

Statement from the Danish Union of Journalists:

A victory for the freedom of the press

The two journalists Jesper Larsen and Michael Bjerre and the editor-in-chief Niels Lunde were all acquitted today in the local court of Copenhagen. The verdict is a victory for press freedom in an unjust case.

Judge Peter Lind Larsen's ruling today was the only right option in the case against the three employees at the Danish newspaper *Berlingske Tidende*. It was a pure acquittal.

The judge ruled that the information presented in the articles were of wide public interest and that the freedom of expression in this case overruled other consideration.

"I'm very content and relieved. It was definitely the right end to this unreasonable trial which has attracted the focus of media all over the world," says President of the Danish Union of Journalists, Mogens Blicher Bjerregård.

"The fact that they were even prosecuted is an insult to free press and a severe blow to the Danish nation as a model country for democracy and freedom of speech. I hope that this acquittal is a strong signal that journalists should not be punished for doing their job," says Bjerregård.

"Internationally, the acquittal is of great importance for the fight for freedom of the press. This effort will not be set back as one could have feared. Denmark can now continue to reliably provide aid and support to the promotion of freedom of expression in those countries in which this fundamental human right is under strain," says Bjerregård.

Mogens Blicher Bjerregård himself testified in the case on November 17.

The Danish Union of Journalists helped the two journalists pay the judicial costs of the case.