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PRESS RELEASE BY THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

Speaker Anġlu Farrugia presides over the Committee to Promote Respect to the International Humanitarian Law Meeting at 150th IPU Assembly in Tashkent

The Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malta, Anġlu Farrugia, chaired the 45th Session of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) during the 150th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Chairing the meeting in his capacity as President of the Committee, Dr Farrugia oversaw deliberations on a range of critical issues, including specific humanitarian emergencies, efforts to end statelessness, the challenges posed by new technologies in contemporary armed conflict, and the workplan of the Committee for 2025.

A major focus of the session was the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Myanmar, which continues to face compounding crises including widespread internal displacement, statelessness, and access restrictions to life-saving services. The Committee reviewed the latest data, noting that 19.9 million people are currently in need of humanitarian assistance, including over 6 million children. The plight of the Rohingya population, many of whom remain stateless and exposed to severe protection risks, received particular attention. The Committee considered options for follow-up, including the adoption of calls or recommendations, and the possibility of future missions to countries of concern.

In its continued efforts to promote universal respect for IHL, the Committee also examined the ICRC's Global Initiative to galvanise political commitment to IHL, launched in September 2024. Parliamentarians were invited to consider how national parliaments may contribute to this initiative, particularly in strengthening the domestic implementation of IHL through legislation and oversight.

In addition, the Committee pursued its discussions on the challenges of contemporary armed conflict, with a renewed focus on the urbanisation of warfare and the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. These discussions build upon previous sessions which considered the humanitarian consequences of cyber operations, autonomous weapons systems, and digital threats.

A further item on the agenda concerned statelessness, which has been a long-standing priority of the Committee. The Committee reaffirmed its support for the Global Alliance to End Statelessness, of which the IPU is a member, and discussed concrete actions to advance parliamentary reforms, including the universalisation of statelessness conventions and the elimination of gender discrimination in nationality laws.

The session concluded with the adoption of the Committee's workplan for 2025, which outlines forthcoming activities including field missions, webinars, panel discussions, and participation in international meetings such as the 13th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the 22nd Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.



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Speaker Farrugia also presented two reports to the Governing Council of the IPU during the concluding session of the IPU Assembly. He presented the report on the activities of the Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine of which Speaker Farrugia is a member. He also presented the report on the activities of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law. Both reports were adopted unanimously by the Governing Council of the IPU.