Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you all very warmly to the City of Geneva and I am delighted to see so many of you here this evening at the Victoria Hall, an important arts venue and a major centre for music. The Victoria Hall, thanks to its remarkable acoustics – which are much appreciated by music lovers – hosts numerous events, including the subscription concerts of the OSR, a renowned and talented symphony orchestra. Some of its musicians are treating us to musical interludes this evening. My warmest thanks to them.

I have held the post of President of the Municipal Council since 2 June 2026, having been elected by a majority of its members, who have placed their trust in me, and will remain in office until the end of May 2027. For those arriving from abroad or from other cantons (as names can vary from one canton to another), the Municipal Council is the city's parliament. It has no legislative power, as the municipalities of Geneva do not enact laws, but they do have the authority, among other things, to submit deliberations that are binding on the members of the executive (Administrative Councillors). This is why the term 'deliberative' is used when referring to the Municipal Council. The latter consists of 80 members, elected by the people to serve a five-year term.

It is within this circle that many of the levers that shape the life of the local community are found. The most important role assigned to the deliberative body is the vote on the annual budget during a special session in mid-December. Requests made by the Administrative Council required for the implementation of various public policies, as well as various types of funding (particularly for construction), are examined and debated throughout the year. Elected representatives also have the option of tabling proposals for motions, deliberations and resolutions aimed at asking the Administrative Council to carry out a particular action. These are genuine opportunities for the local community to get involved. And elected representatives do so in abundance. You will see this for yourself if you look at the meeting agendas, which are available on the Council's website. Please do not hesitate to contact your elected representatives to share your comments, concerns or suggestions, or to express your satisfaction. This form of public participation is important for parliamentarians' decision-making and for maintaining the quality of life in the city.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hadn't intended to share details of my private life with you this evening, but I'd still like to confide in you that, like you, I was once a newcomer to this city, and I've never regretted it.

Having moved here by choice in 1992 with my husband and our first child, who was still small at the time, I felt a little lonely at first, but the 'anonymity of big cities' soon faded away. The community network and all the public events organised – particularly those led by the City – are opportunities to be seized to enjoy the wealth of cultural activities on offer, take up a sport or a hobby, get involved in local events, support charitable causes or simply take part in neighbourhood life. They are also fantastic opportunities to socialise, which, as the months go by, keep the spirit of the traditional and much-loved 'Neighbours' Day' alive.

Before I finish, allow me to share one more observation that really warmed my heart. When I learnt that my speech would be translated into English so that everyone could understand it, I realised that there would certainly be plenty of diversity here this evening. I'm really delighted about that. It is also one of Geneva's greatest strengths, and there is no doubt that you will now be excellent ambassadors for our beautiful city.

I wish you all the best in your new home. And long live Geneva!