

**Remarks for the Four Freedoms
by Anna Eleanor Roosevelt
May 24, 2014**

Esteemed Laureates, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Roosevelt Institute, and the Roosevelt family, it gives me great pleasure to offer our warmest greetings to Their Majesties King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima, Her Royal Highness Princess Beatrix, Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet and Professor Pieter van Vollenhoven. We also extend our greetings to His Royal Highness, Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan, and all the laureates. You honor us with your presence here today. We also wish to extend our deep appreciation to His Excellency, Prime Minister, Mark Rutte, as well as to His Excellency, Han Polman, the King's Commissioner of the Province of Zeeland, for all of their wonderful hospitality and support for the Four Freedoms Awards.

Our sincere thanks also to the people of Zeeland for their ever-gracious and generous welcome. It has been thirty-two years since we established the special link between the Netherlands and the Roosevelt Institute and the one person, who, more than any other is responsible for this special bond, is also with us today, Ambassador William J. vanden Heuvel. Felicia Wong, the President and CEO of the Roosevelt Institute is here to lead our delegation of our distinguished trustees and supporters. We all agree that it is a delight to return to Middelburg, not only because it gives us a chance to see so many old friends and acquaintances, but also because we continue to admire all of the activities of the Roosevelt Study Center, now in its twenty-eighth year, and the University College Roosevelt, which is about to celebrate its tenth anniversary. Taken together these two institutions educate thousands of students and scholars, while at the same time sharing something of the history, values and vision of the Roosevelts, with them and with future generations.

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It is nearly three quarters of a century since my grandfather articulated the Four Freedoms; and almost as long since my grandmother helped draft the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We should remember that both of these historic documents were born out of an era dominated by fear—fear inspired by intolerance; fear that led to such a crescendo of violence that the inevitable result was to plunge the world into the most destructive war in human history. It is tragic that the same base impulses which drove this fear are yet present with us today: the fear of the other; the fear of the unknown; the same deep prejudices that all too often result in senseless bloodshed, death and destruction.

Indeed, looking around at the current state of the world, I am reminded of something Eleanor Roosevelt said in the turbulent years just before her death:

Once more we are in a period of uncertainty, of danger, in which not only our own safety but that of all mankind is threatened. Once more we need the qualities that inspired the development of the democratic way of life. We need imagination and integrity, courage and a high heart. We need to fan the spark of conviction, which may again inspire the world as we did with our new idea of the dignity and worth of free men. But first we must learn to cast out fear. People who 'view with alarm' never build anything.

We are here today to celebrate a group of individuals and organizations who, in the words of my grandmother, have found the strength to "cast out fear." They have chosen to follow a different path: the path of tolerance and compassion; the path of hope; the path of love, the path of imagination and integrity. In doing so, they have helped build bridges between peoples of different occupations, creeds and cultures. And, what is more, their courage and determination to build a better world has not only helped "fan the spark of conviction" among those in their own country, it has also helped inspire people the world over to embrace the "dignity and worth" of the basic human rights espoused in the Four Freedoms. It is a great honor to join in recognizing them today.