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Deputy Speaker represents the Parliament of Malta at 19th Conference of Small European States and signs a historic Memorandum of Understanding

Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives Bernard Grech is participating in the 19th Conference of Presidents of Parliament of Small European States, taking place in Andorra. The conference brings together Speakers and Presidents of Parliament from Andorra, Cyprus, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Montenegro, and San Marino.

The President of the General Council of the Principality of Andorra, Carles Ensenyat Reig, welcomed all participants and emphasised the importance of unity among small states, which share a common future and face many similar challenges. He noted that the Conference provides a valuable platform for participating Parliaments to exchange experiences, compare institutional practices and learn from one another.

During the first thematic discussion 'The Role of Parliamentary Diplomacy in the Current European and International Context', Deputy Speaker Bernard Grech highlighted the increasingly important role of parliamentary diplomacy in addressing today's complex international challenges, including conflict, instability and growing geopolitical tensions. He emphasised that Malta, as a small EU Member State at the crossroads of Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, is well placed to promote dialogue, build bridges and keep channels of communication open. He concluded by emphasising the vital role of parliamentary diplomacy in fostering dialogue, preventing conflicts, promoting peaceful and sustainable solutions, and ensuring that humanity remains at the heart of all efforts.

Addressing the conference during its consideration of the second theme 'Strengthening and Rebalancing Relations between the Executive and Legislative Branches and Their Impact on Contemporary Democratic Systems', Deputy Speaker Grech highlighted the importance of strengthening and rebalancing relations between the Executive and Legislative Branches, particularly within small democracies such as Malta. He emphasised the need for well-resourced and independent parliaments, stronger parliamentary oversight and effective constitutional watchdogs. He concluded his intervention by stressing that a strong and effective Parliament is essential to ensuring better governance, safeguarding public trust and protecting democratic standards.

Following the second working session, the Presidents of Parliament signed a Memorandum of Understanding, formalising their longstanding cooperation and the annual organisation of the Conference, first held in Monaco in 2006. This first and historic Memorandum reaffirms their commitment to democratic values, the rule of law, sovereignty and multilateral cooperation, while promoting greater coordination within European and international parliamentary fora.