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

***Meeting between the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Japanese Chargé d’Affaires***

Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malta Angelo Farrugia received Mr Ryuichiro Kobayashi, Chargé d’Affaires a.i. at the Embassy of Japan in Malta, for a courtesy meeting.

During the meeting, both sides reaffirmed the strong and longstanding bilateral relations between Malta and Japan, which this year mark over six decades of diplomatic ties. They expressed their shared commitment to further strengthening cooperation across a range of sectors, including trade, education, culture, and innovation.

The discussion highlighted the positive developments in people-to-people exchanges, including the recent entry into force of the Working Holiday Arrangement, as well as ongoing initiatives in academic collaboration and cultural promotion. Both parties welcomed the growing engagement between Maltese and Japanese institutions, particularly in higher education and cultural heritage.

Economic cooperation also featured prominently, with both sides acknowledging the potential to expand trade and investment, building on existing strong performance in goods and services. Malta underscored its role as a strategic gateway to European and regional markets for Japanese businesses.

Regional and international developments were also discussed, including EU–Japan relations, Indo-Pacific cooperation, and key global challenges. Both sides reiterated the importance of dialogue, multilateralism, and adherence to the rules-based international order in addressing global issues.