

PRIME MINISTER GRO HARLEM BRUNDTLAND'S SPEECH AT THE  
LUNCHEON AT AKERSHUS CASTLE, WEDNESDAY 14 MAY 1986

Your Majesty King Olav,  
Your Majesty Queen Beatrix,  
Your Royal Highnesses,  
Excellencies,  
Dear guests,

It is indeed a great privilege and pleasure for the Norwegian Government to host this luncheon in honour of Her Majesty Queen Beatrix and His Royal Highness Prince Claus.

We find it particularly pleasant to be able to receive you here at Akershus Castle, which dates back to the year 1299. We do hope that this historic site will be considered a suitable setting for this very special occasion, as we have the honour for the first time since 1953 to receive an official state visit from the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Few countries in the world have so much in common as the Netherlands and Norway. We are likeminded peoples, and the implication of this is that we have built a network of personal and practical relationships within all walks of life, trade, politics, culture and sports.

Throughout the centuries Dutch and Norwegians alike have been seafaring people. The seas and the oceans have brought us to all continents and to the most distant parts of the globe as well as to each other.

Dutch tradesmen took over the role of the Hanse in Norway in the sixteenth century, and cities like Amsterdam, Utrecht and Deventer became trade monopolies in Norwegian cities along our coast.

Trade has always entailed the exchange of ideas and culture. Such relations also form the very basis of the trust and confidence that we have in each other. Here I might add that we highly value the confidence in Norwegian export goods which is implied by the fact that parts of the city of Amsterdam are built on oak logs imported from Norway in the eighteenth century. As we all know the city of Amsterdam stands as solid as a rock, and it would be tempting to suggest that equal confidence could be placed in the goods that Norway today has to offer.

Your Majesty's and Your Royal Highness' visit takes place at a time when relations between the Netherlands and Norway are extending into new fields.

As so often before, the North Sea, which unites us geographically, proves to be the main road to economic cooperation - and this time the offshore industry is the new meeting point. It is very gratifying that Your Majesty and Your Royal Highness have decided to let these prospects for new economic cooperation between our two countries play such an important role during Your state

visit. We in Norway hope that the seminar in Stavanger will bear fruit also in the various sectors of the high-technology manufacturing industries - where, after all, the future beyond the oil age, is to be found.

I also hope that what we will show Your Majesty and Your Royal Highness within medical science and city planning, will prove to be interesting fields for further cooperation between our specialists.

Your Majesties, Your Royal Highnesses, in my capacity as Chairman of the World Commission on Environment and Development, I have experienced the broad agreement between The Netherlands and Norway when it comes to questions which are truly global in character. We are indeed honoured that His Royal Highness Prince Claus, who is an expert in his own right on international economic development, has chosen to devote some of his time to development cooperation during this visit.

Your Majesty King Olav, Your Majesty Queen Beatrix, Your Royal Highnesses, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, In closing I would like to propose a toast to the health of Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands and of His Royal Highness Prince Claus, to the welfare and prosperity of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and its people, and to a further strengthening of the bonds and relations between our two nations.