



Seul le discours prononcé fait foi

**Visite d'État au Luxembourg
du président de la république de Finlande, Alexander Stubb
et Suzanne Innes-Stubb
les 29 et 30 septembre 2026**

Discours prononcé par S.A.R. le Grand-Duc à l'occasion
du dîner de gala au palais grand-ducal
(29.09.2026)

Dear Mister President,

Dear Miss Innes-Stubb,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Grand Duchess and I are delighted to welcome you this evening to the Grand Ducal Palace.

This visit is particularly meaningful to us. Ten years ago, my parents, paid a State Visit to Finland, where they were received with exceptional warmth by President Sauli Niinistö and the Finnish people. It is therefore a great pleasure to return that hospitality a decade later and to welcome you and your delegation to Luxembourg. The occasion is all the more special as this is the first State Visit we have the honour of receiving since my accession to the throne nearly a year ago.

As we prepared for this visit, those involved in the preparations frequently remarked on the smooth and constructive cooperation that accompanied every stage of the process. They spoke highly of the professionalism of the Finnish delegation and of the pragmatic spirit that naturally guided our work together. For those who are regularly involved in organising State Visits, such qualities are highly valued.

They are, I hope, and I do believe, qualities that Finland and Luxembourg have in common. Our countries have quickly learned that cooperation achieves more than grand rhetoric. And we understand that progress is rarely the result of imposing one's will, but more often of finding common ground.

Perhaps this is one of the lessons countries like ours can offer in an increasingly fragmented world.

Mr President,

When people in Luxembourg think of Finland, they may picture its vast forests and pristine lakes, its technological achievements, the culture of Finnish saunas or perhaps even Santa Claus. Yet behind these iconic images lies a defining characteristic of Finland: a remarkable capacity to confront challenges with resilience and foresight, and to transform these challenges into enduring sources of strength.

This is a mindset with which Luxembourg feels a strong connection.

Our histories are different. Our geography is different. Yet both our countries have learned that openness is not a vulnerability but a source of strength. We have learned that diversity enriches our societies. And we have learned that our voice carries furthest when it is joined with those of trusted friends and partners.

Perhaps this is why our bilateral relationship has flourished for more than a century. Soon, we will celebrate one hundred and five years of diplomatic relations between Finland and Luxembourg. Throughout those years, our partnership has continued to grow, strengthened by political cooperation, economic ties and, above all, by the friendship between our peoples.

Today, more than one thousand Finnish citizens contribute to the rich diversity and vitality of Luxembourg society, and we are very proud, that you, Mr President, once counted yourself amongst them. Today, new air links between Helsinki and Luxembourg are bringing our countries even closer together, while our cooperation continues to deepen across a wide range of fields, from business and research to culture and innovation. Let's continue building on these solid foundations.

Mr President,

Throughout your distinguished career as scholar, diplomat, minister, Prime minister and now President - and author -, you have remained a committed advocate of international cooperation and European integration. Few leaders have combined academic reflection and practical politics as naturally as you have.

I made good use of the summer and had the pleasure of reading your book, *The Triangle of Power*. Your analysis of a world undergoing profound transformation, with shifting centres of influence and changing geopolitical realities, is particularly relevant in the world we find ourselves in today.

This brings me back to the role but also the challenges countries like Finland and Luxembourg face in this shifting geopolitical landscape. To paraphrase your UN speech Mister President: "as a pragmatic" ... Luxembourg, I want to say that countries like ours, have always understood that our prosperity and security depend on our ability to navigate a complex international environment. Being a smaller state encourages a certain realism.

We know that influence is not defined solely by the size of a country, the scale of its population or the strength of its armed forces. We know that rules matter. We know that trust matters. And we know that, in a world shaped by larger powers, sovereignty is best preserved by cooperation.

This conviction has guided both our countries throughout our modern history.

It explains our strong commitment to the European Union, to the United Nations and to the rules-based international order that has provided stability and prosperity across our continent for decades.

At a time when faith in multilateral institutions is being tested, Finland and Luxembourg remain firmly convinced that dialogue is more powerful than division, and that cooperation remains our best means of addressing the complex challenges we face.

We both had the opportunity to reaffirm our commitment in our addresses to the United Nations last week.

Mr President,

As you noted in New York, attempts to destabilise and intimidate European societies, whether through acts of sabotage, disinformation or drone-related incidents, are likely to remain a feature of our strategic environment. In responding to these challenges, Finland has become a source of inspiration for many. The resilience it has cultivated commands admiration far beyond its borders.

Your country understands better than most that peace and security can never be taken for granted. Your history has shaped a culture of preparedness that is recognised and respected across Europe.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has reminded all Europeans that freedom requires vigilance. Finland's accession to NATO marked a historic turning point, both for your country and for the Alliance. It reflected a characteristic Finnish combination of realism and responsibility in the face of a changing security environment.

Yet what is particularly remarkable is that resilience in Finland is not limited to defence. It is a national mindset. What I mean and find especially compelling is the way in which the resilience that reinforces Finland's security also finds expression in many other domains, helping to shape the country's remarkable achievements.

We see it in education, where Finland continues to earn international recognition for the excellence of its schools. We see it in Finland's leadership in digital transformation, in the responsible governance of data and in fostering innovation.

It is in this spirit that I warmly welcome Finland's and Norway's recent initiative, calling for the creation of an international framework for the governance of artificial intelligence. Luxembourg is proud to stand by your side in this endeavour.

Together, we share the conviction that technological progress is not an end in itself. Its true purpose is to enhance human well-being and expand opportunities for future generations, whilst always keeping democratic values and the human being at its center.

Mr President,

In your book *The Triangle of Power*, you argue in favour of what you call "value-based realism".

I believe this idea resonates particularly strongly with countries such as ours.

As you correctly point out, realism should never require us to abandon our values.

Finland and Luxembourg remain firmly committed to democracy, human dignity, the rule of law and international cooperation, not because these principles are convenient, but because they are indispensable.

In times of uncertainty, these values remain our compass.

By remaining faithful to them, while adapting with confidence and pragmatism to a changing world, our countries will continue to contribute to a stronger Europe and to a more peaceful, stable and prosperous international order.

Your Excellency,
Madam,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Kalevala, Finland's national epic, tells of the Sampo, a powerful object that promises prosperity and abundance. Yet the story reminds us that even our greatest creations can never give us complete control over an uncertain world.

What matters, ultimately, is not the ability to command the future, but the wisdom to shape it together.

It is in this spirit that I invite you to raise your glasses.

To the health of the President of the Republic of Finland and Mrs Innes-Stubb,

To the continued prosperity and happiness of the Finnish people,

And to the enduring friendship between Finland and Luxembourg.