

Danish Foreign Minister Questioned in Parliament About Ukraine's Blacklist

by Michelle Rasmussen

COPENHAGEN, Aug. 31—On August 19, 2022, Danish Foreign Minister Jeppe Kofod (Social Democrat) was required to appear in an open consultation before the Danish parliament's Foreign Policy Committee for one hour about Ukraine's Center for Countering Disinformation (CCD) blacklist, comprising more than 70 prominent individuals accused of "promoting the Russian narrative," among them three from Denmark. The common denominator for those three was that they had all addressed the Schiller

The two questions that MP Marie Krarup had submitted beforehand, which formed the basis of the consultation, were these:

1. Will the Minister comment on the Ukrainian list of foreigners who "promote the Russian narrative," including that the minister is asked whether, in the government's view, the list is an expression of respect for freedom of expression, democracy and other values which the minister believes Denmark should promote in the world?

2. Does the Minister believe that Denmark can continue to justify its support for Ukraine with arms and money, by saying that Denmark is thus helping to support democratic values outside Denmark?

The open consultation was streamed live on the parliament's website, and has been broadcast on the parliament's TV station. It may be viewed, in Danish, [here](#).

Major Danish Press Coverage

Leading up to the consultation, there had been significant coverage in the major Danish media regarding the three people in Denmark who were targeted by the CCD blacklist and their participation in the Schiller Institute conference. The conference was titled, "We Need a New Security & Development Architecture, Not a Strengthening of Geopolitical Blocs; No to the Danish Referendum [on abolishing the EU military activity opt-out]; No to Sweden and Finland Joining NATO." The video of the conference may be seen [here](#).

The profiles of the three speakers from Denmark and the titles of their speeches are as follows:

Jens Jørgen Nielsen, degrees in the history of ideas and communication, a Moscow correspondent for the major Danish daily *Politiken* in the late 1990s, author of several books about Russia and Ukraine, a leader of the Russian-Danish Dialogue organization, and an as-



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Danish Member of Parliament Marie Krarup, engaging the Foreign Minister in a consultation regarding Ukraine's blacklisting of people in Denmark, in the Folketing, the Danish parliament, Copenhagen, Denmark, Aug. 19, 2022.

Institute's Danish-Swedish online conference on May 25.

A courageous Member of Parliament, Marie Krarup (independent), had invoked a parliamentary procedure which required the Foreign Minister to answer the questions she had submitted beforehand, and to reply to follow-up questions.

This is the first time the Ukraine blacklist has been discussed in a national legislature, and the first time a foreign minister has been summoned to respond, as far as we know.

sociate professor of communication and cultural differences at the Niels Brock Business College in Denmark, He spoke on the “Background to the Ukraine-NATO-Russia War.”

Jan Øberg, peace and future researcher and art photographer, PhD in sociology, visiting professor in peace and conflict studies in Japan, Spain, Austria, and Switzerland, co-founder and director of the independent Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research (TFF), in Lund, Sweden, and author. His address was titled, “Why we need a new security architecture, Why Denmark should vote No to abolishing the EU military opt-out, and Why Sweden and Finland should not join NATO.”

Prof. Li Xing, PhD, professor of Development and International Relations in the Department of Politics and Society and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Director of the Research Centre on Development and International Relations, Aalborg University, and author. His subject was, “Chinese proposals for a new security and development architecture: Xi Jinping’s April proposal for a new international security architecture; the Belt and Road Initiative and the Global Development Initiative.”

In addition to the speakers from Denmark, two additional speakers at the conference were also put on the CCD hit list: Helga Zepp-LaRouche (Germany), the Schiller Institute’s founder, and Ulf Sandmark (Sweden), Chairman, the Schiller Institute in Sweden.

The press coverage included interviews and articles with Li Xing and Jens Jørgen Nielsen: on Denmark Radio’s homepage; the major daily newspapers *Berlingske Tidende* and *Jyllands-Posten*; the newspapers *Nordjyske* and the *Copenhagen Post*; and Radio 24/7.

In addition to its article, *Jyllands-Posten* had an editorial against Ukraine’s list, which was also covered on the homepage of the EU Commission’s representation in Denmark. Most of the press coverage included the fact that the three had spoken at the Schiller Institute conference.

Prior to the consultation, the Schiller Institute in

Denmark sent Foreign Minister Kofod and the members of the Foreign Policy Committee documentation on the CCD list, including its inclusion of 30 people who had spoken at Schiller Institute conferences. The documentation included threatening statements by CCD’s acting director Andrei Shapovalov, who labelled those on the list “information terrorists” who should be brought before a “military court” as “war criminals,” and by Mikhailo Podolyak, the adviser to President Volodymyr Zelensky, who said those on the list should undergo “military lustration” and be sanctioned in their own countries.

This Schiller Institute documentation, which formed the basis for the questions posed by the members of parliament, was acknowledged by the Foreign Minister during the consultation. That documentation on the Parliament’s homepage in Danish is available [here](#).

The Consultation with the Foreign Minister

MP Marie Krarup relentlessly questioned Foreign Minister Jeppe Kofod about what he had done, and would do, in the face of the Ukrainian CCD’s attempt to stifle the three researchers’ freedom of speech, and the threat to their safety by CCD acting director Shapovalov and Zelensky advisor Podolyak. She asked if the Foreign Minister would condemn the list.

The greatest significance of the consultation was not the Minister’s answers, but the persistence with which Marie Krarup, and later, Member of Parliament Christian Juhl (Unity Party), the functioning chairman of the committee during the consultation, pounded the minister with sharp questions.

It would have been the perfect opportunity for the Foreign Minister to denounce Ukraine’s blacklist, but he refused to do so. He would only say that it was important for Denmark to help Ukraine counter disinformation, but that “the fight against disinformation should contribute to strengthening, not undermining, democracy, research and freedom of expression.”

Foreign Minister Kofod did acknowledge that he had directed the Danish embassy in Ukraine to ask the



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Danish MP Marie Krarup relentlessly questioned Foreign Minister Jeppe Kofod. The Folketing, Copenhagen, Denmark, Aug. 19, 2022.

Ukrainian authorities about the list. He noted that it had not yet answered, but that he would be willing to come back to the Committee with its answer. Strangely, he denied that the July 14 roundtable statements by acting CCD director Andrei Shapovalov about “information terrorists” and “war criminals” had anything to do with the people on the blacklist. MP Marie Krarup insisted that it did. Shapovalov in fact made those statements on the same day the list was released.

Foreign Minister Kofod acknowledged that the meeting where these threats were issued was held with support from the U.S. Department of State, and organized by the U.S. National Security Service Academy, Civilian Research and Development Foundation, the

I think that is a very poor response to the quite unbelievably gross situation: that three Danish researchers are being prevented from carrying out perfectly legal research activities because they now have to live with threats hanging over their heads.

In response to a question about what the Foreign Ministry had done to secure the safety of the people from Denmark on the list, the Foreign Minister said that was a matter for the police.

MP Christian Juhl (Unity Party, a leftwing party), who was the chairman of the meeting and, unfortunately, the only other parliamentarian present at the



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Danish Foreign Minister Jeppe Kofod (left) answers questions posed by MP Marie Krarup and MP Christian Juhl (right) regarding the blacklist of Ukraine’s Center for Countering Disinformation. The Folketing, Copenhagen, Denmark, Aug. 19, 2022.

International Academy of Information, and the coordination platform the National Security Cluster. He added that he had not received any request from the Ukrainian authorities to sanction anyone.

Foreign Minister Kofod went to great lengths to avoid criticizing Ukraine, stressing that Ukraine is in an existential fight, that Denmark must do everything to ensure that Ukraine wins the war, and therefore, Danish military aid to Ukraine must continue unabated.

When MP Krarup repeatedly asked him if he agreed that it was a scandal that law-abiding Danish experts were targeted and put on a list to intimidate them, to stop using their freedom of speech, the Foreign Minister simply said that he, of course, was for freedom of speech and that everyone knows the Danish position.

Chastising the Foreign Minister for doing nothing more than asking the Danish embassy in Ukraine to do its job—to inquire about the blacklist—MP Krarup said,

consultation, asserted that he had worked hard to help Ukraine since Feb. 24, but even if we support Ukraine, it still has to abide by certain rules. He asked the Foreign Minister if it would be legal to give up freedom of expression in such an extreme situation as Ukraine is in, including adopting anti-union laws, which is now a matter of great concern; if not just Russia, but also Ukraine should be held accountable for war crimes; and if the Foreign Ministry had investigated if there were any validity in the Ukrainian claim that the three from Denmark on the Ukrainian list were spreading disinformation? The Foreign Minister said that Denmark, of course, was against war crimes, but emphasized, especially, that Russia had to be held accountable.

MP Krarup followed up by saying,

We should therefore say to Ukraine that you have to stop that. You have to take our people off the list. We will not sanction our researchers. We