had to be done with regard to the US and the EU

28. Ibid.: 169-170; Thomsen, 2006: 133.

29. Cf. Petersen, 2006: 168.

30. Cited in Hansen & Hundevad, 2006: 149-50.

to make clear just how serious the crisis was. A crisis centre was established in the Foreign Ministry to monitor the situation, one of its tasks being to produce lists of ongoing events in the crisis which were sent regularly to the EU and NATO-partners.

The immediate concern of Danish Foreign Ministry after the burning of the Danish embassies was that it should not appear to the Islamic countries that such incidents were politically cost-free. The aim, therefore – even more than after the events triggered by the withdrawal of the Saudi ambassador to Denmark on 26 January – was to multilateralise the crisis as quickly as possible. In effect that meant Europeanising and Americanising it. The Danish government considered bringing the issue up at the United Nations Security Council of which Denmark was a member in 2005-06. However, they ultimately decided that this would not help their case given the presence of Islamic countries on the Council. In fact, Denmark attempted to avoid the issue being raised at the UN, including by Kofi Annan. Instead Danish contacts were made with Javier Solana and the Austrian EU Presidency who were asked to engage in diplomacy, and parallel attempts were also made to influence the Americans who had first issued a negative response to the cartoons<sup>31</sup>. Bilateral meetings between Foreign Minister Møller and Secretary Rice therefore took place, as well as bilateral meetings between the Danish ambassador to Washington and Vice-President Cheney.

During the whole crisis, the Danes stressed that they had the support of the EU and the agreement of its member states and the US on the issue<sup>32</sup>. Whether they were right in claiming this, is the aspect we turn to next.

## THE RESPONSE OF THE EU, ITS MEMBER STATES AND THE UNITED STATES

### The EU and its Member States

Solana entered the scene on his own initiative on 26 January by offering an EU declaration<sup>33</sup>. On 29 January, the Trade Ministers of the EU decided that a boycott against Denmark would be considered a boycott against the EU as

31. Ibid.: 180.

32. 'Da Europa så profetens ansigt', Politiken, 16 April 2006.

33. Hansen & Hundevad, 2006: 144.

a whole and warned Arab countries against supporting one<sup>34</sup>. On 31 January, Trade Commissioner Mandelson threatened retaliation against any Islamic government that supported the consumer boycott of Danish goods, which was then taking off<sup>35</sup>.

The communiqué from the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GERC) on 30 January 2006, after the Danish attempt to bring up the issue, contained the following passage and statement:

The Danish and Swedish delegations raised the issue of reactions in the Middle East following the publication of cartoons in an independent Danish Newspaper. The Council adopted the following statement in that respect: “The Council strongly rejects any threats by militant factions against EU citizens”. The Presidency also underlined the importance of both freedom of expression, as a fundamental freedom, and respect for religious beliefs<sup>36</sup>.

This statement could be seen as support for Denmark in the escalating crisis. But no support was offered at this stage on the fundamental issues in the crisis. Disagreements amongst EU member states about the basic issues surrounding the cartoons affair could be discerned in their comments outside the meeting and in other contexts<sup>37</sup>. These differences reflect the balance struck between the support for freedom of expression as a fundamental freedom and the position that freedom of expression carried with it a responsibility to depict all religious beliefs and groups in an inoffensive way and that the Danish cartoons were offensive to Muslims. The most critical countries (Finland, Sweden, Finland, Luxembourg and the UK) first came up with statements which indirectly criticised the Danish government’s handling of the crisis. The UK Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, praised the British media for not publishing the cartoons which he found offensive<sup>38</sup>. In

35. Hansen & Hundevad, 2006: 144.

36. GERC, 2006a.

37. Hansen & Hundevad, 2006: 149-50.

38. Ibid.: 149-150, 171; Thomsen, 2006: 165.

mid-February, Finland sent a letter to newspapers in the Middle East in which it maintained that Denmark should apologise<sup>39</sup>.

The differences between the responses of member states expressed in the balance struck between the two positions – supporting freedom of expression versus stressing that freedom of expression carried with it a responsibility to depict all religious groups and their symbols in an inoffensive manner – were based on fundamental differences between the member states. First, they had different societal and political understandings of the right balance between the two elements, emanating from differences with respect to perceptions of the key values of the state (in particular secularism versus religious values), historical experiences and the religious composition of the population. For instance, French “laïcité” – secularism – as a basic characteristic of the French state underpinned the French approach. Second, the countries had differing degrees of concern about creating or further aggravating societal unrest at home because of the cartoons issue. By the end of January, the cartoons had been published in several other EU member states, including France, and were feared as sources of potential social unrest. Government statements on these issues were therefore carefully weighed. Also, member states were concerned that they themselves might become victims of the international unrest or terrorist attacks. It was characteristic that the UK and Spain, which had recently been the victims of Islamic terrorist attacks, were strong supporters of the principle of religious respect. Third, and partly related to the first point, member states differed in their views as to whether the EU should take up a religious issue which had the potential of ending up on the agenda of the UN if the Muslim countries had their way. Finally, there were also different judgements as to how the issue should be managed concretely. Several EU countries felt that the Danish government had handled the issue badly.

The use of language by the different EU member states and institutions and the positions they took were based on what they considered the key values of the state, as mentioned in the first point above. But their language and positions were also shaped by their specific concerns and views on the three other dimensions above. All countries expressed both positions to

39. ‘Da Europa så profetens ansigt’, *Politiken*, 16 April 2006.

some extent – support for freedom of expression and respect for religious beliefs, and thus it was more a question of the degree to which one side was emphasised over the other. On the *Freedom of expression* wing could be found the following countries: The Netherlands, Denmark, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Austria and the Baltic States. The Commission joined this side, after Commissioner Frattinni had spoken out against Denmark. On the *respect for religious beliefs* wing could be found the UK, Sweden, Finland, Luxembourg and Spain and possibly the High Representative whose statements tended very much to be adapted to the context in which they were being made. The religious beliefs wing was the most outspoken in public, whereas the freedom of expression wing tended to shelter behind EU declarations.

The fundamental character of the issue was brought out in the Presidency's statement of 30 January 2006, in particular in the sentence referring to: "... the importance of both freedom of expression, as a fundamental freedom, and respect for religious beliefs". At this stage, the sentence expressed the striking of a balance between the two elements. In the weeks that followed, the Presidency and Solana attempted to force a common declaration on the issue at the meeting of the foreign ministers on 27 February, although many countries, the UK in particular, felt that it was too late to do this<sup>40</sup> or simply did not think that a declaration on this issue should be formulated.

After the embassy burnings, the EU support and EU diplomacy became clearer. More unqualified support for Denmark's diplomatic and trade problems gained strength across EU member states, although there was no explicit support on the fundamentals of the crisis.

On 4 February, a declaration by the Austrian Presidency of the EU condemned the burning of the embassies (including the Swedish and the Norwegian embassies)<sup>41</sup>. France, Germany, Sweden and Finland offered consular assistance to Denmark in the states in which the Danish diplomatic representations had been attacked. The Austrian embassy instructed its embassies to protest to the authorities in Damascus, Ramallah and Beirut

40. Ibid.

41. EU-Presidency, 2006a.

and to ask for increased security measures for European citizens on 6 February. Additionally, concerns were expressed by the Presidency to the OIC in Vienna<sup>42</sup>.

On 7 February, the EU Presidency asked Solana to contact the OIC and undertake a diplomatic mission to the Middle East in an attempt to diffuse the tensions<sup>43</sup>. On the same day, a joint declaration by the UN General Secretary, the General Secretary of the OIC (Organisation of the Islamic conference) and the EU High Representative was issued. The language used in the declaration was far from the language preferred in Copenhagen, as it called the caricatures “insulting”<sup>44</sup>.

During February 2006, the Austrian Presidency took several initiatives aimed at diffusing the crisis. It made it clear that it considered it an issue the EU could not ignore. The balance struck between freedom of expression and respect for religion was on many occasions close to the Danish discourse. In mid-February, the High Representative Solana undertook the mission to the Middle East, which the EU Presidency had requested on 7 February where he held meetings in many of the Arab states. Later, however, his participation in a meeting of the Alliance of Civilisations in Doha was cancelled due to opposition from some member states who felt that the declaration to which Solana would have to subscribe would yield too much to the respect-for-religion side<sup>45</sup>. Only on 14 February did the President of the Commission, Barroso, issue a statement on the matter after disagreements within the Commission<sup>46</sup>. But this statement was strongly in support of the Danish position and language, with Barroso refusing to take a stance towards the cartoons and stressing that the principle of freedom of expression was non-negotiable<sup>47</sup>.

Austrian EU President Schlüssel stated on 8 February that: “We do not want a clash of cultures, but peace between different cultures”, and, on 9 February, the Presidency and Turkey issued a joint declaration aimed at: “...

42. EU-Presidency, 2006b.

43. EU-Presidency, 2006c.

44. Annan et al., 2006

45. ‘Topmøde med Skønhedsplet’, *Politiken*, 27 February 2006.

46. ‘Da Europa så profetens ansigt’, *Politiken*, 16 April 2006.

47. Ibid.

promoting dialogue between Europe and the Muslim world". On 14 February, a declaration was also issued criticising the attacks on diplomatic missions in Iran.

In a longer account by the Presidency to the European Parliament on 15 February, the Presidency underlined the importance of freedom of expression, and although both the right to freedom of expression *and* respect for religious beliefs were mentioned, the order and the emphasis came close to the discourse of the Danish government<sup>48</sup>.

The Presidency co-organised a conference between the European Imams in Austria on 7 February. On 16 February, it also organised a conference between the Danish Foreign Minister and Muslim clerics in the Austrian Foreign Ministry. The declaration issued after the meeting bore the title: "Begin interacting rather than existing side by side"<sup>49</sup>.

The more principled EU approach to the cartoons crisis was formulated at the GERC meeting on 27 February. The declaration by the GERC on the cartoons crisis on 27 February can be said to be close to the Danish position by recognising and regretting that the cartoons had been *considered* offensive (not that they "were" offensive), with the addition that freedom of expression carries with it responsibility. The formulations were subject to heated debate at the meeting with the Netherlands and the UK at opposite poles with two different drafts. A clash took place between the proponents of the two extremes: the "freedom of expression extremists" vs. the "apology extremists"<sup>50</sup>. The issue was not whether an actual apology should be formulated, but the character of the regret to be expressed by the Union. The UK wanted deep regret, the Netherlands none at all<sup>51</sup>. A compromise between the two would be accepted by all countries. The Austrian Presidency drafted a compromise which was acceptable to both the Netherlands and the UK and thus to all member states. The balance in the statement was such that "freedom of expression" was given primacy and emphasised as an absolute value, followed by respect for religion and tolerance. There were many references to the need

48. EU-Presidency, 2006d.

49. EU-Presidency, 2006d.

50. Hansen & Hundevad 2006: 215-6; 'Da Europa så profetens ansigt', *Politiken*, 16 April 2006.

51. Ibid.

for dialogue with the Muslim world<sup>52</sup>. The grouping closest to the Danish view of the balance between freedom of expression and respect for religion can be said to have gained the upper hand in the formulations. The declaration took the form it did as a result of the drafting position of the Austrian Presidency, combined with a majority of countries being more heavily on the freedom of expression side. The Danish Foreign Minister stressed that he could have lived with both the British and the Dutch drafts, thus continuing to downplay internal differences within the EU. Nevertheless, the communiqué was closer to the Danish discourse on the issue than to the British draft<sup>53</sup>.

The reason for the insistence by the Austrian Presidency and Solana on a more principled statement on the cartoons issue had less to do with specific concerns for Denmark than the implications of the case for the EU. But for Denmark this still represented a *de facto* expression of support during the crisis. For the supporters of the declaration the EU needed to issue a declaration on this topic in order to satisfy general policy concerns – that is, to be able to act in its relations with the Arab world and in the Barcelona Process<sup>54</sup>. The general civilisational aspects were also matters of concern for the Council Secretariat. At the EU Meeting of Foreign Ministers in Salzburg on 10-11 March, the High Representative Solana presented a list of proposals which were aimed at furthering relations with the Muslim world.

To summarize, then, Denmark obtained support from the EU a few days after the onset of the crisis. With the burning of the Danish embassies, the support became more unequivocal. However, it was support aimed at the immediate implications of the crisis rather than the fundamental questions involved. There were differences between EU member states which were expressed in parallel with the EU position and in the work towards a more principled EU stance on the issue which culminated in a stance that supported Denmark.

## The US

The Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Møller met with Condoleezza Rice on 31 January 2006 in London at a conference on economic aid to Afghanistan,

52. GERC, 2006b; Hansen and Hundevad, 2006: 215-26.

53. *Op. cit.*

54. Petersen, 2006

but it was not until 3 February that the first official response came from the US. The first US reactions from the State Department and the White House did not take the form of clear support for Denmark, but focused on how the cartoons were offensive and not acceptable<sup>55</sup>. “Inciting religious hatred in this manner is not acceptable”, stated State Department’s Press Officer J. Hieronimus<sup>56</sup>. Former President Clinton called the drawings “shameful” and saw them as an expression of how anti-semitism had been replaced by islamophobia. Despite their non-official status, his statements were widely quoted in the Danish press<sup>57</sup>.

Diplomatic contacts with the State Department in Washington confirmed that the content of the US statements was intentional: the US was not: “... eager to get involved”<sup>58</sup>. It already had major problems in the Middle East which too close an association with the Danish policy might aggravate, and, additionally, the significant role of religion in multicultural American society led to another view on the cartoons than that of the Danish government<sup>59</sup>.

After the burning of the Danish embassy in Syria on 4 February, Foreign Minister Møller spoke to Secretary of State Rice and the same day a statement from the White House declared solidarity with: “Denmark and our European friends”, and praised Fogh Rasmussen’s handling of the crisis<sup>60</sup>. The strongest support came in a phone call from Bush to Fogh Rasmussen on 7 February to which Fogh Rasmussen was able to refer at his press conference the same day. This represented a change of tack on the part of the US<sup>61</sup>.

The US line which could be found in official statements in February was that the freedom of the press was an absolute right. State governments were not responsible for what the free press published, and therefore an apology for the cartoons was not appropriate. However, since the cartoons were offensive to Muslims, recognition of this fact by the Danish government would be fitting. The US stated that the Danish government (and *Jyllands-*

55. Ibid.: 168; Hansen & Hundevad, 2006: 176-7; Thomsen, 2006: 158-9, 175-9.

56. ‘US calls drawings offensive’, *ABC News*, 3 February 2006. Online, HTTP: [abcnews.go.com] (accessed 04-04-2007)

57. ‘Clinton kalder Mohammad tegninger “skammelige”’, *Ritzau*, 30 January 2006.

58. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2006a.

59. Thomsen, 2006: 175-9.

60. Ibid.: 180.

61. Ibid.: 175-81; Hansen & Hundevad, 2006: 175-83.

*Posten*) had already provided such recognition. According to Assistant Secretary Fried: "We... commend and support Prime Minister Rasmussen's responsible statements in recent days in which he has urged tolerance and respect for all faiths, as well as freedom of the press"<sup>62</sup>. The attacks against the embassies were seen as outrageous and not the solution to religious feelings. Thus strong solidarity and support for the Danish government were expressed. Assistant Secretary Fried said at a press conference on 14 February that he was: "... certainly not going to criticise the Danish government", and: "I don't think it is fair to hold Denmark responsible for all this. I think they certainly do not deserve it. Denmark is a world leader in terms of per capita foreign assistance. They have a wonderful record of support for development, including in the Muslim world. It is certainly sad to see Denmark in this situation and I certainly have no hesitation about expressing solidarity with Denmark ... under these circumstances"<sup>63</sup>.

It took the burning of the embassies, possibly combined with Danish lobbying, for the US to shift to giving strong support to Denmark. The lobbying involved a meeting between the Danish ambassador to Washington and Vice-President Cheney at some point in the period between 7-10 February<sup>64</sup>. As it was clear that the US originally did not desire to become involved in the issue, the change of tack is interesting. The US could have issued a condemnation of the burning of the embassies without further support for Denmark on this issue. But it actually began to support Denmark on what it presented as the substance of the issue: the freedom of the press was fundamental. At the same time, recognition of the offensive character of the cartoons, though not an apology, was judged appropriate by the US, and the Danish government had expressed such recognition. This line could, of course, be seen as an attempt by the US to close the issue which would be a good outcome for the US, as it originally had not wanted to get involved. However, the warm language used with regard to Denmark suggests more than that: that recognition of the Danish loyalty in the bilateral relationship with the US in relation to Afghanistan and Iraq also had a part to play<sup>65</sup>.

62. US Department of State, 2006a.

63. US Department of State, 2006b.

64. Hansen & Hundevad, 2006: 176-7.

65. The reception of the Danish ambassador by Vice-President Cheney also points to the recognition of Danish loyalty in the bilateral relationship.

While the statements coming from Washington represented expressions of support after some initial criticism of Denmark, American support should not necessarily be seen as limited to these statements (which may, of course, have put pressure on countries in the Islamic world to scale down the reactions to Denmark). According to Assistant Secretary Fried: “We are and we will be in very close touch with the Danish and Norwegian governments and we are available 24 hours a day in case of problems. Solidarity means many things. It also means that we want to help our Danish/Norwegian colleagues and provide information and do what is possible for us to do with regard to safety of Danish and Norwegian citizens and their property. This is a very general statement, and I can’t be specific”<sup>66</sup>. The direct result of this was US aid to Danish embassy staff in Pakistan when the embassy was threatened. The Danish ambassador worked from the US Embassy for some days<sup>67</sup>. And after the burning of the Danish embassy in Syria, the Syrian ambassador was summoned to the State Department, and the Syrian government was held responsible for the demonstrations leading to the burning<sup>68</sup>. This may have been noted by the Islamic states involved. Washington may also have made its bilateral influence felt in diffusing the crisis towards other Islamic countries in ways that were less public. The support of the world’s superpower may have contributed to lifting the pressure on Denmark from the Islamic states.

In sum then, Denmark ended up with strong diplomatic support from the US after receiving initial criticism. The US stance was nonetheless substantially different from that of the Danish government in that the US government clearly stated that the cartoons were offensive to Muslims, and thus was indirectly critical of the Danish government’s approach to the issue. The US line was closer to the religious respect side. But the tension was resolved as the US government defined the situation as if the Danish government had already recognised that the cartoons were offensive to Muslims; thus the US could show full solidarity with Denmark.

66. US Department of State, 2006a.

67. Thomsen, 2006: 181.

68. US Department of State, 2006a.

## “JUST A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS” IN EUROPE? WHAT THE CARTOONS CASE TELLS ABOUT THE ROLE OF THE EU AND THE US IN DANISH FOREIGN POLICY

In the period after the cartoons case became an international issue in October 2005 until the end of February 2006 no concerted attempts were made by Denmark to obtain support from the EU or the US. However, Denmark's EU partners were informed about the case at the administrative-diplomatic level and the advice of two major EU partners was sought. No similar activities can be identified with regard to the US in this period.

That no attempts were made to involve the EU and the US during this early period can be understood in the light of the Danish government's assessment – outlined in Section 1 above – that this was not an issue that threatened to escalate. In that light, there did not seem to be any compelling reasons for calling on the two key partners in Danish foreign and security policy.

Another possibility that is in line with this general interpretation is that Denmark did not want to bring up the general subject-matter of the crisis with its partners unless it was strictly necessary. The accusations of the Council of Europe against Denmark after 2001 for the implementation of restrictive legislation on immigration and the treatment of minorities, that was not in accordance with Denmark's obligations under the conventions, did not place Denmark in a favourable position. Reports published by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) which were perceived as negative about Denmark's record can be assumed to have added to this. It may not have been clear at this stage that the EU partners would support Denmark without reservations (as became clear later). And likewise it may have been apparent that the US would not be enthusiastic about becoming involved in a conflict that could position it against the Muslim world. These considerations can be seen as part of the background for the Danish government's decision to deal with the issue unilaterally: to avoid standing out as a problem country in the EU in such matters, and to avoid asking the US for help in a difficult matter for the Americans.

The low level of contact with Denmark's two partners in the early stages

of the cartoons case did not point to any particular Danish weighing of the US versus the EU. If the official understanding was that the: “EU is the key to Denmark’s ability to influence the world around us”<sup>69</sup>, the Danish approach to the case at this stage suggested that the degree of EU involvement in national foreign policy very much depending on the policy issue. National understandings of agency in the policy area are important – together with the existence of an EU policy – in order to explicate the extent to which national policy is conducted inside or outside the EU<sup>70</sup>. In this case there could not be said to have been an EU policy in the area in autumn 2005. And the Danish government had reasons to doubt that it would obtain the support of the EU at this stage if it took the initiative in trying to establish an EU policy for the reasons mentioned above (as suggested in relation to the inquiries in London and Paris above, there might also have been different views within the government/civil service on this issue).

To summarise, it took nearly four months before Denmark actively tried to involve the EU and the US (or any other partner for that matter). It is only when the case escalates after 26 January 2006 that the Danish government tried to involve both the EU and the US. And it became an important part of the government’s handling of the crisis to stress repeatedly the unitary and clear support of both partners, even when this was difficult to reconcile with the disagreements within the EU! An attempt was made to involve the EU first. It was a clear aim of the Danish government to have the case brought up at the GERC meeting of 30 January. The choice of approaching the EU first may have had something to do with the routines and character of EU ministerial meetings (Trade, GERC) which happened to be scheduled shortly after the start of the threats against Danish citizens and the boycott of Danish goods. A trade boycott clearly was a case for the EU. The Danish Foreign Minister was only due to meet the US Secretary of State on 31 January.

Denmark was only isolated without any international support for a few days after 26 January. From the EU it quickly gained support with regard to

69. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2003.

70. Larsen, 2005, substantiates this claim on the basis of an analysis of the role of the EU across seven Danish foreign policy areas.

the economic aspects of the crisis. It obtained political support in a GERC declaration four days after the start of the crisis. After the burning of the embassies it was supported by the Presidency and the High Representative Solana who engaged in dialogue with the Arab world from 7 February, thus contributing to the multilateralisation of Denmark's problems. Solana's Middle East diplomacy and the conferences held by the Austrian Presidency with Islamic representatives were concrete, operational consequences of the process of multilateralisation through the EU. Denmark also received offers of consular support from several member states in countries where Denmark and Danes were facing problems with respect to diplomatic representation. This does not mean that the fundamental Danish view on the balance between freedom of expression and respect for religion prevails to begin with. Denmark received support to protect itself against the effects of the crisis rather than direct support for the Danish view and approach. It is clear that the countries in the EU were divided on the basic question of the balance between freedom of expression and respect for religion. And it is clear that Solana, in his declaration of 7 February 2006, did not support the basic Danish understanding of the balance between freedom of expression and respect for religion. Nonetheless, Denmark did gain the support of the Presidency for its views on the balance between freedom of expression and respect for religious beliefs. And the Danish language in this regard is echoed in the declaration of the GERC meeting on 27 February 2006.

The political support from the US was not as quick in coming as in the case of the EU; it only came after the burning of the embassies. But the US was clear in its political support for the Danish government's actions, such as in the summoning of the Syrian ambassador, although it was apparent that the US did not fully share the Danish government's view on the balance between freedom of expression and respect for religion. The US also offered consular assistance.

How one weighs up the support of the EU against that of the US does, of course, ultimately depend on the yardstick used to evaluate what is important<sup>71</sup>. The support of the EU and the EU member states was by no means unqualified, but it came earlier in relation to the effects of the crisis

71. Jørgensen, 1998.

and, towards the end of February, was less reserved than the American support at the level of principles. It also embraced the economic dimension, although the economic card was not played strongly out of fear of escalating the situation further. The EU quickly became involved in operational diplomacy.

It has been argued by Nikolaj Petersen, that the EU – in spite of the laborious functioning of the CFSP – came forward more efficiently than the US. This was, to a large extent, due to the EU member states' institutionalised cooperation in the field of foreign policy. It was also due to the threat that the crisis posed to the EU's attempt to conduct a balanced and constructive policy towards the Arab world (the Barcelona Process), combined with domestic reasons for seeking to control the crisis<sup>72</sup>. There is little doubt that the EU's initiatives were more numerous than those of the US initiatives in this respect. But that does not necessarily mean that US initiatives had less of an impact, a view that is also shared by Danish practitioners in the field. Particularly given the US sensitivities on this issue, initiatives of a less public, but nonetheless significant, character cannot be excluded. The complicated question of whether the initiatives of the US or the EU in this field contributed more to diffusing the situation, which eased from March 2006, is therefore hard to answer for this reason as well as, of course, the lack of any complete understanding of the background and dynamics of the episode in the Islamic countries and their governmental processes.

The more important question from the point of view of Danish foreign policy is how the role of the two partners was understood and evaluated by the government and in the Danish political debate, and whether the discourse on the role of the EU and the US in Danish foreign policy has changed as a consequence of the interpretations of these roles in the period since the crisis by the government and in the political debate.

The government's general evaluation of the role of its partners in the cartoons crisis was that the EU and the US were both important and that no special emphasis was placed on any one of them in general accounts of their roles during the episode. According to the Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Møller, Denmark had received impressive support from both the EU and the

72. Petersen, 2006: 169.

US<sup>73</sup>. In the account of Danish foreign policy 2006, the Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs Ulrik Federspiel states that: “International support for Denmark, in particular by the US and the EU, was essential in stabilising the situation”<sup>74</sup>.

With respect to the specific evaluation of the role of the EU for Denmark during the crisis, the evaluation was very positive but not jubilant. In a reply to a question posed by the author of this chapter, Foreign Minister Per Stig Møller said that Denmark: “... got what it wanted from the EU. No more and no less. It would have been wrong if we had got more... Denmark has nothing to blame Solana or the EU for...”<sup>75</sup>. In a speech on 7 April 2006, Per Stig Møller stated:

... in what was probably the most serious foreign policy crisis for Denmark since the Second World War, the entire toolbox of the EU was put to use... The crucial show of support from the 24 other Member States constituted a lot more than just... “a little help from my friends”. It demonstrated to the Muslim world that freedom of expression weighed up against religious beliefs was not just a Danish issue, but a common European concern<sup>76</sup>.

The descriptions and evaluations of the US role were shorter and more general. The general post-2001 picture is, as mentioned, that the EU is still referred to as “the key to Denmark’s ability to influence the world around us”. The report from the Danish Foreign Ministry *Den Grænseløse verden – Udenrigsministeriet og globaliseringen*<sup>77</sup>, which was published in Autumn 2006 after the cartoons episode, reads:

73. ‘Per Stig afviser partifællers kritik af Mohammad-sag’, *Berlingske Tidende*, 25 March 2006.

74. See Ambassador Federspiel’s account (‘The International Situation and Danish Foreign Policy 2006’) in this publication.

75. In a debate following a speech by Per Stig Møller at the University of Copenhagen, 7 November 2006.

76. Quote from a speech by the Foreign Minister at the seminar “The Future of Europe”, 7 April 2006. Online, HTTP: [www.um.dk] (accessed 05-04-2007).

77. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2006b.

The analysis [in the report] shows amongst other things that in the years to come the most important economic, political and cultural links for Denmark will taken together be in Europe. Cooperation in the EU is and will increasingly be the most important international framework for Denmark in the management of the challenges of globalisation. Considering all evidence, the EU will play an even greater role internationally amongst other things through a joint foreign service...<sup>78</sup>.

And about the role of the US, he stated:

For Denmark the relationship to the US will in the years to come continue to be central. The US will in most areas be a decisive actor in managing the challenges of globalisation. Through an active engagement, Denmark has good possibilities for maintaining good access to US decision-makers... Globalisation implies that Denmark's ability to establish networks in all relevant environments in the US will be of increasing interest for the guarding of Danish interests<sup>79</sup>.

It is therefore the same discourse as before the crisis, about the EU being the most important forum for Danish foreign policy together with an emphasis on the central character of the relationship with the US and the importance of good access to US decision-makers. It was noticeable how Prime Minister Fogh Rasmussen's visit to President Bush at Camp David on 9 June 2006 was used as an occasion by the Prime Minister to signal that the relationship with the US continued to be strong and gave Denmark influence in Washington. As Fogh was the only foreign guest at Camp David for two years, the visit in itself was interpreted by US and Danish media as a sign of privileged status. Speculations about a cooling of the relationship as a result of the crisis were met by the Prime Minister's claim that the cartoons crisis had even: "... improved Denmark's image in the US"<sup>80</sup>.

However, the role of the EU is presented as being, if anything, stronger

78. Ibid.: 11 (author's translation).

79. Op. cit

80. 'Fogh ryster Amerikanske medier', *Jyllands-Posten*, 12 June 2006; 'Fogh i Amerikansk medieoffensiv', *Politiken*, 12 June 2006.

after the cartoons crisis. It is striking that in *Den Grænseløse verden – Udenrigsministeriet og globaliseringen*, the EU is the organisation that is mentioned the most in relation to foreign policy questions and many areas of global cooperation as part of the response to the challenges of globalisation<sup>81</sup>. This is also the case in many of the speeches made by the Foreign Minister after the crisis. The Foreign Ministry's annual account of Danish foreign policy for 2006 states that: "The EU increasingly represents the most important international framework for Denmark in handling some of the major challenges presented by globalisation, such as climate change, environment, energy, migration, terrorism and free trade"<sup>82</sup>. But the weight is not solely placed on the EU as a pivot. In a feature article in *Politiken* from 24 March 2007, where the subject was the celebration of the 50 years anniversary of the EU, the Prime Minister wrote:

We must of course not forget the major endeavours of the USA for Europe to be free and democratic. But here, on the occasion of the 50 year anniversary of the EU, we can also take pleasure in the fact that we have learned from the mistakes and begun successful cooperation<sup>83</sup>.

The government did not suggest major changes in its relationship with the US and the EU. As already mentioned, there were, if anything, indications of a stronger emphasis in official material on the EU. One might expect that given the nature of the cartoons crisis and its designation as the most serious crisis since 1945, there would be a totally different discourse from before on what constituted the central means in a foreign policy. *Den Grænseløse Verden* did suggest changes in the Danish Foreign Service, including in the diplomatic representation. And the need to understand the new conditions for diplomacy in a globalised world was stressed. But the need to cultivate allies to protect national interests (and thus the role of the US and

81. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2006b: 12, 14-6.

82. See Ambassador Federspiel's account ("The International Situation and Danish Foreign Policy 2006") in this publication.

83. See Anders Fogh Rasmussen, 'Et kig i Europas krystalkugle', *Politiken*, 24 March 2007. An alternative interpretation is that we are dealing with two different discourses on the role of the EU and the US in Danish foreign policy, whereby one emphasises the central role of the EU (The Foreign Ministry) and the other a bridge between the EU and the US (The Prime Minister's Office).

the EU) in spite of lessons learned about diplomacy in the globalised world was also underlined:

The cartoon crisis clearly illustrated a number of lessons about diplomacy in a globalised world: that foreign policy in the global era is as much about handling the media and non-state actors as it is about relations to other governments. But the traditional need to cultivate allies to protect your interests internationally remains unchanged in the new global framework of foreign policy<sup>84</sup>.

The cartoons crisis was followed by a debate in the media in which some argued that Denmark had lost influence in the world following the cartoons crisis. It was claimed that Denmark had lost considerable political capital with the US and the EU and, of course, in the Islamic and Arab world. The Arab Initiative was said to be in shambles. The Foreign Minister admitted that Denmark was drawing on its goodwill capital. From within political science, this view was articulated most strongly by Nikolaj Petersen in an article in *Militært Tidsskrift*, in which he attempted to show that the government's room for manoeuvre had narrowed as a consequence of the crisis drawing on a version of adaptation theory. Petersen also argued that the crisis would make it difficult for Denmark to continue its active policy, as its ability to engage with partners as well as its domestic support was withering away<sup>85</sup>. Copenhagen would become an unattractive partner internationally, in the EU, and, in particular, for Muslim countries. Denmark would lose soft power, as it was no longer attractive as a peaceful, non-threatening country. This affected the possibility for furthering general values as a prominent feature in Danish foreign policy, as Denmark would not be considered a paragon. It was not certain that Denmark would find a compensatory outlet for its active policy in its relationship with the US, as the US would not necessarily want to associate itself with Denmark politically – and had no need to do so militarily<sup>86</sup>.

84. See Ambassador Federspiel's account ('The International Situation and Danish Foreign Policy 2006') in this publication.

85. Petersen, 2006.

86. Ibid.

In an response to the article (in an answer to a question in the Danish parliament) the government pointed out that there were no concrete signs of Denmark being seen as a problem by its partners in relation to its work in the Security Council, its evacuation of Danish citizens from the Lebanon, its contribution to UNIFIL or the Arab Initiative<sup>87</sup>. The government made a point out of illustrating that relations with its partners were normal after the crisis. A visit to Denmark by Solana in autumn 2006 was widely advertised by the Danish Foreign Ministry just like the Prime Minister's visit to the US in June 2006.

An analysis of changed possibilities for Danish foreign policy along the lines of Petersen is complicated by the difficulty in distinguishing between what flows from the cartoons crisis and what derives from other elements in Danish foreign policy and international developments (such as for example the Danish military engagement in Iraq). Moreover, an attempt to judge must be based on an analysis of the long-term consequences. However, if there are no clear consequences to be identified a year after, this would make it less likely that such consequences would appear later (the opposite situation where clear consequences were found a year later would, on the contrary, make it more likely that changes were occurring and might continue to occur). There is no reason to assume that the short-term would not be a guide to future possibilities in this regard, as damage to Denmark's reputation or lack of domestic support can be expected to have consequences also in the immediate aftermath of the crisis.

With regard to the consequences in terms of policy, there are no clear signs that Denmark has lost attractiveness to such an extent that it is significantly limiting traditional bilateral or multilateral relations, as illustrated by the examples given by the Danish Foreign Ministry. Denmark has been put forward as a joint Nordic candidate to the elections for the new UN Human Rights Council in June 2007 following the traditional Nordic rotar for membership in the old UN Human Rights Commission. If Denmark had suffered a significant fall in reputation, implications for Nordic solidarity in this particular field would have been likely. Denmark is also taking part in a new Nordic initiative towards ten leading African countries (some of which are Islamic).

87. Folketinget, 2006. See Ambassador Federspiel's account ('The International Situation and Danish Foreign Policy 2006') in this publication.

Danish possibilities in the Middle East and, in particular, the Arab Initiative would be expected to be the most affected. It is at the present moment difficult to point to concrete difficulties for Denmark emanating from the region. The Danish Foreign Minister was invited to a multilateral meeting in Bahrain in November 2006 because of Denmark's engagement through the Arab initiative. At the end of November Per Stig Møller went on a journey to several countries in the Middle East to re-establish relations and took part in the third "Forum for the Future" on democracy in Jordan. It is possible that Denmark's political weight in these contexts has diminished. But Denmark's participation or access in these contexts does not appear to have been limited by actors in the Middle East. If anything, Denmark's actions in the region seem more constrained by Danish domestic actors. The Danish People's Party has thus been against increased funding for the Arab Initiative following the adjustment of the initiative in November 2006 which led to the opening of embassies in Beirut, Jordan and Morocco and the planning of new public diplomacy in the region.

The so-called "second Mohammad crisis" in autumn 2006 in which members of the youth organisation of the Danish People's Party<sup>88</sup> drew pictures of Mohammad was an occasion to consider whether the international handling of this kind of situation had been affected by the experience of "Mohammad 1" in the spring. It was striking how Prime Minister Fogh Rasmussen during this episode used a discourse that came closer to the tolerance wing amongst Denmark's partners in the EU and the US. The Prime Minister distanced himself and the government almost immediately from the drawings stating that:

I have not seen those drawings. The government does not want to get involved, so that every time something is placed on the web or somebody comes up with a statement, the government would have to take a stance towards it. If we did that it would only encourage those who aim to divide. But I would like to repeat what I have said many times before, that the government is against any kind of mockery of other peoples' religion<sup>89</sup>.

This time the situation did not spill over into the international realm,

88. A similar situation was also reported in the youth organisation of the Radical Liberal Party, see 'Døgnets vigtigste nyheder', *Ritzau*, 13 October 2006.

89. 'Regeringen mod religiøs forhånelse', *Ritzau*, 12 October 2006 (author's translation).

although were there signs of a boycott of Danish products in Iran supported by the Iranian parliament. The Prime Minister quickly invited the Muslim ambassadors to an information meeting<sup>90</sup>. The lessons of the first crisis no doubt served as a guideline for the approach to “Mohammad 2”. Denmark did receive support from the US and the EU in the first cartoons crisis, but not without drawing on its goodwill capital and finding itself in a vulnerable position internationally. The result may have been the adoption of a new diplomatic language on this kind of issue. However, the government’s basic discourse on the balance between freedom of expression and respect for religion, as represented by the Prime Minister, has not changed<sup>91</sup>.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

The present article has examined the attempts by the Danish government to involve international fora and partners during the cartoons crisis, in particular the EU and the US. The aim has been to assess whether the use of these two partners can be said to express a new view on the balance between these two pillars in Danish foreign relations. The article has also analysed the responses of the US and the EU to the crisis. Finally, it has looked at the way the crisis, including the response of its partners, may have affected official understandings about the balance between the EU and US in Danish foreign policy. The main conclusion is that there has not been any fundamental reconceptualisation of the role of the EU and the US in Danish foreign policy, but if anything, the emphasis on the significance of the EU has increased. In spite of the lessons of the nature of diplomacy in a globalised world, the stress on the EU and the US as fundamental allies in guarding Danish interests continues.

The author would like to thank diplomats in the Danish foreign service and in several other EU member states for agreeing to be interviewed on various aspects of the topic. He would also like to thank Hans Mouritzen and the reviewer for helpful comments on a draft of the article.

90. ‘Erhvervslivet i venteposition’, *Jyllands-Posten*, 11 October 2006.

91. See for example Anders Fogh Rasmussen, ‘Hold religionen indendørs’, *Politiken*, 20 May 2006.

## REFERENCES

- Annan, Kofi et al. (2006), *Joint Statement by the Secretary general of the UN, the Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the High Representative for the CFSP of the EU*, S042/06, Brussels: EU. Online, HTTP: [ue.eu.int] (accessed 05-04-2007).
- EU-Presidency (2006a), *Declaration of the Presidency of the EU on the Arson Attacks against the Danish, Swedish and Norwegian Embassies in Damascus*, statement, 4 February 2006, Brussels. Online, HTTP: [www.eu2006.at] (accessed 05-04-2007).
- EU-Presidency (2006b), *Plassnik: Security for European Citizens and European Installations*, press release, 6 February 2006, Brussels. Online, HTTP: [www.eu2006.at] (accessed 05-04-2007).
- EU-Presidency (2006c), *Plassnik calls for international consensus against violence*, press release, 7 February 2006, Brussels. Online, HTTP: [www.eu2006.at] (accessed 05-04-2007).
- EU-Presidency (2006d), *Statement by the Council Presidency: Right to Freedom of expression and respect for religious beliefs*, speech, 16 February 2006, Brussels. Online, HTTP: [www.eu2006.at] (accessed 05-04-2007).
- EU-Presidency (2006e), *Plassnik: Begin interacting rather than living side by side*, press release, 16 February. Online, HTTP: [www.eu2006.at] (accessed 18-04-2007)
- Folketinget (2006), *URU alm. Del – Svar på Spørgsmål 79*, September, Copenhagen. Online, HTTP: [www.folketinget.dk] (Accessed 28-03-2007).
- GERC (2006a), Press Release, 2706th Council Meeting, 31 January, Brussels: EU. Online, HTTP: [ue.eu.int] (accessed 05-04-2007).
- GERC (2006b), Press Release, 2712th Council Meeting, 27 February, Brussels: EU. Online, HTTP: [ue.eu.int] (accessed 05-04-2007).
- Hansen, John & Kim Hundevad (2006), *Provoen og Profeten: Mohammadkrisen bag Kulisserne*, Copenhagen: Jyllands-Postens Forlag.
- Jakobsen, Peter V. (2000), 'Denmark at War: Turning point or Business as Usual?', in Bertel Heurlin & Hans Mouritzen (eds), *Danish Foreign Policy Yearbook 2000*, Copenhagen: Danish Institute of International Affairs (DUPI): 61-87.

- Jørgensen, Knud E. (1998), 'The European Unions Performance in World Politics: How Should We Measure Success?', in Jan Zielonka (ed.), *Paradoxes of European Foreign Policy*, The Hague: Kluwer Law International: 87-103
- Larsen, Henrik (1999), 'British and Danish Policies towards Europe in the 1990s: A Discourse Approach', *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 5, no. 4: 451-83.
- Larsen, Henrik (2000a), 'Danish CFSP Policy in the Post Cold War Period: Continuity or Change?', *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 35, no. 1: 37-63.
- Larsen, Henrik (2000b), 'Denmark and the European Defence Dimension in the Post Cold War Period: Opt-out or Participation?', in Bertel Heurlin & Hans Mouritzen (eds), *Danish Foreign Policy Yearbook 2000*, Copenhagen: Danish Institute of International Affairs (DUPI): 87-120.
- Larsen, Henrik (2005), *Analysing Small State Foreign Policy in the EU: the Case of Denmark*, Houndmills: Palgrave/Macmillan.
- Larsen, Rune E. & Tøger Seidenfaden (2006), *Karikaturkrisen: en undersøgelse af baggrund og ansvar*, Copenhagen: Gyldendals Forlag.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2003), *A Changing World – The Government's Visions for New Priorities in Denmark's Foreign Policy*, Copenhagen. Online, HTTP: [www.um.dk] (accessed 05-04-2007).
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2006a), *Tegningssagen: USA's holdning, report from the Danish embassy in Washington to the ministry*, e-mail, journal-no. 5.E.USA.WAS, 3 February 2006.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2006b), *Den Grænseløse Verden – Udenrigsministeriet og Globaliseringen*, Copenhagen. Online, HTTP: [www.um.dk] (Accessed 28-03-2007).
- Mouritzen, Hans (2006), 'The Nordic Baltic Area: Divisive Geopolitics at work', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. 19, no. 3: 495-511.
- Petersen, Nikolaj (2004), *Europæisk og Globalt Engagement*, bind 6 i serien Dansk Udenrigspolitik's Historie, Copenhagen: Gyldendal.
- Petersen, Nikolaj (2006), 'Efter Muhammed: Handlerummet for den Borgerlige Udenrigspolitik', *Militært Tidsskrift*, vol. 135, no.2: 153-85.
- Rynning, Sten (2006), 'Den ufuldendte strategiske aktør: Danmark og Sikkerhedspolitikken siden 2001', *Militært Tidsskrift*, vol. 135, no.2: 186-95.

Thomsen, Per B. (2006), *Muhammedkrisen: Hvad skete der og hvad har vi lært?* Copenhagen: People's Press.

US Department of State (2006a) *Assistant Secretary Fried pledges solidarity with Denmark and Norway in the Wake of Attacks, press roundtable with European correspondents*, 6 February 2006, Washington. Online, HTTP: [www.state.gov] (accessed 05-04-2007).

US Department of State (2006b) *Assistant Secretary Fried Discusses Cartoon Violence with EU, Danish, Muslim Leaders*, press roundtable, 14 February 2006, Brussels. Online, HTTP: [www.state.gov] (accessed 05-04-2007).

# Drawing the Line: The Cartoons Controversy in Denmark and the US

Helle Rytikønen<sup>1</sup>

Images of angry Muslims in Africa and the Middle East burning down Scandinavian embassies, stamping on Danish flags and chanting death threats against the Danish media and politicians, circulated throughout the world in the first months of 2006. The immediate cause of the anger was the publication, on 30 September 2005, of 12 cartoons of the Prophet Mohammad in *Jyllands-Posten*, a major Danish newspaper. Any portrait of the Prophet Mohammad is a violation of the Judeo-Muslim prohibition against depicting a holy figure and Muslims were further infuriated at having one of their most sacred religious figures portrayed as a terrorist. More than a hundred people died and an estimated eight hundred were injured in the demonstrations, Muslim countries boycotted Danish products and several Muslim ambassadors were withdrawn from Denmark<sup>2</sup>. In the words of its Foreign Minister, Denmark was facing its worst foreign policy crisis since WWII<sup>3</sup>.

During the turmoil, European politicians called for rational calmness from Muslim leaders and urged “the West” to stand united in what was very early on framed as a fight for freedom of speech and a media independent of government interference against the threat of “a reactionary, medieval Muslim culture”. In the months that followed, the cartoons were reprinted

1. Helle Rytikønen, Ph.D., is a lecturer at Stanford University, USA.
2. On 26 January 2006, Saudi Arabia asked its ambassador in Denmark to return home for consultations about the Mohammad cartoons. On 29 January 2006, Libya closed its embassy in Denmark. The Middle East was considered a “closed country” for Danish export (Hansen & Hundevad, 2006: 265).
3. ‘Forsigtig optimisme hos udenrigsministeren’, *Berlingske Tidende*, 14 February 2006.

in several European newspapers<sup>4</sup> in support of the “Danish fight” for freedom of speech, but the reactions to the cartoons was starkly different in the US. While the US media followed the controversy closely, only a handful of US media outlets republished the cartoons<sup>5</sup>. Also, when they finally came, the responses from prominent American politicians were, at best, lukewarm and ranged from former President Bill Clinton’s condemnation of the European publications of the cartoons as “shameful”<sup>6</sup> to President George Bush’s caution that “with freedom comes the responsibility to be thoughtful to others”<sup>7</sup>.

This chapter analyses the Mohammad cartoons controversy as it unfolded in the US and Europe with a special emphasis on Denmark<sup>8</sup>. The focus of the article is on which notions of the nation is reflected in and enabled by the discourses of rights, and exceptions to them, in the debates about the Mohammad cartoons in the US and Denmark respectively. The article begins by analysing how the cartoons and the debates surrounding them mobilized race, class, gender and sexuality to imagine both the nation and broader Western civilization. It discusses different theories of why the US reaction was so different from Europe’s (a difference in the Muslim population, a different history of race relations, and a more spiritual society in which religious difference is not considered as an unwillingness to integrate). Despite these obvious differences, however, the article argues that it is significant for

4. On 10 January, 2006 (incidentally on the holy Muslim Eid al-Adha), the cartoons were published in a small Christian Norwegian newspaper, *Magazinet*. Some or all of the cartoons were also republished in *La Stampa* and *Corriere della Serrra* in Italy, *ABC* and *El Periodico* in Spain, *Tageszeitung* and *Die Welt* in Germany, *Tribune de Geneve* and *Blick* in Switzerland, *Visir* in Iceland, and *NCR Handelsblad* in Holland. They were furthermore published in media in Egypt, Morocco, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Rumania in 2005 and early 2006.
5. *Fox TV*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Austin American-Statesman*, and *the New York Sun* published all or parts of the cartoons. CNN showed pictures of European newspapers, which had printed the cartoons but it blurred the cartoons themselves. The June 2006 issue of *Harper’s Magazine* featured an article by *New Yorker* cartoonist Art Spiegelman in which all 12 cartoons were shown and evaluated according to Spiegelman’s own “fatwa” barometer.
6. ‘Clinton kalder Mohammad tegningerne ”skammelige”’, *Ritzau*, 30 January 2006.
7. ‘Bush Urges World Leaders to Halt Violence over Cartoons’, *New York Times*, 8 February 2006.
8. This article is not arguing that there was a unified European response to the publication of the cartoons and acknowledges that there was great variance amongst the European countries. Also, there was not always an overlap in how the media and politicians responded in each country, but what is important here is that the dominant European response was markedly different from the American.

broader Western<sup>9</sup> attitudes towards Islam that the US so readily accepted that the debate about the cartoons was really, as the Danish Prime Minister argued, an issue of a threat to free speech from fundamentalist Muslims. Both Europe and the US, this article argues, thereby hijacked the debate, and thereby reconsolidated the notion of the West as a protector of fundamental human rights and religious tolerance<sup>10</sup>. This discourse of the West as a protector of universal rights has not only historically served as a legitimizing pretext for European civilizing projects of which the war on terror is but the latest example, but it also, and ironically, silenced those Muslims in Denmark who were, supposedly, invited into a Western society characterized by free speech. It has done so by relying on an extremely reductive notion of Muslim agency in which Muslims were constructed as having very little agency beyond insisting on anti-Western norms and values. As a result thereof, Muslims are kept in a state of Diaspora inside of Europe – despite an official rhetoric of integration and inclusion<sup>11</sup>.

The aim of this chapter is not to decide for or against the legal right to print the cartoons, but rather to insist that such a limited way of framing the debate ignores the broader context of “Muslim/Western” relations within which the cartoons were published (the war on terror, and a tough attitude towards Muslim immigrants in Europe in general) and makes dialogue about coexisting with different religious beliefs and values very difficult. I

9. A point of conceptual clarification: Europe is referred to both in a very concrete sense as a specific, geographically well-defined identity which, for example, European Union citizens belong to through their citizenship in nations of EU member states. On a more abstract level, Europe is discussed as a cosmology or as an epistemic site encompassing most of the western world. Europe, in that sense, is therefore a discourse, a set of values, and a mode of thinking and “packaging” issues, which make some identities, cultures, and problems seem natural and normal, and others not (see also Behnke, 1998). The latter way of referring to Europe also encompasses what Shohat call the “neo-Europeans” of the Americas, Australia and elsewhere in the so-called Western world where Europe is a floating signifier or a referent only loosely connected to a territorial space (Shohat & Stam, 1994).
10. Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen argued that the cartoon crisis had been hijacked by Middle Eastern countries for domestic reasons (‘Rasmussen calls Danes embittered on support’, *International Herald Tribune*, 10 February 2006). This might very well be true too. It does not, however, take away from his own responsibility for framing the debate as he did. See Ole Wæver, “Frihed til at lade være,” *Kristeligt Dagblad*, 1 March 2006, for an interesting argument about how the official Danish response to the crisis played into the hands of fundamentalists, and Sivanandan, 2006, on how, conversely, fundamentalist Muslims feed Western stereotypes and legitimizes the publication of the cartoons.
11. See Rytikønen, 2002, for an analysis of Danish immigration law and integration policies.

therefore end the chapter by arguing that other ways of framing the debate have been ignored in the dominant discourse on both sides of the Atlantic, but that one of the original Mohammad cartoons might pave the way for a less reductive narrative of Muslims in Western space.

## AN INVITATION INTO A CULTURE OF “RIDICULE AND MOCKERY”

We’re in the midst of a “battle over culture and values”, argued Denmark’s Conservative Minister of Culture, Brian Mikkelsen, less than a week before the Mohammad caricatures were first published in 2005. The battle is against a “medieval Muslim culture” which, the minister argued, will never be as “valid” as Danish culture<sup>12</sup>. Mikkelsen argued that the threat came from immigrants from Muslim countries who “refuse to acknowledge Danish culture and European norms” with their “medieval norms and undemocratic ways of thinking”<sup>13</sup>. The minister was concerned because a Danish stand-up comedian, Frank Hvam, had said in an interview on TV that he had realized he was afraid to “piss on the Koran” publicly out of fear of angering fundamentalist Muslims. Similarly, a Danish author of children’s books, Kåre Bluitgen, had complained in an interview that he could not find an illustrator for his otherwise uncontroversial book about the Prophet Mohammad. According to Bluitgen, two illustrators had declined the job by referring to Dutch film-maker Theo van Gogh, who was murdered after making a critical film about Islam. Finally, the Danish Minister of Culture referred to a recent meeting for Muslims in Denmark which was held at a Danish public clubhouse. The Muslim women had had to enter through a separate door and the minister was appaled. “What ridicule of equal rights which Danish women have fought for here at home for years” he commented<sup>14</sup>. Mikkelsen’s speech re-confirmed the idea that Muslim and Danish cultures are separate and possibly antagonistic, which has dominated European political debates in the past ten years. In Denmark itself, both the

12. Speech by Minister of Culture Brian Mikkelsen at the Conservative People’s Party annual meeting, 25 September 2005. Online, HTTP: [www.kum.dk] (accessed 19-04-2007).

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

governing Conservative People's Party and the previous Social Democratic government have taken a tough stance on immigration. Then, Social Democratic Minister of Interior, Karen Jespersen, suggested that criminal immigrants and refugees be isolated on a remote island<sup>15</sup>, and discussions of whether to revoke citizenship or legal residency rights of Muslim Danes who engage in honour killings or forced marriages have flourished in the Danish debate. These developments have coincided with broader European discussions about instituting special citizenship tests for Muslims in which the latter are "tested" for their adherence to "Western values" like gender equality and sexual tolerance.

One major Danish newspaper, *Jyllands-Posten*, was sufficiently provoked by the Minister's speech and Frank Hvam's statement to decide to challenge what they called "self-censorship" in Denmark caused by a fear, "real or not", of violent Muslim reactions. There has been "intimidation of the public space", argued Flemming Rose, the cultural editor of *Jyllands-Posten*, as an explanation for why the paper had asked forty Danish cartoonists to draw the face of the Prophet Mohammad "as they imagined him"<sup>16</sup>.

12 accordingly submitted drawings at *Jyllandsposten's* request and their work was published on its front cover on 30 September 2005<sup>17</sup>. In a note accompanying the caricatures, Rose explained why the newspaper was publishing them: "The modern, secular society is rejected by some Muslims. They demand a particular ["særstilling"] position when they insist that special ["særlig"] considerations be taken of their own religious feelings. This is incompatible with a secular democracy and freedom of speech, where you have to be prepared to tolerate insult, mockery and ridicule"<sup>18</sup>. Months later, Rose would defend the publication of the cartoons by saying that: "the cartoonists treated Islam the same way they treat Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism and other religions. And by treating Muslims in Denmark as equ-

15. 'Asylansøgere kan ende på øde ø', *Berlingske Tidende*, 25 August 2000.

16. Flemming Rose, 'Muhammeds Ansigt', *Jyllands-Posten*, 30 September 2005.

17. See the drawings online in the *Wikipedia Dictionary*. Online, HTTP: [en.wikipedia.org] (accessed 19-04-2007).

18. Flemming Rose, *Jyllands-Posten*, 30 September 2005, my translation; "sær" in Danish means "odd" or "out of sorts".

als, they made a point: We are integrating you into the Danish tradition of satire because you are part of our society, not strangers”<sup>19</sup>.

Entitled “Mohammad’s many faces”, the most controversial and infamous of the caricatures in the series is a sketch of Prophet Mohammad as an angry “Oriental looking” man wearing a turban with a lit bomb in it. The bomb has an emblem with the Muslim creed of faith written in it. The very act of depicting the prophet was itself a violation of the Muslim prohibition against embodying an infinite God in finite materials<sup>20</sup>. However, in the minds of many (Muslim or not), it added further insult to injury by discursively linking the most sacred symbol of Islam to Arab masculinity and terrorism, thereby reinvoking Western tropes about the Orient<sup>21</sup>.

The same theme is dominant in the cartoon on the front cover of the newspaper, in which the Prophet Mohammad is again depicted as an angry man with a bushy, long beard, dressed in a turban and a white long “Arab style” shirt armed with a sword around his waist<sup>22</sup>. Behind the prophet are two Muslim women covered from head to toe in black burkas, with only their black eyes showing. The prophet has a dagger in one hand and holds out the other as if to protect the women – or to hold them back. The veiled women stand frightened behind the Prophet, while all agency is given to the violent Muslim man. The black clothing of the burkas inhibits the movement of the women’s arms, whereas Mohammad’s arm extends outside the borders of the cartoon. The Muslim women are therefore immobilized by their burkas, whereas the Muslim man and his anti-Western anger can barely be contained. The caricature discursively links masculine Muslim bodies with violence and accuses Muslim men of literally trapping Muslim women in the restrictive veil of Islam. It inevitably invokes debates over religious headscarves, forced marriages, genital mutilation, and other examples of

19. Flemming Rose, ‘Why I Published Those Cartoons’, *Washington Post*, 19 February 2006.

20. Shohat & Stam, 1994: 27.

21. Said, 1979.

22. Out of the twelve caricatures, seven invoke the trope of Muslim masculine violence and/or female oppression, one is a serene picture of the Prophet in a desert set against a setting sun, and four are reflections on the debate itself (one is depicting a cartoonist surreptitiously drawing a picture of the Prophet, and two see the publication of the cartoons as a PR stunt for Kåre Bluitgen, the Danish children’s book author.) This article first focuses on a few cartoons, which are symptomatic of the broader and, at the same time, limiting debate about Muslims in the West, and the article ends by discussing one cartoon, which is interpreted as more dialogical.

what is seen, in European media, as Islam's "oppression of women". The caricature therefore begs the question of what the prophet is really protecting the women from, and, given the context of the cartoon series, suggests that it could be from equal freedom to enter the public space (like the club house in the Cultural Minister's speech), freedom of speech, or the freedom to choose their own spouses – rights and norms which are framed in both US and European discourse as constitutive of Western democracies. The blame for failed integration into Western society is therefore placed squarely on the shoulders of male Muslims, ignoring, for example, exclusionary and racist practices in Europe, which criminalizes Muslim boys and men and thereby traps them in their dark-skinned bodies<sup>23</sup>.

The veiled Muslim women reemerge in another caricature inside the newspaper. In this case, their faces are made up of a star and a crescent forming angry mouths. The caricature is accompanied by a poem: "Prophet! Daft and dumb, keeps the women under thumb" (author's translation). The discursive linking of Islam with masculine irrational violence, female oppression and "backwardness" is also present in yet another caricature in which St Peter's place at the Gate of Heaven is taken by the Prophet Mohammad. Mohammad greets a line of Muslim suicide bombers (still smouldering) by saying: "Stop, stop. We've run out of virgins!". In the context of 9/11, the 7/7 bombings in London, and suicide bombings in Israel and Iraq, it is hard not to interpret the caricature as questioning (or denying) whether there are any real political, social, economic or religious motives behind Muslim violence. The caricature suggests that it has exposed the true motives behind terrorist action, literally catching the Muslim terrorists with their pants down (in the cartoon they are still smouldering or burned up), lusting as they are for something as profane (and Western?) as sex with virgins. The suicide bombers therefore come across in the caricature as doubly ridiculous because they have been exposed as having no worthy reasons for committing acts of terror against the West – and there are not even any virgins waiting for them in Heaven as reward for the sacrifice of their lives; they have therefore died doubly in vain. In the caricature, terrorism is thus taken out of any historical or geopolitical context and explained solely with

23. Souilamas, 2006.

reference to sexual motives. It thus insists that the roots of terrorism are an “internal” problem for Muslims and ignores the possibility that the West is implicated in world politics in such a way that terrorism could be a response to it, whether understandable or not. Muslim women are also invoked in their very absence in the caricature (there are no more virgins), and again they are represented as being without any agency of their own, fully at the disposal of Muslim men. Hence, the caricature’s discourse of a failed or castrated male, Muslim sexual identity mobilizes the racialized and sexed bodies of Muslim women and casts them as oppressed and in need of “Western liberation”. This victimization of non-Western women, feminist and postcolonial scholars remind us, has historically served to legitimize Western “civilizing” projects, of which the war on terror is the most recent example<sup>24</sup>.

## THE ENEMY WITHIN

In the days after the publication of the Mohammad cartoons, *Jyllands-Posten* received about a hundred letters to the editor, 3,000 Danes participated in a peaceful demonstration in Copenhagen against the publication of the caricatures, and 17,000 signatures on petitions were collected. The demonstrators demanded apologies for the publication of the caricatures from *Jyllands-Posten* and from the Danish government. Some also demanded to be given assurances that this would never happen again. *Jyllands-Posten*, a conservative paper with an attitude that is generally strongly critical of immigrants, refused to apologize for publishing the cartoons, and the

24. Asultany, 2005. It is beyond the scope of this article to analyze in depth the gender relations in the representations of Muslims, but the cartoons reflect Europe’s intense media focus on female Muslim agency. European and American media have almost craved personal narratives from oppressed Muslim immigrant women who speak of their relationship with their “traditional” fathers, brothers or husbands (Dutch Parliamentarian Ayaan Hirsi Ali comes to mind). While these otherwise “silenced” women are thereby given voice (by Western publishers), their narratives are more often than not represented in the media in binary terms where “freedom” and “progress” in the West is juxtaposed with “backwardness” and “barbarity” in the East. See Razak, 2001, and Ticktin, 2006, for an analysis of how immigrant and Muslim women have to be victims of a particular kind to have a voice, and Niki Akavan for an Iranian feminist critique of how Muslim women’s narratives serve to legitimize empire building projects like the “war on terror” (‘A Genre in the Service of Empire’, published by ZMAG. Online, HTTP: [www.zmag.org] (accessed 19-04-2007)).

Danish government remained silent on the issue. On 12 October 2005, on the initiative of Muslim organizations in Denmark, 11 Muslim ambassadors wrote a letter to the Danish Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, asking for a meeting with the former as soon as possible. In the letter, they expressed their concern with the “on-going smearing campaign in Danish public circles and media against Islam and Muslims”<sup>25</sup>. The letter specifically referred to Culture Minister Brian Mikkelsen’s talk of a “war against Muslims”, remarks on a local radio station which led to an indictment for racism, a Member of the Danish Parliaments’ derogatory remarks about Muslims, and Jyllands-Posten’s cartoons as some recent examples of the Islamophobic tone of the debate<sup>26</sup>. The letter appealed to: “the spirit of Danish values”, such as tolerance and civil society, and the ambassadors stated that they agreed with the Danish Prime Minister that, just as terrorists should not be allowed to abuse Islam for their crimes, the Danish press should not be allowed to abuse Islam in the name of: “democracy, freedom of expression and human rights, the values that we all share”<sup>27</sup>. What would later become the most important part of the letter came at the end, where the Muslim ambassadors asked that the Danish Prime Minister: “take all those responsible to task under law of the land”<sup>28</sup>.

Nine days later, the ambassadors received a reply from the Danish Prime Minister, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, who ignored the plea to meet and instead reiterated that: “freedom of expression is the very foundation of Danish democracy”. He went on to say that freedom of expression has: “a wide scope”, and that the Danish government has: “no means of influencing the press”<sup>29</sup>. However, Rasmussen wrote: “Danish legislation prohibits acts or expressions of a blasphemous or discriminatory nature”, and that: “the offended party”, can take its case to court. It is, Rasmussen wrote: “for the

25. The letter is reprinted in Hvidt & Mouritzen, 2006: 191-192.

26. Ibid. The letter was written on behalf of Ambassadors from Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Egypt, Indonesia, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, and Palestine.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. The reply is reprinted in Hvidt & Mouritzen, 2006: 193.

courts to decide in individual cases<sup>30</sup>. He then continued to say that he agreed with the ambassadors that: “dialogue between cultures and religions needs to be based on mutual respect and understanding<sup>31</sup>”.

Without mentioning them, Rasmussen clearly referred to *Jyllands-Posten*’s publication of the Mohammad cartoons when he discussed the Danish government’s (in)ability to influence the press, and he ignored the ambassadors’ other examples of the “Islamophobic tone” in debates in Denmark, one of which was his own minister’s “culture war” against Islam. He also shifted the issue (by now already much more limited in scope than in the ambassadors’ letter) from the contested terrain of politics and culture to the judicial domain, which is, supposedly, value-neutral and where we are all in principle equal<sup>32</sup>. Hence, the publication of the cartoons, which were seen by many Muslims as the “last straw” in a much broader anti-Muslim debate in Denmark, was isolated from any context and considered only in its legal ramifications.

It is fair to say that the letter from the Danish Prime Minister became one of the most hotly debated parts in the later conflict and was seen as crucial for its further development. Many Danish and international political commentators and critics speculated that the controversy might have ended if the Prime Minister had taken the time to meet with the ambassadors to hear their concerns, or if he had acknowledged – as he would do many months later, when demonstrations and riots had started in the Middle East and Africa – that, as a religious man, he would personally never have published cartoons which ridiculed any religious figure<sup>33</sup>. This article also argues that the letter is important for *how* the conflict developed further and contends that whatever concerns the Muslim ambassadors and organizations might have wished to discuss with official Denmark, they were silenced when the debate was framed in terms of an attack on and defence of funda-

30. On 26 October 2006, a city court ruled that *Jyllands-Posten*’s editors were not guilty of inflammatory statements when they published the Mohammad caricatures. Prior to the case raised by Muslims Organizations, the attorney general (“Rigsadvokaten”) had refused to consider if the publications violated the much tougher law against blasphemy and racism (‘Muslimer anker frifindelse af avis’, *Politiken*, 27 October 2006).

31. *Ibid.*

32. See, however, Agamben, 1998, for an analysis of the historical and cultural context of the rights regime, and Halley, 1999, for how law and culture converge in liberal democracies.

33. ‘Danish paper sorry for Mohammad cartoons’, *The Guardian*, 31 January 2006.

mental Western values like freedom of speech and the absence of government intervention in the free media.

In later speeches, Rasmussen kept emphasizing the importance of dialogue and the: “freedom to be different”, but he also defended humour and satire as constitutive of free speech in Western democracies. “We in Denmark have a healthy tradition for critically scrutinizing all authorities, whether political or religious. We use humour. We use satire. Yes, we have rather relaxed attitude towards authorities”. Then he linked this “healthy tradition” to progress and modernity more broadly: “It is this tradition of a lack of faith in authorities, this inclination to critically debate everything which has created the progress in our society. Because it is in this process that new horizons are opened, new inventions made, new ideas born... That is why freedom of speech is so crucial”<sup>34</sup>. And while he regretted “hurtful expressions” in general, he did not address the concerns which Muslim organizations and demonstrators had raised immediately after the publication of the cartoons. *Jyllands-Posten* also continued to insist that they were within their legal rights to publish the cartoons, and while they regretted that some Muslims had felt insulted by them, they reiterated that they would do the same again<sup>35</sup>. The problem therefore continued to be for Muslims to accept unlimited “mockery and insult” if they were to live in Denmark.

On 3 December 2005 a group of five imams went to Egypt, and later in the month to Syria and Lebanon, to meet with religious leaders, leaders of the Arab League and advisors to Arab governments to put forward their concerns with the way Muslims in Denmark were represented in politics and in the media. In Denmark, polls show that an overwhelming majority of the Danish population believe that the imams had manipulated the Arab world

34. Quotations from the Prime Minister's New Year's speech, 1 January 2006. Online, HTTP: [www.statsministeriet.dk] (accessed 19-04-2007). Domestically, the Danish Prime Minister had been put under enormous pressure by a public letter signed by 22 former Danish ambassadors. The group represented political heavy weight champions in Danish foreign policy, and it was unusual that they interfered with Danish politics. In the letter, the former ambassadors regretted the tone of the debate about Muslims in Denmark in general, and the decision to publish the Mohammad cartoons in particular ('Diplomaternes Indlæg', *Berlingske Tidende*, 21 December 2005). They also urged the Prime Minister to reconsider his decision not to meet with the 11 ambassadors from Muslim countries.

35. Flemming Rose, 'Why I Published Those Cartoons', *Washington Post*, 19 February 2006.

into turning on Denmark and spurred the violent reactions to the cartoons<sup>36</sup>. In Denmark<sup>37</sup>, the imams were compared to “enemy sympathizers within our own ranks” in WWII, and politicians from the anti-immigrant Danish People’s Party raised a debate about whether the imam’s citizenship or legal residence should be revoked<sup>38</sup>. In the first months of 2006, criticism by Middle Eastern governments and religious organizations increased, and tens of thousands of demonstrators started pouring out on to the streets in Pakistan, Kenya, Somalia, Egypt, Jordan, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Malaysia, Nigeria and Venezuela. Estimates vary, but up to 100 people were killed during the demonstrations. Images of spiteful Muslim demonstrators stamping on the Danish flag, burning down Danish embassies and chanting “death to Denmark” circulated round the world<sup>39</sup>. While the immediate cause of the demonstrations was the publication of the Mohammad cartoons in Denmark, the demonstrations spread to include criticism of US involvement in the Middle East, the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, and Denmark’s alliance with the US in the war in Iraq. Several European newspapers published the cartoons in support of the Danish cartoonists and newspaper editors, and European politicians from all ends of the political spectrum spoke out in support of freedom of speech<sup>40</sup>.

The reaction in the US was very different. Only a handful of US media outlets published the cartoons, and former US President Bill Clinton called

36. Poll in *Weekendavisen*, 11 August 2006. The Mohammad cartoons were not an official issue when 57 state- and government leaders gathered at the OIC meeting in Mecca on 7 and 8 December 2005, but international commentators later reported that the “imams’ folder” had been circulated in the corridors and that the OIC conference brought the controversy to the government level in countries like Iran and Syria (‘At Mecca meeting Cartoon Outrage Crystallized’, *New York Times*, 2 September 2006).
37. There were obviously also voices which criticized the media’s focus on controversial Muslims as if they were representative of all Muslims, see for example ‘Journalister elsker ekstremister’, *Information*, 14 February 2006.
38. The debate about revoking citizens to criminal immigrants of non-European backgrounds has been going on in the past years in Denmark.
39. The Danish and Norwegian embassies in Damascus, Syria, the Danish embassy office in Lebanon, and the Danish consulate in Surabaya, Indonesia were attacked and set on fire during demonstrations. Denmark withdrew its ambassadors in Indonesia and Iran and closed the offices in Syria and Lebanon. Danish citizens were warned by the Danish foreign ministry against travelling to Muslim countries and Danish aid workers were evacuated from Afghanistan after death threats (Larsen & Seidenfaden, 2006).
40. Larsen & Seidenfaden, 2006.

their publication “shameful”<sup>41</sup>. His sentiments were also reflected in a statement by US State Department Spokesman Steve McCormack, who told a group of reporters that “anti-Muslim images are as unacceptable as anti-Semitic images, as anti-Christian images or any other religious belief”<sup>42</sup>. The statement is interesting to consider in comparison with Rose’s explanation (above) for why the Mohammad cartoons should be regarded as an inclusive act. Like McCormack, Rose compares Islam to other religions, but, contrary to the official American position, Rose argues that Islam, like all other religions in the West, should accept mockery and ridicule. The difference, as will be argued below, speaks to different ideas about the place of religion in the Danish and American nation.

State Department spokesman Kurtis Cooper sided even more clearly with the Muslim protesters: “These cartoons are indeed offensive to the belief of Muslims. We all fully recognize and respect freedom of the press and expression but it must be coupled with press responsibility. Inciting religious or ethnic hatreds in this manner is not acceptable”<sup>43</sup>.

As the demonstrations against Denmark continued in the Middle East, and Danish embassies were set on fire, the Danish government anxiously awaited support from the US government, a support it felt was “owed” to Denmark because of its support of the war in Iraq<sup>44</sup>. Members of the Danish People’s Party suggested that Denmark should withdraw its troops from Iraq if the US was not prepared to defend “a loyal ally like Denmark”<sup>45</sup>. US President George Bush finally responded to the cartoons crisis. He condemned the violent reactions to the cartoons and called on its ally Saudi Arabia to use its influence to stop the Muslim violence, but he also said that he did understand why the cartoons could be seen as offensive: “We also recognize that with freedom comes the responsibility to be thoughtful about others”<sup>46</sup>.

Political scientists have argued that the, at best, lukewarm American sup-

41. ‘Clinton kalder Muhammedtegningerne “skammelige”’, *Ritzau*, 30 January 2006.

42. Pressbriefing, 3 February 2006, online, HTTP: [www.state.gov] (accessed 19-04-2007).

43. *Reuters*, 3 February 2006.

44. *International Herald Tribune*, 8 February 2006.

45. ‘Bør vi tage ved lære af amerikanernes debatklime’, Danish radio channel *PI*, 8 February 2006.

46. ‘Bush Urges World Leaders to Halt Violence over Cartoons’, *New York Times*, 8 February 2006.

port for its allies' "fight for freedom of speech" was an effort to signal to Muslims around the world that the unpopular US-led "war on terror" is not a war against Muslims and Islam. Others have suggested that the US is a more religious society than most of Europe, a country in which displays of different religious affiliations are less controversial. In the US, "religion isn't viewed as a source of separatism. Ethnic identification is", argues Peter Skerry, Professor of Politics at the Catholic Boston College. The latter point was confirmed in late 2006 when a group of Arab Americans went to Denmark to meet Muslim Danes to discuss Muslim identities in the West. The Arab Americans found that, contrary to European Muslims, they did not have problems in practising their religion, but they were discriminated against because of their ethnicity. The composition of Muslims in the US is also quite different from Europe. Many Muslims in Europe are from former colonies and have been oppressed for generations, argues Younis Ahmed from the lobby group Muslim's Public Affairs Council in Washington<sup>47</sup>. In contrast, most Muslim immigrants in the US come from countries with a good relation to the US. "Almost all are well educated and come to the US to realize the American dream"<sup>48</sup>. The only exception is Afro Muslims whose relationship to the US is influenced by their past as slaves, he argues<sup>49</sup>.

Still others have pointed out that the American notion of freedom of speech is different than the Danish because of the US' history of contentious race relations. The US of the post civil-rights movement therefore realized that freedom of speech also entails the freedom *not* to express racist remarks, for example<sup>50</sup>. This idea was supported by the remarks of American Ambassador in Denmark, Jim Caine, who said that: "self censorship is a good thing", when he discussed the American responses to the cartoons crisis<sup>51</sup>.

Clashes between freedom of speech and religious and ethnic sensitivities do occur in the US too, of course. In December 2002, the Pulitzer Prize-winning US cartoonist Doug Marlette drew a cartoon entitled "What would Mohammad drive?" in which a "Middle Eastern looking" man drives a Ryder

47. 'Et mekka for muslimske indvandrere', *Information*, 20 August 2006.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. Carl Pedersen, *PI Debat*, 8 February 2006.

51. 'Ytringer: Selvcensur kan være en god ting', *Politiken*, 6 February 2006.

Truck similar to the one that white terrorist Timothy McVeigh used in the Oklahoma city bombings. Mohammad has a mad look on his face and is carrying a nuclear weapon in the truck. After the publication, more than 20,000 e-mails protesting against the racial stereotyping of Muslims were sent to the *Tallahassee Democrat*, which had published Marlette's cartoon<sup>52</sup>, and the Washington based Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and the Muslim World League asked for an apology from Marlette's publisher<sup>53</sup>. The situation was therefore in many ways similar to the cartoons controversy in Denmark: the publication of a cartoon violating the prohibition against depicting a holy figure and furthermore linking Islam to violence and terrorism caused Muslims to send e-mails and letters to the editors, sign petitions and/or demonstrate against it. And in both situations, the cartoons were published post-9/11 in countries that were actively engaged in a war against terrorism in Muslim countries abroad. But in the US, much to his regret, Marlette's cartoon was pulled from his syndicated newspaper's website as a response to the protests. And while Marlette refused to apologize for being insensitive to Muslims and invoked his right to freedom of speech<sup>54</sup>, political cartoonist Garry Trudeau, author of the *Doonesbury* cartoons, argued that editors' decision to delete material they felt inappropriate for their readership is not only their right but also their responsibility. "That's not censorship. It's editing". "This is a clear example of something people will be offended by so we don't see the point in doing it", as Keith Richburg, foreign policy editor at the *Washington Post*, expressed it<sup>56</sup>.

This is clearly a very different way of framing the debate than occurred in Denmark, as it avoids pitting freedom of speech against censorship and

52. Doug Marlette, 'I Was a Tool of Satan', *Columbia Journalism Review*, Nov/Dec 2003. Online, HTTP: [www.cjr.org] (accessed 19-04-2007).

53. 'What Would Mohammad Drive?', *WorldNetDaily*, 28 December 2002. Online, HTTP: [www.worldnetdaily.com] (accessed 19-04-2007). CAIR had previously had success in protesting the depiction of a Jesus like figure in a TV Guide Channel commercial advertising professional wrestling. The Network cancelled the commercial ('Syndicated cartoon portrays Mohammad as terrorist', *CAIR News Release*, 22 December 2002. Online, HTTP: [www.cair-net.org] (accessed 19-04-2007)).

54. Doug Marlette, 'I Was a Tool of Satan', *Columbia Journalism Review*, Nov/Dec 2003. Online, HTTP: [www.cjr.org] (accessed 19-04-2007).

55. 'When cartoons are the news. Artists confront issue of how to address protests sparked by Mohammad's image', *San Francisco Chronicle*, 7 February 2006.

56. *Ritzau*, 3 February 2006.

acknowledges that freedom of speech also includes the freedom not to offend. While the US and European responses to the publication of the cartoons were therefore markedly different, it is striking how readily the US government accepted that the cartoons crisis was really, as the official Danish discourse had framed it, about freedom of speech and the struggle between the West and Islam. The dominant US rhetoric disagreed on how “our” freedom of speech should be exercised and expressed, understanding that Muslims might be offended by the cartoons, but apart from the American editors mentioned above, it did not question the idea that this was indeed the way to frame the issue at hand. The Danish Prime Minister interpreted the Muslim ambassadors’ plea to “take all those responsible to task under the law of the land” to be a plea for government intervention in the free press and as a request to curtail free speech. Talking to his own Minister of Culture about concerns with his rhetoric or publicly recognizing the potentially hurtful effect of the Mohammad cartoons and the general tone of the debate also seemed possible options given the formulation in the ambassadors’ letter, but they were ignored, and from then on the debate was framed as a battle for or against freedom of speech, for or against the West and the values that constituted it. This framing of the debate, this article argues, attempted to normalize and neutralize “the West” as a homogenous entity, at the same time claiming ownership of democracy and values like freedom of speech and human rights (which the Muslim ambassadors had otherwise confirmed that “we all share”). It also avoided the much more complex discussion of what Taylor has called a “rhetoric of recognition”<sup>57</sup> and failed to acknowledge the limitations of a Eurocentric “boutique multiculturalism”<sup>58</sup>. Instead, the official Danish and US positions marginalized Muslim concerns, the only positions being left available to Muslims being to be either for or against freedom of speech, for or against Western norms. In other words, Muslims are free to exercise their religion as long as this does not interfere with “fundamental” Western values.

The issue of how to coexist in society was thus reduced to whether Jyllands-Posten had a legal right to publish the cartoons or not and a deli-

57. Taylor, 1994.

58. Fish, 1997.

cate negotiation in civil society was referred to the limited domain of law. Hence, despite their very different reactions to the publication of the cartoons, which speak to different local histories and different notions of the nation and its relation to minorities, both the US and Europe hijacked the debate and converted it into a broader “neo-European” discourse in which the West is cast as both the protector of fundamental human rights like freedom of speech *and* as a society tolerant of different religions.

In both the US and Europe, this discourse of fundamental rights ironically exists side by side with a discourse of “regrettable but necessary” exceptions to Muslims’ rights to citizenship<sup>59</sup>. It is truly ironic, Collier reminds us, that the heritable, legally enforced status distinctions which Enlightenment thinkers hoped to abolish by declaring all “men” equal before the law have reappeared with a vengeance. “Instead of creating and policing such categories as rulers, nobles, clergy and serfs modern immigration laws create and police such categories as citizens, legal immigrants, resident aliens, refugees, asylum-seekers, guest workers and illegal immigrants”<sup>60</sup>.

This discourse privileges a particular spatio-temporal framing of world politics and reinscribes the notion of modern, sovereign political states under threat from “foreigners”. It reconfirms a “moral geography” in which loyalties and rights run parallel with the boundaries of nation states (or neo-European culture in the broad sense of the word), and Muslim immigrants and naturalized citizens being seen as carriers of foreignness. One of the problems with conceptualizing the difference between “us” and Muslims in cultural terms is that the “root causes” of immigration, and the effects of geopolitical identity categories like immigrant and citizen, are completely marginalized (Stolcke mentions North-South inequalities, but in this case East-West relations are much more explicit). Just as the cartoon, which relied for its effect on a discourse of a failed or castrated Muslim sexual identity, ignored the West’s complicity in world politics, it becomes almost impossible to stimulate any discussion of the West’s complicity in causing people to become refugees and immigrants in the first place.

59. Abu Graib comes to mind, but so too do debates about revoking Muslims’ citizenship status in Denmark, racial profiling in the US and the detention of Muslims without criminal charges, etc. See Asultany, 2005.

60. Collier, 1995: 18.

Obviously, one should not reduce a very complex problem – that of flows of people across political and territorial boundaries – into a simple causation where Western colonialism and imperialism, its need for cheap labour, and its trade negotiations or barriers are the culprits, and for which the West in some shape or form should accept its guilt. It is, however, thought-provoking that the “problem” of Muslims in the West remains a problem with their “outdated” culture. Other ways of framing the issue are simply ignored<sup>61</sup>.

This cosmology sanctions certain identity categories and creates a hierarchy of belonging between them in which otherwise “fundamental and inalienable” citizenship and civic rights must “regrettably” be suspended for Muslims post 9/11. The cartoons and the wider debates over the West’s relationship with Islam consolidate the notion that Islamic culture is potentially lethal for the West. It also ironically silences the very people, which the cartoons were supposedly meant to invite into a Western culture of “insult, mockery, and ridicule”, to quote the cultural editor of *Jyllands-Posten*.

Unlike some Muslims, neither the imams and the Muslim ambassadors nor the Muslim demonstrators in Denmark asked for censorship of the Danish press or said they were against free speech. However, it became very difficult to negotiate what it means to be humans of different backgrounds united by political rights when there was talk of revoking citizenship or legal residence rights, and when “Muslim” was mobilized as a politicized identity category belonging to another part of the world and seen as incompatible with neo-European values<sup>62</sup>.

## MOHAMMAD, THE 7TH GRADER

However, efforts are being made to challenge those very binary oppositions, which frame most debates about (and policies directed towards) Muslims in the West to create room for a narrative that is underwritten by a less reductive understanding of identities. This article suggests that one of the infamous 12 cartoons published in *Jyllands-Posten* might actually pave the way

61. Stolcke, 1995.

62. Adamson, 2006.

for this. This particular cartoon stays faithful to the task of depicting Mohammad, but this time it is not Mohammad the prophet, but Mohammad from the 7th grade in a local school in a suburb of Copenhagen. The cartoon shows 7th grader Mohammad (with an arrow pointing him out and the words “Mohammad, 7th grade Valby school”) standing in front of the blackboard in a classroom wearing a T-shirt emblazoned with the logo of a local soccer team. However, whereas the team’s name is “Frem” (Forward), his T-shirt says “Frem tiden” (the future, or, literally, “forward time”). Mohammad is pointing to some writing in Arabic on the blackboard, which isn’t translated in the cartoon. It was only during later debates in the media that the writing was translated, hence *Jyllands-Posten* and most of its readers did not know what Mohammad had written when the cartoons were published. The writing in Arabic in the cartoon might play on the dominant Danish anxiety about the ability to speak Danish as a sign of immigrants’ willingness or not to integrate into Danish society. It might also be interpreted as a warning that, in the future (“fremtiden”), the “writing on the wall” will be in Arabic (and hence illegible to “us”). That interpretation of the cartoon fits squarely with the dominant narrative about Muslims “crowding” Western space through immigration and family reunifications, and it feeds the fear of Islam threatening Western norms.

This article argues, however, that the cartoon invites another interpretation, because 7th grader Mohammad is depicted as a very ordinary looking Danish school kid and not at all as a threatening rebel. He has black hair, but his facial features, body and clothing are not “Orientalized” or exoticized, and he does not come across as hostile or angry. On the contrary, he is grinning like any school kid who has written something provocative on the blackboard. “*Jyllands-Posten* is a bunch of reactionary provocateurs”, it says in Arabic on the blackboard, which Mohammad points to with a wry smile. The very act of drawing 7th grader Mohammad and not the prophet in the context of a series of cartoons depicting “the (Prophet) Mohammad’s many faces” in an ingenious way renders the Prophet and Islam irrelevant. The cartoon therefore thrives on the paradoxical space created by depicting a Muslim Dane commenting on the very cartoon and the debate in which he is himself a main character. This article suggests that this can be read as a cri-

tical reflection on the debates over freedom of speech, integration, and the “clash of civilizations” which provided the context for the publication of the cartoons. 7th grader Mohammad reminds us that, contrary to the dominant Western discourse, it is not Muslims who are reactionary but rather Jyllands-Posten (and, by extension, the dominant discourse on Muslims in the West). Hence, the roles are reversed in the cartoon. This Mohammad is not the antithesis to a modernist and democratic West, he does not represent a “medieval” or “outdated” foreign culture, he is part of “us”, he is already right here in our classrooms, in the heart of the West, and he is an actor of or for the future. The cartoon thus deterritorializes culture and defies the discourse that frames Muslims as little islands of foreignness in the midst of Western space. Because, with his writing on the blackboard, 7th grader Mohammad demonstrates that he is very familiar with “Western”-style satire and “scepticism of authorities” (the very rhetorical strategy which both President Bush and Danish Prime Minister Fogh Rasmussen believed to be the vehicle of Western modernity and a solid basis of democracies) and he does so in his “own” language. He therefore challenges the idea of a dichotomy between East (and Islam) and West<sup>63</sup>, just as the cartoon itself dissolves the tension between, on the one hand, showing one of “Mohammad’s many faces”, and, on the other, respecting the Muslim prohibition against portraying the Prophet Mohammad. It does in a self-reflecting way and without recycling Western tropes about the Orient as fundamentally different from us.

7th grader Mohammad is given agency in this cartoon. Also, contrary to the other Mohammads that are portrayed in this series and reflected in the official discourse about Muslims in the West (in both the US and Europe),

63. The choice of depicting Mohammad in a classroom is interesting since education has played a dominant role in Danish integration policies of non-Western immigrants and refugees in the past 6-7 years. The Danish immigration law was changed in 2000 to further integration and to prevent “forced marriages”. The law changed the age limit for the right to family reunification from 18 to 24 years (at first 25) giving, as the former Minister of Interior explained it, the young immigrant woman an additional “breathing room” to finish an education and mature enough to withstand the “oppressive authorities” they are subordinated to when their parents arrange their marriages for them (former Minister of Interior Karen Jespersen, *Ekstra Bladet*, 9 April 2000, and Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen’s New Year’s speech, 1 January 2000. Online, HTTP: [www.stm.dk] (accessed 19-04-2007)). In the law, as well as in the debates about it, the Muslim woman became a site for an imagined battle between civilization and tradition where the law, in a sense, fought for her head (Western education) while fending off her family’s (ab)use of her sex. Guarding her body thereby became a way of guarding the Danish borders against foreign (Muslim) penetration too (Rytkønen, 2002).

he is not using his agency to put Muslim women “under the thumb” or to promote terrorism in his name. He is neither a victim nor a convert.

Of all the cartoons, this one therefore seems to have the most dialogical view of the encounter between “Islam” and “the West”, which it allows to play out in a hybrid form – not necessarily to reach a consensus, but at least to find a platform on which we as humans can argue and possibly disagree. While the cartoon does not resolve the dilemma between, on the one hand, insisting on freedom of speech, and, on the other, respecting multiculturalism<sup>64</sup>, it does suggest that the debate could be framed in other ways than as a struggle over fundamental Western values. It creates a gently mocking bond between author and audience, instead of merely pointing an accusatory finger at an already marginalized minority.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter, I have analysed how the term “Muslim” was mobilized as a politicized identity category in opposition to European values in the transnational circulation of images in relation to the Mohammad cartoons crisis. I have argued that, despite an official rhetoric in Europe of welcoming Muslims into Western culture, the same discourse imagined the West and Islam as distinctly different identities. Adherence to “Western-style” values like “insult, ridicule and mockery” therefore became the litmus test for whether Muslims belonged to the West or not, even when their very “Muslimness” was insulted, as well as for whether Muslims should be exempt from the very same fundamental civic rights which Islam was seen as threatening. The larger context of “Muslim-Western” relations (the war in Iraq, tough immigration legislation, etc.) was generally ignored in the debate for or against the right to publish the cartoons (except when Muslims in the Middle East and Africa responded violently to the publication of the cartoons. Then the broader context was considered and the violence was seen as justifying the depiction of Muslims as terrorists and fanatics). Furthermore, the Danish Muslims’ plea to consider the general tone of the debate in Denmark (in which publication of the cartoons was just one of

64. Which may, as Fish reminds us, end up insisting on limitations of freedom of speech (Fish, 1997).

four examples brought up) was completely marginalized in the dominant debate both in Europe and in the US<sup>65</sup>.

The article also argued that, while the official US response to the publication of the cartoons was markedly different from that in most European countries, both Europe and the US shifted the focus from the contested terrain of culture into a discussion of supposedly value-free legal rights (and the question was reduced to whether the press had the right to publish the cartoons or not). Ironically, therefore, the very debate which was explicitly portrayed as inviting Muslims into a Western culture of free speech, framed the debate in such binary terms that it ended up silencing the concerns of Muslims in Denmark.

At the same time, the idea of the West as a unified identity and protector of fundamental values like free speech and religious freedom was confirmed. Muslims were seen as insisting on a “particular” position in Western society in which “special considerations” had to be given to their religious feelings, which, in Europe, was seen as incompatible with a “secular democracy”. Despite their different ideas of the nation, both the US and Europe therefore imagined the West as a static and homogenized culture, not a contested, contrasting and conflicting site for negotiation.

While the main focus of the article was on the dominant European and American discourses, the article concluded by returning to one of the cartoons. It was argued that this one cartoon was an example of how the debate could have become a site for a true dialogue, since this cartoon challenged the binary oppositions that normally frame the debate about “the West” and “Muslims”.

65. There are obviously many competing discourses about Muslims and the West, but for lack of space, this article focuses almost exclusively on the dominant discourses.

## REFERENCES

- Adamson, Fiona (2006), *Civil Society, Immigrant Mobilization and the Limits of Liberalism: The Challenge of Janus-Faced Civil Society*, paper presented at Limits of Liberalism Workshop, London.
- Agamben, Giorgio (1998), *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.
- Asultany, Evelyn A. (2005), *The Changing Profile of Race in the United States: Media Representations and Racialization of Arab- and Muslim-Americans post-9/11*, dissertation, Palo Alto: Stanford University.
- Behnke, Andreas (1998), 'The Enemy Inside: The Western Involvement with Bosnia and the Problem of Securing Identities', *Alternatives*, vol. 23, no. 3: 375-95.
- Collier, Jane et al. (1995), 'Sanctioned Identities: Legal Constructions of Modern Personhood', *Identities*, vol. 2, no. 1-2: 1-27.
- Fish, Stanley (1997), 'Boutique Multiculturalism, or, Why Liberals are Incapable of Thinking About Hate Speech', *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 23, no. 2: 378-95.
- Halley, Janet (1999), *DON'T: A Reader's Guide to the Military's Anti-Gay Policy*, Durham: Public Planet Books.
- Hansen, John and Kim Hundevadt (2006), *Provoen og Profeten – Mohammadkrisen bag kulisserne*, Copenhagen: Jyllands-Postens Forlag.
- Hvidt, Nanna & Hans Mouritzen (eds) (2006), *Danish Foreign Policy Yearbook 2006*, Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS):
- Larsen, Rune E. and Tøger Seidenfaden (2006), *Karikatur krisen: En undersøgelse af baggrund og ansvar*, Copenhagen: Gyldendals Forlag.
- Razak, Sherene (2001), 'A Violent Culture or Culturalized Violence? Feminist Narratives of Sexual Violence Against South Asian Women', *Studies in Practical Philosophy*.
- Rytkønen, Helle (2002), *Europe and Its "Almost-European" Other: A Textual Analysis of Legal and Cultural Practices of Othering in Contemporary Europe*, dissertation, Palo Alto: Stanford University.
- Said, Edward (1979), *Orientalism*, London: Vintage.
- Shohat, Ella & Robert Stam (1994), *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the media*, London: Routledge.

- Sivanandan, Ambavalaner (2006), 'Freedom of Speech is not an absolute', interview with A. Sivanandan, *Race & Class*, vol. 48, no. 1: 75-79.
- Souilamas, Nacira Guénif (2006), 'Uses of sexism and ethnicity in the containment of the other', paper presented at Routes Into the Diaspora Conference, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.
- Stolcke, Verena (1995), 'Talking Culture: New Boundaries, New Rhetorics of Exclusion in Europe', *Current Anthropology*, vol. 36, no. 1: 1-24.
- Taylor, Charles (1994), 'The Politics of Recognition', in Amy Gutmann (ed.), *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, New Jersey, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Ticktin, Miriam (forthcoming), 'Sex, Slavery and Suffering: Narratives of Victimhood in Claims to a Postcolonial French Citizenship'.

