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Maltese Parliamentary delegation participates in 12th IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in Samarkand

A Maltese parliamentary delegation composed of Mariah Meli and Annabelle Cilia is participating in the 12th IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians, being held from 4 to 6 September in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

Held under the theme "Reclaiming human rights, justice and dignity for all in turbulent times", the conference brings together young parliamentarians from around the world to discuss key challenges affecting human rights, democracy and sustainable development.

On the first day of the conference, the Maltese delegation attended sessions related to youth rights in times of conflict, digital rights and climate resilience.

During the session on "preserving youth rights in times of conflict", Annabelle Cilia emphasised that protecting young people from violence, displacement, recruitment for hostilities, sexual violence, abuse and exploitation is essential. She also highlighted the importance of youth and therapeutic centres as key resources for reintegration. Furthermore, she stressed the need for accountability, noting that violations must be investigated, perpetrators held responsible, and survivors provided with access to justice and appropriate support.

During her intervention, Annabelle Cilia focused on the "invisible scars of war", highlighting the importance of protecting dignity and mental health, addressing gender inequalities, and safeguarding young people's future opportunities.

She noted that parliamentarians have a responsibility to translate international commitments into legislation, funding, and effective oversight, and also mentioned the importance of allocating national resources to psychological and psychosocial support, emergency accommodation, and alternative education programmes for displaced young people and young refugees. She emphasised that parliamentarians must look beyond government commitments and ensure these commitments effectively reach and support young people.

Annabelle Cilia concluded by stressing that youth participation goes beyond simply having young people at the table, emphasising that young people should become co-authors of the next generation.

In the session addressing "climate resilience and the rights of future generations", Mariah Meli highlighted the particular challenges faced by small island and Mediterranean states such as Malta, including rising temperatures, water scarcity and increasing pressures on coastal and marine ecosystems.

She stressed the growing link between climate change and displacement, noting that climate-related disasters, including floods, droughts and rising sea levels, can force communities to leave their homes, disrupting education, livelihoods and social ties. She emphasised the need to ensure that young people displaced by such events continue to have access to their fundamental rights, including education, healthcare, housing and social support.

Concluding her intervention, Mariah Meli stressed that parliamentarians must translate climate commitments into legislation, secure the necessary funding and take tangible action. She emphasised that climate considerations should be integrated across all policy areas rather than treated as a standalone environmental issue.

The conference will continue on the second day with discussions on parliamentary engagement in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), youth economic rights and employment, and political rights, with a particular focus on ending violence against women and youth. The Maltese delegation will continue to contribute to these discussions, highlighting Malta's experiences and perspectives on sustainable development, youth empowerment, economic participation and the protection of political rights.