

## Discours de Noël 2024 de S.A.R. le Grand-Duc

Dear fellow citizens,

The year 2024 is drawing to a close, and Christmas is the perfect time to reflect on the past year. This time, I do so with great emotion, as it is the last time that I will deliver the Christmas speech as Head of State.

As you know, Prince Guillaume has been *Lieutenant-Représentant* since 8 October and is preparing intensively for his accession to the throne. And, in order to make this speech more exciting, I won't tell you until the end when it will take place.

When I look back today, after almost 25 years, I do so with deep gratitude and humility. It has been a period during which Luxembourg has made much progress, and I am pleased to have been able to be part of that journey with you, together with the Grand Duchess.

It has been a quarter of a century of challenges, opportunities and hopes for a better future: of technological and economic progress, of social change, but also of many conflicts. All were moments that have made us reflect and brought us closer together as a nation. And we have remained united to make Luxembourg even more inviting and sustainable. We have always taken targeted measures to ensure that none of us are left behind or excluded. The strength, and indeed the future, of our society lies in its ability to show solidarity.

Climate change is probably the greatest challenge of the future, but geopolitical tensions, wars and economic upheaval also require a need for reflection. The liberation of Auschwitz 80 years ago shows us what cruelty we are capable of if we neglect our fundamental human rights. We must never forget that.

Dear fellow citizens,

In Luxembourg, the Grand Duke stands above party politics and does not interfere in the political debate. This does not mean, however, that he cannot take a stand on the fundamental interests of the country and its citizens.

This is what I have strived to achieve over the past 25 years, paying particular attention from the outset to the diversity of our population and the need to live together, as well as to sustainability in all areas, in order to leave a resilient and prosperous country to our children.

Luxembourg is indeed a special country. It is a crossroads of cultures, a place for dialogue and exchange, where people from all over the world come to live alongside Luxembourgers. This solidarity is our strength. And I know that such solidarity does not come about by itself. We are a unique model in Europe, but one that requires daily efforts.

However, we should also be proud of what we have achieved. At least, that's the message I hear from many of my fellow citizens of foreign origin. And it is together that we have built the road to get to where we are today.

Even beyond our borders, our country has long advocated multilateralism and even dialogue between nations, in order to defend our values such as democracy, freedom and human rights.

Dear fellow citizens,

A country is not an abstract concept. Luxembourg is made up of all of you who live and work here. Next to each other and with each other. You are what makes Luxembourg so special.

That's why I'd like to say a big thank you from here, to all of you. Thank you to those who work for this country every day, whether they are Luxembourgers, non-Luxembourgers, residents or cross-border commuters, those who work for pay or as volunteers. Your contribution is essential to the prosperity of our society and a guarantee for the future of our country.

The year 2025 is fast approaching and offers new opportunities to advance our vision of Luxembourg: a country that draws on diversity and innovation, that invests in education and research, that assumes its responsibilities in Europe and in the world. A country where citizens come first. We are a country that never stands still in the face of adversity. We face these challenges with confidence and courage.

Dear fellow citizens,

I firmly believe in the next generation. It will take responsibility for a world that is hopefully more peaceful and sustainable.

For most of my generation, the time has now come to retire. It's a natural process that has its *raison d'être*. This also applies to me. On our last National Day, I announced the appointment of Prince Guillaume as *Lieutenant-Représentant*. Today, the Grand Duchess and I are pleased to share with you that Prince Guillaume and Princess Stéphanie will succeed us on October the 3rd, 2025.

I know that they will do their utmost to contribute to the well-being of our country.

Together with the Grand Duchess, Prince Guillaume, Princess Stéphanie and all our children, I wish you a very Merry Christmas and all the best for the New Year.

Schéi Chrëschtdeeg an all Guddes fir d'neit Joer !

Joyeux Noël et Bonne Année!

Schöne Weihnachten und ein frohes neues Jahr!

Bom natal e feliz ano novo!