



PR251864

20.10.2025

2



PRESS RELEASE BY THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

Humanitarian norms are not a matter of choice — they represent the minimum expression of civilisation – Speaker of the House of Representatives

In his address at the 151st Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly in Geneva, the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malta Anġlu Farrugia, declared that humanitarian norms are not a matter of choice but the minimum expression of civilisation. He urged parliaments worldwide to uphold international humanitarian law with courage and consistency, transforming fine words into tangible action.

Addressing delegates under the theme “Upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian action in times of crisis,” Speaker Farrugia stated that the real strength of humanitarian law lies not in the number of treaties signed but, in the determination, to enforce them when it is most difficult. He reminded the Assembly that international humanitarian law exists to protect those who cannot protect themselves, while human rights law affirms the dignity that belongs to every human being, in both peace and war.

Drawing from his experience as Chairman of the IPU Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law, Speaker Farrugia referred to a humanitarian case brought to his attention by the Secretary General of the IPU concerning the former Deputy Speaker of Afghanistan, who has been threatened with deportation from Pakistan following his exile in 2021. The Speaker explained that he had personally contacted both the Deputy Speaker of Afghanistan and the Speaker of the Parliament of Pakistan to seek a humane and lawful resolution to the matter. He expressed hope that this case will be resolved swiftly, as other Afghan refugees continue to face deportation.

The Speaker emphasised that parliaments have a solemn duty to give effect to international obligations through national legislation, to allocate resources for humanitarian action, and to hold governments accountable when promises made on the global stage are not honoured at home.

He underlined that the world’s institutions must move beyond declarations to implementation, calling for a collective effort to strengthen the protection of humanitarian workers and civilians in crisis zones. Speaker Farrugia said that enforcement must be guided by conscience as much as by law, insisting that governments are bound not only by signature, but by scrutiny.

In his closing remarks, Speaker Farrugia affirmed that protecting human life in conflict is not a gesture of goodwill but the most basic act of justice. He called on the Inter-Parliamentary Union to stand as a global convener — bringing together parliaments, the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and regional assemblies — in a shared commitment to defend the essence of humanity.



GOVERNMENT OF MALTA
DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION

PRESS RELEASE

The Speaker led delegation is composed of Hon. Davina Sammut Hili, Hon. Charles Azzopardi and Mr Ian Paul Bajada.