

Address by the Honourable Anglu Farrugia
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Parliament of Malta
on the occasion
of the commemoration of SETTE GIUGNO

Thursday, 6 June 2013

Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, Presidents Emeriti, Speakers Emeriti, Honourable Members, Honourable Senior Members, Excellencies, Distinguished Guests.

The Seventh of June is a special day for the Maltese and Gozitan people, which has remained engraved in the memory of our country as it reminds us of when in 1919 the Maltese and Gozitan people showed that with one voice, united as one nation, they fought for their rights as a Maltese Nation. It is interesting, for instance, that after our Maltese brethren were killed on the 7th of June 1919 by foreign weapons, at the first opportunity which arose during the parliamentary session 680 in 1922, Nerico Mizzi asked the following to the Head of Ministers:

“Nella prossima seduta dell’ Assemblée Legislativa gli domanderà se è vero che l’Autorità Militare ha preso delle misure precauzionali in occasione del terzo anniversario del 7 Giugno 1919, occupando, sia pure in parte, certi edifici pubblici (come il terrazzo del Palazzo di Giustizia), e in caso affermativo, a richiesta di chi e in virtù di quali poteri l’Autorità Militare ha ciò fatto.”.

This clearly indicates that years after the Maltese and Gozitan people were given the Amery-Milner 1921 Constitution and the Parliamentary Assembly began to meet, the people’s voice was still suppressed due to the fact that the British military even occupied the roof of the court building in the event of another riot. It was the same Nerico Mizzi who for the first time claimed that the victims of Sette Giugno should be commemorated in the

same manner we are doing today. He made this proposal during the parliamentary session of Sette Giugno 1923, when he declared:

“Propongo percio` che l’Assemblea sospenda per un quarto d’ora in segno di lutto, la seduta; e colgo questa opportunita` per informare gli onor. colleghi, nella mia qualita` di Segretario del Comitato Nazionale ‘Pro Caduti del 7 & 8 giugno 1919’, che un solenne funerale sara` celebrato posdimani nella Concattedrale di San Giovanni in suffragio dei nostri fratelli caduti in quelle tragiche giornate. Spero che la mia proposta sara` favorevolmente accolta dal Governo e da tutti i membri di quest’ Assemblea e che nessuno manchera` alla cerimonia propiziatoria di posdimani.”.

On that occasion there was a unanimous agreement and the parliamentary session of Sette Giugno 1923 was suspended for fifteen minutes until four in the afternoon. From that day onwards all the leaders of this country, advocated for the progress of the Maltese and Gozitan people towards achieving several rights which led them to Independence and to the removal of any foreign military influence.

The road was long but today we are a people with an identity, a sovereign nation. But more still remains to be done. After our experience of more than nine years of European Union membership, our Parliament has still not reached the desired level of autonomy which other national Parliaments enjoy within the same European Union.

When one speaks about autonomy in this context, this means that the Parliament, the highest institution in the country, would have the administrative capacity to manage independently the requirements of the same institution so that it can fulfil its constitutional functions. In other words, Parliament should have the power to prepare its financial estimates and to manage its own resources unhindered, independently and in a distinct manner from any type of influence from the Executive.

Parliament can never be free and unshackled unless it is no longer considered administratively as a government department. Parliamentary authority and autonomy, though different, are intrinsically linked to each other. To achieve an active parliamentary democracy we should not be afraid of taking the next step towards an autonomous parliament.

We need to proceed from words to facts. It is my pleasure as President of the House of Representatives to note that today this principle is accepted by everyone, including both political groups within the Maltese Parliament. Prime Minister Joseph Muscat himself often declared that Government would like to see parliamentary autonomy actually come into effect. I understand that the Opposition is of the same opinion as after all it was the previous administration that published the white paper on parliamentary autonomy. Thus the next step is to put this general will into action so that we ensure that this right which is missing today in the Maltese Parliament finally begins to form part of a series of rights which, as a Maltese people, we have achieved throughout the years since the 7th of June 1919. It is also necessary that this step is taken within the shortest time possible as I believe that everyone has had enough of hearing about the need of

Parliament autonomy from the Speakers Emeriti, to whom I pay tribute today on this occasion. Please, allow me to quote a section from the ending of the speech of Speaker Emeritus Michael Frendo when he recently addressed the President's Forum:

“Our democracy is a living democracy which has grown and still continues to grow. Only a strong Parliament is proof of a mature democracy. This should be our aim.”.

An important step, if not the most important, is the broad discussion that is taking place regarding the new parliament building at the entrance of the capital city Valletta. It was my great pleasure when the Prime Minister delegated me, in agreement with the Opposition, to lead an open consultation process regarding this building. I have actually started this process and in fact a number of meetings have taken place which should lead to a sound decision in the interest of the Maltese and Gozitan population.

The same reasoning applies to the discussion regarding our country's Constitution, whether it should evolve or not – as in fact there appears the need that it should - and regarding the possibility or not of a Second Republic. I believe that this is also a process that needs the participation – indeed the direction – of the Parliament without prejudice to the broad participation of the Maltese and Gozitan public. For, how can we speak of a Constitution without involving the same Parliament which has to legislate?! Isn't that the way in which our country has progressed throughout the years, by sounding the

voice of our people and ours who represent it? As for the meaning of a living democracy, the famous Constitutional author Sir William Ivor Jennings says thus in his book “Parliament”:

“Si antiquitatem spectes, est vetustissima, si dignitatem, est honoratissima, si jurisdictionem, est capacissima.”

In other words, the highest institution should be able to decide, and be responsible alone for, what is expected from a parliamentary democracy.

There is no denying that we have come a long way. I will keep working on what those before me have worked for to continuously elevate, as appropriate, this institution – Parliament.

- After the publication of the rulings given by the Chair between 1921 and 1924 by Professor Ray Mangion, in the coming months we will see the publication of other rulings given the Presidents of the House since 1924. I will endeavour to see that all these rulings are published as soon as possible.
- After the introduction of audio live streaming of the House and the Committee sessions, and after the launch of the video live streaming of the Committee meetings in the last months of the previous legislation, we will now be improving substantially the quality of the broadcasting of the Committee meetings through this important medium. Moreover, preparations are also in place so that, if necessary, the debates during the plenary sessions of the

Parliament are also transmitted from the new Parliament building. This is another step by which Parliament can be more accessible to the people.

- As soon as I assumed this post I expressed my wish for Parliament to have its own magazine. I am pleased to announce that this wish has materialised in the form of a periodical which will be published every four months. We also plan to make this magazine available online on the Maltese Parliament website in both official languages, in order to increase awareness and appreciation for the work carried out in Parliament among the Maltese people, the members of parliament themselves and foreign parliamentary institutions.

- We have also published the Standing Orders of the House as amended from 1995 until the present day. It was a great honour for me to hand out a copy of this publication to a considerable number of new members of parliament during a meeting which was purposely held for them to understand how the House functions.

- By request of the same members, we have also published a useful information booklet about the Maltese Parliament and about all the members involved within.

As I am speaking about the new members I want to emphasise the fact that for the first time in the history of Parliament, we have ten female members. This augurs well for the political evolution of our country.

All these initiatives are aimed so that this Parliament is in a position to work better but, more importantly, to get closer to the people. In the coming weeks and months, after the necessary consultations, I will be launching other

initiatives in order to strengthen the communication and interaction between Parliament and the people in general. As I said in my first speech on the 6th of April, after I took the oath as Speaker of the House, I would like this institution to be closer to the people and therefore I hope that by virtue of this series of initiatives, Parliament will approach the people and the people will be free to approach Parliament without any difficulty.

Another positive step towards a Parliament that is closer to the citizen is that already indicated by the present Government in its electoral programme, that “as an entity, MEUSAC... falls under Parliament, so that more resources will be available for the House of Representatives to screen EU directives and regulations, and to integrate better feedback from civil society in decisions of the Maltese Government.”. This is a solid step in the direction towards parliamentary autonomy.

On the same level we should explore ways of increasing dialogue between the MCESD and Parliament.

As I mentioned in the meeting which I had with the members elected to Parliament for the first time, I believe that every time I lead a delegation abroad I should possibly be accompanied by new members from each side of the House so that they can gain international experience on issues of national interest. This is exactly what I will be doing later on this month when I will be leading a delegation specialising in issues that concern small countries and environmental and economic difficulties. I think that this should continue so that everyone has the opportunity to increase their experience in the interest of a parliamentary democracy that is truly alive.

With the coming into force of the Treaty of Lisbon towards the end of 2009, the national parliaments were given stronger roles and powers than those under the previous Treaties. The strengthening of the roles of national parliaments, together with the European Parliament, is again evident in the Treaty regarding Stability, Coordination and Governance which has come into force precisely on the 1st of January of this year. Article 13 of this Treaty provides for the establishment of a new inter-parliamentary conference aimed at discussing the budgetary policy lines and other issues under this Treaty. I am pleased to say that during the European Speakers Conference held in Cyprus last April, which was my first official commitment abroad and in which I was one of the four keynote speakers, we discussed and agreed upon the establishment of this new Conference which should be meeting for the first time during the Lithuanian Presidency, in the second semester of this year. It was precisely on the same day that the Maltese Parliament unanimously established the Standing Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs, which among its tasks will have the application of this same Treaty and therefore will be instrumental in the contribution of the Maltese Parliament to this Conference.

Needless to say the time has come for our parliamentary system to have an ethics committee or some other structure which establishes standards to be followed by the members of parliament. What I said in my speech of 6th April 2013, when I spoke about the role of Parliament in scrutinising the executive, applies here, and I quote:

“The people consider this a right, but a right that is complemented, and should be complemented, with the remedies that one expects from the country’s highest institution.”.

Thus we need to explore and discover the best model for achieving a balance concerning the correct behaviour of a member of parliament with regard to every citizen, consisting in the obligations and the remedies required.

In this manner we would be sending a clear signal that parliamentary political life rises above any unfair criticism, and thus we encourage more people to contribute towards strengthening democracy in our country.

Parliament should ensure that the remedies given by the Maltese tribunals and courts to citizens who have suffered some form of injustice due to any wrongdoing by the Executive, are respected. This is necessary so that the credibility of the country’s highest institution is further enhanced and rises above any wrongdoing.

In this context, what the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Simon Busuttil said recently in Parliament when he spoke about the establishment of a Petitions Committee, is relevant. With this proposal the Parliament would be establishing broader procedures so that public requests are not only heard but also treated within the highest institution of our country.

I am saying this because I believe that this institution can never rest on its laurels. We have to keep thinking in the same way as our predecessors, that the Maltese Parliament

has to be a true reflection of the people's will and a beacon of democracy. There is a lot of work to be done but we can manage as long as we all believe in our capabilities as a people who embrace the principles of solidarity and as a member state of the European Union.

On this national day cherished by the Maltese and Gozitan people, as President of the House of Representative, I sincerely pay tribute to all those who along the years felt a deep passion for politics and believed in contributing to the wellbeing of our country. Thanks to individuals like these, our nation has proven itself capable time and time again of deciding the best way forward in crucial moments. This sincere political commitment should fill us with courage.

The memory of the martyrs of Sette Giugno is a reflection of our present and future efforts to further strengthen our Malta, this mother who gave us her name and whose children we all are.

Diskors mill-Onorevoli Anġlu Farrugia
Speaker tal-Kamra tad-Deputati
Parlament ta' Malta
fl-okkażjoni
tal-kommemorazzjoni tas-SETTE GIUGNO

Il-Ħamis, 6 ta' Ġunju 2013

Prim Ministru, Kap tal-Oppożizzjoni, Presidenti Emeriti, *Speakers* Emeriti, Onorevoli Membri, Onorevoli Membri Anzjani, Eċċellenzi, Mistiedna Distinti.

Il-jum tas-Sette Giugno huwa jum speċjali għall-Maltin u l-Għawdxin kollha, li baqa' mnaqqax fil-memorja ta' pajjiżna għaliex ifakkar meta l-poplu Malti u Għawdxin fl-1919 wera kif b'vuċi waħda, f'għaqda nazzjonali, iġġieled għad-drittijiet tiegħu bħala Nazzjon Malti. Kien interessanti, pereżempju, li wara li fis-7 ta' Ġunju 1919 hutna Maltin tilfu ħajjithom bil-munizzjon tal-barrani, fl-ewwel opportunità li kellu Nerico Mizzi fis-seduta parlamentari 680 tal-1922, staqsa hekk lill-kap tal-Ministri:

“Nella prossima seduta dell’ Assemblée Legislativa gli domanderà se è vero che l’Autorità Militare ha preso delle misure precauzionali in occasione del terzo anniversario del 7 Giugno 1919, occupando, sia pure in parte, certi edifici pubblici (come il terrazzo del Palazzo di Giustizia), e in caso affermativo, a richiesta di chi e in virtù di quali poteri l’Autorità Militare ha ciò fatto.”.

Dan jindika ċar illi snin wara li l-poplu Malti u Għawdxin ngħata l-Kostituzzjoni Amery-Milner tal-1921 u bdiet tiltaqa' l-Assemblea Parlamentari, il-vuċi tal-poplu xorta kienet baqgħet taħt suspett għall-fatt li l-militar Ingliż okkupa saħansitra l-bejt tal-qorti fl-eventwalità ta' rvell ieħor. U kellu jkun l-istess Nerico Mizzi li għall-ewwel darba sostna li għandha ssir il-kommemorazzjoni tal-vittmi tas-Sette Giugno bħalma qed nagħmlu hawn

illum. Din il-proposta ressaqha fis-seduta parlamentari tas-Sette Giugno tal-1923, meta qal hekk:

“Propongo perciò che l’Assemblea sospenda per un quarto d’ora in segno di lutto, la seduta; e colgo questa opportunità per informare gli onor. colleghi, nella mia qualità di Segretario del Comitato Nazionale “Pro Caduti del 7 & 8 giugno 1919”, che un solenne funerale sarà celebrato posdimani nella Concattedrale di San Giovanni in suffragio dei nostri fratelli caduti in quelle tragiche giornate. Spero che la mia proposta sarà favorevolmente accolta dal Governo e da tutti i membri di quest’ Assemblea e che nessuno mancherà alla cerimonia propiziatoria di posdimani.”.

Dakinhar kien hemm kunsens unanimu u s-seduta parlamentari tas-Sette Giugno 1923 giet sospiza għal kwarta sal-erbgha ta’ wara nofsinhar. Minn dakinhar ’il quddiem il-mexxejja ta’ dan il-pajjiż, kollha kemm huma, immilitaw favur il-mixja tal-poplu Malti u Ghawdxi lejn rebhiet ta’ għadd ta’ drittijiet li wassluh għall-Indipendenza u għat tneħhija ta’ kull influwenza tal-militar barrani.

It-triq kienet twila imma llum aħna poplu b’identità, poplu sovrani. Imma baqgħalna aktar x’nagħmlu. Wara esperjenza ta’ aktar minn disa’ snin fl-Unjoni Ewropea, għadna ma lhaqniex il-livell mixtieq ta’ awtonomija fil-Parlament tagħna bħal dak li jgawdu Parlamenti nazzjonali oħra fi hdan l-istess Unjoni Ewropea.

Meta wieħed jitkellem fuq awtonomija f'dan il-kuntest ikun qed ifisser illi l-Parlament, l-oghla istituzzjoni ta' pajjiżna, ikollu l-kapaċità amministrattiva li jmxexxi b'mod indipendenti l-htigijiet ta' din l-istess istituzzjoni biex tkun tista' taqdi l-funzjonijiet kostituzzjonali tagħha. Fi kliem iehor il-Parlament irid ikollu s-setgħa li mingħajr xkiel iħejji l-estimi finanzjarji tiegħu stess u jamministra r-riżorsi tiegħu b'mod ħieles u distint minn kull tip ta' influwenza tal-Eżekuttiv.

Il-Parlament ma jista qatt ikun ħieles minn kull xkiel u rbit jekk amministrattivament jibqa' jitqies bħala dipartiment tal-Gvern. L-awtorità u l-awtonomija parlamentari, għalkemm distinti, huma intrinsikament marbuta flimkien. Biex naslu għal demokrazija parlamentari ħajja hemm bżonn li ma nibzghux nieħdu l-pass li jmiss lejn parlament awtonomu.

Mill-kitba u mid-diskors irridu ngħaddu għall-fatti. Huwa pjaċir tiegħi bħala President tal-Kamra tad-Deputati nikkonstata li llum dan il-prinċipju hu aċċettat minn kulhadd, inkluż miż-żewġ gruppi politiċi fi hdan il-Parlament Malti. L-istess Prim Ministru Joseph Muscat kemm-il darba ddikjara li l-Gvern jemmen li jrid jara l-awtonomija parlamentari sseħħ b'mod reali. Nifhem li n-naħa tal-Oppożizzjoni hija tal-istess fehma għaliex wara kollox kienet l-amministrazzjoni preċedenti li ppubblikat il-*white paper* dwar l-awtonomija parlamentari. Għaldaqstant issa jmiss nattivaw din ir-rieda ġenerali biex naraw li dan id-dritt li llum huwa nieqes fil-Parlament Malti fl-aħħar jiġi jiffirma parti minn sensiela ta' drittijiet li bħala poplu Malti akkwistajna mal-medda u l-milja taż-żmien mis-7 ta' Ġunju 1919 'l hawn. Jeħtieġ ukoll li dan il-pass iseħħ fl-iqsar żmien possibbli għaliex naħseb li kulhadd ghejja jisma' fuq il-ħtieġa tal-awtonomija

tal-Parlament mill-*Speakers* Emeriti, li minn hawn insellmilhom f'din l-okkażjoni. Hawnhekk ippermettuli nikkwota parti mill-gheluq tad-diskors tal-*Speaker* Emeritus Michael Frendo meta dan l-aħħar indirizza lill-Forum tal-President:

“Id-demokrazija tagħna hija demokrazija ħajja li kibret u għad baqgħalha tikber. Parlament b’saħħtu biss huwa l-prova ta’ demokrazija matura. Din trid tkun il-mira tagħna lkoll.”.

Pass importanti ħafna, jekk mhux l-aktar importanti, huwa d-diskussjoni wiesgħa li qed issir dwar il-bini tal-parlament il-ġdid fl-entrata tal-belt kapitali Valletta. Kien ta’ pjacir kbir għaliya meta l-Prim Ministru ddelega lili, bi qbil mal-Oppożizzjoni, biex immexxi proċess ta’ konsultazzjoni ma’ kulhadd dwar din il-binja. Jiena dan il-proċess bdejtu u fil-fatt diġà saru numru ta’ laqgħat li għandhom iwasslu għal deċiżjoni għaqlija fl-interess tal-poplu Malti u Għawdxì.

L-istess raġunament japplika wkoll għad-diskussjoni dwar il-Kostituzzjoni ta’ pajjiżna, dwar jekk hemmx ħtieġa li din tevolve – kif effettivament jidher li hemm - u dwar il-possibilità *o meno* tat-Tieni Repubblika. Jiena ngħid li dan ukoll huwa proċess li għandu jsir bil-parteciġazzjoni – jekk mhux bid-direzzjoni – tal-Parlament, mingħajr ma nnaqqas xejn mill-parteciġazzjoni wiesgħa tal-poplu Malti u Għawdxì kollu. Għaliex kif tista’ titkellem fuq Kostituzzjoni u ma tinvolvi lill-istess Parlament li jrid jilleġiżla?! Fuq kollox pajjiżna b’hekk dejjem mexxa ’l quddiem, għaliex il-poplu u aħna li nirrappreżentawh semmajna lehinna.

Dwar it-tifsir ta' demokrazija ħajja, l-awtur kostituzzjonali notevoli Sir William Ivor Jennings fil-ktieb tiegħu "Parliament" jgħid hekk:

“Si antiquitatem spectes, est vetustissima, si dignitatem, est honoratissima, si jurisdictionem, est capacissima.”.

Fi kliem ieħor, l-oġġla istituzzjoni trid tkun kapaċi tara u terfa' weħidha dak li hu mistenni minn demokrazija parlamentari.

Huwa fatt li mxejna. Jien se nkompli naħdem fuq dak li għamlu ta' qabli biex nelevaw dejjem, kif inhu xieraq, din l-istituzzjoni – il-Parlament.

- Wara l-pubblikazzjoni tar-*rulings*, ossia tad-deċiżjonijiet, mogħtija mis-Sedja bejn l-1921 u l-1924 mill-Professur Ray Mangion, fix-xhur li ġejjin se jiġu ppubblikati deċiżjonijiet oħra li ngħataw minn Presidenti tal-Kamra mill-1924 'l hawn. Se nkun qed nara li mill-aktar fis possibbli dawn id-deċiżjonijiet jiġu ppubblikati kollha.

- Wara l-introduzzjoni ta' *audio live streaming* tas-seduti tal-Kamra u tal-Kumitati, u wara t-tnedija ta' *video live streaming* tal-laqgħat tal-Kumitati fl-aħħar xhur tal-legiżlatura li għaddiet, issa se nkunu qegħdin intejbu b'mod sostanzjali l-kwalità tax-xandir tal-laqgħat tal-kumitati fuq dan il-*medium* tant importanti. Barra minn hekk diġà saru l-preparazzjonijiet biex mill-bini tal-Parlament il-ġdid, jekk ikun il-każ, jibdew jiġu trazzmessi wkoll id-dibattiti fl-awla plenarja tal-Parlament.

Dan huwa pass ieħor biex il-Parlament jersaq aktar lejn il-poplu.

- Hekk kif bdejt nokkupa din il-kariga kont urejt ix-xewqa tiegħi li l-Parlament ikollu r-rivista tiegħu. Ghandi pjaċir inħabbar li din ix-xewqa mmaterjalizzat fil-forma ta' perjodiku li se jibda joħroġ kull erba' xhur. Hsibna wkoll biex din il-pubblikazzjoni nagħmluha aċċessibbli *on-line* fuq is-sit tal-Parlament Malti fiż-żewġ lingwi ufficjali, biex b'hekk ikompli jizdied l-għarfien u l-apprezzament tal-ħidma parlamentari fost il-poplu, fost l-istess parlamentari kif ukoll fl-istituzzjonijiet parlamentari barra l-pajjiż.

- Ippubblikajna wkoll l-Ordniġiet Permanenti tal-Kamra kif emendati mill-1995 sal-lum. Kien unur kbir għalija li nqassam kopja ta' din il-pubblikazzjoni lil numru sabiħ ta' membri parlamentari ġodda waqt laqgħa li saret apposta għalihom biex jiġi spjegat kif taħdem il-Kamra.

- Fuq talba tal-istess membri, ippubblikajna wkoll ktejjeb ta' informazzjoni utli dwar il-Parlament Malti u dwar il-membri kollha fi hdanu.

Kif qiegħed nitkellem dwar il-membri ġodda rrid nossottolinea l-fatt li għall-ewwel darba fl-istorja tal-Parlament, għandna għaxar membri nisa. Dan jawgura tajjeb għall-evoluzzjoni politika ta' pajjiżna.

Dawn l-inizjattivi huma kollha mmirati biex dan il-Parlament ikun f'qagħda li jaħdem aħjar, imma aktar importanti minn hekk, biex ikun jista' jersaq viċin il-poplu. Fil-ġimgħat u x-xhur li ġejjin, wara l-konsultazzjonijiet meħtieġa, se nkun qed invara inizjattivi oħra sabiex insaħħu l-komunikazzjoni u

l-interazzjoni bejn il-Parlament u l-poplu in ġenerali. Kif għedt fl-ewwel diskors tiegħi fis-6 ta' April, wara li hadt il-ġurament bħala *Speaker* tal-Parlament, irrid li din l-istituzzjoni tkun aktar qrib il-poplu u għalhekk nittama li bis-saħħa ta' din is-sensiela ta' inizzjattivi, il-Parlament imur għand il-poplu u l-poplu jkollu l-libertà kollha li jersaq lejn il-Parlament mingħajr xkiel.

Pass pożittiv ieħor lejn Parlament aktar qrib iċ-ċittadin huwa dak diġà indikat mill-Gvern preżenti fil-programm elettorali tiegħu, li “il-MEUSAC bħala entità ... taqa' taht il-Parlament, b'mod ukoll li jkun hemm aktar riżorsi kemm biex il-Kamra tar-Rappreżentanti tgħarbel id-direttivi u r-regolamenti Ewropej, kif ukoll biex il-*feedback* tas-soċjetà ċivili jiġi inkorporat ahjar fil-pożizzjonijiet tal-Gvern Malti.”. Dan huwa pass konkret fid-direzzjoni tal-awtonomija parlamentari.

Fuq l-istess livell għandu jiġi esplorat ukoll kif għandu jikber id-djalogo bejn l-MCESD u l-Parlament.

Kif semmejt fil-laqgħa li kelli mal-parlamentari eletti għall-ewwel darba, jiena nemmen li kull meta mmexxi delegazzjoni barra minn xtutna possibilment ikolli miegħi membri godda minn kull naħa tal-Kamra biex dawn ukoll jieħdu esperjenza internazzjonali fuq sugġetti ta' interess għal pajjiżna. Hekk se nagħmel aktar tard dan ix-xahar meta se jkolli miegħi delegazzjoni speċjalizzata fuq sugġetti li jikkonċernaw pajjiżi żgħar u problemi ambjentali u ekonomiċi. Nemmen li dan għandu jkompli biex kulhadd ikollu opportunità li jwessa' l-esperjenza tiegħu fl-interess tad-demokrazija parlamentari haġja.

Bid-dhul fis-sehħ tat-Trattat ta' Liżbona lejn l-ahħar tal-2009, il-parlamenti nazzjonali ngħataw rwoli u setgħat

aktar b'saħħithom minn dawk li kellhom fi Trattati preċedenti. It-tishih tar-rwol tal-parlamenti nazzjonali, flimkien mal-Parlament Ewropew, joħroġ ukoll mit-Trattat dwar Stabbiltà, Koordinazzjoni u Governanza li daħal fis-seħħ proprju fl-ewwel ta' Jannar ta' din is-sena. Artiklu 13 ta' dan it-Trattat jipprovdi għat-twaqqif ta' konferenza interparlamentari ġdida bil-għan li tiddiskuti l-linji ta' politika baġitarja u kwistjonijiet oħra koperti b'dan it-Trattat. Bi pjaċir ngħid li waqt il-Konferenza tal-*Speakers* Ewropej li nżammet f'Ċipru f'April li għadda, li kienet l-ewwel impenn uffiċjali tiegħi barra minn Malta u fejn kont wieħed mill-erba' *keynote speakers*, iddiskutejna u qbilna dwar it-twaqqif ta' din il-Konferenza ġdida li għandha titlaqqa' għall-ewwel darba fil-Presidenza Litwana, fit-tieni nofs ta' din is-sena. Kien proprju fl-istess ġurnata li l-Parlament Malti, b'mod unanimu, waqqaf il-Kumitat Permanenti dwar l-Affarijiet Ekonomiċi u Finanzjarji, li fost ix-xogħol tiegħu se jkollu l-applikazzjoni ta' dan l-istess Trattat u allura se jkun strumentali fil-kontribuzzjoni tal-Parlament Malti f'din il-Konferenza.

M'hemmx dubju li wasal iż-żmien li s-sistema parlamentari tagħna jkollha kumitat dwar l-etika jew xi struttura oħra li tistabbilixxi *standards* li jridu jiġu segwiti mill-membri parlamentari. Hawnhekk japplika wkoll dak li għedt fid-diskors tiegħi tas-6 ta' April 2013, meta tkellimt dwar ir-rwol tal-Parlament li jiskrutinja l-eżekuttiv, u nikkwota:

“Il-poplu dan jarah bħala dritt, imma dritt li huwa kumplimentat, u għandu jkun kumplimentat, bir-rimedji li wieħed jistenna minn din l-oghla istituzzjoni ta' dan il-pajjiż.”.

Għalhekk irridu nesploraw xi jkun l-aħjar mudell biex jintlaħaq bilanċ dwar kif wiehed għandu jara li jikkomporta ruħu bħala parlamentari korrett fil-konfront ta' kull cittadin li jwassal kemm għal obbligi kif ukoll għal rimedji meħtieġa.

B'dan il-mod inkunu qed nibagħtu sinjal ċar li l-ħajja politika parlamentari hija 'l fuq minn kull kritika ingusta u b'hekk inħajru aktar nies jaġħtu sehemhom għat-tisħih tad-demokrazija ta' pajjiżna.

Il-Parlament għandu jara li jkun hemm osservanza sħiħa tar-rimedji mogħtija mit-tribunali u l-qrati Maltin liċ-ċittadini li jkunu sofrew xi ingustizzja f'każ ta' xi nuqqas mill-Eżekuttiv. Dan huwa meħtieġ biex il-kredibbiltà tal-ogħla istituzzjoni tal-pajjiż tkompli tissaħħaħ u tkun dejjem 'il fuq minn kull ombra.

F'dan il-kuntest huwa relevanti dak li qal riċentement fil-Parlament, il-Kap tal-Oppożizzjoni l-Onor. Simon Busuttil meta tkellem dwar it-twaqqif ta' kumitat dwar il-petizzjonijiet. B'din il-proposta l-Parlament ikun qiegħed jistabbilixxi proċeduri aktar wiesgħa biex talbiet imressqa mill-pubbliku mhux biss jiġu mismugħa imma wkoll trattati fl-ogħla istituzzjoni ta' pajjiżna.

Dan qed ngħidu għax nemmen li din l-istituzzjoni ma tista' tistrieħ qatt. Irridu nibqgħu naħsbu kif dejjem haħsbu ta' qabilna, li l-Parlament ta' Malta jkun verament riflessjoni tal-kuxjenza popolari ta' pajjiżna u l-aqwa espressjoni tad-demokrazija. Hemm ħafna x'nagħmlu imma nistgħu naslu ladarba lkoll nemmnu fil-kapaċitajiet tagħna bħala poplu li jħaddan prinċipji ta' solidarjetà u bħala pajjiż membru tal-Unjoni Ewropea.

F'dan il-jum nazzjonali għażiż għall-poplu Malti u Ghawdxi, bhala President tal-Kamra tad-Deputati, minn qalbi nsellem lil dawk kollha li matul iż-żmenijiet ġo fihom hassew passjoni għall-politika u emmnu li jistgħu jagħtu kontribut għall-ġid ta' pajjiżna. Bis-saħha ta' nies bħal dawn il-poplu dejjem wera li fil-mument ta' prova kien kapaċi jagħraf jiddeciedi x'inhu l-aħjar għalih. Dan l-impenn politiku sincier għandu jagħmlilna kuragg.

Il-memorja tal-martri tas-Sette Giugno hija riflessjoni ta' dak li qed nagħmlu llum u li għad irridu nagħmlu biex dejjem insaħħu lil Malta tagħna, din l-omm li tatna isimha u li aħna lkoll uliedha.