



# Jesper Petersens tale ved Det Danske Studenterhus i Paris

**Taler**

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Uddannelses- og  
forskningsminister

**Dato**

2. juni 2022

**Sted**

Det Danske Studenterhus, Paris

- 1 Altesse Royale  
Excellence  
Madame la Déléguée Générale  
Monsieur le Conseiller du Recteur  
5 Madame la Présidente du conseil d'Administration  
Chers invités – mesdames et messieurs

Bonjour et merci beaucoup de m'avoir permis de vous accueillir aujourd'hui.  
Depuis quatre-vingt-dix ans La Fondation Danoise ici à la Cité Universitaire a  
10 été une base sécurisée pour les étudiants et chercheurs Danois et Danoises à Paris.

And now I think it's time to switch to English, before I over-stretch my French  
speaking abilities. Thank you for inviting me to this reception in your historic  
house where we celebrate your new facilities as well as your time-honoured  
15 traditions.

There's a French saying that goes: *C'est dans les vieux pots qu'on fait les  
meilleures confitures*. Old jars make the best jam.

20 Today we celebrate that your jars, pots and pans – and the whole kitchen and  
dining room – are brand new.

But no matter the beautiful job Henning Larsen Architects did modernising  
and renovating, The Danish Student House itself is an old jar – after all you  
25 celebrated your 90th birthday in January this year.

And the jam you make here has always been fresh and forward thinking. Being  
progressive and modern is part of your history, your DNA. And the DNA of

30 the Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris.

### **Language is the key**

35 It's actually a little bit curious that on a day like today. In Paris. I speak to you in English. It's definitely, in part, due to my own linguistic abilities – or lack thereof.

Europeans used to be able to communicate with each other in more of our big European languages.

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For many reasons and especially with we should improve and recognise the value of wider language skills in our population.

Language is the thread that ties us together across borders and cultures.

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Language is the key to international trade, cooperation and understanding each other's lives and cultures. The key to the international communities fostered right here in the Danish Student House.

50 We need more of this in Europe. Especially right now where our continent and our values are under attack. We need communication and collaboration.

Last year, the Danish government and the parties in the parliament decided to prioritise almost 5.4 million Euros extra to education in German and French education.

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We need even more skilled teachers and educators with comprehensive knowledge of German and French to strengthen the primary school language education in Denmark. And we are also going to launch a number of initiatives to attract more students to French and German study programs in Danish universities. And seek to combine other skills with linguistic ones. The engineer also speaking German, the political scientist also speaking French. And who knows, maybe the minister of the next generation will manage the entire speech in French.

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English cannot stand alone as *the* European language. Encore plus de français, encore plus d'allemand et plus de communication européenne.

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### **A sustainable future**

Today we celebrate the new and the old. The longstanding traditions of this historic house. And the renovation and new strategy for sustainability that is leading you into the future.

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We are dining on a sustainable menu. As part of your roadmap for sustainable action. I think your vision for sustainability is the perfect combination of the old and the new.

80 You want to keep your identity as a safe place for Danes and other nationalities away from home. To provide the best possible foundation for international communities.

At the same time, you want to work seriously with the issues facing our society.

85 You want to work on sustainability and be a showcase for Denmark as a green country. To inspire your residents to carry sustainable thinking with them in their studies and their everyday lives.

### **Never too small to make a difference**

90 We need sustainability goals. Climate change is the single biggest issue facing our civilisation. We need to act now for our children and grandchildren. And for ourselves and our democracies.

Recent events underline how we need to be independent of Russian oil and gas. We need to leave a planet behind with clean air and drinking water for the  
95 future generations.

The well-known Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg once said "*I have learned you're never too small to make a difference*". This is true for her. She was only 15 when she said it and had already made a huge impact worldwide.

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It's true for The Danish Student House. And it is true for Denmark. Every action counts. From sustainable food goals to big political agreements.

Denmark is a small country, and even when we achieve climate neutrality by  
105 year 2050 it won't in itself make a huge difference globally.

110 But that doesn't mean we can't change the world. We are a front runner. And  
education and science play an important role here. If we invest in science and  
new green technologies, we can show the whole world that you can have a  
thriving economy, provide a high quality of life for your citizens, and be climate  
neutral at the same time. That's our ambition.

115 It's important to the Danish government to show that we can do this. Without  
side-effects like unemployment and inequality. We thrive to make a  
comprehensive green change in Denmark. Without yellow vests in the streets.

120 If we pave a green path for others to follow. If we develop new green solutions,  
technologies and ideas, we can share with the rest of the world. Then we can  
truly make a difference. And I am glad that The Danish Student House is  
leading by example.

### **An old jar**

125 Today is the conclusion of years of modernisations and renovations of your  
historic building. But the spirit here is still the same as it was in 1932.

130 You are a true home away from home. And you insist on making a positive  
difference in the world. You are an old jar full of trusted ingredients – your  
residents, your traditions and your values.

And as I'm sure we'll see later today – you do make the best jam.

135 Félicitations et merci beaucoup.

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ufm.dk

140 **Kildetype**  
Dokumentation på online medie

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