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PRESS RELEASE BY THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

The Speaker Carmelo Abela commemorates the 105th anniversary of the first Legislative Assembly

Speaker Carmelo Abela marks the 105th anniversary of Malta's first Parliament under Responsible Government. In an address to Parliament on Wednesday evening, marking the 105th anniversary of Malta's first Legislative Assembly, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Carmelo Abela, highlighted the importance of this institution in the democratic development of our country.

The first Legislative Assembly held its inaugural sitting in 1921 under the presidency of Malta's first Speaker, Edgar Arrigo. Since then, Parliament has continued to evolve alongside Malta's constitutional development, from Independence in 1964 to the establishment of the Republic in 1974 and the reforms that further strengthened the country's democratic institutions.

Abela emphasised the Speaker's role in safeguarding the proper functioning of Parliament, the dignity of the institution and Members' right to participate in debate. He also noted that, since 2017, with the achievement of parliamentary autonomy, this role has taken on a new dimension.

A commemorative plaque was inaugurated at the current Parliament building in tribute to all those who have served as Speakers, recognising their contribution to the development and strengthening of the institution.
The Speaker called for greater maturity and a willingness to set aside partisan interests when necessary, so that Parliament can achieve greater results for the people and the country.

In his address, the Prime Minister of Malta, Robert Abela, reiterated that the greatest tribute we can pay to those who worked to achieve self-government in 1921 is to honour responsibly the trust that the people place in us today. We have a duty to continue strengthening our democracy and to leave behind a Parliament that is more open, stronger, and closer to the citizen.

The Leader of the Opposition, Alex Borg, stressed the importance of ensuring that young people see Parliament as a place where their voices can be heard, and that public service continues to attract capable and honest people.

The Speaker concluded by calling on Parliament to continue upholding the values of democracy, responsible debate, accountability and service to the Maltese people.