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## **PRESS RELEASE BY THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER**

*Speaker of the House of Representatives Anglu Farrugia participates in the 2025 Conference of Speakers of the European Union Parliament, held between 11 and 12 May in Budapest, Hungary, as the final event of the parliamentary dimension of the 2024 Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union*

The Conference of the Speakers was divided in two sessions – Session I dealt with the future of the European Union, discussing diverging opinions on moves to either greater federalism or more national sovereignty providing a platform for discussions on the Union's future direction, while Session II explored ways to strengthen the EU's connection with its citizens while celebrating its diverse cultural heritage.

Addressing the first session, Speaker of the House of Representatives Anglu Farrugia remarked that the EU was not born from conquest but from conviction, aiming to be a peace project rooted in solidarity, not merely an economic bloc. He questioned whether through the greater defence spending the EU is remaining true to its roots of protecting its people through unity. This was especially important in the face of the growing number of EU citizens at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

With regard to Malta's neutrality, the Speaker said that Malta's absence from military alliances must not be seen as silence but substance, not inaction but intention, and this through humanitarian, diplomatic and moral efforts.

The Speaker welcomed the warning sounded last week by the European Parliament President to the European Commission that using an emergency clause bypassing Parliament for the Eur 150 billion joint procurement defence facility could lead to legal action at the European Court of Justice.

The Speaker insisted that the EU must stand for Gaza as it stands for Ukraine, and questioned the reported intention of Israel to replace agencies distributing food and medicines on the ground.

Concluding his address Speaker Anglu Farrugia stated that at this turning point for Europe, the EU needs to work against more division, and toward toward deeper responsibility.

The Conference was chaired by Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly László Kövér, and was addressed by Prime Minister of Hungary Viktor Orbán, President of the National Council of Austria Walter Rosenkranz, President of the European Parliament Roberta Metsola, President of the Chamber of Deputies of Italy Lorenzo Fontana, Speaker of the National Assembly of Serbia, Ana Brnabić, and President of the National Council of Switzerland, Maja Riniker.



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# PRESS RELEASE

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The Conference of Speakers of the EU Parliaments is the highest forum for interparliamentary cooperation in the European Union, with the main task of defining the framework and strategic objectives of parliamentary cooperation. The Conference of Speakers is attended by the Speakers of the Chambers of the National Parliaments of the EU Member States, the President of the European Parliament and, as observers and permanent invitees, the Speakers of the parliaments of the candidate countries and, as special invitees, the Speakers of the parliaments of other European countries.