

EUROPE

# Queen Elizabeth II Delegates Wreath Ceremony to Prince Charles

By SUSANNE FOWLER NOV. 12, 2017

LONDON — In a significant step in the British monarchy's transition, Queen Elizabeth II watched from a balcony in central London on Sunday as her eldest son, Prince Charles, placed a wreath at the Cenotaph, Britain's memorial to its war dead.

Often praised for being rigorous about her royal obligations, the queen, 91, had delegated the Remembrance Sunday duty to Charles, 68, who is next in line to the British throne.

Buckingham Palace announced the change last month, a move seen by royals observers as a major step in the shift to the monarchy's next generation.

The queen watched the ceremony unfold from a nearby Foreign and Commonwealth Office balcony in Whitehall on a chilly morning, flanked by her husband, Prince Philip, and Charles's wife, Camilla, the Duchess of Cornwall.

Prime Minister Theresa May and the leader of the opposition Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn, were among the officials in attendance.

The chimes of Big Ben, which had been silent for a lengthy restoration project, tolled during the event, the second time in two days, before the nation observed two minutes of silence. The bell also rang on Saturday to mark Armistice Day.

Elizabeth is Britain's longest-reigning monarch, having been crowned in Westminster Abbey on June 2, 1953.

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Prince Philip, 96, retired in August from solo public appearances, remarking that he had been “the world’s most experienced plaque-unveiler.”

Charles recently represented his mother on a 10-day tour of four Commonwealth countries: Brunei, India, Malaysia and Singapore. Sunday wasn’t the first time he had stepped in for his mother at the annual wreath-laying ceremony in London: He performed the ritual in 1983 — but while she was in Kenya.

Security was tightened this year, with the authorities employing facial recognition cameras, bag searches, sniffer dogs and body scanners, according to news reports.

On Saturday night, Elizabeth and Philip joined thousands of veterans at Royal Albert Hall for a program honoring British military men and women. The event included hymns, prayers and performances by the Scottish singer-songwriter Emeli Sandé and the English tenor Alfie Boe.