

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

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CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS DELIVERS REMARKS AND RAISES
ALBANIAN FLAG**

Commissioner Manuel Castro, Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs: Well, while we wait for the mayor, I just want to say thank you to the performers. Please give a big round of applause to performers. It's so important to have our culture represented in these locations and at every event we have. While we wait for the mayor, I want to ask you to make sure he hears you when I say long live Albania! All right, let's try that again. Long live Albania. Long live New York City and long live the United States of America.

Long live Albania. Commissioner Mermelstein likes it when I say Viva Albania. All right, let's give the mayor a little bit and I'll introduce him once he comes up.

Now, I am incredibly proud to introduce the mayor of the City of New York, Mayor Eric Adams.

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you. Thank you, thank you. You can't be here for a flag raising without putting up our flag. My son is in Albania right now performing, showing his talents, so he's letting me know that I'm not the only one with talent. I'm not the only one with talent. What a community, and this community means so much to me. Your support, focus, discipline, small business owners. You believe in public safety. You believe in family. You believe in education, and you believe in the patriotism of embracing your adopted country as you love your motherland of Albania. Only country on the globe that we tell you to hold on to your culture as you come here and infuse it with the American experience. So I'm happy to be here with my commissioner of Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs and my International Affairs commissioner, Commissioner Mermelstein. And we want to acknowledge also the ambassador here from Albania, Ambassador Faber.

Welcome here to the Albanian Capital of America right here. We are proud that we have the largest Albanian population outside of Albania. Over a hundred thousand Albanian participants here in this city. It's strong. And you own businesses. You're frontline workers. You're very much engaged and ensure that we continue to have the diversity and the prosperity in this city. It doesn't matter where you go. If it's from Little Albania in the Bronx to Queens to Staten Island, this is a community that just knows how to get stuff done. And we are a city of immigrants. That is who make us what we are as we continue to grow and expand and pursue the American dream in a real way.

And so I'm happy to be here today to raise the flag on the 110th anniversary of how we acknowledge the independence of Albania and to honor all of our Albanian Americans who have long enhanced the five boroughs of this amazing city and amazing people that's in it. So Happy Independence Day. This is such a significant moment when you raise the flag here in Bowling

Green, at the heart of our financial capital. It states that we acknowledge you, we acknowledge your contribution and all that you have to offer. And so not only do we raise the flag on this pole, but you raise the flag in my heart. I love this community. Let's continue to grow and prosper.

So this proclamation. Whereas Albanian Americans have long enhanced the five boroughs, and they will continue to play a key role as we take bold steps to come back stronger from the COVID-19 pandemic, grow our economy, and build a safer, fairer, more prosperous future for all. At today's ceremony, Albanian New Yorkers will commemorate the milestone foundation of their homeland by raising this red flag featuring a silhouette black double headed eagle. This event is also a wonderful occasion to celebrate the meaningful tradition of this vital community and our enduring friendship with their homeland. I look forward to the many ways everyone gathered will further invigorate New York as we work to build a brighter, more united future together. Therefore, I, Eric Adams, the mayor of the City of New York, Albania's 110th anniversary day here at Bowling Green.

(...)

Elmi Berisha, President, Federata Pan-Shqiptare e Amerikes-VATRA: I also have a gift for you, Mr. Mayor, from the Albanian-American community federation VATRA.

Mayor Adams: Wow.

Berisha: (Inaudible) 15th century Albanian prince, that from the beginning of his life or career he fought (inaudible) general, but then he realized that he was Albanian (inaudible) people. So he went back and forth across the Ottoman Empire and saved Christianity (inaudible) and war against (inaudible.) I also like to have a... I want to ask if you can keep this one in your office.

Mayor Adams: I'll keep this in my office too. Mother Teresa!

Berisha: This will make your life better if you look at it every day.

Commissioner Castro: And now we'll begin our flag raising ceremony. Yes, please. You're welcome to get closer. We'll begin the flag raising ceremony with the United States National Anthem.

(Flag of the United States of America is raised.)

Commissioner Castro: Now we will raise the Albanian flag.

(Flag of the Republic of Albania is raised.)

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