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PRESS RELEASE BY THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

Conference in Parliament on Combating Violence Against Women: The Role of Men & Boys

Speaker of the House of Representatives Anglu Farrugia presided over a conference which discussed the role of men and boys in the fight against gender violence. This conference was hosted by the Parliament of Malta and organised in conjunction with the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade and the Council of Europe, with the aim of providing an opportunity to have an exchange of views on how to tackle domestic violence in a holistic manner.

In his opening address, Speaker Anglu Farrugia stated that violence against women remains a reality all over the world, and citing recent cases, argued that Malta is no exception, this in spite of all the work being done. In his address, he outlined the major legislative steps that were taken by Parliament in the fight against violence against women, specifically the ratification of the Istanbul Convention and the introduction of femicide as a criminal offence in the Maltese legislation, yet more needs to be done to truly eradicate violence against women. He concluded his address by stating that there remains an obligation on everyone to take all necessary measures to prevent and combat violence against women, irrespective of their race, colour, language, religion and disability, amongst others.

Dr Lydia Abela, Lawyer and Spouse of the Prime Minister, Dr Helena Dalli, EU Commissioner for Equality, and President of the Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), Ms Iris Luarasi, delivered keynote addresses.

Following the opening addresses, the conference dealt with two main themes: ‘The need to eliminate harmful gender stereotypes’ and ‘The importance of adopting an intersectional approach’. These themes were discussed in two panels introduced by Rebecca Buttigieg, Parliamentary Secretary for Equality and Reforms, and Graziella Attard Previ, Opposition Spokesperson for Equality, Children’s Rights and Human Rights respectively.

Ian Borg, Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade, and Lorenzo Vella, Permanent Representative of Malta to the Council of Europe, addressed the participants.

Closing the conference, Speaker Farrugia remarked that society cannot support a culture of silence and impunity and that everyone must speak publicly against gender violence, adding that for justice not only to be done but also be seen to be done, men and boys need to be seen to fight violence against women.

Members of the Maltese delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe Chris Bonett and Romilda Zarb, as well as Ivan Castillo and Katya De Giovanni attended the conference.



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A photographic exhibition by Peter Paul Barbara on the subject of combating violence against women was later opened in the foyer of the Parliament building, and will remain open to visitors until Thursday, 11th May 2023.