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PRESS RELEASE BY THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

Speaker Farrugia appointed to serve as member in the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Speaker of the Maltese House of Representatives Anglu Farrugia will be serving as a member of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law of the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) after being appointed by the geo-political group 12plus of which the Maltese Parliament is a member. He has subsequently been formally approved by the Governing Council of the institution on Friday, 27 October, meeting in Luanda, Angola, in the margins of the 147th IPU Assembly.

In brief introductory remarks submitting his candidacy, Speaker Farrugia stated that the role of promoting respect for international humanitarian law is not only relevant in today's world, but essential. He admitted, however, that there are countless examples of violations of international humanitarian law. Increasingly, the victims of war are civilians.

Speaker Farrugia emphasised that there are important cases where international humanitarian law has made a difference in protecting civilians, prisoners, the sick and the wounded, and in restricting the use of barbaric weapons. Given that this body of law applies during times of extreme violence, implementing the law will always be a matter of great difficulty. That said, striving for effective compliance remains as urgent as ever.

Set up in the 1990s, the IPU Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law advocates for the protection of civilians and combatants in conflict around the world through the adoption and ratification of relevant laws and treaties.

It monitors adherence to the Geneva Conventions, the international body of law that aims to protect those not involved in armed conflict. Many breaches of the Conventions continue to occur in conflicts around the world, and some countries have yet to sign up to the Convention or its additional protocols.

The Committee also raises awareness of the treatment of refugees and internally displaced people, as well as the issue of statelessness which affects millions of people around the world. Efforts include supporting a United Nations campaign to end statelessness by 2024 by encouraging parliaments to support changes in policy and practice to help bring this about.

Where possible, the Committee organises field missions to better understand particular humanitarian crises. If it identifies concerns—either regarding the treatment of people or the status of international agreements—it encourages parliaments in those countries to act.



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The Committee works closely with other relevant organisations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the UN refugee agency, UNCHR.