



Toespraak

van de Voorzitter van de Eerste Kamer der Staten-Generaal, dr. M. L. Vos, ter gelegenheid van de ontvangst de Groothertog van Luxemburg

Datum 19-11-2025

Your Royal Highness,

Wëllkomm!

And also welcome to you, Excellency, Mr Battel.

On behalf of the States General, I am very honored to welcome you here, in the Dutch Senate.

It is a great privilege for us to receive you here today.

First of all, let me congratulate you with your succession to the throne of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

I believe all three of us are fairly new to the job: you succeeded your father on the third of October, and I was elected as President of the Senate four days later.

And my colleague from the House of Representatives has just been elected, yesterday as a matter of fact.

Being new to the job is an opportunity to bring new, fresh perspectives.

I wish us all the best in our new role, and of course you especially as Grand Duke of Luxembourg.

Your Royal Highness,

Tomorrow the Dutch parliament will convene for a special meeting of the States General.

We will commemorate that 80 years ago, 20 November 1945, the States General convened for the first time since the liberation from the nazi occupation.

And while preparing for that special meeting, it struck me once again how the governments of our two countries - together with the Belgian government - signed a visionary treaty in September 1944, long before the war was finally over.

The three governments decided - while they were in exile in London - to take the first steps in 1944 to form the Benelux Union.

The purpose was closer cooperation between three like-minded countries, which began with a customs union.

The customs union was followed by many more treaties and now, 81 years later, the Benelux Union deals with tariffs, customs duties, waterways, extradition, mutual recognition of qualifications and copyright, among other things.

It should also be noted that eleven years later, in 1955 the Benelux Parliament was formed to provide the necessary parliamentary control as counterweight to the governmental proposals.

The Benelux Parliament celebrated its 70th birthday two weeks ago.

The Benelux Union and the Benelux Parliament have demonstrated the importance of cross-border cooperation.

The Benelux serves as a motor for the European Union.

The great value is not that 1 plus 1 plus 1 equals 3, but many more.

Your Royal Highness,



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Our two countries share a long history.
That was underlined with our Royal Family being present at both the abdication ceremony and the following succession ceremony in the Luxembourgish parliament.

We also share a similar flag with almost the same colours: red, white and blue!
There is a touch of difference in the blue, and the dimensions are not the same.
Apparently that is confusing for others, but we know very well the difference!

And the same goes for our national anthems, that have almost the same title.
You say 'De Wilhelmus, and we say 'Het Wilhelmus'.

Similar but not the same!

But most importantly, we share a common future.
A future with the continuation of our outstanding bilateral relations.
But also a future within multilateral frameworks such as the Benelux Union, the European Union, NATO, and the United Nations to name just a few.

Your visit today underlines the importance of the relations between our two countries.

Thank you once again for your visit. And I wish you all the best and success in this new task you have taken on.

I would like to give the floor to my colleague from the House of Representatives.

Thank you. Merci.