

IMPORTANT NOTICE:
EMBARGO UNTIL 20H15 on 19th October 2012

Speech of H.R.H. Grand-Duke Henri of Luxembourg

Gala dinner Grand-Ducal Palace, 19th October 2012

My dear Stéphanie,

My dear Guillaume,

On this, the evening of your wedding, we, your parents, would like to say how happy and proud we are that you are embarking on this journey together through life.

We have seen your love blossom for more than two years now. It has grown over time into this couple beaming with happiness, whom we have the pleasure of seeing before us today. You have travelled this path together. Therefore, you know that marriage is a union, a commitment which is renewed each day. It is a shared pledge; where each party must act in accordance with the other. A successful marriage means looking together in the same direction. Looking at you, there is absolutely no doubt: you are made for one another, ready to embrace the joys, but also the trials and tribulations of life in the service of each other, the service of your family and the service of your country, over which, one day, you will reign. In your union, the people of Luxembourg see a

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harbinger of continuity which will lead our cherished country towards a future that we fervently hope will be prosperous and peaceful.

My dear Stéphanie,

We welcome you on this day with overwhelming joy. We know that, through your sensitivity, your intelligence and your devotion, you will bring great happiness to our son. The fact that you have already endured the most difficult of ordeals, notably the sudden passing of your beloved mother, has shown us that you are capable of strength and courage in the face of adversity.

Alix, for those of us fortunate enough to have known her, will always remain an exceptional person. From heaven above, she will watch over you, so that you, too, will be a united and exemplary couple, as were Alix and Philippe. May their example guide you throughout your lives.

At the time of your engagement and your presentation to the national authorities, the Luxembourg people immediately adopted you as their future Princess. Your radiance, your beliefs and your tenderness make you the perfect person to assist and support Guillaume throughout his life. We love you and are happy and grateful that you have chosen our son.

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We would like to thank your dear parents for the unconditional support that they showed during the blossoming of your love. Alix, your dear mother, shall remain in our hearts, especially during these celebrations. Your father Philippe is giving the hand of his final daughter, his youngest child, in marriage. We can imagine how he must feel.

The union between our two families, with well-established traditions, based on Christian values, passed on to their children, is also a pledge of strength for our young couple.

My dear Guillaume,

For Stéphanie and for you, now begins the grand and wonderful adventure of marriage. We have watched you grow up to become a responsible individual, resolutely committed to the service of others and, in particular, to those who are suffering. Your great ability to interact with others allows you to perform your duties with intelligence and ease. The trade missions which you lead with such skill are indispensable to the promotion of our country worldwide, particularly in the challenging situation in which we currently find ourselves.

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Your wife shall be, as your mother is for me, steadfast in her support of the difficult but oh so rewarding tasks which await you. Yes, my dear Guillaume, we are proud of you, you are a man of duty and your guiding principle is the common good. We have every confidence in your judgement, but remember too that we shall always be there to support you and help you if you so desire.

Your Majesties,

Your Royal Highnesses,

Your Excellencies,

Dear family and friends,

We would like to thank you, our guests, some of whom have travelled a great distance to attend the marriage of Stéphanie and Guillaume. We are honoured by your presence. Tomorrow you shall bear witness to this new union which, we all hope, will be happy and prosperous. With this, I invite you to raise your glasses and drink to the health and happiness of our young couple.

Long live the happy couple, long live Luxembourg!