



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND

Dear expatriate Finns,

We celebrate the Finnish Independence Day in the midst of a rapidly changing world. Unfortunately, in this time and age that change has meant instability and conflicts around the world.

The secret of our small nation's success has been based on trust. Differences have been settled through discussion, and matters have been resolved together. We respect each other's different backgrounds and foster unity through everyday actions.

Many of you who have moved out to the world may have reflected on your identity at different stages of life. Being Finnish does not exclude being international. In the same way as we are Finnish, we are also citizens of the world. When different identities live side by side, for many Finns the factors uniting people are the Finnish language and Finnish customs.

I thank you for the work you have done. You are flying the flag of Finnish identity in the world at a time when the need for cooperation and understanding each other is getting increasingly bigger. We can be proud that Finland is one of the most stable countries in the world. So, let us all do the best we can to ensure that stability and cooperation will prevail over discord in the future.

I wish you all expatriate Finns and those with a Finnish background a peaceful Independence Day.

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

Sauli Niinistö  
President of the Republic of Finland