



Press Release

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Maltese delegation participates in the 26th Annual Session of the OSCE PA

A delegation of the Maltese Parliament took part in the 2017 Annual Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE PA). The delegation was led by newly-elected Member of Parliament, Rosianne Cutajar and comprised also Emanuel Mallia and Godfrey Farrugia.

The Maltese delegation has participated very actively in the meetings of the General Committees of the OSCE PA, notably the Second General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and the Environment, where a supplementary item draft resolution on drinking water and climate change submitted by Godfrey Farrugia was debated in depth by the members of the General Committee. Though a few amendments to clarify the text were proposed at the end of the debate, the supplementary item was approved unanimously with one amendment put forward by Farrugia himself.

It was then included in the Final Declaration of the Annual Session, a copy of which will be presented to the Ministerial Council of the OSCE later this year, with the aim of bringing to the Ministers' attention issues of major importance, and to call on the OSCE to take action to address shortcomings and problems identified.

Fourteen other supplementary item draft resolutions on various subjects, ranging from migration to terrorism, were also debated both in the three General Committees and in the plenary sessions of the OSCE PA.

The aim of the Maltese draft supplementary item draft resolution is to raise awareness on a hugely important resource without which there can be no human life - water in its various forms - and the main challenges it is facing, most importantly climate change. It calls on strengthened cooperation between the participating States as these problems are common to many of them and they tend to transcend national borders. Contrary to most issues discussed by the OSCE PA participating States, drinking water is an issue that creates consensus and constructive dialogue.

Prior to being submitted to the OSCE PA, the Maltese draft resolution had to obtain the necessary number of signatures from foreign delegations. The Maltese delegation also supported a number of draft resolutions presented by other delegations, including the American resolution on combating child exploitation through advanced technology.

Attachments: none

Page: 1 of 2

Emanuel Mallia and Rosianne Cutajar also participated very actively in the general debate organised in plenary on 8 July. Emanuel Mallia intervened to talk about the issue of migration, more specifically the recent border issue that erupted between Italy and Austria. He called for participating States to honour their international commitments and to show solidarity with another participating State in difficulty, rather than recurring to threats and a nationalistic approach. Participating States need to share responsibility in addressing migration, as it is not a problem that belongs to only one or a few states. Malta has always taken action to support Italy, and will continue to do so.

Rosianne Cutajar intervened to talk about the plight and unprecedented suffering of the children of Syria as a result of a war that has dragged for so long and which has caused many victims, including thousands of deaths. She mentioned the myriad of problems and brutal hardships that they are made to face at such a tender age – not only do these children have to live without the most basic needs such as food, water and healthcare, but they are also being deprived of their future. They cannot go to school and the trauma which they are experiencing now will surely have devastating effects, including on their psychology.

The Maltese delegation also participated actively in a number of other debates, most notably in the debates on the resolutions submitted by other participating States on the rights of the LGBTIQ community and counter-terrorism.

The next meeting of the OSCE PA will take place in Andorra in October 2017.