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DATE: 06 February 2014
FILE NO.: 2014 - 450
ID NO.: 276926

Annual Report 2013, the Danish Bar and Law Society

2013 was yet another busy year in the Danish Bar and Law Society. In June 2013 the Bar organized and hosted its General Assembly. It was a large-scale event where all Danish lawyers admitted to the Danish Bar were invited to participate. It included, beside the general assembly, also workshop-sessions built up around presentations as well as active involvement from the lawyers themselves (and thus also counting as continued training) and a festive gala-dinner. The day also marked the farewell to a number of council-members and a warm welcome to four new. The President of the Danish Bar, Mr. Søren Jenstrup, was re-elected for another two-year period.

The People's Meeting "Folkemødet" on Bornholm 2013

The Danish Bar and Law Society participated for the second time in the official "People's meeting" in June 2013. The People's Meeting "Folkemødet" situated on the Danish Island Bornholm is a unique platform with open debates where politicians informally meet citizens, business people and organizations and takes place every year in June and lasts for three days. Folkemødet is the Danish counterpart to the famous Swedish "Almedalsveckan".

In 2013 The Danish Bar and Law Society hosted a stand with numerous activities including a "legal emergency room" where lawyers for the duration of the event offered free legal advice to people visiting Folkemødet. Following the success from 2012 a moot court was also once again organized, this time displaying the functioning of a court session regarding a parental custody case. City court judges participated. The Danish Bar and Law Society is planning to attend the People's Meeting again in 2014.

Publication of disciplinary rulings

The Disciplinary Board of the Danish Bar and Law Society has continued its strong focus from the previous year on the development of a website where the Board's rulings are published in so far as the Board finds the lawyer in breach of the applicable ethical standards (for a one-year time period only). During 2013 the website has been further developed and will in the future also serve as a platform for publishing legal opinions drafted by the Councils subcommittee. The website has served as a useful compilation of information for lawyers, clients and a broad range of other stakeholders, including legislators and the press.

Rule of law in the taxation field

Following up on the Rule of Law Program on taxation issued by the Council in 2011, the Tax Committee has in 2013 published a report named "Skat og Straf" ("Tax and Sanctions"). It concerns how a case on taxation can be followed by a criminal case and the rule-of-law issues this may entail. The report points at the legal basis for the tax authorities' investigation and subsequent criminal proceedings, i.e. the Tax Control Act, and argues how it (in the Committees view) in several areas is regarded out-of-date and should be revised accordingly.

Another topic of concern for the Tax Committee in 2013 has been the reimbursement of expenses in connection with court proceedings following decisions made by the Property Assessment Appeals Board. The Minister for Taxation has been approached and a hearing will be held at the Parliament during the spring of 2014.

Procedural Law Committee

The Procedural Law Committee has in 2013 published guidelines on lawyers work-habits with regard to civil court proceedings. The guidelines are intended as a tool for new as well as for more experienced lawyers and provide practical advice on how lawyers can contribute to a good process in the legal proceedings, one purpose being to shorten the delay between the preparation of the case and the actual trial at court. The guidelines have been developed in close collaboration with the Danish Association of Judges.

Award for reporters

The Danish Bar and Law Society has continued its tradition from 2011 and awarded a prize to a journalist for the best reporting on judicial issues and the rule of law. The prize was awarded in June 2013 at the general assembly of the Danish Bar and Law Society to the reporter Mr. Bo Maltesen from the Danish newspaper "Politiken"

because he has made an important contribution to the Danish rule of law and is known for his fair and decent journalism.

The Centre of law and justice

The Centre of Law and Justice (CLJ) was established in 2009 with the purpose of establishing an inspiring think tank comprising representatives of all relevant private and public institutions. The Centre has in 2013 hosted one meeting and continues to serve as an inspiring think tank gathering representatives of all key players within the legal community. The Centre has also held a meeting with the Danish Parliament's Legal Affairs Committee and discussed current rule-of-law issues.

Kind regards



Torben Jensen