



The Danish Parliament FOLKETINGET
The Legal Affairs Committee
The Prime Minister's Office
Christiansborg
DK-1240 Copenhagen K, Denmark

Sent only in electronic form

Vienna, 18 January 2015

Re.: Plan by the Danish Government to Repeal the Law on State-Authorization of Translators and Interpreters

Dear Members of the Danish Parliament,

EULITA, the European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association, was founded five years ago to represent the interest of legal interpreters and translators in EU member states (www.eulita.eu).

Two of EULITA's members, i.e. *Danske Translatører*, the Danish Authorised Translators and Interpreters, and *Translatørforeningen*, the Association of Danish Authorised Translators and Interpreters, recently informed the EULITA Executive Committee of plans by the Danish Government to repeal the law on state-authorization of translators and interpreters.

In this connection EULITA would like to draw your attention to the fact that the Danish law on state-authorization of translators and interpreters is one of the oldest laws on legal interpreting and translation in the world, which has inspired many other countries in Europe and beyond to enact similar regimes. At a time, when the Directorate General Justice of the European Union has been promoting procedural safeguards in criminal proceedings (e.g. Directive 2010/64/EU on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings), EU member states are called upon to establish and/or further develop their national regimes governing legal interpreting and translation. The step planned by the Danish Government would therefore be a step back and a step in the wrong direction. It would destroy a system of authorizing translators and interpreters that has served the courts well for many decades and in thousands of legal disputes. Without ensuring that the interpreters and translators who work in court and other judicial settings have proven qualifications, court proceedings may end in miscarriages of justice and cause an enormous waste of time, energy and money.

Fair trials and equal access to justice can only be achieved if the language rights of persons who are not familiar with, or fluent in the language spoken in court are ensured by qualified, tested and security-vetted interpreters and translators who have demonstrated their skills and competencies.

The European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association (EULITA) therefore requests that the Danish Parliament and the Danish Government withdraw their plan to repeal the law on state-authorization of translators and interpreters in order to preserve a standard in Danish court proceedings that satisfies the requirements of the UN Charter of Human Rights, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and Directive 2010/64/EU on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings. While Denmark is among the countries that have opted out of the justice sector, it must nevertheless be Denmark's political objective to ensure fair trial standards and equal access to justice to all persons.

Please don't hesitate to contact the European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association if it can be of any assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Liese Katschinka, President
on behalf of the
Executive Committee of EULITA
European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association