



Toespraak

datum 29 oktober 2021

AFSLUITENDE TOEPSRAAK VAN DE VOORZITTER VAN DE EERSTE KAMER TEN BEHOEVE VAN DE ONTVANGST VAN DE PREMIER VAN CANADA, DHR. JUSTIN TRUDEAU

Your Excellency,

I would like to thank you for your presence here today. It was a great honor and a great pleasure to welcome you and your delegation.

The pleasure of having you here today was even bigger due to the fact that the Covid-19 pandemic prevented us from welcoming foreign guests for a long time. After we welcomed the President of Suriname in September, it was a privilege to also welcome a foreign prime minister in the Dutch parliament again for the first time since the start of the pandemic.

Your Excellency,

The former Queen of the Netherlands, Queen Beatrix, who spent four years in Canada during the Second World War as Crown Princess and went to school in the city of Ottawa, once said: *'The insight that your own well-being partly depends on other countries, makes you look outward. Our strength lies not in isolation, but in cooperation'*.

I think her words did not lose any of their relevance over the years. Progress is only possible if we work together on the international stage. In these times, with so many challenges that transcend the national level, like the Covid-19 pandemic, we should even more rely on the values of multilateralism and a rules based world order.



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In this light, it is very important that politicians from countries all over the world continue to meet each other and discuss issues of mutual interest. Sometimes, just a meeting itself already sends out a message. That is why it is very valuable that you delighted our country with this bilateral visit, and why it is also very much appreciated that you provided our members of parliament with the opportunity to exchange views with you here today on several very important topics.

However, it is not only important to meet each other on the political level. Exchanges also on the field of business, education, science, tourism and many other areas, are just as important to contribute to mutual understanding between countries and nations, to learn from each other, and to seek cooperation where possible. I am happy to note that these exchanges between Canada and the Netherlands are extensive and fruitful on all of the mentioned fields.

I truly hope that Canada will continue to play its active role on the global stage as a partner, a friend and a pillar for international solidarity, for the Netherlands and the European Union. Allow me to quote your father, the former prime minister of Canada, His Excellency Mr. Pierre Trudeau, by saying *'The best thing you can possibly do for a friend is to be his friend.'*

Canada has been a true friend of our country for a very long period of time, and your visit today is another contribution to this long standing friendship. In this light, I would not only like to underline again the role that Canada played in the liberation of our country – something that will never be forgotten – but also the continuous support of the Canadian government to pursue justice and accountability with regard to the downing of flight MH17, which also cost the life of one Canadian.

Your Excellency,



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After your visit to the Netherlands, you will travel to Rome to attend the G20 Leaders' Summit, and to Glasgow to attend the UN-Climate Conference COP26, where you will meet other world leaders to discuss important challenges that directly affect the people of our countries.

I would like to wish you all the best for your participation in these conferences, as well as for the rest of your visit to the Netherlands, and to thank you again for your presence here today.

Thank you, *Merci beaucoup*