

Asker/Oslo, 24. April 2013

SUPPORT GROUP PLEADS FOR NEW SCANDINAVIAN STAR INQUIRY

The support group of surviving relatives after the fire of MS *Scandinavian Star* (1990) have today requested the governments in Denmark, Sweden and Norway to establish an investigating committee, to finally determine the course of events of the fire outbreak and to identify the underlying causes, with a view to prevent the future recurrence of similar accidents in the future, with authorization to clarify some crucial aspects of the fire disaster:

- The outbreak and the development of the fire from start to finally extinguished.
- To clarify the ownership of the vessel and the Company management responsibility at the time of the fire outbreak.

This request is supported by the members of the previous Scandinavian Investigation Committee, which investigated the Scandinavian Star disaster in 1990-1991 (NOU 1991 1A). The support group is emphasizing that the investigation committee should be given the authority to investigate the accident for the purpose to identifying circumstances of improve the general safety at sea, but not to apportion civil and criminal liability.

The passenger ferry MS *Scandinavian Star* was commissioned to sail between Oslo (Norway) and Frederikshavn (Denmark) the 1st of April in 1990. But the 7th of April the ship was set in fire. There is no doubt that this was willfully done by arson. The fire went wild, and caused the death of 158 passengers that night.

The police investigation of the fire concluded in Mars 1991 that a Danish person was accused to have set the fire, but as he was one of the deceased, no further investigation was done.

The authorization of the investigation committee of 1990 was limited to investigate the fire from the outbreak to the time the captain abandoned the ship at the time of 0320. But the fire continued up to the 8th April at 1600 o'clock. Later on, there have been presented 2 different and independent fire investigation reports from fire experts Pierre Palmberg from SWECO and Håkon Witherseth from SKANSEN. Both reports concludes that the fire continues, and that it is likely that several new arson attempts is done after the accused and suspected arsonist was proven deceased. Neither the surviving relatives or the Scandinavian authorities should accept this contradiction between the previous reports and the newly presented information.

The support group is very grateful to the previous investigation's fire experts Kjell Pedersen and Eystein Jager Meland, by their 17th April's presentation of a proposal of how it is possible to carry out new fire-technical investigations of the overall fire development, in contrast to

the limited investigation of 1990. By this way the support group hopes to clarify if there has been one single arson done, or if there has been several arson attempt.

The support group also claim that there was never carried out any investigation about who was the real owner(s) and who was the managing Company of the *Scandinavian Star* the 7th April 1990, when the fire took place, and now also require that this matter should be duly investigated.

The support group is also presenting several other topics which should be more investigated more carefully, but states that the two specified items should have the highest priority.

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