

Chair of the Board of CFoIS attends Helena Jäderblom's retirement

Dr David Goldberg, the Chair of the Board of CFoIS, recently attended Helena Jäderblom's retirement at the House of Nobility in Stockholm to celebrate the support and inspiration which Helena has provided CFoIS with over the years.

Helena was the President of the Supreme Administrative Court of Sweden and, from 2012 to 2018, she was a judge at the European Court of Human Rights. She is continuing her work as the Chairperson of the Council of Europe's Access Info Group, one of the two monitoring bodies established by the Tromsø Convention.

Two panels of speakers presented at the event, one in Swedish and one in English. David participated in the English speaking panel, giving a presentation titled 'The Principle of Fol in Europe: Past, Present and Future'.

When speaking about the past, David focused on Peter Forsskål, who was instrumental in establishing Fol in Sweden. Helena was key part of the Peter Forsskål project, translating the text of Forsskål's 'Thoughts on Civil Liberties', which led to the Freedom of the Press Act 1766, from Swedish into English. To round off the section, David quoted Forsskål: "it is also an important right in a free society to be freely allowed to contribute to society's well-being. However, if that is to occur, it must be possible for society's state of affairs to become known to everyone".

In terms of the present of Fol, David spoke about Helena's involvement with CFoIS and Fol in Scotland, noting how often she has visited to guide, assist and inform our efforts over the years. He even hinted at a job for her after retirement, as he intends to send her a copy of the Freedom of Information Reform (Scotland) Bill for her to make comments on.

When talking about the future, David referred to role of AI in Fol, both positive and negative, and how it may affect the practice of Fol. Furthermore, he stated that the European Convention on Human Rights should be amended to include a stand alone right of access to information, which is both his personal opinion and that of CFoIS. Finally, he paid tribute to Helena's input into the current and ongoing work to translate Forsskål's doctoral dissertation, 'Dubia de principiis Philosophiæ recentioris', from Latin into English.

David represented CFoIS at Helena's retirement in the Swedish capital, commemorating her contributions to Fol in Scotland and her continued support. CFoIS congratulates Helena on her impressive work, both in Sweden and further afield, and wishes her a happy retirement.

Further text on the event will be published in the Swedish Law Review in due course.

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