



United by family ties

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Slottet

Omstendigheter

Kongeparets middag for Hertugen og Hertuginnen av Cambridge

1 Your Royal Highnesses,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Queen and I are delighted to welcome you on your first official visit to
5 Norway. You are family. And that makes the visit very special - for the Queen
and me, and for all of us.

The history of the British and the Norwegian royal families is entwined with the
history of our countries. And quite a few times throughout our history, the
10 paths of our families and our nations have crossed.

As you no doubt know, my grandmother Queen Maud was the sister of your
great-great grandfather, King George V, so we are united by family ties. But we
are also united by the North Sea, by our love of the arts and sports - and by
15 other shared interests that I will say more about later.

The memory of Queen Maud has recently been revived here at the Palace. Being
a passionate rider, she introduced horsekeeping almost as soon she set foot in
Oslo in 1905. The King and Queen had a stable built on these grounds -
20 inspired by the Royal Mews at Buckingham Palace. My gift to The Queen on
her 80th birthday last July was a totally renovated stable - now transformed into
a gallery bearing the name Queen Sonja Art Stable. The current exhibition
contains artefacts from the stables from the time of Queen Maud.

25 Your Royal Highnesses,
In comparing Norway with the United Kingdom, I am tempted to quote a line
from the film Love Actually: 'We may be a small country, but we're a great one

too...'

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However, some of the aspects we appreciate most about our own country, are things the UK and Norway have in common - and that are important for all of us:

35 We are countries with beautiful nature and lovely hills for hikes.

We are old nations with deep cultural roots.

Our peoples have been shaped by our climate, the challenges and opportunities that have arisen through the course of our histories.

40 And most important: Our societies are based on democratic rule, freedom of speech and fundamental human rights. Today, that is something we must treasure and work to defend every single day. We must remember that these values cannot be taken for granted.

45 Norwegians have always been great fans of British culture. We love your TV shows, your comedies, your music - and above all: English football. But I understand that Norwegian music and literature are also popular in the UK. Norwegian Wood by Lars Mytting was a huge hit in 2016. Who would have thought that a book about chopping, stacking and drying wood could become a
50 bestseller in the UK?

I am very pleased to see that our cultural and economic ties are as close as ever. The UK is one of our main trading partners and by far our largest export destination.

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Oil, gas and seafood have long been major sectors in our economies. Today we are also finding new ways of harvesting resources from the sea. Offshore wind production is providing not just renewable energy, but also opportunities for even closer cooperation between our countries. One example is the Dudgeon

60 Wind Farm off Norfolk, which was opened in November last year, and where the main owner is the Norwegian energy company Statoil. At the same time, about 70 % of the UK's gas imports are from Norway. So there are good reasons to think about us when you are putting on the kettle for a cup of tea!

65 The UK also continues to be by far the most important destination for Norwegians who study abroad. I think the impressions these young people

bring home play an important part in further deepening our bilateral relationship.

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I hope we will be able to maintain our close and extensive cooperation when the United Kingdom withdraws from the European Union.

Dear William, dear Kate,

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I admire the way you carry out your duties, and the way that you support Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. The Queen and I know from our own experience how valuable it is to work together with the younger generation and how important it is to support one another in this rather unusual profession of ours...

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You have become engaged in important areas that matter to many people. For example, your Heads Together initiative is encouraging greater openness about mental health. Tomorrow, I understand that you will be meeting actors from the TV series SKAM. They too have raised awareness about mental health problems among young people - and may have helped to reduce the stigma that sadly often surrounds these issues.

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I hope that you will enjoy the rest of your stay in Norway and that you will find your programme interesting and relevant for your work. And I hope that you will bring fond memories back home with you to share with your family - with our relatives.

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Now I invite you all to join me in a toast to Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, to the people of the United Kingdom, and to the friendship between our countries.

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