



---

# Press Release

---

PR 200296

22.02.2020

## **PRESS RELEASE BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

### *19<sup>th</sup> winter meeting of the OSCE PA*

A delegation of the Maltese Parliament, led by Jean Claude Micallef and comprising Emmanuel Mallia and Karl Gouder, was one of around 50 delegations participating in the 19<sup>th</sup> winter meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly within the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE PA), which took place in Vienna, Austria, on the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> of February. The winter meeting included a meeting of the Standing Committee, two joint sessions of the three General Committees, as well as meetings of the General Committee on Democracy, Human Rights and Humanitarian Questions, the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, and the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security.

The opening session was addressed by George Tsereteli, President of the OSCE PA, and included reports by the Treasurer, the Secretary General, as well as updates from ad hoc committees and special representatives. The opening session was followed by a joint session of the three general committees and individual meetings of the three general committees. During the meetings, the delegates discussed various topics, which ranged from climate change and environmental security to multilateralism, anti-Semitism, racism and discrimination.

In his address during the meeting of the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment, MP Jean Claude Micallef said that parliamentarians cannot remain diplomatically conservative, but must take a progressive approach. He emphasized that they should formulate policies to address climate change, while scrutinising their governments in the implementation stage. He said that small states like Malta should be given special consideration, as climate change might affect them more due their size, economic scale and domestic markets, whilst urging those present to fight climate change together, in order for them to stand tall in front of their constituents.

MP Karl Gouder mentioned the three important roles that should be played by parliamentarians in the fight against climate change; declaring a climate emergency, which the Maltese Parliament did in October of 2019, educating the people about the effects of climate change and how they can contribute in the fight against it, and taking action with regard to clean energy, reduction in the use of diesel and fossil fuels, investment in solar energy and waste management.

The head of the delegation, Jean Claude Micallef, also spoke during the second joint session of the three General Committees, which included a discussion on combating anti-Semitism, discrimination and intolerance in the OSCE region. He said that one cannot only speak about irregular immigration from the point of view of those running away from troubles, but that the impact of those receiving

---

**Attachments: photo**

**Page: 1 of 2**

the burdens overnight must also be acknowledged. He urged the OSCE PA to commission reports and studies on the impact these arrivals have on the hosting nations. MP Micallef said that cultural prejudices and lifestyle differences can be causes of discriminatory behaviour and that nations cannot address intolerance and discrimination by expecting their people to accept the immigrants' way of life, without guiding the newcomers to integrate in local customs. He finished his intervention by saying that having European nations resistant to honour their solidarity obligation in this area is a contradiction of the OSCE mantra, and asked for cooperation in the fight against anti-Semitism and discrimination.