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## **PRESS RELEASE BY THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER**

### ***Deputy Speaker David Agius welcomes the Ambassador of Belgium on courtesy visit***

The Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, David Agius, today hosted a courtesy meeting with Andy Detaille, the newly accredited Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium to Malta. The meeting, held within the historic chambers of the Parliament building in Valletta, signalled a warm and forward-looking recommitment to strengthening bilateral parliamentary and diplomatic ties between Malta and Belgium.

During their discussion, Deputy Speaker Agius and Ambassador Detaille reflected on the 60 years of diplomatic relations between their respective countries and reaffirmed the historically strong bonds between the two nations, rooted in shared EU membership, democratic values, and mutual respect. They explored ways in which Malta's parliamentary institutions can deepen collaboration with Belgian counterparts, particularly through enhanced interparliamentary dialogue, legislative cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges.

Ambassador Detaille expressed his appreciation for the hospitality extended by the House of Representatives, and underscored Belgium's eagerness to support and foster deeper cooperation across a range of sectors. Deputy Speaker Agius welcomed this cooperation and encouraged the development of new channels for engagement, including a possible Parliamentary Friendship Group to broaden opportunities for MPs, youth delegations, and civil society to interact and collaborate as well as further cooperation in the fields of sports, tourism and culture.

The two dignitaries also touched upon the importance of multilateral cooperation within the European Union, particularly in the context of strengthening parliamentary oversight of EU policymaking and reinforcing democratic accountability across member states.

In closing, Deputy Speaker Agius wished Ambassador Detaille a successful tenure in Malta and expressed his hope that this meeting would serve as a springboard for more frequent and substantive engagement between the Maltese Parliament and Belgium's diplomatic and legislative institutions.