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PRESS RELEASE BY THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

Speaker of the House Anġlu Farrugia welcomes new Italian Ambassador Valentina Setta

Speaker of the House of Representatives, Anġlu Farrugia, held a courtesy meeting with Valentina Setta, the Ambassador of the Republic of Italy to Malta, at the Parliament of Malta. The meeting reflected the deep-rooted and dynamic bilateral relations between Malta and Italy, founded on historical, cultural, and geographic ties and reinforced by strong cooperation across various sectors.

Speaker Farrugia warmly welcomed Ambassador Setta, who officially presented her credentials on 11 June 2025, and expressed Malta's appreciation for the close friendship and enduring partnership that have characterised Maltese Italian relations since diplomatic ties were first established on Malta's Independence Day in 1964.

Discussions focused on the multifaceted nature of Malta–Italy relations, which continue to flourish through active political dialogue, robust economic and trade exchanges, and vibrant cultural cooperation. Speaker Farrugia commended the extensive air and maritime connectivity between the two countries, as well as the substantial presence of Italian nationals residing in Malta.

The Speaker of the House of Representatives also highlighted the significant trade relations between the two nations, with Italy being Malta's largest import partner and a key export destination. He reaffirmed Malta's commitment to strengthening collaboration in areas such as innovation, maritime affairs, renewable energy, and education, noting the positive engagement of entities such as Malta Enterprise, Tech.mt, and the Malta Tourism Authority.

On cultural cooperation, the Speaker expressed appreciation for Italy's active participation in the first Malta Arts Biennale in 2024 and encouraged continued Italian involvement in the upcoming 2026 edition. He also acknowledged the successful 50th anniversary celebrations of the Italian Cultural Institute and the recent cultural initiatives supported by both countries, including the visit of the Italian naval vessel *Amerigo Vespucci*.

Speaker Farrugia further outlined Malta's current Presidency of the Council of Europe, which commenced on 14 May 2025. He emphasised Malta's priorities in promoting human rights, democracy, the rule of law, and youth empowerment. Dr Farrugia welcomed Italy's support and expressed interest in continued multilateral collaboration within European and Mediterranean fora.

The meeting concluded with mutual expressions of commitment to further enhancing bilateral and multilateral cooperation, and with Speaker Anġlu Farrugia extending his best wishes to Ambassador Setta in her new diplomatic mission to Malta.