



Toespraak

van de Voorzitter van de Eerste Kamer der Staten-Generaal, prof.dr. J.A. Bruijn ter gelegenheid van het bezoek van de Emir van Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani

Datum 24 juni 2024

Your Highness,

On behalf of the States General, I am very honored to welcome you in the Dutch Senate. It is a great privilege for us to receive you here today.

The relations between Qatar and the Netherlands stretch across many domains.

We share the tradition of the monarch as head of state. There is also a shared maritime tradition with the importance of your ports and our port of Rotterdam as gateway to Europe.

In addition, our countries are in an energy partnership discussing energy security and of course the supply by Qatar of liquefied natural gas.

As we honour these ties we are reminded of the memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the field of dispute resolution, social dialogue and wage protection that was signed last year between Qatar and the Netherlands.

The Memorandum exemplifies our shared commitment to the dignity and welfare of our people. This agreement is a testament to our collective efforts to promote and protect human rights and labour standards.

Your Highness,

Your visit to the Netherlands comes at a time of great global unrest, in the Middle East as well as in Europe.

Both our countries are in one way or another affected by the conflicts between Russia and Ukraine and between Israel and Hamas.

In the latter conflict, you and your government are playing an important role in mediating between both parties and trying to reach a cease fire.

You have also successfully intervened to have the kidnapped Ukrainian children returned from Russia to their own country.

Also your country made it possible for people to travel via Doha to the Netherlands from Afghanistan after the Taliban took control.

These examples show the great value of international diplomacy.

Like the philosopher and poet Rumi wrote: *"Patience with small details makes perfect a large work, like the universe."*

So is the strength of diplomacy: small steps and attention to detail will have great results.

It is important that leaders and politicians from different countries meet each other, have a dialogue and inform each other about the situation in their countries.

Like we do today.

As representatives of the people, we should exchange information, learn from each other and work together where possible.

In 2019 for instance, a delegation of the Dutch parliament took part in the meeting of the InterParliamentary Union in Doha.



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Finding common ground is of the utmost importance in international meetings like ours today.

Your Highness,

We are truly honored by your presence and look forward to discussing these issues with you.

Allow me to introduce Mrs Tineke Huizinga-Heringa, vicechair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Senate.

I would now like to give the floor to my colleague from the House of Representatives, Mr Martin Bosma.

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Thank you.