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2



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Maltese delegation attends the 71st annual session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly

A Maltese parliamentary delegation, composed of Carmelo Abela and Bernard Grech, participated in the 71st Annual Session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA), held in Ljubljana, Slovenia, from 11 to 13 October 2025.

The session brought together nearly 300 parliamentarians from NATO member and partner countries to discuss key international security challenges.

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly serves as an interparliamentary forum for dialogue on security, defence, and economic issues, aimed at reinforcing mutual understanding and cooperation among member states. It comprises delegates from all 32 NATO member countries, as well as associate and regional partners, Mediterranean Associate Members, observers, members of the European Parliament, and representatives of other interparliamentary bodies.

The Assembly's work is organised through five standing committees: the Political Committee, Defence and Security Committee, Economics and Security Committee, Science and Technology Committee, and the Democracy and Security Committee.

The committee meetings, held on 11 and 12 October, featured in-depth discussions and the adoption of various reports and resolutions. The Maltese delegates took part in the Committee on democracy and security and the political committee sessions. Bernard Grech also attended the Committee covering defence and security.

Topics discussed during the Democracy and Security Committee included the Slovenian Electric Power Sector and national energy resilience, developments in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, the protection of critical infrastructure against hybrid attacks, technology, democracy, and digital threats to electoral systems, and Enhancing cybersecurity and democratic resilience among Allied nations.

The Political Committee addressed Slovenia's strategic priorities in NATO, European security challenges, and held panels on shaping a secure and stable future for the Western Balkans, strengthening NATO's collective defence, and Ukraine's ongoing fight for freedom and the importance of continued Allied support.

During the discussions, Carmelo Abela focused on the challenges currently facing the Western Balkans and Europe, emphasizing the importance of preserving citizens' hope and reinforcing their European aspirations. He reaffirmed that full European Union membership remains the ultimate goal for Western Balkan countries — a process that also serves the EU's strategic interest in ensuring long-term security and stability across the continent.



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Abela highlighted the need for enhanced regional cooperation among Balkan states through joint initiatives and shared projects to overcome existing challenges and strengthen mutual trust. He cautioned that a reduced EU presence in the region could open the door for other global actors to fill the vacuum, underlining the Balkans' vital geopolitical significance at the heart of Europe.

Addressing the broader theme of collective defence and emerging threats from Russia and its partners, Abela called for continued commitment to diplomacy and open communication channels, particularly with countries perceived to be aligning with Russia, such as China.

“Europe must remain engaged, proactive, and united — not only to safeguard our shared values and security, but also to ensure that hope and cooperation continue to define our continent’s future,” said Abela.

The Annual Session concluded with the plenary meeting on Monday, 13 October, featuring addresses by Mr Marcos Perestrello, President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. Mr Danijel Krivec, Vice President of the National Assembly of Slovenia, Robert Golob, Prime Minister of Slovenia, NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, and an online intervention by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy who shared an update of the frontline in Ukraine.

The session also included the presentation of the 2025 Women for Peace and Security Award to Dr Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu, President of Kosovo. Finally, delegates conducted administrative votes and elections for the President and Vice Presidents of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, as well as debates continuing from the Spring Session held in Dayton, Ohio, in May 2025.