

Closing remarks by Mrs Van Miltenburg, Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Netherlands, at the occasion of the visit of the President of Israel, H.E. Mr Shimon Peres

1st of October 2013 in the Plenary Hall of the Senate

Your Excellency,

Thank you for visiting our Parliament. Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us today.

You have been in politics for much longer than most of us here, I dare say *any* of us here. You were present at the creation of your country and you have been an eyewitness to and key participant in its history. You have dedicated most of *your* life to the *political* life of the state of Israel. And we salute you for that.

Mr. President,

In your career you have at times been called a “hawk”, at other times a “dove”. With so much political experience, I realize that there is a lot that we can learn from you.

The bonds between Israel and the Netherlands have always been strong and will remain so, even though we may not see eye to eye on some issues. As friends we can afford to disagree sometimes.

Earlier my colleague, Mrs Broekers-Knol, spoke of the children that are painted in the very centre of the ceiling of this Plenary Hall. They remind us, as she said, of our responsibilities as parliamentarians. They also

remind us of the future, a future that we, as politicians, always strive to make a little bit better than the past and the present. That realization is at the heart of the friendship between Israel and the Netherlands.

Your presence here today symbolizes that historic bond between our countries. And your words make us realize that it is up to us and our children to carry that friendship into the future.

Your Excellency, thank you again for honouring us with your visit. We wish you all the best with your important duties.