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PRESS RELEASE BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Women parliamentarians meet on the margins of the Standing Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe being held in Malta

A session of the Women@PACE hosted by the Maltese Parliament was held earlier today. Naomi Cachia, who also heads the Maltese delegation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), moderated this morning's session. President Emeritus Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca was invited as a special guest for this occasion to address women Parliamentarians present for this event. Secretary General of PACE, Despina Chatzivassiliou-Tsovilis, was also present for this event, an initiative which she founded back in 2022.

In her remarks, the President Emeritus emphasised that women have already embraced empowerment and called for greater efforts to engage men and raise awareness about the burdens of societal expectations placed on women. Furthermore, she emphasised the importance of educating children, adding that education is key not only to achieving a gender-balanced society but also to obtaining peace-building and mutual respect.

Coleiro Preca remarked that Malta has introduced the right for 16-year-olds to vote in local and national elections. Therefore, it is crucial that children and youth feel empowered from a very young age.

She also referred to the introduction of free childcare, which boosted the number of women in the labour market up to 60 percent. The President Emeritus also remarked about the situation in our families, as in most cases, women tend to carry more family responsibilities than men.

Delegates had the opportunity to make their remarks and ask questions to the President Emeritus. Coleiro Preca discussed her personal and political experience and how she managed to balance the two, which was not always easy. Asked about the threats posed by social media to children, the President Emeritus reiterated that education is key to protecting them.

President Emeritus expressed her preoccupation with the situation in Ukraine and Gaza. She stated that there is a growing sense that the international community is getting used to wars. She emphasised that both the international community and Europe should do more in such situations.

Ramona Attard, a member of the Maltese delegation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, also participated in this event.



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PRESS RELEASE

The Women@PACE group is a non-political, cross-party, informal platform open to all women members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe