



PRESS RELEASE

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The Ombudsman is not an accessory to democracy. The Ombudsman is democracy's last line of defence – Speaker Anġlu Farrugia

“The Ombudsman is not an accessory to democracy; the Ombudsman is democracy’s last line of defence,” concluded the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Dr Anġlu Farrugia, when addressing those present at the International Ombudsman Conference being held in Malta, marking the 30th anniversary of the Office of the Ombudsman, the conference — held under the theme ‘Upholding Good Governance in Challenging Times’, which gathered Ombudsmen and Commissioners from across the Mediterranean basin and members of the International Ombudsman Institute.

The Speaker continued by observing that these are not merely challenging times but defining ones — when citizens across the world see abuse unpunished, decisions hidden in shadows, and truth strained by convenience. Yet, he stated, there remains one figure who continues to stand unbending: the Ombudsman.

Speaker Farrugia underlined that the Ombudsman is not to comfort the powerful, but to confront them, describing the office as an institutional conscience whose loyalty is owed to the people and the truth. He further remarked that integrity must be felt in every action, not claimed in every speech, and warned that democracy suffocates when oversight is weakened, or Ombudsmen are ignored.

The Speaker of the House of Representatives also emphasised that Parliament has a constitutional duty to ensure that institutions of accountability remain strong and independent. If oversight is weakened, he cautioned, democracy that breathes risks becoming democracy that suffocates. He reiterated that the recommendations of the Ombudsman, as a Parliamentary Office, carry institutional weight and should never be left unattended or ignored.