



**GALA DINNER SPEECH
BY HRH THE GRAND DUKE**

Your Majesties,
Mr Federal President,
Mr President of the Republic,
Your Royal Highnesses,
Mr President of the Chamber of Deputies,
Mr Prime Minister,
Dear Guests,

This morning, when I took the oath of office before the Chamber of Deputies, I sought to express what inspires me most deeply. I recalled a remarkable figure in our history, Grand Duchess Charlotte, my great-grandmother, who embodied the spirit of resistance of the Luxembourgish people. Together with her son, Grand Duke Jean, my grandfather, she was able, in the darkest hours of our history, to give voice to the hope and dignity of a people attached to their freedom.

Their commitment, courage and faith in the future paved the way for the path we follow today: that of a nation which, without ever renouncing its sovereignty, chooses dialogue over isolation, cooperation over confrontation.

Today, with a profound sense of duty and a clear awareness of the weight of this tradition, I am honoured to uphold the values and principles that my great-grandmother, my grandfather and my parents instilled in me with such conviction. At the same time, it is now my task to carry the monarchy into the 21st century and to help it fully realise its potential in the service of our society.



Each reign has been marked by its own distinctive qualities and strengths, shaped by the challenges of its time. Today, the commitments my wife and I have made to building a cohesive, inclusive and supportive society are not only the guiding principles of our service to the country; they also reflect the spirit of the modern Grand Duchy and have played a significant role in its renown and prosperity.

However, these values should not be regarded as unique to Luxembourg. They could not have borne fruit, nor shaped our society so profoundly, had we not, as a people, opened ourselves to the world and embraced its diversity with confidence and generosity.

When I took the oath of office this morning, I wanted to pause and reflect on a project very close to my heart. It is a dream, an ambition that has, over time, taken root and established itself as a powerful symbol of our unity. A vision that has greatly contributed to the Grand Duchy's growth and that, despite the uncertainties of our times, continues to offer hope in a constantly changing world. I am, of course, speaking of Europe.

The values that inspire me are the very values that Europe embodies: solidarity, freedom, democracy and equality, together with respect for the rule of law and human dignity. Alongside our institutions, these values form the foundation of our democracies and lie at the heart of the European identity we share and are entrusted to preserve.

We are gathered here tonight among friends, neighbours, and fellow Europeans.

I am deeply honoured by the presence of the Heads of State of our neighbouring countries, including our cousins from the Benelux nations, who have come to celebrate this milestone in our institutional history alongside the people of Luxembourg. For centuries, our nations have shared far more than geographic borders. We have forged unbreakable bonds through exemplary political, economic and cultural cooperation, but also through genuine friendship among our peoples.

This closeness has fostered shared experiences, carefully forged alliances and a deep conviction that we share a common destiny. Together, we have overcome many challenges and, together, we have shaped a future grounded in mutual respect and the aspiration to build a united and resilient Europe.



Luxembourg, Belgium, the Netherlands, France and Germany, we represent the heart of Europe: five of the six countries that took the initiative to embark on this bold venture that has become the European Union. I would like to salute Presidents Metsola and Costa, who joined us this morning to represent Europe, as well as Italian President Mattarella, whom my father received in this very room last June. The President said at the time: *'It is in the relations between our respective societies and peoples that the fraternity between our countries is constantly renewed, united as we are by a community of values with solid foundations.'*

These words resonate with particular relevance today. For it is indeed in the relations between our peoples, in gestures of trust and acts of solidarity, that Europe draws its vitality. Our country, modest in size yet resolutely open-minded, has made cooperation a founding principle and multilateralism a vocation. It is this Europe that we celebrate tonight: a Europe of values, a Europe of peace, a Europe which, despite headwinds, continues to believe in the strength of bonds and in the dignity of every nation. Only a strong and united Europe is capable of defending our way of life. This is not a matter of opinion, but a fundamental geostrategic reality.

Tonight, in the presence of our partners and friends, we reaffirm our commitment to the principles that unite us. By staying true to our history, our values and our shared responsibilities, we can build a Europe capable of meeting all the challenges of tomorrow.

Kéint ech lech elo alleguerten invitéieren Äert Glas ze hiewen:

op Europa,

op eis Frëndschaft,

op mäi Papp, de Grand-Duc Henri, a meng Mamm, d'Grande-Duchesse Maria Teresa,

op Lëtzebuerg!