

**Laudatory speech for Niels Due Jensen,
2016 recipient of the “Luther Rose for
social responsibility and
entrepreneurial courage”**

12 November 2016

--- The spoken word applies ---

[Introduction]

Excellences. Ladies and Gentlemen. Dear Minna, dear Annette, dear Poul. My warmest greeting to Niels.

Today we have heard about outstanding historical men, most of all Martin Luther of course.

We have heard very qualified reflections about his impact on our history and his impact on how our economic life has developed.

It is my privilege to talk about another outstanding man.

He is, however, not historical, but living in the present.

He has played an important role in Danish business and society in our time, but in the spirit of Martin Luther and the tradition, he represents in *this* country.

In other words, it is my privilege to talk about the recipient of this year's Luther Rose, Niels Due Jensen, Chairman of the Poul Due Jensen Foundation and former CEO of Grundfos.

And that is exactly what I intend to do, talk concretely about Niels Due Jensen and his

achievements – knowing that the philosophical and historical points on today's general theme has been covered by other distinguished speakers.

When you look at Grundfos both historically and today, you could say that Niels Due Jensen's work and life do – in a way – speak for themselves.

But let me try, anyway, to give you an idea of his achievements as a business leader and his profound engagement with his peers to influence Danish society and business environment.

[Niels Due Jensen's role in DI]

I will start with the last.

Niels Due has played a very active role in the Confederation of Danish industry, DI. He is

one of the few figures who has been consistently involved for decades:

For a very long period, Niels Due Jensen was a member of DI's General Board, DI's central governing body that has the last word on DI's policy mandates and overall direction.

He has also been closely involved in DI's various policy committees, not least as chair of DI's policy committee dealing with climate and energy questions (2002-2003).

For Niels Due Jensen, it is a natural thing both to seek influence on the business community he belongs to, but also to serve it and promote its interests in general. Even if this means having to publicly disagree with the government on certain issues.

Over the years, Niels Due Jensen has done just that. He has had the courage to speak his

mind on issues that were important to him – even when it was not opportune to do so.

I myself was not yet DI's director-general when Niels Due Jensen was sitting on the Board, but I have certainly seen the results of his efforts – or I could almost say legacy.

The reason I call it a legacy is that Niels Due Jensen really had a long lasting focus on the topic of sustainability and corporate social responsibility.

He had a clear sense of how this was relevant for business long before most other business people saw the importance of it.

This very persistent – some might even say tenacious – pioneering turned out to be decisive and helped unite considerations that were previously considered as opposites.

Today, sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility more broadly, are part of the way most companies run their business.

In addition, politicians and citizens see companies much more as part of the society and an essential way to achieve important societal goals, than they did before.

I believe that Niels Due Jensen has played an important role in bringing this change about, not only in his own company, but for Danish business more generally.

[Grundfos and Niels Due as an example for the business community]

For Niels Due Jensen, none of this came unexpectedly.

It came from a personal conviction and a tradition closely linked to Niels Due Jensen's

family and the values on which the family business was established and run.

It is my feeling that the Due Jensen family's approach was never primarily driven by a wish to do good deeds.

They rather seem to be driven by an urge to run their business in a way they found was appropriate – based also on a natural consideration for both the local community and society at large.

When it comes to corporate social responsibility, Niels Due and his family have in a sense been walking the talk, rather than showing off - they did things in a way they instinctively knew was right for them.

One can also say that they have been leading by example. I have seen this with my own eyes, when I have visited Grundfos around the world.

Once I visited a Grundfos' factory in China. When I walked inside, it hit me that this was in no way a typical Chinese factory. The interior decoration was simply different. The factory had several recreational areas for the employees, where they could spend their breaks in quiet, soothing surroundings.

To me this proved that Grundfos not only cares for their employees, but also that they bring - what I would call - Danish values of corporate social responsibility with them abroad.

[Grundfos history]

A few historical facts would probably be useful at this point.

Niels Due Jensen was born in 1943, and was Grundfos' CEO from 1977 until 2003.

Since 2011, he has been the chairman of the Poul Due Jensen Foundation, the majority owner of the Grundfos Group.

The company was established by his father Poul Due Jensen in 1944. He established a foundry and machine factory in the cellar of the family villa in Bjerringbro, a small town in Jutland, in the western part of Denmark.

In 1945, Poul Due Jensen received an order for a small automatic waterworks for a farm in the area.

At that time he was unable to obtain a pump of satisfactory quality, which prompted him to develop his first pump Foss 1, nicknamed 'the pig' because of its design.

A total of 26 pumps of this model were produced and sold. And from then on, the company never stopped developing.

After the first two decades of the company's existence, Niels Due Jensen took over from his father, and over the following decades, he took the company to the next levels.

Today, Grundfos is one of the world's leading pump manufacturers, especially within advanced pump solutions. It produces as much as 16 million pumps every year, and the company is also a trendsetter in water technologies.

The company has been developing constantly with a very high focus on both innovation and sustainability.

Today, Grundfos has approximately 18.000 employees worldwide.

In spite of being a global company, Grundfos still has the main part of its activities in Denmark, and is kept – to the extent possible – as an essentially Danish company.

[Grundfos' CSR activities]

Also when it comes to the core of Grundfos' CSR focus, we need to look back in history.

It has been a long-standing tradition for Grundfos to also employ people with reduced working capabilities. As a family, the Due Jensens considered that this followed naturally from being part of a community.

The concept of establishing workshops for people with reduced capabilities has also been replicated in Grundfos around the world.

In 2015, 4% of Grundfos' workforce were people employed on special terms, and the focus in this area is being reinforced going forward.

But this was only the first step by the company, taken long before the concept of

Corporate Social Responsibility came to the fore.

Also in other areas, Grundfos and Niels Due Jensen have been pioneers. Today they have a very broad and mature range of CSR activities.

Let me just mention a few.

Linked to the product portfolio itself – the pumps – Grundfos has a strong focus on energy efficiency and helps its partners and customers reduce their energy consumption.

But through their water solutions they also help reduce negative impact on the environment and provide water to people where it was not possible before.

Recently, Grundfos was honored with the UN Climate Change Award for its approach to sustainable water supply in Kenya and Uganda (LifeLink).

In this context, it is also worth mentioning that Niels Due has been very actively involved in the UN Global Compact and a staunch supporter of their 10 principles since 2002.

He and Grundfos were also a driving force behind the upstart of the Nordic Global Compact network. Grundfos has been particularly involved in the CEO Water Mandate of the UN Global Compact.

As a global company, Grundfos has also developed a strong policy and advanced tools on business ethics.

This kind of effort is both important to help employees act correctly when faced with dilemmas and grey areas when doing business all over the world.

But it is also a very valuable contribution in the fight against corruption, which is a major

problem for developing a fairer and better functioning business environment globally.

All in all, Grundfos – under the leadership of Niels Due Jensen – has developed a broad range of state of the art CSR activities, which also include activities in areas such as people competences, environmental footprint, health & safety at the work place and reporting practices.

It is truly impressive to see how Niels Due Jensen has been able to create a perfect synergy between all of these CSR activities and the expansion of the business itself.

[Fund ownership]

Apart from many other things, such a development requires time and persistence, something that cannot be taken for granted in today's hectic and ever changing business environment.

That is why I would like to mention an enabling factor for Grundfos - and a number of other successful Danish companies - and that is the role played by industrial foundations (erhvervsdrivende fonde) in Denmark.

I think that Grundfos and the Poul Due Jensen Foundation are perfect examples of that. To Niels Due Jensen it has always been important that his company was a benefit to society. Having an industrial foundation taking over his legacy secured just that.

[Conclusion]

The Grundfos example reminds us, first of all, that it takes dedicated people to change things for the better.

And if competent and accomplished business people like Niels Due Jensen have such ambitions, they can really make a concrete

difference – to help create a more affluent society, a fairer and more balanced society.

I think we should all thank Niels Due Jensen for being such a businessman who both takes care of his business and has had the ability and tenacity to make a difference in society.

He has certainly played a key role in making CSR mainstream in the Danish business community and been a pioneer when it comes to corporate societal thinking.

Therefore he is, also in my personal view, a truly worthy recipient of the Luther Rose.

Thank you for your attention.