

Judith's comments: December 6.17. Finland's Independence Day:

Colleagues of the Calgary Consular Corps present, Distinguished guests, dear friends, ladies and Gentlemen:

Tervatuulua. Welcome!

For all Finns, today is a very special day not only because it is Finland's Independence Day but more importantly, it is the Centenary of Finland's Independence - the most significant commemorative year for this generation of Finns because this Centenary emphasizes Finland's strengths such as equality and democracy. It also provide opportunities to better understand the past and set the course for Finland's future.

In spite of hard times, Finnish people for almost 100 years engaged in the building of their country and have taken their place in the global society. They have made a difference in innovation, peace keeping, best practices in the treatment of the environment and the development of many applications of renewable energy as well as leadership in policy development within the European Union.

What an accomplishment for this small but very exceptional country. I am so proud to represent Finland and on this occasion wish all Finns the best as they lead their country into a new century of change and challenge with courage and determination. This is indeed a time for celebration!

And now, I would like to bring greetings from the Prime Minister of Finland, Juha Sipilä, Finland's Ambassador to Canada, Vesa Lehtinen, The Premier of Alberta, Rachel Notley and Alberta's Minister of Culture and Tourism, the Honorable Ricardo Miranda:

Greetings for the Prime Minister of Finland, Juha Sipilä

27 November 2017

Finland's centenary of independence is being celebrated in an epic way throughout the world

The centenary of Finland's independence culminates on Finland's Independence Day, 6 December 2017. The story of the 100-year-old Finland is extraordinary and rests on the values cherished by the Finns: democracy, education, equality and freedom of speech. The climax of the centenary will be a joint effort, and the programme will be rich and memorable. The celebrations will take place throughout Finland as well as in more than 100 countries on all the continents.

Finland became an independent state on 6 December 1917. The newly born state was willed into being by Finns after a long struggle. For a hundred years the Finns have been engaged in the building of their country and making decisions together. The unbroken period of 100 years of democracy is exceptional, and Finland has often reached top positions in different international rankings.

"The story of the 100-year-old Finland is unique and deserves a special celebration. The centenary of independence is the most significant anniversary of our generation. This epic year has been built in a unique and open way, together with the whole of society, Finns and friends of Finland, in more than 100 countries," says Pekka Timonen, General Secretary of the Centenary of Finland's Independence, Prime Minister's Office.

Finland 100 has become a phenomenon: the centenary has been celebrated throughout the year. Four out of five Finns think it is important to participate in the centennial year and more than 600,000 people, 14% of all 15-84-year-old Finns, are involved in creating the centenary year programme. It has become the richest and most versatile programme of all time and provides a great overview of the nation today. As many as 5000 different projects have been included in the programme, with an especially strong presence of culture, nature, history, and doing good for both each other and the future of Finland.

The historical moment will be celebrated with dignity and joy

Finland's Independence Day, 6 December, will be preceded by both traditional and new festivities over several days. Most of the official celebrations will take place in the capital city, Helsinki, but there will be many other unique moments all over Finland. The Finnish flag will fly for two consecutive days, and the whole country will be illuminated with blue and white lights, the colours of Finland. Special monuments and locations, e.g. an entire fell, Saana in Lapland, will be lit up.

Many joyful festivities will bring people together. As the Finns are the biggest coffee drinkers in the world, the whole country will gather to enjoy birthday coffee to honour the 100-year-old Finland. Avid karaoke fans will be singing iconic Finnish songs at the same time in karaoke restaurants all over the country. The nation's favourite sport, ice hockey, will be celebrated at an outdoor stadium in the heart of Helsinki, specially built for the occasion.

Abroad, all the Finnish embassies will host an Independence Day reception and Finnish communities around the world will have their own celebrations. In many countries, special concerts with famous Finnish

artists such as Karita Mattila and Esa-Pekka Salonen will be organised.

"Celebrations will take place on all the continents. It's touching to see how many friends our country has all over the world. We are very pleased with all the special greetings, gifts and visits from heads of states that Finland has already received during the centenary year. We invite everyone to join the celebration with us."



Premier of Alberta

Office of the Premier, 307 Legislature Building, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6 Canada

Message from Honourable Rachel Notley Premier of Alberta

On behalf of the Government of Alberta, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the Centenary Celebration of Finnish Independence.

Alberta is proud to be home to a strong Finnish community, and to share in celebrating its unique contributions to our province's diverse cultural mosaic. The beauty of this multicultural tapestry makes our province a vibrant and interesting place to live. It also helps strengthen the connections we have to our respective heritages and to one another.

As you commemorate Finnish Independence, may you remember the sacrifices of your foremothers and forefathers as they fought for Finland's independent future. May this historic anniversary be a time to reflect on the achievements of the past and look towards continued success in the future.

My thanks to the Calgary Finlandia Cultural Association and The Honorary Consul of Finland, as well as all the event organizers and supporters for putting together this incredibly successful event.

I hope you enjoy the evening, and I wish you great success in the year ahead.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. Notley".

Rachel Notley

December 6, 2017

Ambassador of Finland
Ottawa

Ottawassa 6. joulukuuta 2017

Hyvät Calgaryn suomalaiset ja Suomen ystävät,

Minulla on ilo välittää sekä Suomen hallituksen että omasta puolestani teille parhaimmat tervehdykseni 100-vuotta täyttävän Suomen itsenäisyyspäivän johdosta.

Itsenäisyytensä aikana Suomi on kohdannut suuriakin haasteita. Voimme olla ylpeitä siitä, että olemme pitäneet yhtä ja onnistuneet rakentamaan Suomesta nykyaikaisen, kaikista huolta pitävän yhteiskunnan. Haluan erityisesti kiittää sodissa taistellutta sukupolvea, joka loi perustan nyky-Suomen vahvalle kansainväliselle asemalle, rauhanomaiselle kehitykselle ja hyvinvoinnille.

Sata vuotta sitten Suomi itsenäistyi köyhänä ja jakautuneena maana kansainvälisten kriisien keskeltä. Tänäpäin olemme yksi maailman vakaimmista valtioista ja kansainvälinen asemamme on vahva. Yhteiset arvot ja yhteistyö samanmielisten maiden, kuten Kanadan kanssa, luovat tukevan pohjan, jolta voimme katsoa luottavaisesti eteenpäin. Juhlittakoon 200-vuotiaasta Suomea samalla ilolla, jolla nyt juhlimme 100-vuotiaasta maamme!

Dear Finnish Canadians and friends of Finland in Calgary,

I wish to convey to you, on behalf of the Government of Finland, my warmest greetings on our country's 100th anniversary. Many events have been organized throughout the whole year and today the jubilee year culminates in celebrations across the world.

Tonight we have many reasons to be proud. Especially I want to thank the generation that fought in the war for the sacrifices that they made in order to maintain our country's independence. You laid the foundation for the present-day peaceful development and well-being.

Ambassador of Finland
Ottawa

In 1917 Finland was one of Europe's poorest countries, emerging from the crisis. Today, in 2017, we are one of the most stable societies in the world and top performers in areas like education, high technology, circular economy and social well-being. With strong values and close cooperation with like-minded countries, such as Canada, we can look into the future with confidence.

Toivotan Teille kaikille oikein hyvää itsenäisyyspäivää.

I wish all of you a very Happy Independence Day.

A handwritten signature in brown ink, appearing to read 'Vesa L', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Vesa Lehtonen
Suurlähettiläs



ALBERTA
CULTURE AND TOURISM

*Office of the Minister
MLA, Calgary-Cross*

**Message from Honourable Ricardo Miranda
Minister of Culture and Tourism**

As the Minister responsible for Culture and Tourism in Alberta, it is my pleasure to extend greetings in celebration of Finland's centenary.

Milestones such as Finland 100 and Canada 150 are opportunities to reflect on who we are as people, and the contributions we as a nation have made to the world and its citizens. Like the Finns, Canadians value an inclusive society and equal rights. We both understand the importance of transparency and freedom of expression. We share a love of nature, exploring the great outdoors and a passion of winter sports and know how to enjoy the wonders of winter.

This year as we celebrate our nation's achievements, I congratulate Finland for being a world leader in equality and democracy, and for rising above its challenges to ensure all its residents have the best quality of life possible.

Congratulations on the 100th Anniversary of Finland's Independence Day!



Ricardo Miranda
Minister