



Toespraak

Opening statement by the President of the Senate of the Netherlands Mr. Jan Anthonie Bruijn on the occasion of the visit of the President of the Republic of Italy, Mr. Sergio Mattarella

datum 10 november 2022

Your excellencies, Mr. President,

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

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

Mr. President,

The relationship between our countries goes back for centuries.

We thank Italy for its huge influence on the European culture, from the old Roman Empire to the Renaissance, which laid down the foundations of the modern Europe.

In the field of art, in the field of science, in the field of political culture and in many other aspects of our European societies, we see the marks of Italian history.

In more recent times, our two countries were both founding fathers of the European Union. The Treaty of Rome, signed 65 years ago in your beautiful capital, is still one of the most important international treaties ever signed.

It established the European Economic Community and marked a major step towards the united Europe with 27 member states we find ourselves in at this very moment.

As I understand you will participate in the celebrations of the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, 30 years ago this year.

With this treaty the foundations for our present European Union were laid out.

Just like the Treaty of Rome did in the early years of the European cooperation.

We are united by the European Union and we work closely together in many areas.

On the other hand, in recent years the European member states have faced important challenges, in which this close cooperation has been challenged.

The migration crisis, which has put incredible pressure on southern European member states like Italy.

I really feel that the people of Italy have done a great job in dealing with this difficult situation.

And of course covid-19, that has hit your country especially hard when it first reached the European continent.

Your visit to the Netherlands takes place in a period when our continent is faced with a military conflict within its borders.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine and the violence carried out by the army of the Russian Federation have shocked us deeply.

However, the war in Ukraine once more proves the importance of European and international cooperation.

Your Excellencies,

Common problems need common solutions. And common opportunities require common action. We need close friends and close cooperation to face the challenges of the future.

The Italian Republic and the Kingdom of The Netherlands are partners in the United Nations, partners in the European Union, partners in NATO and in many other international organizations.

Our economic ties are very strong, and so is the historical connection between our countries.

Therefore, I would like to end with a sentence from the national anthem of the Italian Republic:



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'Stringiamci a coorte', which literally means 'let us join in a cohort'.

Or, in other words: let us continue to stand shoulder to shoulder, let us continue to work closely together and let us continue to further build on our excellent partnership.

I am certain that your visit to the Netherlands will undoubtedly contribute to this end.

Allow me to give the floor to my colleague from the House of representatives, Ms Roelien Kamminga.

Grazie. Thank you.