

**NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE ADVISOR COMMANDER TONY MASTERS REMEMBRANCE DAY  
SPEECH**

**NIEDERZWEHREN – 17 NOVEMBER 2014**

<b><i>E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e rau rangatira mā</i></b>	<i>(To all authorities, speakers and chiefly people here;)</i>
<b><i>E ngā iwi i huihui nei</i></b>	<i>(and all the people gathered here today;)</i>
<b><i>O nga hau e wha</i></b>	<i>(from the four winds;)</i>
<b><i>Nau mai, haere mai</i></b>	<i>(I welcome you;)</i>
<b><i>Tēnā koutou - tēnā koutou - tēnā koutou katoa</i></b>	<i>(Greetings to you all)</i>

For nearly a century, commemorations have been undertaken in November across various nations and countries, so to reflect the days of peace or the end of hostilities for WW1 in what was at the time the bloodiest and most horrific conflict in human history.

For all the respective countries that participated in WW1, over one hundred years ago, the awful reality of the war had not yet touched us or been realised. But the reality of the war and its terrible effects have subsequently been acutely visible and today the commemoration ceremonies that take place and the memorials undertaken in cemeteries like here in Niederzwehren are undertaken to remember those that went before us.

It is important to note that while service personnel from all nations who lost their lives, may have been divided by language, culture or cause, they were united in their shared experiences of hardship, camaraderie, bravery and sacrifice. They were united too by families in faraway homes who shared their sacrifice by keeping farms and families

It is therefore an honour to address you here in a place of such profound importance to so many people. Since arriving here as the Defence Attaché in 2019, I've had the privilege to visit many parts of the country and nearly every time I've travelled I've been approached by fellow New Zealanders also paying their respects, or visiting ancestors who may never have had a visitor from home before. The War had a profound effect upon New Zealand, but we were but one small part of it. We remember today all those who lost their lives and are buried here.

In a conflict of such staggering losses, it can be difficult to get beyond the percentages and numbers – to fully comprehend that every casualty, every death, was an individual person – a husband, a brother, a son. In many cases, we will never know who those people were, what they went through or what they meant to people back home. We are left only with the duty to try and remember them as best we can.

On this day we remember the hardships and the bravery of all those affected by war. In particular those displaced by the fighting; those who suffered during the times of shortage; and those who were injured or killed, directly as a result of the War or by the disease and deprivation that inevitably followed it. We reflect on the fortitude and perseverance of those who returned to rebuild farms, homes and livelihoods - and the beauty of what they have achieved, especially here in this beautiful region.

I would like to acknowledge in particular the work of the Reseristenkameradschaft Kassel from the German Army Reserve and the volunteers and personnel involved in the WW1 commemorations; like those here today who do so much for us every year to help us

remember what happened here, the experiences of those who served and those who never returned.

On this, Remembrance day it behoves us all to reflect on those shared experiences one hundred years ago, on the bonds that we forged in the century since, and above all our shared commitment to preserve the memory of what happened here and ensure it is never forgotten.

**Kia maumahara tonu tātou - ki a rātou**

**We will remember them**