



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND

Dear Expatriate Finns, Dear Friends,

2020 is coming to an end. This year has been exceptional. The coronavirus epidemic has put us all in a new situation. Many of you expatriate Finns have had to spend a long time away from your loved ones here in Finland. Concern about your own health and that of close friends and relatives has grown.

Despite the fact that physical distances may seem long, I believe that emotional ties to Finland remain strong and may even have been strengthened. While times are demanding and we have experienced loss, there is hope. We will come through this, everywhere.

It is of great significance that you celebrate Finland's Independence Day all around the world. This year, due to coronavirus, our independent homeland will be remembered in a different way than in previous years. This will not diminish the importance of the day, however. On the contrary.

You are representatives of Finnishness in the world. Each of you carry the blue-and-white flag with dignity. Finland needs friends throughout the world. I express my heartfelt thanks to you for that.

I would like to wish you all, expatriate Finns and people of Finnish heritage around the world, a very happy Independence Day!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Sauli Niinistö'.

Sauli Niinistö
President of the Republic of Finland