



**COLONEL-IN-CHIEF
ANNUAL CHRISTMAS MESSAGE
2023**

My Dear Patricias,

This is the grimmest Christmas since I became your Colonel-in-Chief in 2007. The world is at war on so many different fronts. The conflict in the Ukraine is nearly two years old. The ghastly events in Israel have been going on since October 7th. And meanwhile in the African continent, unrest and disorder go from Niger to Mali, from Sudan to Ethiopia. There is no good news anywhere.

And to make matters worse, the news of the environment is frightening. We know that our Regiment has been called upon to fight fires in the vulnerable areas of Canada. And we know that this is only the beginning. Environmental degradation is increasing exponentially. I guess the one thing we can be happy about is that we can actually DO something here at home by fighting the fires.

We must not let ourselves feel hopeless and useless in the face of overwhelming disorder in the world. We are a country which is made-up of Canadians who have their origins from all over the world. Therefore, we reverberate with all the things that are happening in the world. There is nobody in Canada who does not feel a tremor when a conflict starts somewhere in the world. We are the world in Canada.

So what can I offer as a wish for our Christmas and for the new year of 2024? First of all, we must never lose hope. We must never lose confidence. We must never lose the ability to believe that we can effect change and make a difference. I know this is difficult to accept at a time when housing is in crisis and the cost of living has gone through the roof. But we are all individual human beings with great capacities for hope and energy.

We must never stop hoping that we can make a difference in the world. As members of the Armed Forces, we will be called upon to make a difference in conflicted areas in the world. We're all certain of this. And we can make that difference and we can bring to those conflicts our Canadian values and the perspective of diversity and acceptance which we have all grown up with as Canadians. Our values are going to be more and more important as we face the world in which values are scorned and where morality and ethical standards are thrown out the window in the name of winning.

We are very fortunate that we live in a country which values democracy and the rights of individuals. We have built a strong country and we must continue to believe that our values will help us to sustain our own country. And we must always act with assurance that if we are called upon to help others, we can use our solid ideas of citizenship and belonging to help those who have not had the experience of these fundamental and sacred values.

If we are called into conflict this year, I hope we will all remember that we bring with us the best values of Canadian life - a belief in the dignity of the individual and a respect for every human being's right to life.



These are things that are hard to hang onto as we see the awful things that are happening. And there are things happening in countries that we don't pay attention to, in Africa and South East Asia. We must not turn away.

The true human being never averts their eyes. We must look all around us and try to comprehend human suffering. We must not turn our eyes away from evil things that are happening to others. We must always try to say, from a happy position we have of strength in our own society, that we will help others.

When we think of the world that our children and grandchildren are going to inherit, we must abide by these values. We want this Christmas to convey to those we love and those that we don't know who need our love, that the world can be made a better place by individual effort and by each of us caring for the most fundamental and basic values in human life.

My very warmest good wishes to you for Christmas and for the new year of 2024.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrienne Clarkson', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Adrienne Clarkson
Colonel-in-Chief
Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
