

Mr Harry Nilsson

Good evening honoured guests, Members of the Board, colleagues, parents and students past and present.

It is my great privilege to invite you to dedicate the next few minutes of this celebratory evening to the memory of a very special friend of the BES – Mr Harry Nilsson. It is fair to say that without Harry's numerous donations in times of difficulty, particularly in the early stages, the BES would have faced many problems.

We all know that Harry loved Libya and these two schools. So, it seems so right to plant a Libyan palm tree in Harry's memory, as an everlasting symbol of our gratitude. The palm branch is a symbol of victory, triumph, peace and continuity. A palm branch was awarded to victorious athletes in Ancient Greece. The palm tree is also a symbol of goodness and wisdom – it has strong roots – it will sway back and forth in strong winds but it will not break! It also symbolises our ability to rise above conflict and disillusionment and emerge victorious – surely a fitting tribute, not only to a great friend of the BES but also to Harry's belief in the BES. The school has had its difficult moments but it has never let anything dampen its enthusiasm and determination to carry on against all the odds. It will continue to fight on and, when Harry's palm tree will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> birthday, the BES will be proudly celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> graduation.