

Winds of Changes

The world has experienced a dramatic transformation regarding international relations since the late 80's. The current international society is completely different from the one we saw during the Cold War. The fall of the Berlin Wall reunited the east with the west. The ideological war between communism and capitalism ended as the communist powers collapsed, best illustrated by the disintegration of the Soviet Union. At first the change was from a bipolar international system to an unipolar one with only the USA as a superpower. While the Cold War forced states and oppositions forces to take sides with either the eastern or the western block, the 90's has meant the arrival of international terrorism as the new major danger against humanity, a threat most countries can agree fighting against.

But the change in the international community after the Cold War did not only end the east-west conflict, it also opened its doors so the microstates could enter the international arena, so as not to force the microstates into joining one or any other alliance.

The Faroes are in the untroubled part of the world and has not seen a war since World War II. Conflicts among states are not normally resolved through armed conflict but rather through legitimate democratic processes.

The Faroes are at a crossroad, where the Home Rule Government and the Danish Realm system are deemed insufficient. Denmark will probably integrate herself further into the EU, while the Faroes on the other hand are finding that option highly unlikely.

The situation has not only occurred because of a general will for more political powers, but also because the world is changing. Denmark will presumably integrate herself further into the EU, while the Faroes opt to remain outside. A further Danish integration into the EU means that Denmark will implement the new EU constitution and that Denmark will abolish her four derogations¹. If no practical and functional solution is found between Denmark and the Faroes, this means that affairs of the Danish Kingdom, which Denmark says the Faroes cannot have

¹ Denmark's derogations means that Denmark does not participate in the joint defence, currency, the judiciary and citizenship in the EU.

power over, as they are the core areas of sovereignty, will effectively be administered from Brussels, leaving the Faroes with no direct access to these policy areas. This takes place despite the fact that all the Faroese political parties claim that the Faroes have the Right to Self-Determination.

A possible interpretation of these changes can be that only policy areas concerning Denmark are to be administered from Brussels, while policy areas beyond Faroese jurisdiction concerning the Faroes are to be administered from Copenhagen by the Danish administration on the behalf of the Faroes. This will constitute areas proposed by Faroese administration as being outside the EU context, inasmuch as the Faroes have expressed disapproval of the EU values. This system is neither practical nor functional; moreover, why should policy areas in special concern to the Faroes be ruled from Copenhagen?

The Faroes have chosen to stay outside the EU. However there is no basic agreement among the Faroese on how the relationship between the Faroes and the EU should be. If the Faroes join the EU as a part of Denmark the Faroes will gain free access to the European market, but more or less all policy areas under Faroese jurisdiction would come under EU. In this model we might be allowed one member in the European Parliament as Greenland had when they were a member of the EU. If we choose to remain outside as a part of Denmark it is necessary to come up with a practical and functional solution. To become a full member of EU as a part of Denmark is not possible but the Faroes as a sovereign state could become a member. If the Faroes choose to remain outside the EU it is necessary to establish relations with other parties as well.

This issue is in coherence with the increasing globalisation, a phenomenon which has escalated in last decade through the work accomplished in international organisations and their operating areas. A lot of expertise is put into these organisations. But international cooperation in specific policy areas is now often done by the specific ministries themselves and not the Foreign Ministries. An academic investigation shows that the criteria for participation in international organisations normally is sovereignty, but the non-sovereign states can access the organisation e.g. in the form of associate membership if the state has jurisdiction on the policy area of concern. Thus the Faroes at least should aim to participate in international cooperation by themselves in policy areas under Faroes dominion. This is necessary if the Faroes want to take part in globalisation and international progress.

There are winds of change now coming continuously from several directions making it necessary to rebuild the shelter, so it will be suitable for winds originating from the EU, Denmark and the more open international society at the same time.