

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ANNUAL REVIEW

2009



Kamra tad-Deputati  
Malta

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*Front cover: Hon. Louis Galea, Speaker of the House of Representatives with the parliamentary staff*

*From left to right in the front row: John Vella, Anna Schembri Coleiro, Pauline Abela - Clerk of the House, Speaker of the House, Ray Scicluna - Clerk Assistant, Anna Brincat - Clerk Assistant and Gaetan Naudi*

*“Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, Parliament may make laws for the peace, order and good government of Malta in conformity with full respect for human rights, generally accepted principles of international law and Malta’s international and regional obligations in particular those assumed by the treaty of accession to the European Union signed in Athens on the 16th April, 2003.”*  
*[Article 65 (1) of the Constitution of Malta]*



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## FOREWORD

The Annual Report of the House of Representatives for 2009 compiled by the Office of the Clerk is a manifestation of the substantial work that our Members of Parliament, supported by the Clerk and her staff, perform in the course of their duties. I believe that all those who contributed to this work, including the National Audit Office, the Ombudsman, many public officers and civil society organisations who participated in Hearings before our Committees, deserve everybody's appreciation and thanks.



Very early in 2010, the Maltese authorities informed me that they shall be nominating me for membership to the European Court of Auditors in Luxembourg. Following a Hearing in front of the Committee on Budgetary Control, the European Parliament gave a favourable opinion to the European Council which is expected shortly to make the relative appointment. As a result, on the 5th of May 2010, I am expected to preside my last sitting of Malta's House of Representatives after two years experience as Speaker, having sat in the House for the past thirty four years, twenty of which I served also as Minister of the Maltese Government.

I often reflect about the fundamentals of good governance and of democracy in this fast changing environment. How do today's young generations conceive and perceive our elected Representatives? What value do they attach to our parliamentary institution? Do they establish a *nexus* between their future and what happens in Parliament? In what way do citizens at large feel the relevance of Parliament to their daily lives and the future of our country? What is their relationship to the democratic process?

Sovereignty flows from the people and through the democratic process it is deposited in Parliament and exercised by the elected representatives, the Members of Parliament. As a very young boy we were imbued with this vision of Parliament as the 'highest institution of the Land'. That is as it should be. But in truth, is it? In four years' time we shall be celebrating the golden anniversary of our Independence and close to hundred years from the 1921 Constitution which ushered in our first proper experience of democratic representation in a Legislative Assembly. Is our Parliament living up to its proper aspiration of being 'the highest institution of the Land'?

I have served long enough in Parliament to appreciate and accredit the institution with historical and momentous importance. It is here, and behind its scenes, that the people's elected representatives and their leaders designed and developed our constitutional framework. It is the patient, and sometimes frustrating and enervating, controversial cut and thrust of political debate that translated our nationhood into our Sovereignty, Independence, to become a democratic State, built on liberty, on the respect of the rule of law and of the fundamental human rights and liberties, and on social justice. It is here that Malta became a Republic, embraced neutrality, and later fulfilled its aspiration to take its place as a Member State of the European Union. In this chain of historical events our House of Representatives served Malta more than well.

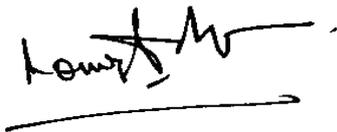
However, I am somewhat concerned about the health status of the legitimacy that ought to bestride our democratic institutions. Society has evolved radically over the past fifty years, essentially for the better. The Maltese people today enjoy the best quality of health and life ever in their millennial history. Yes, unfortunately, we have more than our fair share of mistakes which we could have avoided, or which we should be avoiding. And it is also here that our Parliament needs to become more robustly vociferous. But we also need to grasp the implications of this cultural, social, economic and political evolution of our society. What is the impact of all this on the democratic process? How is this being shaped by the ever pervasive information and communication revolutionary technologies? How are we going to harvest and rein in this vast new energy to enhance the legitimacy and the balancing act of our institutions and of the democratic environment which we want them to safeguard and strengthen?

I believe this needs to come about by enabling Parliament to earn its due status as the 'highest institution of the Land', the depository of the people's sovereignty, the full expression of our democratic credentials and aspirations. Parliament, moreover, needs to evolve into a better tool to deliver to the people more effective transparency and accountability of its own representation as well as of the Executive governmental institutions and programme. Without accountability there is no control, and if there is no control where is the legitimate seat of power?

The Maltese people have always cleverly understood their situation and their political leaders, and elected their representatives as they thought best served their national interest and aspirations. This bond has so far provided the necessary legitimacy for Governments to lead, for Parliament to legislate, and for people to follow. Legitimacy is essential because it glues this triangular relationship.

We need to strengthen our parliamentary institution, to enable it to deliver informed, objective, quality debates, addressing the relevant needs of our people and country. We need a Parliament which improves its effectiveness and its watchful scrutiny of the government of the day in the implementation of its programme and budgets. We need a more continuous open dialogue with society, using properly all the communications opportunities technology affords us today. All this is an urgent must for the democratic process to prosper and to keep the people together in their search to attain the common good whilst safeguarding a quality life for them and their families.

The Select Committee, the House unanimously appointed in July 2008, is a golden opportunity to realize all this and more.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louis Galea', with a horizontal line underneath it.

**HON LOUIS GALEA**  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

# 1. HOUSE BUSINESS

## 1.1 OVERVIEW

The second year of the 11<sup>th</sup> Legislature proved to be a very busy year for the Maltese Parliament. Its 69 Members met 110 times in plenary, meeting three times a week on average, and more frequently when debating the General Estimates for 2010. Adjournment was availed of on 89 occasions, alternating equally between Government and Opposition members. Throughout the year there were two calls for quorum, neither of which was upheld. Six Rulings were requested of the Speaker of the House during the course of the year. Throughout the year the House discussed and approved a number of motions including First Reading of Bills, private Members' motions, motions relating to the debate of the general estimates and two motions calling for the setting up of two new select committees of the House. The House also debated the private Member's motion on the need for legislation on climate change submitted by Hon Leo Brincat.

Other than attending and addressing the Parliament in plenary the Members also participated in a number of meetings of its committees, details of which can be found in the third section of this report. In addition to the six Standing Committees, the two Committees set up by virtue of the Auditor General and National Audit Office Act and the Development Planning Act were also convened in 2009. The House Select Committee on Strengthening Democracy took forward its work from 2008 and will now evaluate the reactions received to a public consultation launched towards the end of the year. In 2009, the House furthermore adopted two resolutions setting up two select committees, one on medically assisted procreation and the other on the re-codification and consolidation of Maltese laws. These two committees are expected to commence their work in 2010.

Parliamentary work, however, is not limited to the formal plenary and committee meetings held in the House. Other than the various meetings with foreign delegations and personalities held at the House of Representatives, the Speaker and the Members of Parliament took part in various inter-parliamentary conferences and meetings abroad. Details of the work of these inter-parliamentary fora and the attendance by Maltese MPs can be found in Section 4.

On 4 April the House met in a special sitting in order to appoint HE George Abela as the eighth President of Malta.

In 2009 the House of Representatives was also host to a considerable number of events, some of which have now become yearly events. Such activities include the EkoSkola Parliament, the Youth Parliament, the NSTF Mini European Assembly and the Parliament for Persons with Disability. As in previous years, Parliament commemorated the events of the *Sette Giugno* and opened its doors to the public for *Notte Bianca*. In addition to these regular events, Parliament hosted a number of other activities, including the celebration of Mediterranean Day, the Malta Encounter of the *Ulysse 2009* Voyage, and the Doha Colloquium on strengthening marriage and the family, amongst others. Details of these activities are found in Section 6 of this report.

## 1.2 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME

During 2009, 23 acts were enacted by Parliament, four of which were new acts and 17 amendment acts.

### 1.2.1. New legislation and objectives behind the Bills

- **Act I of 2009 – The Public Administration Act**

The object of this Bill is to affirm the values of public administration, to provide for their application throughout the public sector, and to provide for the organisation and management thereof.

- **Act II of 2009 – The Budget Measures Implementation Act**

The objects of this Bill are to implement various Budget measures and other administrative measures.

- **Act XV of 2009 – The Authority for Transport in Malta Act**

The object of this Bill is to provide for the establishment of an Authority responsible for land transport, sea transport and air transport. The Bill also makes consequential and related amendments to other legislation.

- **Act XIX of 2009 – The Appropriation (2010) Act**

This Bill provides for the application of a sum not exceeding €1,901,907,362 for the service of the Financial Year 2010 to meet expenditure under the Votes in the Schedule to the Bill.

- **Act XX of 2009 – The Second Appropriation (2009) Act**

The Bill provides for the application of a sum not exceeding €190,671,980 for the service of the Financial Year 2009 to meet expenditure under the Votes specified in the First Schedule to the Bill in addition to €1,698,946,008 appropriated by Act No. XI of 2008 and for the appropriation of a further €20 for the service of the financial year 2009 to repay an equivalent amount withdrawn from the Contingencies Fund during the financial year 2009 under the Votes specified in the Second Schedule of the Bill.

- **Act XXIII of 2009 – Services (Internal Market) Act**

The object of this Bill is to provide for the implementation of Directive 2006/123/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December, 2006, on services in the internal market.



### *1.2.2. Amendment Acts and objectives behind the Bills*

- **Act III of 2009 – The Various Laws (Amendment of Financial Provisions) Act**

The main object of this Bill is to amend various financial related provisions in various laws.

- **Act IV of 2009 – The Equality for Men and Women (Amendment) Act**

The object of this Bill is to amend the Equality for Men and Women Act, in line with Council Directive 2002/73/EC of the European Union.

- **Act V of 2009 – The Employment and Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act**

The object of this Bill is to amend the Employment and Industrial Relations Act in line with Council Directive 2002/73/EC of the European Union.

- **Act VI of 2009 – The Motor Vehicles Registration Tax (Amendment) Act**

The object of this Bill is to introduce a new motor vehicle registration tax and licensing fee system based on polluter pays concept.

- **Act VII of 2009 – The General Elections (Amendment) Act**

The object of this Bill is to make provision, in certain cases, for voting prior to polling day by persons eligible to vote at General Elections, at elections of Members of the European Parliament and at Local Council elections.

- **Act VIII of 2009 – The Broadcasting (Amendment) Act**

The object of this Bill is to amend the Broadcasting Act to enable the Broadcasting Authority to license satellite radio and television services.

- **Act IX of 2009 – The Copyright (Amendment) Act**

The object of this Bill is to render the Copyright Act compliant with the obligations emanating from the WIPO Copyright Treaty 1996 and the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty 1996.

- **Act X of 2009 – The Civil Code (Amendment) Act**

The object of this Bill is to reform the rent laws in order to establish social justice with the owners of leased tenements; in a phased manner it liberalises leases made before 1 June, 1995, and also lays the foundations for a lease market which would function properly and thus provide a suitable alternative for adequate and affordable accommodation. The saving clause in the transitory provisions for requisitioned property is made subject to the

government's on-going policy aimed at phasing out as soon as possible all Requisition Orders.

- **Act XI of 2009 – The Criminal Code (Amendment) Act**

The main object of the Bill is to amend the Criminal Code in order to further implement the 2005 Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism and the Council Framework Decision 2005/222/JHA on Attacks against Information Systems, to further penalise certain motivated conduct, and to make provision for the offence of piracy.

- **Act XII of 2009 – The Various Laws (Civil Matters) (Amendment) Act**

The objects of this Bill are to further amend the Code of Organization and Civil Procedure, following the amendments introduced by Acts XIV of 2006, VII of 2007 and XV of 2008, and also to amend the Civil Code.

- **Act XIII of 2009 – The Interpretation (Amendment) Act**

The Bill provides for the electronic publication of international instruments to which Malta is a contracting party and the recognition of the publications in the Official Journal and its electronic means of instruments of the European Union.

- **Act XIV of 2009 – The Consumer Affairs (Amendment) Act**

The object of this Bill is to amend the Consumer Affairs Act, in conformity with Directives 93/13/EEC and 2005/29/EC.

- **Act XVI of 2009 – The Local Councils (Amendment) Act**

The object of the Bill is to give effect to the proposals for Local Government Reform.

- **Act XVII of 2009 – The Various Financial Laws (Amendment) Act**

The main object of this Bill is to implement the provisions of Directive 2007/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 September 2007 amending Council Directive 92/49/EEC and Directives 2002/83/EC, 2004/39/EC, 2005/68/EC and 2006/48/EC as regards procedural rules and evaluation criteria for the prudential assessment of acquisitions and increase of holdings in the financial sector.

- **Act XVIII of 2009 – The Immigration (Amendment) Act**

The object of the Bill is to implement the provisions of Directive 2001/40/EC of the 28 May 2001 on the Mutual Recognition of Decisions on the Expulsion of Third Country Nationals.



- **Act XXI of 2009 – The Land Acquisition (Public Purposes) Ordinance (Amendment) Act**

The objects and reasons of this Bill are the amendment of the Ordinance for the purpose of providing a specific mechanism for the acquisition into public ownership of historical buildings for the purpose of safeguarding and preserving the historical and the cultural identity of Malta and the implementation of other amendments to the Ordinance, *inter alia* for the purpose of complying with judgements of the Constitutional Court.

- **Act XXII of 2009 – Lotteries and Other Games (Amendment) Act**

The main object of this Bill is to amend various provisions, in various laws, related to lotteries and gaming.

### *1.3 PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS*

3,163 parliamentary questions requiring an oral reply were raised and answered during the year under review, while 16 requiring a written reply, were also answered.

### *1.4 MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS*

The following six ministerial statements were made to the House in 2009:

- 26 January - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on his official visit to Germany between 19 and 22 January 2009;
- 3 March - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on the informal meeting of the Heads of Government of the European Union, held in Brussels on 1 March 2009;
- 23 March - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on the EU Council Meeting held in Brussels on 19 and 20 March 2009 on the current financial and economic situation, on energy and on climate change;
- 20 April - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on the irregular immigrants taken on board the MV PINAR-E off the coast of Lampedusa on 16 April 2009;
- 6 July - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on the EU Council Meeting on 18 and 19 June 2009 and on a meeting with the Prime Minister of Sweden Frederik Reinfeldt, President of the European Council;
- 4 November - Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, on the EU Council meeting held in Brussels, on 29 and 30 October 2009 and on a meeting with the Prime Minister of Spain, José Luis Zapatero on 2 November 2009.

### *1.5 PETITIONS*

During 2009 the following two petitions were deposited in Parliament:

- 25 March – Hon Justyne Caruana on behalf of 4,854 signatories requesting assurance for early diagnostic and treatment services for breast cancer;
- 4 November – Hon Silvio Parnis on behalf of residents in the south of Malta regarding the problem of black dust in the area.

### *1.6 MOTIONS*

The Office of the Clerk received 56 motions during 2009. 27 of these were in respect of First Readings of Bills. Four motions were private Members' motions.

Other than the considerable number of motions for First Reading of Bills received and a number of motions regarding the approval of the estimates of various authorities and entities falling within government, a number of other important motions were deposited in Parliament during the year under review. These included a motion on certain procedures in the House, a motion on the appointment of the President of Malta and two motions on the setting up of two Select Committees of the House, one on medically assisted procreation and the other on the re-codification and consolidation of laws.

The four private Members' motions received were the following:

- Extension of St John's Co-Cathedral Museum - submitted by Hon Joseph Muscat, Leader of the Opposition (this motion was subsequently withdrawn by Leave of House)
- Energy Tariffs - Revocation of Legal Notices 330, 331 and 338 of 2008 - submitted by Hon Joe Mizzi
- Traffic management in Anton Buttigieg Street, Żejtun – submitted by Hon Helena Dalli
- Extension of Delimara Power Station - submitted by Hon Joseph Muscat, Leader of the Opposition.

### *1.7 PAPERS LAID*

In 2009, a total of 2,221 documents were laid on the Table of the House, 380 of which were legal notices.

The information tabled by the Speaker included replies to parliamentary questions submitted to Mr Speaker, the Annual Review of the House of Representatives for 2008, the second interim report on the work of the Select Committee set up by motion 34 of 16 July 2008, correspondence received from the Ombudsman, reports of the National Audit Office, and copies of sentences of the Constitutional Courts.



## *1.8 DIVISIONS*

Divisions called and taken in 2009 totalled 51.

The casting vote by the Speaker of the House was required and cast on two occasions.

## *1.9 PARLIAMENTARY WHIPS*

Whips are Members of Parliament appointed by each political party represented in the House of Representatives to facilitate their Party's contribution to parliamentary business. One of the primary responsibilities of party whips is to ensure the regular presence in the House of their Parliamentary Group especially when votes are taken and when divisions are called.

Hon David Agius is the Government Whip whilst Hon Joe Mizzi is the Opposition Whip.



*Hon David Agius*



*Hon Joe Mizzi*



*Swearing in of HE George Abela  
as the eighth President of the Republic of Malta*



*Members of Parliament exchange New Year's greetings with  
HE Edward Fenech Adami, President of Malta*



*HE Ban Ki Moon, United Nations Secretary General,  
addressing the House of Representatives*



## 2. SELECT COMMITTEES

### 2.1 SELECT COMMITTEE ON STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY

The Select Committee on Strengthening Democracy was set up in terms of Standing Order 121, by way of Motion 34 moved by the Prime Minister, seconded by Hon Angelo Farrugia, on 16 July 2008 and approved unanimously by the House. The Standing Order states that:

“The House may appoint a Select Committee of its Members for the purpose of investigating any subject. It shall be competent for the Speaker to be appointed a Member of any Select Committee of the House.”

The resolution established the main themes to be considered by the Committee:

- strengthening of Parliament
- strengthening transparency and accountability, including public financing of political parties, the Commission against Corruption, the Office of the Ombudsman, conflicts of interest of the Members of Parliament, Parliamentary Secretaries and Ministers
- strengthening the Constitution.

The Members of the Committee are as follows:

**Chairperson** Hon Louis Galea, Speaker of the House of Representatives

**Substitute** Hon Carmelo Abela, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives

**Government Members** Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Leader of the House  
Hon Austin Gatt, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications  
Hon Francis Zammit Dimech

**Substitutes** Hon Charlò Bonnici  
Hon Beppe Fenech Adami  
Hon Michael Frendo

**Opposition Members** Hon Angelo Farrugia  
Hon Charles Mangion  
Hon Karmenu Vella

**Substitutes** Hon Evarist Bartolo  
Hon Michael Falzon  
Hon George Vella

Further to the six meetings and the public consultation and hearing during which the public was invited to submit its views on the issue of strengthening Parliament held in 2008, this Committee took forward its work during the year under review.

As stipulated by the parliamentary resolution setting up the Select Committee, the Speaker made a second interim report to the House on 14 December 2009, where he reported that the Committee met a further seven times in 2009. In the course of these meetings, the Committee finalised its recommendations on the strengthening of the Office of the Ombudsman. The House will eventually be presented with a bill incorporating these recommendations.

With regard to the other themes falling within the remit of the Select Committee, the Speaker reported that:

- A Working Group of the Committee is finalising a report on the strengthening of Parliament and the updating of its Standing Orders;
- A public consultation exercise on the electoral system and process, expiring on 18 December 2009, was launched;
- The Committee received from Government a document on the use of blind trusts by Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries;
- Discussions on the strengthening of the Commission against Corruption are still underway; and
- The Committee is still to consider public broadcasting in Malta and revisions to the Constitution.

## *2.2 SELECT COMMITTEE ON MEDICALLY ASSISTED PROCREATION*

On 14 December the House approved Motion 113 moved by Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, calling for the setting up of a Select Committee of the House tasked with examining the practice of medically assisted procreation in Malta, particularly in the light of a lack of a relevant regulatory structure. In terms of Motion 113 the Committee is to be chaired by Hon Jean Pierre Farrugia and composed of a Member from each side of the House.

The Committee is to report to the House within three months of the motion's submission.

## *2.3 SELECT COMMITTEE ON RE-CODIFICATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF LAWS*

Also on 14 December, the House approved a second motion moved by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Motion 114, calling for the setting up of a Select Committee of the House tasked with the simplification of Maltese Laws by way of re-codification and consolidation. This Committee is to be chaired by Hon Franco Debono with two Members, one from each side of the House.

The Committee is to report to the House on its progress every six months, and regularly produce special reports regarding the various aspects of its mandate.





*Meeting of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee with European Commissioner Jacques Barrot, chaired by Hon Michael Frendo*



*Hon Louis Galea, Speaker of the House of Representatives, meeting with HE Abdelwaheb Abdullah, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tunisia*



*Meeting of the Public Accounts Committee, chaired by Hon Charles Mangion, with a delegation from the Senate of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic*



*Hon Louis Galea, together with Members of the House, receiving a delegation led by HE Xi Jinping, Vice President of the People's Republic of China*



*Hon Louis Galea, Speaker of the House of Representatives, receiving HE Douglas Kmiec, US Ambassador to Malta*



*Hon Louis Galea, Speaker of the House of Representatives, meeting with the newly elected Maltese Members of the European Parliament*



### 3. STANDING COMMITTEES

The Standing Committees of the House, established with the cooperation and approval of both sides of the House in 1995, are of particular relevance in the workings of the House of Representatives. The Standing Committees, which are an extension of the House itself, have provided that professional touch by which various issues are discussed.

The Standing Committees have furthermore introduced an element of consultation with civil society. Technical experts and representatives from various organisations are invited to discuss and contribute through their expertise on particular subjects. More than that, meetings of the Standing Committees are open to the public and the media and are streamed on the parliamentary website, thus facilitating an even closer relationship between the people and their elected representatives in Parliament.

Committees may submit recommendations to the House for its consideration.

The House has six Standing Committees, namely,

- Standing Committee on House Business
- Standing Committee on Privileges
- Standing Committee on Public Accounts
- Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs
- Standing Committee on Social Affairs
- Standing Committee for Consideration of Bills.

The Development Planning Act (1992) (Cap. 356) and the Auditor General and National Audit Office Act (1997) (Cap. 396), provide for the setting up of the Standing Committee on Development Planning and the National Audit Office Accounts Committee respectively.

#### 3.1 STANDING COMMITTEE ON HOUSE BUSINESS

The Standing Committee on House Business was set up by way of Motion 9 of 12 May 2008 and is composed as follows:



*Hon Louis Galea*

**Chairperson** Hon Louis Galea, Speaker of the House of Representatives

**Members** Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Leader of the House

Hon David Agius

Hon Frederick Azzopardi

Hon Angelo Farrugia

Hon Joe Mizzi

“120C. (1) The Standing Committee on House Business shall have power to:

(a) distribute Bills and other business among the Standing Committees appointed in accordance with the provisions of Standing Orders 96, 120A and 120B;

(b) (i) determine the number of sittings to be allotted for the consideration of a Bill by a Standing Committee;

(ii) allocate business to each sitting of a Standing Committee; and

(iii) determine the time when any business, if not previously concluded, shall be concluded by a Standing Committee; and

(c) consider all matters of procedure and business of the House, and report its opinion thereon to the House from time to time.

(2) A report of all resolutions carried by the Standing Committee on House Business shall be made to the House at the next sitting after a resolution is carried, immediately after Question time, and shall be recorded in the Minutes of the proceedings of the House.

(3) (a) The Standing Committee on House Business shall be constituted of the Leader of the House, two members nominated by the Prime Minister and two members nominated by the Leader of the Opposition.

(b) Three members in attendance shall constitute a quorum.

(4) Substitute members shall also be appointed for each member of the Standing Committee on House Business and the provisions of paragraph (4) of Standing Order 120B shall also apply.

(5) The Standing Committee on House Business shall be chaired by the Speaker who shall not vote unless on any question the votes are equally divided, in which case he shall have and exercise a casting vote.”

The principal task of this Committee is to organise the business of the House by distributing Bills and other work to the other Standing Committees and the House, establishing and scheduling the number of sittings to be allocated to parliamentary debates and to consider other procedural issues.

The Standing Committee on House Business was convened 14 times in 2009. Details of the meetings held in 2009 can be found in Annex 2 to this report.

### *3.2 STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVILEGES*

The Standing Committee on Privileges was set up by way of Motion 17 of 2 June 2008. It is composed as follows:





*Hon Louis Galea*

**Chairperson** Hon Louis Galea, Speaker of the House of Representatives

**Members** Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Leader of the House

Hon Owen Bonnici

Hon Angelo Farrugia

Hon Beppe Fenech Adami

Hon Francis Zammit Dimech

- “120D. (1) The Standing Committee on Privileges shall have power to consider cases referred to it by the Speaker or by the House and to take such decisions and to make such recommendations as provided in the Standing Orders and in the House of Representatives (Privileges and Powers) Ordinance or in any law from time to time substituting the said Ordinance;
- (2) The Standing Committee shall be constituted of the Leader of the House, two Members nominated by the Prime Minister and two members nominated by the Leader of the Opposition;
- (3) The provisions of paragraphs (3), (4) and (5) of Standing Order 120C shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to the Standing Committee on Privileges;
- (4) The Standing Committee on Privileges shall, without prejudice to the provision of the Standing Order 164, have power and authority to summon witnesses and order the production of documents before it. The Standing Committee on Privileges may request the attendance of the Attorney General or of his representative, who may also be authorized to participate in the proceedings, but he shall in no case have a vote thereat.”

The Standing Committee on Privileges met four times in 2009. During these meetings the Members of the Committee continued discussing an allegation of breach of privilege raised in 2008 by Hon Alfred Sant against Hon Austin Gatt, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications, on which the Speaker had ruled that there was a *prima facie* breach.

During the last meeting, the Speaker informed the Committee that following discussions between the two parts a solution acceptable to them both was found. In view of this, the Speaker called on the Committee to consider the case as closed and that its work be deemed as complete. A declaration acceptable to both Hon Alfred Sant and Hon Austin Gatt was tabled in the House by Mr Speaker on 24 March.

Details of the meetings of the Standing Committee on Privileges held in 2009 can be found in Annex 3 to this report.

### 3.3 STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts was set up by Motion 16 of 2 June and is composed as follows:



*Hon Charles Mangion*

**Chairperson** Hon Charles Mangion

**Members** Hon Robert Arrigo  
Hon Helena Dalli  
Hon Tonio Fenech, Minister of Finance, the  
Economy and Investment  
Hon Austin Gatt, Minister for Infrastructure,  
Transport and Communications  
Hon Philip Mifsud  
Hon Alfred Sant

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts is chaired by a Member nominated by the Opposition. This follows the system adopted in the UK House of Commons.

Standing Order 120E outlines the powers and the composition of the Public Accounts Committee as follows:

“120E. (1) The Standing Committee on Public Accounts shall have the power to:

- (a) inquire into matters relating to public accounts referred to it by the House, a Minister or the Director of Audit;
- (b) inquire into expenditure as is referred to in subsection (3) of section 103 and section 104 of the Constitution;
- (c) examine the accounts of statutory authorities, including parastatal organisations, whose accounts are presented to Parliament;
- (d) request the Director of Audit to submit memoranda on any matter where a request for such submission is made by at least three members of the Standing Committee;
- (e) consider memoranda submitted by the Director of Audit, made upon a request made to him in virtue of paragraph (d) hereof, or on his own initiative;
- (f) examine reports, and related documents, made by the Director of Audit;
- (g) report to the House on any accounts, reports or documents referred in the previous paragraphs hereof;
- (h) report to the House on any change that it considers desirable in the form of the accounts, on the manner in which they are kept, on revenue or expenditure or the control of money; and
- (i) discuss Malta’s monetary policy and receive reports thereon from the Governor of the Central Bank of Malta.

(2) The Public Accounts Committee shall consist of not more than seven members of whom four shall constitute a quorum. The members shall be



chosen so as fairly to represent the House in general and the proportion of Government and Opposition members in particular;

(3) The provisions of paragraphs (3) and (4) of Standing Order 120B shall apply to the Public Accounts Committee;

(4) One of the members nominated by the Leader of the Opposition and so designated by him after consultation with the Leader of the House shall be appointed Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. The Chairman shall have an original vote but shall not have a casting vote.”

In 2009 the Public Accounts Committee met eleven times. The Committee started discussing the Annual Report of the Auditor General for the Year 2007, with particular reference to the Performance Audit Follow-up Acquisition of Property by Government and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment. The Committee also discussed the grant scheme for tourism enterprises; consultants/advisers on a part-time basis; arrears of revenue with particular interest to Income Tax and VAT; statement on the current status of the accrual accounting system in government departments; the NAO performance audit report on renewable energy sources and energy efficiency in Malta, as well as the monetary policy of the Central Bank which was presented by the Governor of the Central Bank of Malta. Various officials from the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment and from the Office of the Prime Minister, participated in these meetings together with other officials from the respective ministries.

Details of the meetings held in 2009 can be found in Annex 4 to this report.

### *3.4 STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS*

The Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs was set up by Motion 18 of 2 June 2008 and is composed as follows:



*Hon Michael Frendo*

**Chairperson** Hon Michael Frendo

**Members** Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Hon Francis Agius  
Hon Charlò Bonnici  
Hon Luciano Busuttil  
Hon Leo Brincat  
Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca  
Hon Beppe Fenech Adami  
Hon George Vella

“120F. (1) The Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs shall consist of not more than nine members of whom five shall constitute a quorum. The members shall be chosen so as fairly to represent the House in general and the proportion of Government and Opposition members in particular:

Provided that the Government members appointed on the Standing Committee shall include the Minister for Foreign Affairs who shall have the right to participate and to vote:

Provided further that members of the European Parliament elected from Malta shall have the right to participate in the work of the Standing Committee but shall not have the right to vote or to move motions and amendments.

(2) The Chairperson of the Committee shall be nominated by the Leader of the House from amongst the members representing the Government side, provided that any member of the Committee may, at any time, be appointed by the Leader of the House to act as Chairperson in case of the unavoidable absence of the Chairperson.

(3) The Standing Committee shall have the power to appoint select sub-committees and to delegate any of its functions to such sub-committees.

Provided that the composition of any sub-committee appointed by the Standing Committee shall be determined by the Standing Committee so as fairly to represent the House in general and the proportion of Government and Opposition members in particular.

(4) Subject to what is stated in this Standing Order, the provisions of paragraphs (3) and (4) of Standing Order 120B shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs.

(5) The Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs shall have the following functions:

- (i) to deal with matters relating to foreign and European Union affairs which may be referred to it by the House or by the Standing Committee on House Business;
- (ii) in the context of European Union issues and measures to be taken by the Council of Ministers of the European Union, to scrutinise on its own initiative:

- (a) any proposals under the Community treaties for legislation by the Council or the Council acting jointly with the European Parliament;
- (b) any document which is published for submission to the European Council, the Council or the European Central Bank;
- (c) any proposal for a common strategy, a joint action or a common position under Title V of the Treaty on European Union which is prepared for submission to the Council or to the European Council;
- (d) any proposal for a common position, framework, decision or a convention under Title VI of the Treaty on European Union which is prepared for submission to the Council;



- (e) any document (not falling within (b), (c) or (d) above) which is published by one Union institution and which does not relate exclusively to the consideration of any proposal for legislation; and
  - (f) any other document relating to European Union matters placed on the Table of the House by any Minister; and
- (iii) to represent the House of Representatives of Malta at the Conference of European Affairs Committees (COSAC).”

During 2009 the Foreign and European Affairs Committee (FEAC) met 17 times in plenary.

The FEAC held meetings with two Vice-Presidents of the Commission, Commissioner Jacques Barrot and Commissioner Günter Verheugen. With Mr Barrot, Commissioner responsible for Justice, Freedom and Security, the Members had the opportunity to discuss EU immigration policy and the situation in Malta with regard to irregular immigrants. The debate with Mr Verheugen, Commissioner responsible for Enterprise and Industry, concerned the international economic and financial crisis as well as the European Recovery Plan and other corrective measures.

The Committee also held talks with a number of visiting ministers. With Bernard Kouchner, French Foreign Minister, Members discussed bilateral relations, irregular migration and EU-Mediterranean issues; with Miroslav Lajcak, Foreign Minister of Slovakia, the Committee focused on the Lisbon Treaty, bilateral relations and economic developments following EU membership; with Ewa Bjorling, Minister of Trade of Sweden, the Members referred to trade issues that were on the agenda of the Swedish Presidency with regard to the EU internal market and to international trade; while with Ahmad Soboh, Deputy Foreign Minister of Palestine, the situation in the Middle East was the focus of the meeting.

The FEAC invited and welcomed for an exchange of views a number of parliamentary delegations. With the delegation from the Federal Republic of Germany led by Mr Ernst-Reinhard Beck, they discussed bilateral cooperation and environment policy; with the delegation from the Republic of Korea led by Mr Lee Yong-Kyung they discussed relations between North and South Korea, alternative sources of energy and the international financial crisis; and with the European Affairs Committee of the Czech Republic led by Mr Ludek Sefzig, the committee focussed on the Lisbon Treaty and EU affairs. The committee also met with the European Integration Committee of Croatia led by Mr Neven Mimica, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committee on European Integration of the Croatian Parliament, where they referred to the progress made by Croatia towards EU membership and the challenges that laid ahead, and with a delegation from the State of Bavaria led by Prof Ursula Männle, they spoke about the effect of the Lisbon Treaty on national and regional parliaments and on environmental policy.

Moreover, the FEAC held briefings with (i) the Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, on his visit to Lebanon, Syria and Jordan in April 2009, (ii) with Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Mr Richard Cachia Caruana, Malta’s Permanent Representative to the EU, on the Commission’s Work and Legislative Programme for 2009 and the work of Malta’s EU Representation Office in Brussels and (iii) the Hon Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici, Minister of Justice and Home Affairs, on illegal immigration issues.

The Committee also received HE Mr Amr Moussa, Secretary General of the Arab League, with a view to discussing the situation in the Middle East, Mediterranean issues and the EU-Arab League dialogue – resulting from a Malta Meeting of EU-Arab League Foreign Ministers held in February 2008 – and the opening of the EU-Arab League Liaison Office in Malta in 2009.

During 2009, the Chairman of the FEAC met a number of personalities, amongst them, Benita Ferrero Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy; HE Mr Suleiman Al-Shahoumi, International Secretary of the General People's Congress of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya; HE Mr Kamalesh Sharma, Secretary General of the Commonwealth; HE Mr Douglas Kmiec, US Ambassador; HE Mr Zhang Keyuan Ambassador of China; HE Mr Bernd Braun, Ambassador of Germany; HE Ms Louise Jane Stanton, UK High Commissioner; HE Mr Robbert Jan Gabriëlse, Ambassador of the Netherlands and HE Mr Gideon Meir, Ambassador of Israel.

The FEAC in plenary also discussed the issue of subsidiarity and proportionality with regard to legislative proposals drawn up by the Commission. The Committee also participated in the subsidiarity and proportionality test conducted by COSAC with regard to the Proposal for a Council Framework Decision on the right to interpretation and to translation proceedings (COM (2009) 338) in preparation for the new responsibilities that would be assigned to national parliaments through the Lisbon Treaty.

The Foreign and European Affairs Committee, acting in its role to scrutinise the EU pipeline *acquis*, has formally expressed its concern with the Commission against a 'one-size-fits-all' approach in the drawing up of certain legislative proposals. The Committee called upon the Commission to retain at all times the distinct realities and specificities of EU member states in particular small island member states, such as Malta, which are faced with particular intrinsic challenges and therefore may carry a disproportionate burden in implementing EU legislation and proposals.

Details of the meetings held in 2009 can be found in Annex 5 to this report.

### *3.4.1 Visits Abroad*

Hon Michael Frendo, Chairman of the FEAC, visited Libya in March, at the invitation of HE Suleiman Al-Shahoumi, International Secretary of the General People's Congress of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. He also held talks with Abdulati Obeidi, Secretary for European Affairs, and with Dr Saleh Ibrahim, Director of the Academy for Graduate Studies.

In June 2009 the Chairman of the FEAC was invited by the Hon Miloslav Vlcek, Speaker of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, to join a delegation of Members of the EU National Parliaments to Cairo, Gaza, Jerusalem, Ramallah and Amman.

In July, the Hon Dr Michael Frendo led a delegation of the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs made up of the Hon Francis Agius, the Hon Charlò Bonnici, the Hon Leo Brincat, the Hon Luciano Busuttil and the Hon George Vella to the People's Republic of China.

The delegation sought to enhance the longstanding good relations and close cooperation between Malta and the People's Republic of China by exchanging views with Mr Zha



Peixin, Vice Chairman, and Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress, Mr Zhang Ruofei, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the People's Congress of Qingdao in Shandong Province, Mr Li Jianping, Vice President of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and representatives of the China Foreign Affairs University.

The economic relations between Malta and China were discussed with Mr Yu Ping, Vice Chairman of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade and with Capt Wei Jiafu, CEO of the China Ocean Shipping Company (COSCO).

A delegation of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee comprising the Chairman, Hon Michael Frendo and Hon George Vella, took part in the XLII Ordinary Meeting of COSAC in October in Stockholm. The main issues discussed during the Conference were the state of play of the Swedish Presidency Priorities, the climate change challenge, the openness and transparency of EU institutions and in national parliaments when discussing EU matters, and the Stockholm Programme.

### *3.4.2 Sub-Committees*

In accordance with paragraph 3 of Standing Order 120F, four Working Groups were set up in 2008:

#### **Working Group 1**



***Hon Michael Frendo***

**Chairperson** Hon Michael Frendo

**Members** Hon Luciano Busuttil  
Hon Jean Pierre Farrugia  
Hon Beppe Fenech Adami  
Hon George Vella

The objective of this Working Group is to analyse the EU *pipeline acquis* in preliminary scrutiny, that is, to identify those documents of political or legal importance and to reach a decision on whether a particular document should be cleared without reserve or referred for debate at the plenary FEAC, Working Group 2, Working Group 3, Working Group 4 or the Social Affairs Committee.

## Working Group 2



*Hon Jean Pierre  
Farrugia*

**Chairperson** Hon Jean Pierre Farrugia

**Members** Minister responsible for the *acquis*  
Hon Francis Agius  
Hon Roderick Galdes  
Hon Gavin Gulia  
Member *ad hoc* from Government  
Member *ad hoc* from Opposition

Working Group 2 addresses issues related to economic and monetary affairs, taxation, transport and energy, budget, internal market and customs union.

## Working Group 3



*Hon Beppe Fenech  
Adami*

**Chairperson** Hon Beppe Fenech Adami

**Members** Minister responsible for the *acquis*  
Hon Joseph Falzon  
Hon Noel Farrugia  
Hon Joseph Sammut  
Member *ad hoc* from Government  
Member *ad hoc* from Opposition

The areas of competence of Working Group 3 include health, development and humanitarian aid, rural development, agriculture and fisheries, and justice and home affairs.

## Working Group 4



*Hon Charlò Bonnici*

**Chairperson** Hon Charlò Bonnici

**Members** Minister responsible for the *acquis*  
Hon Chris Agius  
Hon Evarist Bartolo  
Hon Francis Zammit Dimech  
Member *ad hoc* from Government  
Member *ad hoc* from Opposition

The areas of competence of Working Group 4 include research, employment and culture, consumer protection, environment and regional policy.



The FEAC, in Plenary and through its Working Groups, also has the power to scrutinise on its own initiative legislative proposals or documents that emanate from European Union institutions and measures to be taken by the Council of Ministers.

### *3.4.3 Meetings of the Working Groups*

Working Group I held eight sessions during 2009 to scrutinise 456 legislative and non-legislative proposals including reports, staff working documents, Green Papers and White Papers. Of these documents, 410 were cleared by Working Group I, 39 documents were referred to the ministries concerned for further information whereas seven documents were cleared by the Foreign and European Affairs Committee and by Working Group III following further discussions with the ministers concerned.

### *3.5 STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS*

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs was set up by Motion 19 of 2 June 2008 and is composed as follows:



*Hon Edwin Vassallo*

**Chairperson** Hon Edwin Vassallo

**Members** Hon Frederick Azzopardi  
Hon Justyne Caruana  
Hon Michael Farrugia  
Hon Michael Gonzi  
Hon Stephen Spiteri  
Hon Anthony Zammit

In addition to Motion 19, Motions 53 and 71 determined the current list of Committee Members, as shown above.

Standing Order 120G:

“120G. (1) The Committee for Social Affairs shall deal with all matters relating to social policy, including social assistance and family matters, which may be referred to it by the House or by the Standing Committee on House Business.

(2) The provisions of paragraphs (2) and (3) of Standing Order 120E shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to the Social Affairs Committee.”

During the course of 2009 Members of the Social Affairs Committee (SAC) continued to discuss family issues in line with the work programme agreed upon for the 11<sup>th</sup> legislature. In 2009 the SAC was convened 42 times and dealt with matters related to the role of the family in Maltese society. Details of the meetings held in 2009 can be found in Annex 6 to this report.

During the year under review, the Committee published the following reports:

- *More social inclusion measures translate into more measures against poverty: Children fare worst* – the first report published in this legislature dealt with relative poverty and concluded how children are worst affected. The Committee invited Dr Angela Abela (psychologist) and Rev Dr Charles Tabone (sociologist) to brief it about the prevailing situation and to put forward proposals.
- *Education and Prevention, Responsibility and Loyalty - The best national strategy for sexual health.* The Committee compiled this report following meetings and presentations given by Dr Philip Carabot, Director of the GU Clinic, Dr Charmaine Gauci, Director, Health Promotion Department and Dr Anna Vella, Sexual Health Educator. The Committee concluded and agreed that the national strategy for sexual health should give a clear message on the following three main values:
  - education and prevention;
  - being responsible; and
  - being faithful.
- *Update on the latest ethical and moral considerations relating to assisted procreation.* This document updated the detailed report published by the Social Affairs Committee during the 10<sup>th</sup> legislature. It was compiled and agreed upon after the Committee held meetings with Rev Prof Emmanuel Agius, Dean of the Faculty of Theology. Prof Agius also sits on the Bioethics National Committee and on the European Group of Ethics and New Technologies under the auspices of the President of the European Commission. This document identifies three important issues related to assisted procreation:
  - which couples should be eligible to obtain assisted procreation;
  - freezing of embryos;
  - donation of gametes by third persons.

These reports, which include a number of recommendations, have been tabled in Parliament by the Chairman of the Social Affairs Committee.

Moreover, another report dealing with ‘The effect of fatherlessness on children’ has been issued for public consultation. This exercise will continue in 2010. Following meetings with Family Court officials and a number of separated persons, the Committee is now in the process of drafting another report dealing with issues related to the Family Court and how to make this Court more ‘children friendly’.

The Committee also held a number of meetings wherein family and social issues were discussed, namely gambling, alcohol and drug addiction, and the negative repercussions of these problems on the family.

Other meetings held in 2009 dealt with the importance of the relationship between the couple. Members acknowledged the importance of education as a factor leading to a better relationship in the family. Mr Martin Scicluna from the Today Public Policy Institute briefed the Committee on the document entitled ‘For Better and for Worse – Marriage after legal separation’, where the Diocesan Youth Commission presented the memorandum entitled ‘Youth on Family and Marriage’.



Other subjects on the Committee's agenda included the need for further research on family issues, people with disability in the family, the elderly and the family, the influence of the media on the family and the fertility rate in today's society.

During the year under review, the Committee visited Dar Gużeppla Debono in Għajnsielem, Gozo, the Dun Manwel Attard school in Wardija, the detention centres at Ta' Kandja and Lyster Barracks in Hal Far; and the YMCA Drop-in Centre in Valletta.

Details of the meetings held in 2009 can be found in Annex 6 to this report.

### *3.6 STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF BILLS*

The Standing Committee for the Consideration of Bills was set up by Motion 20 of 2 June 2008 and is composed as follows:



***Hon Francis  
Zammit Dimech***

**Chairperson** Hon Francis Zammit Dimech

**Members** Seven Members, four Government Members including the Chairperson, and three Opposition members appointed according to the Bill under discussion

The principal task of the Committee for the Consideration of Bills is to consider Bills referred to it by the House after the conclusion of the debate on the Second Reading stage. The work of the Committee is regulated by Standing Order 120B:

“120B. (1) In addition to the Standing Committees listed in Standing Order 120A, the House may, on motion made after notice, appoint such Standing Committee as may be necessary for the consideration of Bills or other business committed or referred by the House to a Standing Committee.

(2) A motion as is referred to in paragraph (1) of this Standing Order shall:

(a) fix the number of members to serve on the Standing Committee which is to be so composed in such manner as appears practicable to the House as fairly to represent the House in general and the proportion of Government and Opposition members in the House in particular; and

(b) name the Chairman who shall preside the Standing Committee.

(3) Each side of the House shall nominate the members representing it on a Standing Committee, and shall also nominate alternate members for any members so appointed. The members and alternate members representing the Government side shall be nominated by the Leader of the House while the members and alternate members representing the Opposition side shall be nominated by the Leader of the Opposition. The name of members and alternate members so nominated and appointed by the House shall be recorded in the Minutes of the sitting.

(4) Each side of the House may substitute any member or alternate member nominated by it in accordance with paragraph (3) hereof to represent it on a Standing Committee. Such substitution shall only have effect after the Speaker is notified therewith. The Speaker shall, at the first available opportunity, notify the House, or, if the House is in recess, the Standing Committee on House Business.

(5) Government Bills referred to a Standing Committee shall have precedence over the other business of the Standing Committee and shall unless otherwise ordered by the House, be considered in such order as the Standing Committee on House Business may determine.”

The Standing Committee for the Consideration of Bills met 23 times in 2009 to discuss in committee stage Bills which had been referred to it by a resolution of the House. 18 Bills were discussed, approved and referred back to the House for Third Reading.

### *3.7 NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE*

The National Audit Office Accounts Committee was set up by Motion 21 of 2 June 2008 in accordance with Part IV of the National Audit Office Act as follows:

- “13. There shall be a Committee to be styled the National Audit Office Accounts Committee (hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”) which shall be composed as follows:
- (i) the member of the House of Representatives who is for the time being Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Representatives or such other committee of the said House from time to time replacing such Committee;
  - (ii) the Minister responsible for parliamentary affairs (hereinafter referred to as “the Leader of the House of Representatives”);
  - (iii) three members of the House of Representatives appointed by the said House upon a motion by the Leader of the House of Representatives, as to two members from among members supporting the Government and as to the remaining member from among the members in Opposition.
14. The Committee shall from time to time but not less often than once a year present to the House of Representatives (through the Leader of the House of



Representatives) a report of its activities and the report of its examination of any estimates prepared by the Auditor General.

15. The Committee shall elect a chairman from among its members, and may regulate its own proceedings.
16. Upon the dissolution of the House of Representatives the Committee shall be deemed to be dissolved until it is next reconstituted after the House next meets. Where upon the dissolution of the House of Representatives the sum to be established for the purposes of paragraph 8 of Part III is not so established or the House has not after the end of a financial year established the said sum, the Auditor General shall be entitled to expend, each month, a sum equivalent to one twelfth of the sum or sums established for the previous financial year, until the said sum is so established.
17. The validity of any proceedings of the Committee shall not be affected by any vacancy among its members or by any defect in the appointment or nomination of any of its members.”

It is composed as follows:



*Hon Tonio Borg*

**Chairperson** Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Leader of the House

**Members** Hon Charles Mangion, Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee  
Hon Chris Agius  
Hon Philip Mifsud  
Hon Jesmond Mugliett

The National Audit Office Accounts Committee met three times in 2009. In its first meeting, the Committee discussed the NAO Report for 2008 and the NAO Estimates for the Financial Year 2009. In its second meeting, the Committee discussed a resolution on the transfer of Government property to Nylon Knitting Ltd., whilst during its last meeting for 2009, the Committee agreed to withdraw the same resolution as further discussions between Malta Enterprise and Nylon Knitting Limited were necessary.

Details of the meetings held in 2009 can be found in Annex 8 to this report.

### *3.8 DEVELOPMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE*

The Development Planning Committee was set up by Motion 57 of 30 September 2008 in terms of Article 17B of the Development Planning Act as follows:

“17B. (1) There shall be a Standing Committee on Development Planning which shall consist of five members, one of whom shall be the Minister, who shall also be the Committee’s Chairman, and four other members

appointed by the House, of whom two shall be members supporting the Government and the other two shall be members from the Opposition.

(2) Any development plan referred to the House of Representatives in terms of this Act shall be first referred to the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee shall review any such plan referred to it as aforesaid and shall recommend to the House whether the plan should be approved, with or without amendments, or rejected. The Standing Committee may also discuss any report referred to it by the Minister relating to the structure plan or any review thereof.

(3) When notice of a motion, as is referred to in article 22(2), is given by the Minister, that motion shall be referred to the Standing Committee of the House, and the said Standing Committee shall discuss the said motion and report thereon to the House.

(4) Not later than one month after a notice as is referred to in subarticle (3) has been referred to the Standing Committee of the House, the said Standing Committee shall discuss the structure plan or any review thereof, and shall, not later than one month after the said plan or review thereof has been referred to it, report thereon to the House:

Provided that where the said Standing Committee fails to report to the House within the said period of one month, the House may pass on to discuss the motion.

(5) Where the report of the Standing Committee on a motion is unanimous, the House shall proceed to vote on such motion and on any amendments that are proposed in the said report without debate.”

The Committee is composed as follows:



*Hon Lawrence Gonzi*

**Chairperson** Hon Lawrence Gonzi, Prime Minister

**Members** Hon Charles Buhagiar  
Hon Franco Debono  
Hon Joseph Falzon  
Hon Roderick Galdes

The Development Planning Committee did not meet in 2009.



## **4. INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

An important aspect of the work of the House of Representatives is establishing contacts with other parliamentarians.

This aim is reached, other than by receiving foreign delegations and visitors to the Parliament, when the Speaker and the Members of Parliament participate in inter-parliamentary meetings organised by various international organisations.

### *4.1 OUTGOING VISITS BY MR SPEAKER*

On 27 and 28 February, the Speaker, Hon Louis Galea, attended the Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments in Paris, France. The topics discussed in the conference were the institutional future of the EU and the implementation by national parliaments of the relevant clauses of the Lisbon Treaty, the involvement of parliaments in crisis management in a European context, the preparation of the parliamentary dimension of the Presidency of the EU and the Future of Europe for 2030.

On 6 and 7 May the Speaker, Hon Louis Galea, participated in the meeting of the United Nations Committee on the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People which took place in Cyprus. The aim of the conference was to emphasise the role of parliamentarians and inter-parliamentary organisations in providing information to the public, policy formulation and support on a fair and peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian issue. In his address, Hon Galea called on inter-parliamentary assemblies to effectively coordinate their work in finding a solution to the Middle East crisis and stressed that parliamentary diplomacy had an important role to play in this respect. Hon George Vella, Chairman of the Committee on the Middle East of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, also addressed the conference.

Between 2 and 4 June Hon Galea took part in the commemoration of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first free elections in Poland. The event took place at the Polish parliament in Warsaw. The Speakers of the two Polish Chambers presided over the event. The various Speakers of European parliaments were addressed by Lech Walesa, founder and leader of Solidarnosc movement, and Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the first non-Communist and democratically elected Prime Minister of Poland. Personalities from Bulgaria, Lithuania, Slovakia, Germany and Russia who featured prominently in the time of the fall of Communism, also took part in the commemoration.

On 27 June Mr Speaker attended the official commemoration of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of the Iron Curtain in Budapest, Hungary. The event celebrated the liberation of Hungary from the rule of the Soviet Union, the return to liberty and democracy and its role in the events that led to the fall of the Iron Curtain and of the Berlin Wall.

Between 2 and 8 August the Speaker visited the Cypriot parliament in Nicosia. The purpose of this visit was to observe how the Cypriot parliament dealt with the construction of a new parliamentary building. This visit was made in the light of the projected construction of a new building to house the Maltese Parliament.

Between 15 and 18 September Hon Galea made an official visit to Ljubljana, Slovenia, accompanied by Hon David Agius, Government Whip, and Hon Joe Mizzi, Opposition Whip. During the visit the delegation had meetings with the Speaker of the National Assembly, Dr Pavel Gantar, and with delegations from various parliamentary committees. The delegation was also received by the Slovenian Prime Minister Borut Pahor and the Slovenian President Dr Danilo Türk. The delegation also had the opportunity to meet with leaders of a number of political parties in Slovenia.

On 10 December the Speaker attended an Extraordinary Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments in Stockholm, Sweden. The Conference was convened in view of the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, and its consequences for national parliaments and cooperation between the European Parliament and national parliaments.

## *4.2 OUTGOING VISITS OF MALTESE PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS*

### *4.2.1 Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs*

March            On 9 and 10 March, Hon Charlò Bonnici participated in the Conference of Foreign Affairs Committees Chairpersons (COFACC) held in Prague, Czech Republic.

Between 21 and 23 March, Foreign and European Affairs Committee Chairman Hon Michael Frendo visited Libya on the invitation of HE Suleiman Ah-Shahoumi, International Secretary of the General People's Congress of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

July             Between 1 and 9 July a delegation of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee led by Hon Michael Frendo and comprising Hon Francis Agius, Hon Charlò Bonnici, Hon Leo Brincat, Hon Luciano Busuttil and Hon George Vella visited China.

October         Hon Michael Frendo and Hon George Vella took part in the Conference of EU Scrutiny Committees (COSAC) that was held in Stockholm, Sweden, between 4 and 6 October.

### *4.2.2 European Parliament and European Union Presidency Meetings*

Joint Parliamentary Meetings are co-chaired by the President of the European Parliament (EP) and the president of the national parliament of the country holding the rotating EU Presidency. These meetings are also jointly organised and coordinated between the EP and the national parliament of the EU Presidency. Particular emphasis and priority is given to policy issues where the EU at present does not legislate, but nevertheless takes important decisions. The common foreign, defence and security policy, the macro-economic and monetary policy coordination and areas of freedom, security and justice and climate change, cover such issues.

The aim of the Parliamentary Meetings is not to arrive at common positions between the representatives of national parliaments and the EP, but to establish better parliamentary



oversight and control with intergovernmental and non-legislative decisions taken at the EU level. They also seek a parliamentary input for the European Council meetings.

Joint Committee Meetings are proposed on the initiative of the individual parliamentary committees of the EP who invite colleagues from their corresponding committees in national parliaments. These meetings are a continuation of existing practice and mainly cover the policy areas where the EU has legislative powers using the co-decision procedure. The aim of these meetings is to promote exchange of views between European and national parliamentarians with a view to influencing the legislative decisions of the EP.

During the course of the year under review, Maltese Members of Parliament participated in the following meetings:

January            On 19 and 20 January Hon Angelo Farrugia and Hon Francis Zammit Dimech participated in a parliamentary meeting on the progress in the area of freedom, security and justice organised jointly by the European Parliament and the Czech EU Presidency in Brussels.

Hon David Agius and Hon Marlene Pullicino participated in a meeting of the Chairpersons of Committees on Secure and Sustainable Energy for Europe, held in Prague on 25 and 26 January.

February            Hon David Agius and Hon Gavin Gulia took part in a parliamentary meeting organised jointly by the European Parliament and the Czech EU Presidency on a New Deal for European Economic Recovery in Brussels on 16 and 17 February.

On 22 and 23 February Hon Michael Falzon and Hon Jean Pierre Farrugia participated in a meeting of the Security Committees Chairpersons organised by the EU Presidency in Prague discussing integrated rescue systems, and legal and illegal migration in connection with environmental security.

March                On 5 March Hon Justyne Caruana participated in a Conference on Women and the European Elections organised in Brussels by the European Parliament.

April                 On 2 April Hon Angelo Farrugia took part in an Inter-parliamentary Committee Meeting with national parliaments in Brussels on the transposition and implementation of EU Consumer Law.

Hon Charles Mangion attended a meeting of the Budget and Financial Committees Chairpersons organised by the Czech Presidency in Prague on 27 and 28 April.

September            Between 6 and 7 September Hon Jean Pierre Farrugia and Hon Charles Mangion attended a meeting of the Economics of Climate Change and Sustainable Public Finances Committee organised in Stockholm by the Swedish EU Presidency.

October Hon Beppe Fenech Adami took part in the Joint Committee Meeting on the Stockholm Programme organised by the European Parliament in Brussels on 8 October.

#### *4.2.3 Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe*

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) brings together democratically elected Members of Parliament from the 47 Member States of the Council of Europe. Its powers extend only to the ability to investigate, recommend and advise; nevertheless, its recommendations on issues such as human rights have significant weight in the European political context. The European institutions often refer to the work of the PACE, especially in the fields of human rights, legal cooperation and cultural cooperation.

The Assembly has 10 permanent committees that meet throughout the year to prepare reports and projects for resolutions in their respective fields of expertise.

The Assembly sets its own agenda; it discusses European and international events and examines current subjects which interest the populations of the countries of Europe covering issues related to human rights, democracy, protection of minorities and the rule of law.

The Maltese delegation to the PACE is composed as follows:

**Members** Hon Francis Agius, Leader of the delegation  
Hon Robert Arrigo  
Hon Joe Debono Grech

**Substitute Members** Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca  
Hon Joseph Falzon  
Hon Beppe Fenech Adami

In 2009 the members of the delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe participated actively in both the plenary sessions of the Assembly as well as in the various committees of which they are Members. This participation included an address by Hon Joseph Falzon delivered to the Assembly on the Copenhagen negotiations on climate change followed by the address of Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca who spoke on the tourism sector, describing it as highly climate-sensitive. Hon Falzon also had the opportunity to address the Assembly on the water challenge in the countries of the Mediterranean basin.

The Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee met during the autumn part-session to vote on a number of amendments arising out of an opinion report prepared by Hon Francis Agius on behalf of the Migration, Refugees and Population Committee. The Migration Committee was asked to formulate an opinion on the McCafferty Report - Fifteen years since the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action. The report included issues relating to family planning, assisted childbirth, prevention of sexually transmitted infections, family planning, abortion services and gender equity and equality in primary and secondary education.



The challenges faced by small national economies was the subject of a Motion for a Resolution submitted by Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca. The motion was accepted, and the Assembly approved the decision of the Bureau to refer it to the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development for its consideration and report. The document spoke of costs borne by small peripheral economies, which costs may be attributed to inability to benefit from economies of scale, a higher reliance on strategic imports such as food and fuels, limited absorption capacity, the issue of indivisibility of costs and exposure to external shocks.

The following information lists the Maltese delegation's participation in both the Assembly plenary sessions and Committee meetings where Members had the opportunity to participate in discussions on a number of texts which later were adopted or otherwise, by the Assembly:

January            On 22 and 23 January Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca attended a meeting of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development in London.

Hon Beppe Fenech Adami, Hon Robert Arrigo, Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca and Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in the 1<sup>st</sup> Part of the 2009 Ordinary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe held between 26 and 28 January in Strasbourg.

March            Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca attended a meeting of the Committee on Social, Health and Family Affairs in Paris on 11 March, meetings of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development on 12 March in Paris and in Limassol on 27 and 28 March, as well as a meeting of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights in Berlin on 23 and 24 March.

On 13 March Hon Francis Agius participated in a meeting of the Standing Committee in Paris.

On 16 and 17 March Hon Francis Agius and Hon Joe Debono Grech took part in a meeting of the Political Affairs Committee in Paris.

On 30 and 31 March Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in a meeting of the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States (Monitoring Committee) in Valencia.

April            Hon Beppe Fenech Adami, Hon Francis Agius, Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, Hon Joseph Falzon and Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Part of the 2009 Ordinary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg held between 26 and 29 April.

May            On 15 May Hon Francis Agius and Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in a meeting of the Sub-Committee on External Relations in St Petersburg.

On 26 May Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in a meeting of the Political Affairs Committee in Paris and in a meeting of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population also in Paris on 27 May.

- June On 11 and 12 June Hon Joe Debono Grech attended a meeting of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs in London.
- Also on 11 and 12 June, Hon Francis Agius and Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca took part in a meeting of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee in London.
- Hon Beppe Fenech Adami, Hon Francis Agius, Hon Robert Arrigo, Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, Hon Joseph Falzon and Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Part of the 2009 Ordinary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe that was held between 22 and 25 June in Strasbourg.
- September On 4 September Hon Joseph Falzon participated in a meeting of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs in Paris.
- On 10 and 11 September Hon Francis Agius and Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in a meeting of the Political Affairs Committee in Paris.
- On 14 September Hon Francis Agius participated in a meeting of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee in Paris.
- Hon Beppe Fenech Adami, Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, Hon Joseph Falzon and Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in the 4<sup>th</sup> Part of the 2009 Ordinary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe that was held between 27 September and 2 October in Strasbourg.
- October On 10 October Hon Joe Debono Grech took part in a meeting of the Sub-Committee on the Europe Prize organised by the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs in Ankara.
- November On 12 and 13 November Hon Francis Agius and Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in a meeting of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population in Antalya.
- On 13 November Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca participated in a meeting of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee in Paris.
- On 27 November Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca attended a meeting of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development in Paris.
- On 30 November Hon Francis Agius and Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca participated in a meeting of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, in Paris.
- December On 14 and 15 December Hon Joe Debono Grech took part in a meeting of the Political Affairs Committee in Paris.



Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca attended a meeting of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights in Paris on 16 December.

On 17 December Hon Joe Debono Grech participated in a meeting of the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States (Monitoring Committee) in Paris.

One other point worth mentioning was the rejection of Malta's all-male list of nominees to serve as a Judge on the European Court of Human Rights. At its meeting on 28 April 2009 the Sub-Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights decided that the Assembly should accept Malta's list of nominees. However, this decision did not get the required double majority by the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights which met on Tuesday 23 June. Whilst getting a two-thirds majority of members who cast their vote (30 in favour – 13 against) the Sub-Committee's recommendation did not manage to harness the support of a simple majority of all members entitled to vote, which, according to the Rules and Procedures of the PACE, should amount to at least 42 members.

2009 also marked the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council of Europe and the election of Mr Thorbjorn Jagland, formerly President of the Norwegian Parliament, as Secretary General of the Council of Europe. It was also the year when the first ever Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Human Rights Prize, began to be awarded so as to honour "outstanding civil society action in the defence of human rights in Europe". The British Irish Rights Watch, an independent non-governmental organization, was selected as the winner for monitoring the human rights dimension and the peace process of the conflict in Northern Ireland since 1990. The prize consisted of €10,000, a medal and a diploma which was awarded at a ceremony in Strasbourg on the occasion of a special debate on "the state of human rights in Europe" during the Assembly's summer plenary session (22-26 June 2009).

#### *4.2.4 Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean*

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) was set up in Nafplion, Greece, in February 2005, on the initiative of Maltese parliamentary delegations participating within the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Malta holds the seat of the Secretariat of the Assembly.

The aim of the Parliamentary Assembly is to provide the Mediterranean with a unique parliamentary forum of its own and bring together, on an equal footing, the national parliaments on the Mediterranean littoral.

By addressing issues of common concern to foster and enhance further confidence between Member States to ensure regional security and stability and promote peace, the Assembly works to develop cooperation among its Members in its fields of action by promoting political dialogue and understanding between parliaments concerned.

The detailed work of the Assembly is carried out by three Standing Committees which draw up opinions and recommendations. The committees of the PAM are:

- Committee on Political and Security Related Cooperation
- Committee on Economic, Social and Environmental Cooperation
- Committee on Dialogue among Civilisations and Human Rights.

Furthermore, in early 2008, the Standing Committees of the Assembly set up a number of working groups under the form of *ad hoc* Committees and Special Task Forces.

The Members forming part of the Maltese delegation to the PAM are:

**Members** Hon Jesmond Mugliett, Leader of the delegation  
 Hon Justyne Caruana  
 Hon Franco Debono  
 Hon Louis Deguara  
 Hon George Vella

**Substitute Members** Hon Stephen Spiteri  
 Hon Michael Falzon

February On 20 and 21 February Hon Jesmond Mugliett and Hon Stephen Spiteri attended a meeting of the Special Task Force established under the 2<sup>nd</sup> Committee of Environment and Climate Change and on Disaster Management, in Limassol.

March Between 12 and 15 March Hon Justyne Caruana participated in a meeting of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Standing Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, in Rome.

April On 2 April Hon George Vella attended the first meeting of the Special Task Force on organised crime, in Cairo.

May Between 17 and 22 May Hon George Vella formed part of a delegation of the PAM led by PAM President Hon Rudy Salles on a visit to the Middle East.

June Between 24 and 26 June Hon George Vella and Hon Justyne Caruana participated in the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committees, in Lisbon.

September Hon Jesmond Mugliett participated in the PAM's mission to the USA between 2 September and 1 October.

October Between 20 and 22 October Hon Justyne Caruana and Hon George Vella attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of the PAM in Istanbul.

#### 4.2.5 Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly

The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA), established in 2003, is the most recent institution of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean.



EMPA consists of parliamentarians appointed by the national parliaments of the EU Member States, the national parliaments of the Mediterranean partners and from the European Parliament.

EMPA:

- provides parliamentary impetus, input and support for the consolidation and development of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership;
- expresses its views on all issues relating to the Partnership, including the implementation of the association agreements;
- adopts resolutions or recommendations, which are not legally binding, addressed to the Euro-Mediterranean Conference.

The committees of EMPA are the Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights, the Committee on Economic, Financial and Social Affairs and Education, the Committee on the Promotion of the Quality of Life, Human Exchanges and Culture and the Committee on Women's Rights in the Euro-Mediterranean Countries, as well as an *ad hoc* Committee on Energy and Environment.

The Maltese delegation to EMPA comprises:

**Members** Hon Censu Galea, Leader of the delegation  
Hon Jean Pierre Farrugia  
Hon George Vella

**Substitute Members** Hon Leo Brincat  
Hon Edwin Vassallo  
Hon Ninu Zammit

March On 6 March Hon Jean Pierre Farrugia participated in a meeting of the Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs, Social Affairs and Education in Cairo.

Hon Censu Galea and Hon George Vella participated in the 5<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of EMPA in Brussels between 15 and 17 March.

On 16 March Hon Leo Brincat attended a meeting of the *ad hoc* Committee on Energy and Environment in Brussels.

June On 20 and 21 June Hon Censu Galea participated in a meeting of the Committee on Economic, Financial and Social Affairs and Education in Cairo.

November On 3 November Hon George Vella took part in a meeting of the Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights in Brussels.

December Hon Censu Galea participated in a meeting of the Working Group on Financing the Assembly and Revision of EMPA's Rules of Procedure on 10 December in Brussels.

#### 4.2.6 Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) is an association of Commonwealth parliamentarians united in their interests, respect for the rule of law and individual rights and freedoms, and by the pursuit of the positive ideals of parliamentary democracy.

The mission of the CPA is to promote the advancement of parliamentary democracy by enhancing knowledge and understanding of democratic governance. It seeks to build an informed parliamentary community able to deepen the democratic commitment of the Commonwealth and to further cooperation among its parliaments.

Members of the Maltese House of Representatives took part in the following CPA gatherings in 2009:

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| February  | Between 2 and 7 February Hon Michael Falzon and Hon Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando participated in the CPA UK Conference on International Migration and Human Trafficking in London.                              |
| March     | Between 1 and 13 March Hon Joseph Sammut participated in the 58 <sup>th</sup> CPA Seminar on Parliamentary Practice and Procedures in London.  |
| May       | Hon Joe Mizzi took part in the 21 <sup>st</sup> CPA Seminar between 25 and 29 May in Sydney.   |
| June      | Between 15 and 19 June Hon Chris Agius, Hon David Agius and Hon Roderick Galdes attended the 40 <sup>th</sup> CPA Conference of the British Islands and Mediterranean Region in Guernsey.                    |
| July      | Hon Philip Mifsud and Hon Joe Mizzi took part in the CPA Inter-parliamentary Conference on Climate Change between 5 and 11 July in London.   |
| September | Between 28 September and 6 October Hon David Agius, Hon Justyne Caruana and Hon Alfred Sant attended the 55 <sup>th</sup> CPA Conference and the 29 <sup>th</sup> CPA Small Branches Conference in Tanzania. |

On 19 and 20 March a delegation of the CPA Canadian Branch led by Mr Russ Hiebert, Chair of the Canadian Branch, made a visit to Malta. During its visit, the delegation had the opportunity to call on the Speaker of the House as well as meet with a number of Members of Parliament where they discussed the new technology that is helping to improve communication between the Commonwealth organisations in general and the good relations that have been maintained between Canada and Malta. The delegation also visited Malta's main ports of entry with a view to discussing the immigration system and procedures.

During the delegation's visit at the House of Representatives, it also attended the inauguration of the Mediterranean Day Colloquy which was taking place in the Tapestry Chamber. The delegation was also shown around the 'Afrika' photographic exhibition set up in the parliamentary committee room.



#### 4.2.7 Inter-Parliamentary Union

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is an international organisation established as a forum for political multilateral negotiations. The Maltese Parliament, together with the parliaments of 142 other countries, is a member of the IPU. IPU has a permanent observer status at the United Nations.

One of the organs of the IPU is the Assembly which meets twice a year. The Assembly is composed of parliamentarians designated as delegates by the members of the Union. It is assisted in its work by a number of Standing Committees which normally prepare reports and draft resolutions for the Assembly.

The Executive Committee of the National Group comprises:

**President** Speaker of the House of Representatives

**Vice Presidents** Prime Minister  
Leader of the Opposition

The Maltese delegation to the IPU is made up of:

**Members** Hon Michael Gonzi  
Hon George Vella

**Substitute Members** Hon Philip Mifsud  
Hon Joe Mizzi

Members of the Maltese delegation attended the two Assembly meetings that were held during the year under review:

April Between 5 and 10 April Hon Michael Gonzi and Hon Joe Mizzi participated in the 120<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the IPU in Addis Ababa.

October Hon Philip Mifsud and Hon George Vella attended the 121<sup>st</sup> Assembly of the IPU in Geneva between 19 and 21 October.

#### 4.2.8 Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Originally established in 1990 with 320 members, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE PA) comprises parliamentarians from 56 participating states. The aim of the OSCE PA is to facilitate inter-parliamentary dialogue which is an important aspect of the overall effort to meet the challenges of democracy throughout the OSCE area.

The Maltese House of Representatives is represented in the OSCE PA as follows:

**Members** Hon Louis Deguara, Leader of the delegation  
Hon Frederick Azzopardi  
Hon Angelo Farrugia

Members of the Maltese delegation participated in the following meetings:

- February      On 19 and the 20 February the Members of the Maltese delegation to the OSCE participated in the Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Vienna.
- June            Between 29 June and 3 July Hon Frederick Azzopardi and Hon Angelo Farrugia participated in the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Vilnius.
- October        Hon Louis Deguara and Hon Angelo Farrugia participated in the Fall Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Athens between 9 and 12 October.

#### *4.2.9 Others*

- February      Between 15 and 17 February Hon Alfred Sant took part in a Conference on Combating Anti-Semitism held in London.
- On 26 and 27 February Hon Beppe Fenech Adami and Hon Joe Mizzi participated in the European Energy Efficiency Watch Conference organised by the European Forum for Renewable Energy Sources (EUFORES) in Wels.
- March          Between 3 and 5 March Hon Jesmond Mugliett participated in the 16<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, in Strasbourg.
- June            Hon Michael Frendo, Chairman of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee, took part in a parliamentary delegation to Gaza and Israel led by the Speaker of the Czech Parliament between 7 and 13 June.
- December      Between 1 and 3 December Hon Joseph Falzon attended the 57<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of the Assembly of the Western European Union (WEU) held in Paris.

### *4.3 INCOMING VISITS*

#### *4.3.1 Visit by a delegation of the Germany-Malta Parliamentary Friendship Group*

Between 9 and 13 March the Maltese Parliament hosted a German delegation from the Germany-Malta Parliamentary Friendship Group. During their stay, the members of the delegation, led by Mr Ernst-Reinhard Beck, had the opportunity to call on the Speaker, Hon Louis Galea, and to meet with the Maltese Members of the Germany-Malta Parliamentary Friendship Group and the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs.

Outside Parliament, the delegation also held meetings with the Prime Minister Hon Lawrence Gonzi, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon Tonio



Borg, the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs Hon Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici, the Minister for Gozo Hon Giovanna Debono, the Leader of the Opposition Hon Joseph Muscat, and with the Chairman of the Malta Financial Services Authority Prof Joe Bannister.

#### *4.3.1 Visit by the Italian Parliamentary Committee on Schengen, Europol and Immigration*

On 17 July a delegation of the Italian Parliamentary Committee on Schengen, Europol and Immigration led by Ms Margherita Boniver, made a visit to Malta, calling on, amongst others, the Speaker of the House. The main subject discussed during the talks was the problem that Malta is facing with illegal immigration.

#### *4.3.2 Visit by a delegation of the Korea-Malta Parliamentary Friendship Group*

During a two-day visit to Malta between 20 and 22 August, a delegation of the Korean National Assembly, led by Mr Lee Yong-Kyung, President of the Korea-Malta Parliamentary Friendship Group, held talks with Speaker Hon Louis Galea as well as with the House Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs. The purpose of the visit was to enhance mutual understanding and to strengthen cooperation between Korea and Malta in the international arena.

#### *4.3.3 Visit by the European Integration Committee of Croatia*

Between 30 November and 2 December the Maltese Parliament hosted a visit by a delegation from the European Integration Committee of the Parliament of Croatia, led by the Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the European Integration Committee Mr Neven Mimica. During the visit, the delegation had meetings with the Speaker Hon Louis Galea, and with the House Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs. Other meetings were held with the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Malta, with the Director General (Economic and European Affairs) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at the Malta Enterprise and with representatives of the Malta Labour Party (*Partit Laburista*). The aim of this visit was to exchange views on the experience of Malta's accession to the European Union.



*Hon Louis Galea, accompanied by Hon David Agius, Government Whip, and Hon Joe Mizzi, Opposition Whip, with Dr Pavel Gantar, Speaker of the Slovenian Parliament*



*Youth Parliament 2009 presided by Hon Carmelo Abela, Deputy Speaker*



*Ulyssse 2009: A Mediterranean Voyage – the Malta Encounter, held at the House of Representatives*



## **5. ASSOCIATION OF FORMER MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT**

The Association of Former Members of Parliament of the House of Representatives held a number of meetings during the course of 2009, with its Annual General Meeting taking place in December. The Maltese Association has been member of the European Association of Former Members of Parliament of the Member States of the Council of Europe or of the European Union since 2006.

The principal objective of the European Association, according to the statute, is to promote the European ideal, based on individual and political liberties, the primacy of law and true democracy, and to contribute to the European construction. To this end, the association wants to make the European institutions better known and may organise meetings and colloquies aimed at examining the major problems of society.

During 2009 members of the Association of the House of Representatives participated in a number of meetings of the European Association.

Dr Joseph Buttigieg and Mr Lino Debono took part in a meeting of the Bureau and General Assembly of Former Members of Parliament on 13 and 14 March in Paris.

Between 23 and 25 April Dr Joseph Buttigieg and Mr Lino Debono attended a meeting of the Spanish Association of Former Members of Parliament in Madrid.

On 23 and 24 October Mr Lino Debono and Mr Vincent Moran took part in a meeting of the Bureau and General Assembly of Former Members of Parliament in Lisbon.

Mr Lino Debono attended the celebration for the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Establishment of the Association of Former Members of Parliament of the Italian Republic in Rome.



*Hon Louis Galea, Speaker of the House of Representatives, delivering the speech on the occasion of Sette Giugno*



*Hon Louis Galea addresses the Mediterranean Day Colloquy*



*A meeting of the Malta-Germany Parliamentary Friendship Group*



## 6. OTHER ACTIVITIES

### 6.1 THE PALACE OF NEW THINKING – SECOND ROUNDTABLE

On 26 and 27 February ‘The Palace of New Thinking’, the second of a series of monthly meetings led by Dr Edward de Bono, was held in the parliamentary committee room. These meetings were being held to mark 2009 as the European Year for Creativity and Innovation. The mission of the Palace of New Thinking is to generate new ideas and concepts on the global level and to make these available in situations requiring possibility design, especially, prior to conflict resolution negotiations and the creative design of solutions for complex scenarios.

The theme of this second meeting was irregular immigration. This subject was discussed and approached through the use of creative thinking tools developed by Dr Edward de Bono.

### 6.2 ‘AFRIKA’ PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION

In March, the Parliament hosted the photographic exhibition ‘Afrika’ in its Committee Room. After travelling through various cities in Italy, the exhibition was brought to Malta from Assisi on the initiative of Patri Dionysius Mintoff, founder and director of the *Laboratorju tal-Paċi*, and Hon Louis Galea, Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The exhibition comprised 50 portraits by Cesare Pippi. The photos showed a diversity of African faces, mainly of children and young people from Mali, the Ivory Coast, Zanzibar, Kenya and Senegal, amongst others.

In his speech during the opening of the exhibition, Hon Galea said that this exhibition should help the visitors to understand that Africa is not just about poverty, dictatorships and war, often leading to illegal immigration into other countries. Although these aspects feature prominently in the news, Africa is also a continent full of opportunities wherein lies a great part of the future of the world. Mr Speaker noted too that the exhibition was taking place at the same time that the House was debating illegal immigration.

Patri Mintoff also referred to the fact that the exhibition was being hosted in the place where decisions are taken, enabling visitors to look at Africa from a different perspective, not solely as a continent begging for aid.

### 6.3 MEDITERRANEAN DAY COLLOQUY

21 March was chosen by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) in Monaco in November 2008 to mark Mediterranean Day. This day coincides with the first day of spring and does not have any political or religious significance, making it an ideal day to promote Mediterranean values.

The Maltese Parliament celebrated this day on 20 March by holding a colloquy in the Tapestry Chamber at the Grandmasters' Palace. Mr Speaker referred to the PAM's aim to contribute in the transformation of the Mediterranean into a place of stability, comprehension and shared prosperity. He added that the common values shared by all Mediterranean countries far outweigh their racial, linguistic and religious differences. Hon Galea also made reference to the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development and the initiative for a holistic marine policy by the European Union, stating that the good will of states outside the EU was necessary to make these initiatives effective.

The colloquy was also addressed by the PAM General Secretary Sergio Piazzzi, as well as Hon Jesmond Mugliett, Hon George Vella and Hon Justyne Caruana, members of the Maltese delegation to the PAM.

#### *6.4 APPOINTMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF MALTA*

On 4 April, the House met in a special sitting in the Throne Room of the Grandmasters' Palace. During this sitting the Prime Minister, Hon Lawrence Gonzi, in terms of Article 48 of the Constitution of Malta, moved a motion calling for the appointment of Dr George Abela as the President of Malta. The motion was approved unanimously, without debate, by the House. Dr Abela was thus appointed the eighth President of the Republic.

#### *6.5 SEMINAR ON REPLIES TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS*

On 14 April the House of Representatives, in conjunction with the Staff Development Organisation within the Office of the Prime Minister, organised a half-day seminar focussing on parliamentary questions. The seminar targeted officials from the various ministries who in the course of their duties handle parliamentary questions and was intended to help participants understand the purpose and nature of parliamentary questions, as well as parliamentary procedures and relevant provisions in the Standing Orders of the House.

The sessions were led by Ms Pauline Abela, Clerk of the House, and Mr Ray Scicluna, Clerk Assistant.

#### *6.6 ADDRESS BY UN SECRETARY GENERAL*

On 22 April the House was addressed by United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki Moon. In his address, the Secretary General spoke of how the United Nations was increasingly engaging with parliamentarians and other new partners, who, through their legislative powers, have the ability to give domestic meaning to international standards.

Mr Ban Ki Moon made reference to the fact that Malta was the first to raise the issue of climate change at the United Nations General Assembly in 1988. Reference was also made to the problems Malta was facing with illegal immigration which has been a long standing challenge, as well as the positive role that Malta has always played in bringing Israelis and Palestinians together for quiet, practical cooperation and dialogue on water issues and other matters of common concern.



The Secretary General concluded by saying that common to all the issues raised was the need to increase global cooperation to deliver collective solutions to collective problems.

#### *6.7 NSTF MINI EUROPEAN ASSEMBLY*

The Mini European Assembly of the National Students Travel Foundation (NSTF) is a simulation of the Assembly of the Council of Europe where students represent different European countries and discuss topics of European relevance through the political perspective of the European country they represent.

The final plenary session of the 20<sup>th</sup> edition of the Mini European Assembly, with the theme ‘The European Transport Policy – Building Bridges or Flying Solo?’ was held in the Parliamentary Chamber on 8 May.

Speaker Hon Louis Galea chaired this final plenary session that had as its keynote speaker the European Commission Vice-President and Commissioner responsible for Transport Antonio Tajani.

#### *6.8 EUROPE DAY*

On 9 May, a debate organised by the European Parliament Office and the European Commission Representation in Malta was held in the Parliamentary Chamber to commemorate Europe Day. The debate featured six girl guides on one side of the House and six Members of Parliament from both parties represented in Parliament, on the other. The hour-long debate touched upon various subjects including the environment, equal opportunities, health and education.

European Commissioner Joe Borg was a special guest at this debate which was chaired by the Speaker of the House Hon Louis Galea. Minister George Pullicino, Parliamentary Secretaries Joe Cassar and Clyde Puli, Hon Evarist Bartolo, Hon Leo Brincat and Hon Justyne Caruana participated in the debate.

#### *6.9 EKOSKOLA PARLIAMENT*

The fifth annual session of the EkoSkola was held in the parliamentary chamber on 27 May. This event brings together young policy makers participating in the EkoSkola Programme face to face with the country’s official policy makers. The main theme for this year’s session was the State of the Environment Report 2008. The young children, together with a number of Members of Parliament from both sides of the House, discussed ways of improving the quality of life in our schools and in our country.

The session was chaired by Speaker Hon Louis Galea.

## 6.10 SETTE GIUGNO

As in previous years, the Maltese Parliament held a ceremony to commemorate the *Sette Giugno*, a day which has become synonymous with the development of the Maltese parliamentary democracy as we know it.

In his speech at the foot of the *Sette Giugno* Monument, Speaker of the House Hon Louis Galea, referred to the political and economic unrest that prevailed in Malta in the wake of the First World War. This unrest peaked on 7 June 1919, a day of uprising and violent incidents resulting in the loss of a number of Maltese lives and leaving many others injured. As a result of these incidents Malta was granted self-government in 1921.

Mr Speaker added that although the country has long since moved on from times of such strife and unrest, the world is still characterised by international economic and financial crises, environmental problems and conflicts. Such conditions mean that politicians and parliamentarians have serious and pressing challenges to face. As suggested by the events of the *Sette Giugno* the solution to these challenges lies in a sound political vision and strategy.

## 6.11 YOUTH PARLIAMENT

On 16 September, the Parliamentary Chamber provided the venue for the sixth session of the Youth Parliament. The activity was held in two sessions, chaired by the Deputy Speaker, Hon Carmelo Abela.

During the two sessions all seven resolutions put forward were approved. The resolutions concerning the environment, education, transport and infrastructure, and illegal immigration were debated in the morning session which was targeted for participants aged between 13 and 16, while social security, the right to life and creativity and innovation - a European Opportunity, were debated in the afternoon session by participants aged 17 and over.

In his remarks, Hon Carmelo Abela stated that the involvement of young people in the various sectors of society ensures that they are not only relevant in the future but also now. The Deputy Speaker appealed to young people to carry on taking an interest in what was happening around them in order to be able to make a difference.

Minister Dolores Cristina, Parliamentary Secretary Clyde Puli, Hon Evarist Bartolo and Hon Owen Bonnici participated in this activity.

## 6.12 NOTTE BIANCA

For the third year running, the Maltese Parliament participated in the *Notte Bianca* activity by opening its doors to the public. This year, the event was held over two days on 3 and 4 October. As in previous years the venue attracted a large number of people who were shown around the Parliamentary Chamber and Committee Rooms by the parliamentary staff. Throughout this time, a number of Members of Parliament, as well as the Speaker of the House, were present to meet the public.



### 6.13 DOHA COLLOQUIUM – STRENGTHENING MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

On 6 and 7 October the Cana Movement in collaboration with the Centre for Family Studies of the University of Malta organised a colloquium on strengthening marriage and the family.

The colloquium was held under the auspices of the Social Affairs Committee and was conducted in the parliamentary committee room. The event was funded by the Doha Institute for Family Studies based in Qatar. Leading experts delivered presentations on various topics related to the family and hosted academics, researchers, family professionals and policymakers as well as top managers in child and family services.

Hon Edwin Vassallo, Chairman of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, addressed the colloquium at the close of its first day and the Speaker of the House, Hon Louis Galea, closed the proceedings on 7 October.

### 6.14 ULYSSE 2009 – A MEDITERRANEAN VOYAGE

On 8 and 9 October the Malta Encounter of ‘*Ulysse 2009 – A Mediterranean Voyage*’ was held in the House of Representatives. The voyage was an initiative of the Ambassador of France and writer Daniel Rondeau, supported by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bernard Kouchner, the Speaker of the Maltese House of Representatives, Hon Louis Galea, and the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, Mr Sergio Piazzi.

This voyage, starting in Valletta, was held on board the French military ship, La Meuse. Jacques Barrot, Vice-President of the European Commission, responsible for justice, freedom and security, was in Malta for the occasion. A special guest was Rudy Salles (Member of the French National Assembly), President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean.

*Ulysse 2009* brought together, in Malta, Tunisia, Libya, Cyprus and Lebanon, a number of people coming from all over the Mediterranean who are passionate about peace and freedom. Writers and intellectuals, French, Tunisians, Algerians, Maltese, Libyans, Greeks, Cypriots, Lebanese, Egyptians and Turks, French Diplomats and Members of Parliament, travelled from every country in the Mediterranean to participate in debates, meetings and conferences. Israeli and Palestinian singers performed together in “One Voice”.

The Malta Encounter combined three elements:

- First, it brought together a wide spectrum of people with an interest in culture - men and women from both sides of the Mediterranean, artists and politicians, established intellectuals and youth;
- Second, it provided a forum for an informal and open discussion; and

- Third, a special focus was made on how the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean can serve to facilitate the consideration and actuation of further proposals and initiatives.

The Malta Encounter was closed by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon Tonio Borg.

#### *6.15 MALTA NATIONAL BOOK FAIR*

On 11 November a delegation comprising Members from both sides of the House, led by the Speaker of the House, visited the National Book Fair that was being held at the Mediterranean Conference Centre. During the visit Hon Louis Galea stated that the Maltese Parliament supports initiatives being undertaken to promote Maltese books and authors, and referred to the important role that the National Book Council played in this respect.

#### *6.16 PARLIAMENT FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITY*

On 9 December the parliamentary committee room served as the venue for this year's Parliament for Persons with Disability. This special parliamentary session, organised by the National Commission for Persons with Disability, has now become an annual event marking the week dedicated to persons with disability.

The theme chosen for 2009 was 'Everyone has a right to work' and its intention was to enable consultation on the national employment policy for persons with disability. During the session Members from both sides of the House participated in the discussion. People with disability and their relatives had the chance to voice their concerns during this sitting.





*Children from various schools participating in the EkoSkola Programme*



*EkoSkola Programme*



*Hon Louis Galea, Speaker of the House of Representatives, receiving a delegation of former Belgian Senators*



*The Speaker together with the Parliamentary Whips, at the opening of the 'Afrika' Photographic Exhibition in the Committee Room*



*The Speaker, together with a number of Members of Parliament, visiting the National Book Fair*



*The House of Representatives is open to the public on Notte Bianca*



## **7. OBITUARIES**

During 2009 the House expressed its grief:

- on 12 January, at the loss of Mrs Evelyn Bonaci, ex-Member of Parliament, who passed away on 16 December 2008;
- on 26 January, at the loss of Mrs Maria Deguara, mother of Hon Louis Deguara, who passed away on 23 January 2009;
- on 23 March, at the loss of Mr Charles Mifsud, ex-Clerk of the House, who passed away on 19 March 2009; and
- on 2 November, at the loss of Mr Joe A Grima, ex-Member of Parliament, who passed away on 1 November 2009.

Furthermore, on 28 January, the House commemorated the victims of the Holocaust and observed a minute of silence.

# MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

11<sup>th</sup> Legislature

as on 31 December 2009

**Speaker of the House of Representatives : Hon Louis Galea**

***Partit Nazzjonalista (Government)***

Agius David  
Agius Francis  
Arrigo Robert  
Azzopardi Frederick  
Azzopardi Jason  
Bonnici Charlò  
Borg Tonio  
Cassar Joseph  
Cristina Dolores  
Dalli John  
de Marco Mario  
Debono Franco  
Debono Giovanna  
Deguara Louis  
Falzon Joseph  
Farrugia Jean Pierre  
Fenech Tonio  
Fenech Adami Beppe  
Frendo Michael  
Galea Censu  
Galea Mario  
Gatt Austin  
Gonzi Lawrence  
Gonzi Michael  
Mifsud Philip  
Mifsud Bonnici Carmelo  
Mugliett Jesmond  
Puli Clyde  
Pullicino George  
Pullicino Orlando Jeffrey  
Said Chris  
Spiteri Stephen  
Vassallo Edwin  
Zammit Ninu  
Zammit Dimech Francis

***Partit Laburista (Opposition)***

Abela Carmelo  
Agius Chris  
Agius Decelis Anthony  
Bartolo Evarist  
Bonnici Owen  
Brincat Leo  
Buhagiar Charles  
Buontempo Stefan  
Busuttil Luciano  
Cardona Chris  
Caruana Justyne  
Cauchi Gino  
Coleiro Preca Marie Louise  
Dalli Helena  
Debono Grech Joe  
Falzon Michael  
Farrugia Angelo  
Farrugia Michael  
Farrugia Noel  
Galdes Roderick  
Gulia Gavin  
Herrera José  
Mangion Charles  
Mizzi Joe  
Muscat Joseph  
Parnis Silvio  
Pullicino Marlene  
Refalo Anton  
Sant Alfred  
Sammut Joseph  
Vassallo Adrian  
Vella George  
Vella Karmenu  
Zammit Anthony



## **ANNEX 1: MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE HON LOUIS GALEA, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, IN 2009**

- 22 April 2009 Mr Speaker welcomed HE Mr Ban Ki Moon, Secretary General of the United Nations, on the occasion of his visit to Malta and address to the House of Representatives
- 24 April 2009 Mr Speaker addressed a conference of the National Council of Women (Malta) in collaboration with the European Centre of the International Council of Women on the occasion of the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary regarding Maltese women in the European Parliament
- 12 June 2009 Meeting with the newly elected Members of the European Parliament
- 15 June 2009 Farewell call by HE Mr Karl-Andreas von Stenglin, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Malta
- 15 June 2009 Meeting with a delegation of the Malta-Cuba Society
- 7 July 2009 Farewell call by HE Mr Jan Heidsma, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Malta
- 17 July 2009 Meeting with HE Mr Mohamed Ali Ganzoui, Ambassador of Tunisia to Malta
- Meeting with a delegation from the Italian Parliamentary Committee on the implementation of the Schengen Agreement
- 7 August 2009 Meeting with HE Mr Bernd Braun, newly accredited Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Malta on 16 July 2009
- 19 August 2009 Farewell call by HE Mr Abdel Karim Soliman, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to Malta
- 21 August 2009 Meeting with a delegation from the Korean National Assembly
- 25 August 2009 Meeting with HE Mr Suleiman al Shahumi, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the General People's Congress of Libya
- 9 September 2009 Meeting with HE Mr Vuk Jeremic, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia
- 22 September 2009 Meeting with HE Mr Abdelmawgoud A.M. Elhabashy, newly accredited Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to Malta on 17 July 2009
- Meeting with HE Mr Zhang Keyuan, newly accredited Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Malta on 17 July 2009

Meeting with HE Mr Robbert Jan Gabrielse, newly accredited Ambassador of the Kingdom of Netherlands to Malta on 17 July 2009

Meeting with HE Mr Douglas W Kmiec, newly accredited Ambassador of the United States of America to Malta on 17 July 2009

Meeting with a visiting group of former Belgian Senators

25 September 2009 Mr Speaker addressed the opening of the 4th UNESCO Congress for Women Organisations from the Eight Small States of Europe hosted by the National Council of Women of Malta

30 September 2009 Meeting with a delegation from the EU Affairs Committee of the Czech Republic led by Mr Ludek Sefzig

7 October 2009 Mr Speaker addressed the closing of the Doha Colloquium on strengthening marriage and the family held in the parliamentary committee room at the House of Representatives

Meeting with Mr Rudy Salles, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean

13 October 2009 Meeting with HE Mr Ismail Ethem Tokdemir, newly accredited Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to Malta on 8 October 2009

16 October 2009 Meeting with a delegation from the Bavarian Landtag Parliament

Meeting with the Speaker of the Senate of Canada Hon Noel Kinsella

29 October 2009 Mr Speaker addressed the annual conference of the International Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transsexual Association (ILGA) - Europe, organised jointly with the Malta Gay Rights Movement (MGRM)

11 November 2009 Mr Speaker led a parliamentary delegation to the Book Fair organised by the National Book Council.

24 November 2009 Mr Speaker addressed the International Roundtable of Parliamentarians on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaption – in preparation for Copenhagen, convened by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) and the United Nations international strategy for disaster reduction (UNISDR)

1 December 2009 Meeting with a delegation from the Parliament of Croatia, led by Mr Neven Mimca

7 December 2009 Address at the Annual General Meeting of the Association of Former Members of Parliament



## **ANNEX 2: MEETINGS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON HOUSE BUSINESS**

13 January	House Business Standing Order 13
28 January	House Business Ombudsplan 2009
11 February	House Business
2 March	House Business Allocation of discussion time on the issue of irregular immigration
17 March	House Business
1 April	Proposal re discussion of the issue of irregular immigration by a Standing Committee
28 April	House Business
13 May	House Business
1 June	House Business
16 June	House Business
10 September	House Business
29 September	House Business
16 October	House Business
10 November	House Business Ombudsplan 2010

### **ANNEX 3: MEETINGS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIVILEGES**

- 13 January      Decision of the Chair regarding a legal point raised in the previous Committee meeting  
                    Consideration of the case of breach of privilege raised by Hon Alfred Sant in Sitting 42 of 14 October 2008 in respect of Hon Austin Gatt
- 9 February      Consideration of the case of breach of privilege raised by Hon Alfred Sant in Sitting 42 of 14 October 2008 in respect of Hon Austin Gatt
- 9 March          Consideration of the case of breach of privilege raised by Hon Alfred Sant in Sitting 42 of 14 October 2008 in respect of Hon Austin Gatt
- 23 March        Consideration of the case of breach of privilege raised by Hon Alfred Sant in Sitting 42 of 14 October 2008 in respect of Hon Austin Gatt



#### **ANNEX 4: MEETINGS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS**

21 January	Annual Audit Report for 2007: “Performance Audit Follow-up Acquisition of Property by Government” and other related matters
4 February	Annual Audit Report for 2007 - Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment
3 March	Annual Audit Report for 2007 - Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment
25 March	Annual Audit Report for 2006 - Malta Tourism Authority - Grant Scheme for Tourism Enterprises - Licences, Contributions and Salaries
13 May	Annual Audit Report for 2007 - Arrears of Revenue 2007 - Consultants/Advisers on a part-time basis
26 May	Annual Audit Report for 2007 - Arrears of Revenue 2007 - Consultants/Advisers on a part-time basis
15 June	Annual Audit Report for 2007 - Arrears of Revenue 2007 (Income tax and VAT)
8 July	Central Bank of Malta monetary policy
14 October	Accrual accounting system in government departments
28 October	Performance Audit: Renewable Energy Sources and Energy Efficiency in Malta
25 November	Performance Audit: Renewable Energy Sources and Energy Efficiency in Malta

## **ANNEX 5: MEETINGS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS**

- 14 January Partnership for Peace - Presentation by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Gaza conflict  
Visits abroad by Committee Members  
Annual Report 2008
- 27 February Meeting with Mr Bernard Kouchner, Minister for Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of France
- 06 March Meeting with Mr Richard Cachia Caruana, Malta's Permanent Representative for the European Union  
Czech EU Presidency Work Programme (Jan - Jun 2009)  
EU Commission Legislative Programme (2009)  
EU Council Work Programme (Jul 2008 - Dec 2009)
- 10 March Meeting with German Members of Parliament forming part of the Malta-Germany Parliamentary Friendship Group headed by Mr Ernst-Reinhard Beck
- 11 March Meeting with Dr Ahmad Soboh, Palestinian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs
- 14 March Meeting with Mr Jacques Barrot, Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Justice, Freedom and Security
- 27 March Meeting with Mr Günter Verheugen, Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Enterprise and Industry
- 15 April Meeting with Ms Ewa Bjorling, Minister of Commerce of Sweden
- 29 April Report by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs on his visit to the Middle East countries in April  
Report by Hon Michael Frendo on his visit to Libya in March
- 27 May Scrutiny of Commission proposals on immigration (debate held *in camera*)
- 21 August Meeting with a parliamentary delegation from South Korea
- 30 September Meeting with a delegation from the European Affairs Committee of the Czech Senate
- 14 October Meeting with HE Mr Amr Moussa, Secretary General of the Arab League



- 16 October Meeting with HE Mr Miroslav Lajcak, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovakia
- 19 October Meeting with a delegation from the Committee for Federal and European Affairs of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Bavaria, Federal Republic of Germany
- 23 November Subsidiarity check on a Commission proposal on succession and wills (COM (2009) 154) (debate held *in camera*)
- 30 November Meeting with a delegation from the European Integration Committee of the Parliament of Croatia

## ANNEX 6: MEETINGS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

- 14 January The family and persons with disability - discussion with the Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b'Diżabilità
- 20 January National report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2008-2010
- 21 January The effect of fatherlessness on children – discussion with Dr Charlie Azzopardi, Psychotherapist, Couple and Family Therapist
- 27 January The effects of the media on the Maltese family – presentation by Mr Gaetano Vella, Mr Anson D Aquilina and Ms Sarah Suda
- 28 January The family and the elderly – discussion with the Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Anzjani
- 4 February The Family Court – discussion with Mr Aldo Testone, Director Civil Courts and Tribunals, Mr Ben Bugeja, Official from the MJHA Secretariat, Ms Carmen Borg, Family Mediation Coordinator and Ms Mary Lourdes Lautier, Deputy Registrar at the Family Court Registry
- 11 February The effect of dependencies on the family – discussion with Caritas Malta and the OASI Foundation of Gozo
- 18 February The need for education for better relationships within Maltese families – discussion with Dr Angela Abela
- 2 March Assisted procreation - discussion with Rev Prof Emmanuel Agius and Rev Dr Ray Zammit
- 3 March The family and young people - discussion with youth organisations
- 10 March Analysis of the regulation of gaming outlets and their effect on the community
- 17 March The effect of dependencies on the family – discussion with Sedqa, Caritas, OASI, Mr Carlos Tabone and Ms Rachel Zammit
- 23 March Scrutiny of EU documents (debate held *in camera*)
1. Proposal for a Council Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation (COM (2008) 426 Final)
  2. Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the final evaluation report on the Community framework strategy and Community action programme relating to the Community strategy on gender equality (2001-2006) (COM (2008) 503 Final)



24 March	The effect of dependencies on the family - discussion with Sedqa, Caritas, OASI, Mr Carlos Tabone and Ms Rachel Zammit
1 April	Illegal Immigration
27 April	The effect of poverty on children Assisted procreation - discussion with Prof Rev Emmanuel Agius and Rev Dr Ray Zammit
30 April	Illegal Immigration – presentation by Hon Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici, Minister of Justice and Home Affairs, and Mr Mario Caruana, Director General, MJHA
11 May	Assisted procreation - discussion with Prof Rev Emmanuel Agius and Rev Dr Ray Zammit
12 May	Illegal Immigration - discussion with the Commissioner of Police and the Minister of Justice and Home Affairs
13 May	Fertility aspects of Maltese families – presentation by Dr Maja Miljanic Brinkworth
18 May	The effect of fatherlessness on children – discussion with Dr Charlie Azzopardi, Psychotherapist, Couple and Family Therapist
19 May	Illegal Immigration - discussion with the AFM Commander and the Minister of Justice and Home Affairs
20 May	Sexual health
26 May	Illegal Immigration - discussion with the AFM Commander and the Minister of Justice and Home Affairs
26 May	The Family Court - discussion with Mr Aldo Testone, Director Civil Courts and Tribunals, Mr Ben Bugeja, Official from the MJHA Secretariat, Ms Carmen Borg, Family Mediation Coordinator and Ms Mary Lourdes Lautier, Deputy Registrar
10 June	Sexual health
16 June	International Day of the Families - discussion with Mr Etienne Caruana, Manager, and Mr Joe Bonello, Director Economics Statistics at the National Office of Statistics
22 June	Presentation to representatives of the Civil Society Committee on the Committee’s report on the effect of poverty on children
23 June	Sexual health

30 June	Presentation of a memorandum on the Family by the Kummissjoni Djoċezana Żgħażaġh Sexual health
1 July	Presentation to NGOs and voluntary organisations of the Committee's report on the effect of poverty on children
14 July	Sexual health
13 October	Discussion on the updated report drawn up by the Social Affairs Committee of the 10th Legislature on assisted procreation
19 October	Discussion on the updated report drawn up by the Social Affairs Committee of the 10th Legislature on assisted procreation
20 October	Illegal immigration - discussion on the report by the Minister of Justice and Home Affairs
26 October	Presentation by Mr Martin Scicluna on the report 'For worse, for better: Remarriage after legal separation'
27 October	Presentation by Mr Martin Scicluna on the report 'For worse, for better: Remarriage after legal separation'
28 October	Analysis by the Kummissjoni Djoċezana Żgħażaġh of the Committee's report on sexual health - discussion with Fr Savio Vella Proposals by separated persons for amendments to legislation
3 November	Illegal Immigration - report by Mr Alex Tortell, OIWAS Director, and by the Minister of Justice and Home Affairs
3 November	Proposals by separated persons for amendments to legislation
30 November	The effect of fatherlessness on the children
1 December	The effect of fatherlessness on the children
9 December	The effect of fatherlessness on the children
14 December	Presentation of the Ministry of Social Policy report on a drug policy The effect of fatherlessness on the children



## **ANNEX 7: MEETINGS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF BILLS**

14 January	Public Administration Bill – Bill No 2
27 January	Budgetary Measures Implementation Bill – Bill No 12
28 January	Budgetary Measures Implementation Bill – Bill No 12
03 February	Budgetary Measures Implementation Bill – Bill No 12
16 February	Budgetary Measures Implementation Bill – Bill No 12
10 March	Various Laws (Amendment of Financial Provisions) Bill – Bill No 9
20 April	Motor Vehicles Registration Tax (Amend) Bill – Bill No 18
21 April	Motor Vehicles Registration Tax (Amend) Bill – Bill No 18
29 April	Broadcasting (Amend) Bill – Bill No 19
12 April	Civil Code (Amend) Bill - (Rent Law) – Bill No 17
19 May	Civil Code (Amend) Bill - (Rent Law) – Bill No 17
15 May	Civil Code (Amend) Bill - (Rent Law) – Bill No 17
30 June	Malta Transport (Regulatory) Authority Bill – Bill No 28
6 July	Local Councils (Amend) Bill – Bill No 27
7 July	Criminal Code (Amend) Bill – Bill No 16 Various Laws relating to Civil Matters (Amend) Bill – Bill No 25 Interpretation (Amend) Bill – Bill No 26
8 July	Consumer Affairs (Amend) Bill – Bill No 23
13 July	Local Councils (Amend) Bill – Bill No 27
14 July	Malta Transport (Regulatory) Authority Bill – Bill No 28
6 July	Various Financial Services Laws and to implement Directive 2007/44/EC (Amend) Bill – Bill No 29
10 November	Land Acquisition (Public Purposes) Ordinance (Amend) Bill – Bill No 33

24 November Immigration (Amend) Bill – Bill No 30  
Lotteries and other Games (Amend) Bill – Bill No 31

9 December Services (Internal Market) Bill – Bill 32

14 December Services (Internal Market) Bill – Bill 32



**ANNEX 8: MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE**

- 9 February      Estimates of the National Audit Office for 2009
- 25 May          Motion on the transfer of property (Nylon Knitting Property)
- 16 June         Motion on the transfer of property (Nylon Knitting Property)









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