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“Dialogue must be recognised as a serious instrument of peace, trust and prevention” – Speaker of the House of Representatives

Today, 26 March, at the Parliament of Malta, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Anglu Farrugia, presided over the conference Peace and Dialogue in the Mediterranean Space and delivered an address reaffirming Malta’s enduring commitment to peace, dialogue and shared responsibility in the Mediterranean.

In his address, Speaker Farrugia stressed that peace and security in the Mediterranean cannot be sustained through rhetoric alone. Dialogue, he said, must not remain symbolic, episodic or detached from decision-making, but must be recognised as a serious instrument of peace, trust and prevention. If lasting stability is to be secured, dialogue must be structured, continuous and allowed to shape decisions before crises erupt, rather than merely respond to them afterwards.

Recalling Malta’s role in the Helsinki process and the principle that security in Europe is closely linked with security in the Mediterranean, the Speaker reaffirmed Malta’s longstanding position that peace in the region can only be safeguarded through cooperation, democratic legitimacy and political courage. He also referred to Malta’s constitutional neutrality, stressing that neutrality does not mean indifference or silence, but a principled commitment to building bridges, encouraging dialogue and promoting cooperation where confrontation might otherwise prevail.

Speaker Farrugia also reflected on Malta’s own history, recalling the sovereign decision taken in 1979 to close foreign military bases on Maltese soil. He described this as a lasting affirmation that the true strength of a nation lies not in its service to conflict, but in its courage to stand for peace, dialogue and cooperation.

He noted that the Mediterranean has for centuries been a sea of civilisation, exchange and encounter among peoples, cultures and faiths, yet it has also known periods of conflict and division. The responsibility of the present generation, he said, is to ensure that the Mediterranean once again becomes a space that unites rather than divides, and that history will judge not the number of meetings held, but whether there was the courage to turn dialogue into direction.

Among those who addressed the conference today were Mustafa Cerić, Grand Mufti Emeritus of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Senator Yousuf Amer of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Ali Kheshan, former Minister of Justice of Palestine, Enzo Bianco, former Minister of the Italian Republic, and Cahit Özkan, Member of the Parliament of



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Türkiye. Carm Mifsud Bonnici, Beppe Fenech Adami, Edward Zammit Lewis and Carmelo Abela, also addressed those present.

Today's proceedings were also marked by the signing of the Mediterranean Charter for Peace, Cooperation and Dialogue among Civilizations, a document which reflects the same principles highlighted throughout the conference: respect among peoples, dialogue across cultures and faiths, parliamentary cooperation, human dignity, shared responsibility and a common commitment to peace and stability in the Mediterranean. The signing of the Charter gave concrete expression to the message advanced during the day's discussions and to Malta's continued belief that peace must be built through encounter, responsibility, and cooperation.