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PRESS RELEASE BY THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

Speaker Carmelo Abela Marks the 105th Anniversary of Malta's First Legislative Assembly

Speaker of the House of Representatives Carmelo Abela, highlighted the importance of parliamentary continuity, impartiality and respect for democracy during the Speakers' Day ceremony, commemorating the 105th anniversary of the first sitting of Malta's Legislative Assembly, held on 29 October 1921.

In his address, the Speaker recalled that Edgar Joseph Arrigo had been unanimously elected as the first Speaker, describing this as a significant milestone in Malta's constitutional development. He noted that Arrigo played a pivotal role in laying the foundations of Malta's parliamentary system, notably through the adoption of the Standing Orders in 1922 and the development of parliamentary practices and conventions.

The Speaker stressed that the office demands that the authority and dignity of the House always take precedence over partisan interests. He observed that, despite the constitutional and social changes Malta has experienced over the years, Parliament remains firmly rooted in the principles of free debate, respect for the rule of law, and every Member's right to speak and be heard.

He also paid tribute to the Speakers who have held office over the past 105 years, as well as to Members of Parliament and parliamentary officials, acknowledging their contribution to the institution. He emphasised that parliamentary continuity is built and sustained from one generation to the next. Speakers' Day, he said, is not simply an occasion to look back on the past, but also an opportunity to strengthen the institution and preserve Malta's parliamentary heritage for future generations.

During the occasion, Professor Godfrey Pirotta provided an overview of the historical context, while MP Alex Perici Calascione and Minister Owen Bonnici delivered their speeches on behalf of the Opposition and the Government. A message from the Speaker of the UK House of Commons, Sir Lindsay Hoyle, was also shown.