

12 August 2011

J.nr.: 2007-112/18246

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1. RESPONSE TO RECENT ACTION BY MARIA SVANE: SUMMER HOLIDAY 22 JULY - 6 AUGUST 2011

Statsforvaltningen were notified of recent events in three emails from my wife, Christine Armstrong, dated 24th July, 25th July and 28th July.

I cannot properly express how shocked and appalled I am at Maria's actions in not handing over Tatjana and Sophia's passports at the start of their summer holiday visitation with me. Maria intentionally put Tatjana and Sophia at risk.

They were traumatised by her behaviour to me in front of them, and as a direct result of her actions. The girls spent an extremely stressful first five days of their holiday as we tried to seek help to remedy the situation, as well as arrange accommodation, food and other necessities for this unscheduled delay in Copenhagen. She abandoned the girls, knowing full well that we had no plans to stay in Copenhagen, and we could not meet our flights without the passports.

After not handing over the passports, Maria then also placed herself out of contact for the next week. She would not answer her phone when I, the police and the Fogedretten tried to contact her to get emergency passports. Maria also did not notify the authorities of the "loss" of the passports, nor notify me until I arrived at her house. She made no attempt to help to rectify the situation.

Tatjana and Sophia lost five days of their holiday with us before a solution could be found.

Maria was called to a meeting on the 11 August 13h30 by the Fogedretten to present the passports. She telephoned to say she would not be attending, as she was working. In the phone call she said:

- She had "found" the passports
- The period for which they were needed was over, and so there was no point in handing them over
- We had managed to get Tatjana and Sophia to France so there wasn't a problem

Regarding each of these points made by Maria Svane :

- Maria having now "found" the passports brings into question whether she had ever actually "lost" the passports, or was simply being obstructive. She had strongly opposed the rulings of Statsforvaltningen, and Familiestyrelsen upholding the decision to allow Tatjana and Sophia to travel to France for their holiday with me. Further, she made no attempt to either notify the authorities, or to help rectify the situation.

If Maria was not being obstructionist, then at best, she was negligent in safeguarding these very important documents. She shows herself incapable of their safekeeping.

- The meeting was indeed called for a time when the holiday was already over, despite the urgency of the situation. This is an internal process delay, and there is no effective way of speedily addressing this type of situation through the Fogedretten.

It was my experience that there was no urgent system in place to help me. (I refer to Christine's email of 28 July listing all the institutions I approached for help of various kinds). I was given conflicting information, and ultimately found no-one would take responsibility in helping me address the situation effectively to enable a fair outcome. Thus I have no guarantee that this would not be a recurring problem, and now know that there is no effective way of having it addressed in time to continue the holiday together.

The solution found this time - that of repurchasing all the airline tickets through another carrier - is not a long-term solution to the problem of Maria Svane not providing the passports.

- What Maria considers "not a problem" is precisely the problem.
My daughters were extremely traumatised by Maria's actions in not handing their passports to me. They were bewildered, and were crying, taking some time to calm down. They could not understand why their mother would not hand over the passports, how she could "lose" them, and why she slammed the door in my face. They were also extremely anxious we would not be able to reach France.
We spent five stressful days living out of an airport hotel, and forced to go from place to place to try solve the situation. Tatjana and Sophia were obliged to be with me all the time, no matter how strenuous the travel and waiting were for them.

As it was tourist season in Copenhagen, the hotel was not available some nights, no affordable alternative could be found, and I was obliged to rely on friends to accommodate us for some nights. This is not how I choose to spend half of my precious holiday time with my daughters.

As a direct result of Maria's actions this day, and leading up to this visit (see my emails of 27th June and 1st July), I had to postpone our flights on Air France four times. Eventually I had to purchase new flights to France and back. We were obliged to travel via Barcelona, a four hour drive from our home in Mèze, which extended the total travelling time to over 11 hours, which was taxing on the children.

Besides the stress placed on my children and myself, there is also the financial penalty I incurred as a direct result of Maria's actions.

The extra travel costs alone came to over DKK 15 000, and the total additional costs incurred over the five days was over 3000 Euros.

2. MEASURES TO PREVENT FURTHER OBSTRUCTION BY MARIA SVANE TO FUTURE VISITATIONS BY TATJANA and SOPHIA SVANE TO FRANCE

It is in my daughters' best interests to be able to travel safely and freely, without problems, as is normal for anybody else.

I do not want my children and myself to have to go through the same experience again. The children still have worries, doubts and questions resulting from this experience that they cannot fully process or answer for themselves.

DELIVERY OF PASSPORTS

Maria has shown that she is either negligent in caring for these important documents, or wilfully obstructionist in not handing them over.

In either case, I request that Statsforvaltningen require her to hand them in two weeks before any holiday period, as requested by my lawyer, Anne Heide-Jørgensen.

Should she fail to do so, please may immediate measures be put in place to have Maria sign for emergency replacement documentation, so that the holiday is not jeopardised.

My lawyer has also requested that a fine be imposed for further infractions by Maria Svane.

I would like consideration be given to the possibility of providing me with duplicate passports for Tatjana and Sophia that would remain in my possession, along the lines of those provided to businessmen who travel to multiple destinations requiring visas, and are therefore provided with duplicate passports.

3. APPLICATION FOR A VISIT TO FRANCE BY TATJANA and SOPHIA SVANE 14-23 OCTOBER 2011

In this application, I ask for two things:

- The girls be allowed to come to Mèze, France, during their Autumn holiday, 14th - 23rd October 2011.
- That their passports be delivered by Maria to Statsforvaltningen or a suitable body of your choice, as per my lawyer's request, two weeks before this holiday period.

Tatjana and Sophia both had a wonderful time at our home in Mèze. They got to know the small village, the people and places of interest. They have their own bedroom in our house, plus many of their toys and books I have saved over the years. They spent nearly every day on the beach. Apart from the stresses caused by Maria in getting to France, and the girls subsequent needing to deal with that, Tatjana and Sophia had no problem being here with us. They loved seeing Kayla and Christine again.

There were also many activities we planned for Tatjana and Sophia's recent visit to Mèze. But the loss of five days of their holiday, plus the stress of getting to France, caused us to postpone and cancel many of our plans. We would like to make up the lost time with the girls during this vacation, and give them the opportunity of visiting us in Mèze, free of travel stress and anxiety over whether the holiday will proceed.

I have postponed the Air France flights (via Paris) to the following days and times:

- Departure from Copenhagen: 16 Oct, 06:55
Arrival in Montpellier: 16 Oct, 12:45
- Departure from Montpellier: 23 Oct, 13:35
Arrival in Copenhagen: 23 Oct, 21:40

If I do not use the flights on these days, I will be obliged to forfeit them. Thus, I would like the visitation period to be from: Friday 14 October 16:30 until Sunday 23 October 23:30.

I would therefore like Maria Svane to provide Tatjana and Sophia by Friday 30th September 2011. I will collect them from Statsforvaltningen in the afternoon of Friday 14th October 2011, and return them together with Tatjana and Sophia to Maria at the end of the visitation period.

If Maria does not hand over the passports on the 7th October, she should make herself available to sign for, and obtain new passports immediately, which need to be made available to me in time for the holiday to proceed as scheduled.

4. APPLICATION FOR THE NORMALISATION OF FUTURE HOLIDAY PERIODS

As requested by my lawyer, please could future holiday periods with me, year round, be able to take place at my place of residence, Mèze, France.

Along with this, please can Tatjana and Sophia's passports be provided by Maria Svane, as requested, two weeks before any holiday period they are to spend with me, along the same terms as those requested above, and by my lawyer.