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

***Speaker Farrugia calls for stronger parliamentary diplomacy at PAM Speakers Summit***

The Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malta, Anġlu Farrugia, underscored the growing importance of parliamentary diplomacy as a cornerstone for strengthening democratic institutions during his address at the Speakers Summit of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), held in Budva, Montenegro.

Addressing the debate on *Parliamentary Diplomacy as a Resilience Stronghold of Democratic Institutions*, Dr Farrugia highlighted the increasing challenges facing democracies worldwide, including geopolitical instability, the spread of misinformation, and declining public trust in institutions.

He stressed that parliamentary diplomacy plays a vital role in fostering dialogue, strengthening accountability, and enhancing cooperation among nations. “Parliamentary diplomacy must go beyond dialogue. It must deliver tangible and measurable results that improve the lives of our citizens,” Farrugia stated.

Speaker Farrugia reaffirmed Malta’s long-standing commitment to international cooperation, noting that the country played a key role in the establishment of PAM in 2006. He described the Assembly as a crucial platform for addressing regional challenges, including security, migration, economic development, climate change, and intercultural dialogue.

Reflecting on the Assembly’s 20-year milestone, he called for renewed ambition and greater effectiveness to ensure that the institution remains relevant, credible, and responsive to citizens’ expectations.

The Speaker outlined three key functions of parliamentary diplomacy:

- Strengthening democratic legitimacy by linking international decision-making more closely with citizens
- Promoting peace and regional stability through sustained dialogue and cooperation
- Building institutional resilience through the exchange of best practices in governance and the rule of law

He also emphasised the importance of inclusivity, highlighting the need to enhance the participation of women, young people, and underrepresented groups in parliamentary processes. In conclusion, Speaker Farrugia called for continued collaboration among parliaments worldwide to safeguard democratic values and strengthen international partnerships.

On the margins of the Speakers Summit, Speaker Farrugia held a bilateral meeting with H E Shalva Papuashvili, Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia. During their exchange, both sides discussed the volatile situation in the Middle East and emphasised the importance of upholding international law as a cornerstone for maintaining global order and stability.



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Speaker Farrugia noted that Malta is closely monitoring developments in the Strait of Hormuz, following an aerial attack on a Maltese-flagged cargo vessel on the evening of 5 May 2026, while transiting through Omani territorial waters.

He reiterated that Malta firmly upholds freedom of navigation as a fundamental principle of international law, essential to global stability and economic prosperity, particularly in strategic maritime corridors such as the Strait of Hormuz. Speaker Farrugia pointed out that Malta has consistently used its voice at the United Nations to advocate that international straits must remain open, secure, and governed in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

On the margins of the Speakers Summit, Angelo Farrugia also met with Hassan bin Abdullah Al Ghanim, Speaker of the Shura Council of Qatar. During their meeting, the two sides reaffirmed the strong bilateral relations between Malta and Qatar, while also exchanging views on the evolving and volatile situation in the Middle East. Speaker Farrugia commended Qatar's role in mediation efforts related to the conflict in Gaza, highlighting the importance of dialogue and diplomatic engagement in promoting de-escalation and stability. He also expressed Malta's solidarity with Qatar following recent attacks.