

Message from the Ambassador to Paraguay on the Queen's Birthday Party

[Video message of Ambassador Navai for the Queen's birthday party](#)

Hello everyone, I am Ramin Navai, British Ambassador to Paraguay. Welcome to the first virtual celebration of the birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in Asunción.

For now, the pandemic has drastically changed the way we come together, and the way we celebrate the traditions of our nations around the world. But neither the pandemic, nor any other crisis, will ever change what we celebrate and why. Today we have the opportunity to recognise not only the longest reign in British history, but also the special relationship that exists between the United Kingdom and Paraguay, and its bright future.

In honor of the occasion, I would like to explain a little more, and I will start with the most striking thing people wonder: why does the Queen have two birthdays? When I was little, I was jealous of Her Majesty for this reason, believing that she got two sets of presents. But that is not the case. The answer to the question is very British: it is all due to the famous London weather.

The tradition dates back to 1748 during the reign of King George II. His birthday was in late autumn, a very rainy season in the UK to celebrate on the streets as he wanted it, who would not? So they combined it with the already existing "Trooping the Color" military parade in the summer, when with any luck, the weather would be nicer.

So, while the Queen's birthday is on 21 April, the official day is the second Saturday of June. This event takes place every year on the streets of London, so that everyone can enjoy a colorful and important British celebration. We celebrate this occasion all over the world, in our Embassies and High Commissions.

This year is also extra special as it is the last Queen's Birthday Party before the Jubilee of Platinum. In 2022 she will celebrate her 70th anniversary as regent of the United Kingdom, the first British monarch to reach this milestone. Our Embassy will also be part of it. For more details, I invite you to keep an eye on our social networks in the coming weeks.

Now, a piece of advice I got before I became an Ambassador was not to make such long speeches. Unfortunately (sorry Robert), I am not going to achieve that today, as I have to summarize what would normally be spread out at a reception of several hours, during an evening of culture, of fraternity between our countries. But I will try to finish soon, and I invite you to have a glass ready for the toast at the end of my speech.

Whilst we cannot enjoy this occasion together and in person, one significant

advantage of doing it virtually is that many more people across Paraguay can join us on this special day. This would not have been possible otherwise, so I would like to make a special welcome to those of you listening in, especially from outside Asunción.

Now I would like to talk about something close to my heart – your beautiful country, Paraguay. I have only been here seven months and I already have very strong feelings for your remarkable history, your unique culture, the Guarani language, your cuisine and my favorite place to be: the “quincho”. The incredible nature and impressive trees. I have even fallen in love with the albirroja national team, although – as with England – I imagine that this emotional commitment causes me more pain than happiness.

But more important than my feelings are my convictions about what our two countries can achieve by working together. There are opportunities for our economies to grow, to build greater ties between our talented young people through education, and a shared ambition to protect the environment. I am committed not only to strengthening the ties that unite us, founded on a history of friendship and shared values, but also to building new bridges and deepening the relationship based on inclusion, equality and an investment in a sustainable future.

Back to the celebrations, I am pleased to announce that in addition to the materials we have prepared, we also have content produced by the British Royal Household as well as other surprises. I invite you to see them and continue sharing with us from the safety of your homes. You will find them on our social networks and on our website, which appear on the screen. Follow us to find out more. [On screen appear the words “gov.uk/world/Paraguay/news” and below “@UKinParaguay”]

And now, three final thanks. First, I would like to thank our partners who have supported us: Diageo, Jaguar and Land Rover, Wines and Spirits, Monalisa and AJ Vierci. To the Paraguayan government for its continued support in this important relationship between our nations. And finally, and most importantly, I want to thank you, the Paraguayan people who have made me and my family feel incredibly welcome here, even during such a difficult time like this. I know that many of you are facing very difficult situations and I want to take a moment for all who have recently lost loved ones, including in our thoughts His Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh. They will always be with us, as will the friendship from the UK.

I reiterate my commitment, and that of the Embassy and the United Kingdom, to continue to strengthen our commercial, cultural, educational and people-to-people relations with Paraguay. This enormous challenge that we face, we face it together. We will overcome it, hopefully in the best way and in the shortest time possible, and we will meet again soon.

Until then, I hope you will join me in raising your glass to toast Queen Elizabeth II. Friends, let’s wish together happy birthday to Her Majesty!