

Welkomstwoord van de Voorzitter van de Eerste Kamer, mevrouw Ankie Broekers-Knol, ter gelegenheid van de ontvangst van de President van de Republiek Kaapverdië, de heer Jorge Carlos Fonseca, op dinsdag 11 december 2018.

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the States General of the Kingdom of The Netherlands, I am honoured to welcome you here in the Senate of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Your Excellency,

It is a great privilege to receive you here today. It needs no further explanation that your visit to Rotterdam this afternoon is not a coincidence: I know that this city, and especially the district of Delfshaven, is sometimes referred to as 'the eleventh island of Cabo Verde', due to the many inhabitants of Cabo Verdean origin.

The large Cabo Verdean community - a very active and flourishing community - that is present in our country marks one of the reasons why our countries maintain a special bilateral relationship. Already in the 1950s, Cabo Verdean sailors came to the city of Rotterdam to work for Dutch shipping companies. And after the independence of Cabo Verde in 1975, the Netherlands were the first country to establish a development relationship with your country; a relationship that could be ended in the year 2011 due to the excellent economic development of Cabo Verde.

This history resulted in the strong and special relationship that exists between our countries nowadays. Cabo Verde has become a major tourist destination for Dutch tourists. Economically, our countries increasingly find ways to cooperate. And also with regard to security, culture and the fight against organised crime, the relationship between Cabo Verde and the Netherlands intensified over the last years.

I am convinced that your state visit to our country marks another step in the broadening and deepening of the good relationship between the Republic of Cabo Verde and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Your Excellency,

Our two countries do have more in common: we share the value of democracy. The value of human rights. And the value of the international legal order.

These values might seem for granted, but they are increasingly under pressure in the present day. That is why it is so important that like-minded countries work together as partners to promote and defend these values.

Your country is one of those partners. On September 26 of this year, you held your speech on the occasion of the general debate of the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York. In your speech, you referred to the importance

of human rights and international law. You referred to the 70-year anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights on December 10th of this year.

I would like to take this opportunity, just one day after the official 70-year anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, to endorse your important words. Progress is only possible through multilateralism, through international cooperation and through a rules-based global order.

In this context, I would also like to express my appreciation for your continuous and vocal support for the International Criminal Court. Especially after all the criticism of the last years, often directed from countries on the African continent, it is important that other countries stand up for the important task of the International Criminal Court. I regard your visit to the International Criminal Court today as another sign of your support.

Your Excellency,

I hope and believe that our countries maintain and extend their excellent partnership. I am certain that your visit to the Netherlands will undoubtedly contribute to this end.

It has been a great honour to welcome you here today. Allow me to give you the floor.

Thank you.