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

### *Glenn Bedingfield participates in the COSAC Chairpersons meeting in Madrid*

On September 18, 2023, Glenn Bedingfield, Chairperson of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee, took part in the COSAC (Conference of parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs) Chairpersons meeting held in the Spanish Senate. The priorities of the Spanish Presidency of the EU Council were presented by the Spanish acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union, and Cooperation, José Manuel Albares. This was followed by a speech from the First Vice President of the European Parliament, Othmar Karas.

In the following session, the Chair of the Ukrainian Parliament's Committee on the Integration of Ukraine into the EU, Ivanna Klymush-Tsintsadre, and the Chair of the Swedish Riksdag's Committee on European Union Affairs, Hans Wallmark, discussed the future of Ukraine in Europe. During this session, Glenn Bedingfield made a brief intervention in which he reiterated Malta's position as a strong advocate of EU enlargement on a merits-based approach. He therefore remarked that, besides Ukraine and Moldova, Georgia also deserved to be given EU candidature based on the progress made in their reforms. On the issue of migration, while pointing out that Europe experienced an influx of migrants due to the war in Ukraine, the EU is currently also experiencing a humanitarian crisis due to the huge influx of migrants on its southern shores. Glenn Bedingfield referred, in particular, to what is happening in Lampedusa right now. He stressed that the EU needs to turn solidarity into concrete action. The last session dealt with current affairs in the EU, with particular reference to the State of the Union speech delivered by the President of the European Union last week.

Glenn Bedingfield also held two bilateral meetings on the margins of the COSAC Chairpersons meeting with Maka Botchorishvili, Chair of the Committee on European Integration of the Parliament of Georgia, and with Doina Gherman, Chair of the Committee on Foreign Policy and European Integration of the Parliament of Moldova. Discussing the status of the EU applications of both Georgia and Moldova, Glenn Bedingfield reiterated Malta's support for a merits-based approach to all candidates and prospective candidates joining the EU.

*Since its establishment in 1989 in Madrid, the COSAC (Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs) has brought together the European Union Affairs Committees of the national parliaments and the Constitutional Committee of the European Parliament. A meeting of COSAC Chairpersons is held every semester, and it is attended by the Chairs of the European Affairs Committee of national Parliaments with the objective of preparing for the COSAC plenary meeting.*