

## CDA Konstantino's Remarks at the Independence Day Reception 2025

- Excellencies, Fellow Members of the Diplomatic Corps...
- And I must recognize:
  - President Claude Wiseler
  - President Marc Thewes
  - Finance Minister Gilles Roth
  - And finally: Foreign Minister and Vice Prime Minister Xavier Bettel, Gauthier Destanay...
- Thank you all for you taking time to be here and for your partnership with the United States.
- And I must give special thanks to Xavier and Gauthier, who have not just served surprised guests crémant at the Konstantino Eurovision parties but also been immensely generous friends from the moment we arrived here.
- Chères amis, Liebe Freunde, Léif Frënn, Dear friends...
- ...welcome and thank you for joining us to celebrate 249 years of American independence. From government, to business, to civil society – all of you here today and what you represent are the reasons why we accomplish so much for the U.S. and Luxembourg together every day.
- First, I want to extend a very special thank you to our sponsors. Whether they've helped us finance this great reception or directly provided the treats you're enjoying, this event wouldn't have been possible (or delicious) without their support. Please take some time to recognize them on the display at the entrance to the residence: they are many of the great American businesses or Luxembourg companies with U.S. ties that make up the *uniquely* strong and diverse economic sector in Luxembourg. Please join me in giving them a big round of applause... thank you!
- I also must thank my amazing U.S. Embassy staff, my husband, Shalom, and our coordinator this year, David Houston, for all their hard work. This event

takes months of planning and a huge investment of labor. Thank you, dear colleagues... you are an incredible team...

- So...When we chose this year's theme... *A Hollywood Affair*... it wasn't just because cinema is one of my favorite artforms and because Los Angeles happens to be my hometown – and that of our Ambassador-nominee, by the way -- but also because Hollywood is something *quintessentially* American. The earliest motion picture technology may not have been invented in the U.S., but the popular artform it gave rise to – the industry of today the whole world knows – is very much an American institution. Hollywood cinema has been one of the primary means that the world has experienced America and its culture. American movies inspire, connect, and sometimes even change how we see the world or other people. When I look back on my own life, I wonder if I would've ever fully absorbed the tragedy of the holocaust had I not seen *Schindler's List*; if I would've ever decided to become a career diplomat if I hadn't seen *Casablanca*; or if I would've ever had the courage to come out had I not seen *The Bird Cage*. I imagine every one of you here today has had some personal connection to a Hollywood film – a story that inspired you and gave you a window into what otherwise would have been an entirely unknown part of the human experience.
- So today, as we celebrate the birth of the United States, it feels right to also celebrate the power of storytelling because it's *through stories* that we imagine greater things. That desire to reach ever higher and push the limits has always defined the American spirit... and it's truly what animates our democratic intensity, our business culture, and our commitment to innovation. That spirit is alive and well today: grounded in a foreign policy focused on peace through strength and principled partnerships.
- I use the term “principled partnerships” intentionally, because our story here in Luxembourg-- our relationship with Luxembourg-- is exactly that: built on aligned interests and grounded in real results:
  - You see this clearly in our economic cooperation. U.S. companies are thriving here, and many more are eager to grow. Together, we're

boosting investment on both sides of the Atlantic-- anchored in a trade relationship that is fair, reciprocal, and delivering real benefits.

- You also see it in our commitment to security. Luxembourg and the U.S. both understand that today's global challenges demand even greater ambition by *every* NATO Ally. Containing growing conflict and ushering in lasting peace can't rest on the shoulders of one nation alone. For that reason, the 5% defense spending pledge Luxembourg and our other NATO Allies agreed to last week in The Hague is a welcome and big step forward.
- But beyond policies and partnerships, the people of Luxembourg and America feel the depths of our bonds in real human connections. Luxembourgers who have family ties to the U.S., local communities who care for American war memorials, and in shared traditions like commemorations and cultural events. These numerous opportunities bring our nations together year after year.
- But strong partnerships aren't just built on the things we agree on, they're also tested and strengthened by how we handle the things we don't. And lately... well, let's just say we've had no shortage of spirited discussions. Whether it's defense, fair trade, or digital regulation, the United States values honest, open conversations with our European partners. That kind of frank dialogue is a cornerstone of the transatlantic relationship. It's also grounded in something we care deeply about: free speech. The freedom to express ideas, challenge each other, and work through disagreements-- that's what keeps cooperation real, evolving, and enduring.
- Speaking of enduring impact, allow me to also share a more personal note. For my husband, Shalom, and me, this is our final Independence Day celebration here in Luxembourg. These bittersweet goodbyes are part of every career diplomat's life, but moving on from Luxembourg will be especially hard for us. The warmth of the people, the depth of our friendships, and the quiet strength of this country have left a lasting impression on us.... And I really don't know how we're going to survive without the ever-present *coupe de crémant* at every social function.

- But still -- if America's Hollywood story is an epic, then Luxembourg's, for me, is a masterclass in subtle brilliance. It's the kind of story that stays with you long after the credits roll, showing how a small cast can deliver a powerful performance.
- Chaque année, lors de cette célébration, j'ai dit quelques mots en français... alors je me suis dit qu'il était temps que j'essaie le luxembourgeois...

*Lëtzebuerg wäert ëmmer eng speziell Plaz a mengem Häerz behalen.  
Villmools Merci fir Är Häerzlechkeet, Är Partnerschaft, Är immense  
Generositéit, an datt de Shalom an ech en Deel vun Ärer Geschicht dürfte  
sinn.*

- Un grand merci, Viellen Dank! Villmols merci! And: HappyIndependence Day! Thank you very much for joining us.
- Please enjoy the party!