

**Welkom speech bij ontvangst van
The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau,
Prime Minister of Canada
Vrijdag 29 oktober 2021, 9.00 tot 10.00 uur, Ridderzaal**

Your Excellency,
Esteemed members of the delegation,

Let me start by welcoming you on behalf of the members of both Houses of parliament. It gives me great pleasure meeting you here today.

Votre visite au Parlement néerlandais illustre la relation significative et intense entre nos pays. Les liens entre le Canada et les Pays-Bas ont toujours été forts et le resteront. Cette amitié est enracinée dans notre histoire commune et nos valeurs partagées.

(Your visit to the Dutch Parliament illustrates the meaningful and intense relationship between our countries. The bonds between Canada and the Netherlands have always been strong and will remain so. Our friendship is rooted in our common history and shared values.)

This building, the Hall of Knights, dates back from the thirteenth century and is part of the buildings of parliament. It is a historical place. In this hall, Sir Winston Churchill gave his famous address in 1948 in which he called for European unity.

Perhaps less known is, that in 1947, Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King gave a speech in this same Hall before the members of our parliament. Mackenzie King started his visit to the Netherlands in the

southern border town of Putte, the first Dutch village liberated by Canadian troops in 1944. But unfortunately also the place where the first Canadian soldiers died on Dutch soil. The fallen are buried in the Canadian War Cemetery near Bergen op Zoom. You will visit this memorial place later this morning.

Last year we celebrated the 75th anniversary of the liberation of The Netherlands from the Nazi tyranny. Canadian service men played a crucial role in this liberation. More than four thousand young Canadians lost their lives in fighting for freedom.. The people of the Netherlands will always be grateful for the sacrifice your fellow country men made.

Our royal family found in Ottawa a safe place to stay during the war. In gratitude for this hospitality the royal family in 1945 send one hundred thousand tulip bulbs.. This was the start of the yearly famous Canadian Tulip Festival, in Ottawa. This festival claims to be the world's largest tulip festival, displaying over one million tulips annually. Tulips are planted throughout the city, also in the front of the building of parliament. This long standing tradition is symbolizes our historic and maybe colourful friendship.

During the nineteen-fourties and fifties more than one hundred and eighty thousand (180.000) people migrated from the Netherlands to Canada. Of Canada's (34) thirty-four million inhabitants, more than a million have Dutch ancestry. These family ties are also an important part of our close relationship.

In international policy Canada and the Netherlands uphold the same values. We both stand up for human rights and the international rule of law. We work closely together in NATO and the United Nations.

These days climate change is on the forefront of national and international policy. This summer the Netherlands and other countries were confronted with the disastrous effect of climate change. The House debated yesterday the “Fit for 55” climate package of the European Commission. The EU aims for fifty-five (55) percent reduction in CO2 emissions by 2030. The upcoming climate conference in Glasgow will be crucial to reach an understanding on international level.

Your Excellency,

We are very interested to hear your views and comments on the challenges our countries are confronted with at this moment. It is my pleasure to give you the floor.