



House of Representatives Annual Report 2016

KAMRA TAD-DEPUTATI PARLAMENT TA' MALTA

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'There shall be a Parliament of Malta which shall consist of the President and a House of Representatives'. [Article 51 of the Constitution of Malta]

'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

It is with great satisfaction that I am presenting the Annual Report for 2016, a year of many milestones for the Maltese House of Representatives.

The biggest milestone was the approval of the Parliamentary Service Act, which granted Parliament administrative autonomy from the Executive. This Act makes it possible for Parliament to carry out its role of scrutinising the Executive more freely, thereby addressing criticism reiterated by various Speakers that Malta's highest Institution can never truly carry out its scrutiny functions if it is administratively dependent on the Executive. The



significance of the Parliamentary Service Act will be felt in the long-term as it will result in a stronger parliamentary democracy for our country.

Two of the measures implemented in 2016 serve to open the Parliament to civil society. One such measure was the amendment to the Standing Orders pertaining to Petitions which has made it possible for petitions to be submitted directly to the Parliament by citizens themselves. Such amendment has also established a Standing Committee on Petitions.

2016 was the year in which Malta joined the Trio ahead of holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in January 2017; a role which Malta will be carrying out for the first time. Simultaneously, the Maltese parliament initiated its work on the Parliamentary Dimension of the said Presidency which is planned to include the hosting of six inter-parliamentary conferences. In preparation for these challenging six months, the Maltese parliament received a number of visits from delegations, including from the European Parliament and the European Commission.

These milestones have given the House of Representatives renewed impetus to continually strive towards giving a service of excellence, not least during the upcoming Parliamentary Dimension of Malta's Presidency of the Council of the European Union, for the enhancement of democracy in Malta.

ANĠLU FARRUGIA Speaker

1. HOUSE BUSINESS

1.1 Overview

During 2016, Parliament launched its own TV channel, Parliament TV, where it started broadcasting plenary sittings and committee meetings. This measure further strengthened the aspects of transparency of accountability and opened the House to the public. This initiative was made possible following legislation rendering Parliament financially autonomous from government, and the opening of an audiovisual studio located within the parliamentary building. Other parliamentary events, such as various exhibitions that take place inside the House, as well as discussion programmes with MPs, NGOs, experts and students have also been aired on Parliament TV.

In 2016, parliament initiated its work on the Parliamentary Dimension of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, before Malta takes on the rotating six-month Presidency in January 2017. As from 1 January 2016, the Republic of Malta, together with the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Slovak Republic, formed the so-called 'Trio' for the duration of 18 months. The Trio, based on the principle of rotation, ensures continuity and consistency in the work of the Council of the EU. The Trio defines a general agenda and implements a joint programme, while each of its members, in a predetermined order, presides over the Council of the EU for a period of six months.

In recent years national parliaments have gained growing relevance in the European decision making structure, not least since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, which has at times been referred to as 'the Treaty of national parliaments' due to the new powers it grants to these institutions.

This growing relevance of national parliaments and their EU dimension has also been reflected in a strengthening of the parliamentary dimension of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, including the setting up of new inter-parliamentary conferences, namely the joint parliamentary scrutiny group on Europol. Apart from the statutory meetings organised by each Presidency, the Maltese Parliament will be organising additional thematic meetings of Chairpersons of parliamentary committees.

Furthermore, the Maltese Parliament will also host a number of incoming visits. The aim of these visits is to discuss Malta's priorities during the Presidency of the Council with the law-makers of the country.

The first incoming visit was that from the European Parliament's Committee on Employment and Social Affairs that held a meeting with the Maltese Parliamentary Committee for Social Affairs in November. This meeting was held in preparation for the Meeting of the Chairpersons of the Committees on Social Affairs, which will focus on alleviating people out of poverty and social exclusion and which will be held in March 2017.

A delegation of the Estonian Riigikogu visited the Maltese Parliament on the 3-4 November 2016 to discuss preparations for the Parliamentary Dimension of the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the subsequent Estonian Presidency that will be held between July and December 2017. An exchange of views, spanning both the preparatory stage and the outcomes of the presidencies, was held.

The COSAC Secretariat visited the Maltese Parliament on 5-6 December to discuss the preparations for the two COSAC meetings that will be held during the Maltese Presidency, including the agenda and relating documents. The COSAC Secretariat met the Chairperson of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee Hon. Luciano Busuttil as well as the staff of the Maltese Parliament dealing with the meetings falling within the Parliamentary Dimension of the Maltese Presidency. A meeting was also held with the personnel of the Presidency Unit where the relevant logistics were discussed.

COSAC is a conference of the Committees of the national parliaments of the European Union member states dealing with European Union affairs as well as representatives of the European Parliament.

During each Presidency, two COSAC meetings are held, one for the Chairpersons of European Union Affairs Committees in the national parliaments, and the other at the end of the Presidency, the general meeting that brings together parliamentarians from national parliaments of European Union member states and also those of candidate countries.

COSAC was established in 1989 whene the Speakers of the Parliaments of the European Union Members Sates agreed to strengthen the role of national parliament in relation to Community matters by bringing together their Committees on European Affairs.

Another meeting, traditionally taking place at the beginning of each presidency, was that on 8 December, when the Maltese Parliament received the Conference of Presidents of the European Parliament led by the President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz, in a special session at the Chamber of Deputies. Maltese MPs from both sides of the House, together with the political parties' representatives of the European Parliament, had the opportunity to express their own views on the priorities of the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union during the first half of 2017 and on the EU's current reality.

An important measure taken by the Parliament of Malta during 2016 was the amendment to the Standing Orders pertaining to Petitions. Motion 382, was approved in Parliament in the sitting of 25 July, brought about changes to the procedures surrounding the parliamentary petitions which made it possible for petitions to be submitted to Parliament directly by the citizens. Furthermore, they established a Standing Committee on Petitions which will discuss all petitions and decide on whether and how the petition will be followed up.

1.1.1 Composition of Parliament

During the year under review the composition of the House of Representatives or the parliamentary groups changed three times:

- On 31 March, Member of the Opposition Hon. Albert Fenech presented his letter of resignation as a Member of the House of Representatives to the Speaker. This resignation resulted in a vacancy in the 10th electoral district which was filled by Mr Karl Gouder who took the oath of allegiance in the sitting of 6 April. Hon Gouder was co-opted as a Member of Parliament by means of a motion that was unanimously approved in the House.
- On 30 September, Member of the Government Hon. Leo Brincat tendered his resignation from Member of the House of Representatives following his appointment as a European Auditor at the European Court of Auditors in Luxembourg. This resignation resulted in a vacancy in the 9th electoral district for which a casual election was held on 11 October. The seat was filled by Dr Clifton Grima who took the oath of allegiance as Member of the House of Representatives on the same day.
- On 28 November, Hon. Edwin Vassallo and Hon. Peter Micallef took and signed the Oath of Allegiance as new Members of Parliament in accordance with the Electoral Commission's declaration to elect two Members of Parliament following the Constitutional Court judgment of 25 November 2016 in the case "PN vs Electoral Commission et".

1.2 Legislative Programme

During 2016, 50 Acts were enacted by Parliament, 19 of which were principal Acts and 31 amendment Acts.

1.2.1 New legislation and objectives behind the following bills

Act I of 2016 - Environment Protection Act

The object of this Bill is to make provision for the protection of the environment and for the establishment of an Authority with powers to that effect and for matters relating to the afore-mentioned objects.

Act III of 2016 - Healthy Lifestyle Promotion and Care of Non-Communicable Diseases Act

The objects of this Bill are to establish and ensure an interministerial lifelong approach favouring physical education and healthy balanced diets for a healthy lifestyle reducing the level of obesity throughout all age groups.

Act V of 2016 – Environment and Planning Review Tribunal Act

The object of this Bill is to establish a tribunal for the purpose of reviewing decisions of the Planning Authority and of the Malta Environment Authority, to provide for the manner in which proceedings of the Tribunal are to be conducted, and to provide for appeals from decisions of the Tribunal.

Act VII of 2016 – Development Planning Act

The object of this Bill is to make provision for development planning, and for the establishment of an Authority with powers to that effect and for matters relating to the afore-mentioned objects.

Act X of 2016 – Commissioner for Older Persons Act

The object of this Bill is to provide for the appointment of a Commissioner for Older Persons with power to promote and safeguard the interests of older persons, and for matters ancillary thereto or connected therewith

Act XV of 2016 – Budget Measures Implementation Act

The objects of this Bill are to implement Budget measures for the financial year 2016 and other administrative measures.

Act XVI of 2016 - Arbiter for Financial Services Act

The objects of this Bill are to set up the Office of the Arbiter for Financial Services, to set up a Board of Management and Administration, and to provide for other purposes connected therewith, particularly in relation to consumer protection in the field of financial services.

Act XVII of 2016 - Maltese Sign Language Recognition Act

The objects of this Bill are to provide for the setting up, composition and functions of the Sign Language Council of Malta, which is being set up in order to achieve a situation where the deaf community is consulted on matters relating to Maltese Sign Language; the Bill also provides for the promotion of the use and development of Maltese Sign Language, whilst declaring that the Maltese Sign Language is to be considered an official language of Malta, and for other matters ancillary or consequential thereto.

Act XXVI of 2016 – Persons within the Autism Spectrum (Empowerment) Act

The objects of this Bill are to empower persons within the autism spectrum by providing for their health and well-being in society, the betterment of their living conditions, their participation and inclusion in society and to make ancillary and consequential provisions thereto in full adherence to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability

Act XXVIII of 2016 - Human Organs, Tissues and Cell Donation Act

This Bill addresses both cadaveric and live organs, tissue and cell donation whilst ensuring that organ, tissues and cells donation shall continue to be viewed as a selfless gift. The Bill has the objective of strongly emphasising altruistic choices, reinforcing the philosophy of voluntary and unpaid donation as well as solidarity between the donor and the recipient. The Bill lays down the applicable procedures in the field of organ, cell and tissue donation. The Bill further introduces amendments to the Criminal Code to address offences under the Council of Europe Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs, 2015.

Act XXXVIII of 2016 - Academy for Disciplined Forces Act

The objects of this Bill are to provide for the establishment of an Academy to be known as the Academy for Training of Members of Disciplined Forces to mainly provide training to recruiting officers, members of the Armed Forces of Malta, members of the Malta Police Force, Prisons Officers and the Civil Protection Officers.

Act XXXIX of 2016 - Parking Concessions for Persons with Disability Act

The aim of this Bill is to provide for designated parking concessions for persons with disability, in line with Council Recommendation 98/376/EC of 4 June 1998 on a parking card for people with disabilities, and to provide for other matters ancillary thereto.

Act XL of 2016 – Assignment of Statutory Ministerial Responsibilities Act

The object of this Bill is to provide for greater clarity in the allocation of statutory ministerial responsibilities.

Act XLII of 2016 – Parliamentary Service Act

The object of this Bill is to set up an autonomous Parliamentary Service which is autonomous in its administration, and to provide for matters consequential and ancillary thereto.

Act XLIII of 2016 - Lands Authority Act

The object of this Bill is to make provision for the establishment of the Lands Authority, to regulate its activities, for the establishment of a Board of Governors and Directorates, for the appointment and functions of officers of the Authority, financial matters relating to the Authority and the transfer of assets to the Authority; and to provide for other matters ancillary or incidental thereto or connected therewith.

Act XLIV of 2016 - Constitutional Reforms (Justice Sector) Act

The objects and reasons of this Bill are the enactment of Constitutional reforms concerning the judiciary, the establishment of two sub-committees of the Commission for the Administration of Justice to be styled as the Judicial Appointments Commission and the Committee for Judges and Magistrates with the respective tasks of advising on judicial appointments and of conducting disciplinary proceedings in respect of members of the judiciary, the entrenchment of the Commission for the

Administration of Justice and of the Committee for Judges and Magistrates in the Constitution and the enactment of the Members of the Judiciary (Pensions) Act.

Act XLV of 2016 - Various Laws (Amendment and Repeal) Act

The objects of this Bill are to consolidate certain legislation and also to repeal certain laws which have expired, or have become spent or have had their effect.

Act XLVIII of 2016 - Family Business Act

The objects and reasons of this Bill are to provide a legal framework to assist and facilitate family businesses to prepare themselves for transferring the business from one generation to the next by providing benefits including governance and incentives for the better management and organisation within the family and the business.

Act L of 2016 - Institute of Tourism Studies Act

The object of this Bill is to provide for the establishment of the Institute of Tourism Studies by means of an Act of Parliament, to provide for the Institute's legal personality, its governing bodies and officers and staff, for the transfer of assets to the Institute, and to provide for the revocation of the Institution of Tourism Studies Regulations (S.L. 327.423).

1.2.2 Amendment Acts and objectives behind the following amendment bills

Act II of 2016 - Code of Police Laws (Amendment) Act

The objects of this Bill are to transpose the Street Naming Committee and Door Re-numbering Unit from the Ministry responsible for public works to the Electoral Office.

Act IV of 2016 - Various Laws (Justice Reform) (Civil Procedure) (Amendment) Act

The objects and reasons of this Bill are to implement proposed reforms of the justice system in the field of civil procedure. The Bill provides for the raising of the competences of the Courts of Magistrates and of the Small Claims Tribunal, proposes measures to accelerate the service of written pleadings, creates an electronic register for interdicted and incapacitated persons and proposes measures to curb frivolous and vexatious court proceedings in order to make the courts more efficient. The Bill also clarifies the issue relating to the jurisdiction of the Administrative Review Tribunal to review administrative acts.

Act VI of 2016 - Sports (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to change the nomenclature of the Kunsill Malti ghall-Isport to SportMalta.

Act VIII of 2016 - Accountancy Profession (Amendment) Act

The objects of this Bill are to amend the Accountancy Profession Act so that the composition of the Accountancy Board is brought in line with Directive 2014/56/EU and Regulation 537/2014, give certain other powers to the Accountancy Board and to recognise the professional accountancy degree organised by the University of Malta for the grant of the warrant of accountant.

Act IX of 2016 - Central Bank of Malta (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to establish a Central Credit Register at the Central Bank of Malta; moreover, the Act is being amended in order to update it in view of recent amendments made to the Act.

Act XI of 2016 - Police (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to amend and update the provisions in the Police Act relating to the pensionable emoluments payable to Police officers who are seriously injured during the course of their duties or payable to their dependants in the case where Police officers die as a direct consequence of their having carried out the duties of their office.

Act XII of 2016 - Malta Travel and Tourism Services (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to amend the Malta Travel and Tourism Services Act by updating the definition "tourist" contained therein.

Act XIII of 2016 - Civil Code (Amendment) Act

The main object of this Bill is to widen the protection afforded to vulnerable persons, by imposing certain conditions on mandates given in the case of persons of full age in anticipation of incapacity or by dependent adults, and making the infringement of such conditions a criminal offence within the ambit of Sub-title XI of Title VIII of the Criminal Code.

Act XIV of 2016 - Civil Code (Amendment No. 2) Act

The objects and reasons of this Bill are the facilitation of the mobility of co-owned property with a view to its better use and preservation.

Act XVIII of 2016 - Utilities and Services (Regulation of Certain Works) (Amendment) Act

The objects of this Act are to implement Directive 2014/61/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on measures to reduce the cost of deploying high-speed electronic communications networks, the regulation of certain works in connection with utilities and other services, and to amend other existing laws that relate to such measures and to the provision of electronic communications services.

Act XIX of 2016 - Various Financial Services Laws (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to implement and transpose the relevant provisions of: (i) Regulation (EU) 600/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on markets in financial instruments and amending Regulation (EU) 648/2012; and (ii) Directive 2013/50/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2013 amending Directive 2004/109/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the harmonisation of transparency requirements in relation to information about issuers whose securities are admitted to trading on a regulated market, Directive 2003/71/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the prospectus to be published when securities are offered to the public or admitted to trading and Commission Directive 2007/14/EC laying down detailed rules for the implementation of certain provisions of Directive 2004/109/EC; and also to amend article 11A of the Financial Markets Act with regard to multilateral trading facilities; to amend the Prevention of Financial Markets Abuse Act; and to provide for matters ancillary or incidental thereto.

Act XX of 2016 - Civil Aviation (Security) (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to give effect to the Protocol to amend the Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft (Montreal Protocol, 2014), the Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts relating to International Civil Aviation (Beijing, 2010) and the Protocol Supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft (Beijing, 2010).

Act XXI of 2016 - Participation within the Single Resolution Fund and granting of financial support under the Single Resolution Mechanism (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to amend the Participation within the Single Resolution Fund and granting of financial support under the Single Resolution Mechanism Act in such manner as to clarify the transitional period during which the Government of Malta is authorised to enter into the agreement on the transfer and mutualisation of contributions to the Single Resolution Fund.

Act XXII of 2016 - Arms (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to authorise a non-resident who is under the age of sixteen years but not under the age of fourteen years to practise target shooting in the same way as Maltese nationals.

Act XXIII of 2016 - Local Loans (Registered Stock and Securities) Ordinance (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to enable the Minister for finance to raise money by way of loan for the purpose of lending to the Single Resolution Board an unsecured loan facility of up to sixty-six million Euro (€66,000,000) in terms of the Loan Facility Agreement between the Republic of Malta and the Single Resolution Board to be entered into in pursuance of Regulation (EU) 806/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 July 2014 establishing uniform rules and a uniform procedure for the resolution of credit institutions and certain investment firms in the framework of a Single Resolution Mechanism and a Single Resolution Fund and amending Regulation (EU) 1093/2010.

Act XXIV of 2016 - Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) (Amendment) Act

The objects and reasons of this Bill are to amend the provisions of the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act, to provide for the updating of the law which came into force more than fifteen years ago by means of the principal provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol adopted on 13 December 2006 as well as to provide for a bill of rights for persons with disability.

Act XXV of 2016 - Civil Code (Amendment No. 3) Act

The objects of this Bill are to amend the provisions of the Civil Code (Cap. 16) relating to the law of things, defining the rules on the coastal perimeter and the foreshore, classifying property in ownership of the Government, defining and introducing rules on the concept of the public domain and rules on duties and limitations on the Government in its administration of property in the public domain, regulating the designation and declassification procedures and effects in relation to the public domain, introducing rules on the registration of property in the public domain and addressing the impacts of the amendments on private rights and on other existing cultural, environmental and other special laws affecting Government property.

Act XXVII of 2016 - Employment and Training Services (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to change the nomenclature of the Employment and Training Corporation to Jobsplus.

Act XXIX of 2016 - Social Work Profession (Amendment) Act

The main object of this Bill is to update the Social Work Profession Act by creating a demarcation line between a registered social worker who is a person in possession of a warrant to practise the profession of social work and is registered in the official register of registered social workers, and a social worker who is a person in possession of a recognised degree in social work, but who is not in possession of a warrant to practise the profession of social work.

Act XXX of 2016 - Consumer Affairs (Amendment) Act

The objects and reasons of this Bill are to amend the Consumer Affairs Act to complement the transposition process relative to Directive 2014/17/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 February 2014 on credit agreements for consumers relating to residential immovable property and amending Directives 2008/48/EC and 2013/36/EU and Regulation (EU) 1093/2010.

Act XXXI of 2016 - Conduct Certificates Ordinance (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to simplify the manner in which an individual may obtain a copy of his conduct certificate through the possibility of requesting a copy of the conduct certificate through electronic means.

Act XXXII of 2016 - Education (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to make provision for the delegation of powers by the Minister for Education to the Minister for Tourism relative to the Institute of Tourism Studies.

Act XXXIII of 2016 - Employment and Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act

The objects and reasons of this Bill are to bring the provisions of the Employment and Industrial Relations Act (Cap. 452) relating to the Industrial Tribunal into line with two judgments delivered by the Constitutional Court on 12 February 2016 and to strengthen respect for the right to a fair hearing before the said Tribunal.

Act XXXIV of 2016 - Various Laws (Transposition of Directive 2013/55/EU) (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to amend various laws related to the recognition of qualifications in order to implement the provisions of Directive 2013/55/EU.

Act XXXV of 2016 - Electronic Commerce (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to amend the Electronic Commerce Act and to provide for the measures required to ensure the implementation of Regulation (EU) 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market and repealing Directive 1999/93/EC.

Act XXXVI of 2016 - Accountancy Profession Act and other Laws (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to amend the Accountancy Profession Act and the Companies Act so as to bring them in line with Directive 2014/56/EU and with certain provisions of Regulation (EU) 537/2014.

Act XXXVII of 2016 - Criminal Code (Amendment) Act

The objects and reasons of this Bill are to update the provisions of the Criminal Code on crimes against religious sentiment also given that since these laws have been enacted in the 1930s the Criminal Code has been amended several times in order to impose criminal sanctions on the instigation of religious and other forms of hatred and to provide for the better implementation of the right to freedom of expression with regard to the striking of the necessary balance between the right of everyone to receive and impart information and ideas and the need to protect society and vulnerable persons in particular from certain forms of pornography and indecency. Consequential amendments are also being made to the Customs Ordinance and the Pornography and Obscenity Regulations are being repealed.

Act XLI of 2016 - Transfer of Responsibilities (Various Laws) (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to update various legislation by transferring certain responsibilities therein contained to other authorities in order to reflect, by legislation, the current situation with regards to such responsibilities.

Act XLVI of 2016 - Malta Armed Forces (Amendment) Act

The object of this Bill is to introduce a mechanism to the effect that the provisions relating to the granting of pension service to officials of the Armed Forces of Malta may be applied retroactively.

Act XLVII of 2016 - Probation (Amendment) Act

The objects of this Bill are to provide for the taking of samples for the purpose of ascertaining by means of laboratory analysis or by a device approved by the Minister, whether a probationer or a parolee has any drugs or alcohol in his body.

Act XLIX of 2016 - Central Bank of Malta (Amendment No. 2) Act

The object of this Bill is to remove from the Central Bank of Malta Act provisions relating to the counterfeiting, forgery and uttering of money, as these provisions are being included in the Criminal Code by means of a separate amending Act.

1.3 Parliamentary Questions

7,477 Parliamentary questions were submitted in 2016. From these, 7,319 questions required an oral reply, of which, 6,950 were answered. Whereas out of 158 parliamentary questions requiring a written reply, 151 were answered during 2016.

1.4 Ministerial Statements

The following 21 ministerial statements were delivered in the House during 2016:

Sitting No. 342 – 11 January	Statement by the Minister for Home Affairs and National Security, Hon. Carmelo Abela, on the death of a prisoner whilst in custody at Mount Carmel Hospital on 9 January
Sitting No. 351 – 1 February	Statement by the Minister for Finance, Hon. Edward Scicluna, on the Anti-Tax Avoidance Package published by the European Commission on 28 January. The Anti-Tax Avoidance Package is part of the Commission's ambitious agenda for fairer, simpler and a more effective corporate taxation in the European Union
Sitting No. 352 – 2 February	Statement by the Minister for Tourism, Hon. Edward Zammit Lewis, on the positive outcome in the tourism industry and the Government's vision for the coming years
Sitting No. 354 – 9 February	Statement by the Minister for Justice and Local Government, Hon. Owen Bonnici, on the appointment of two Magistrates and the reform in the justice sector

Sitting No. 355 – 15 February	Statement by the Parliamentary Secretary for Health, Hon. Chris Fearne, on measures to fight the spread of the Zika virus in various parts of the world
Sitting No. 359 – 22 February	Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon. Joseph Muscat, on the European Council held on 18 and 19 February in Brussels wherein Brexit, migration and foreign relations, amongst others, were discussed
Sitting No. 361 – 24 February	Statement by the Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights, Hon. Roderick Galdes, on the unregistered sheep in Gozo owned by Mr Ġanni Attard
Sitting No. 364 – 2 March	Statement by the Minister for the Economy, Investment and Small Businesses, Hon. Chris Cardona, on the Council of Ministers for Competitiveness held in Brussels on 29 February, with regard to 'Competitiveness check-up – State of play of the real economy'
Sitting No. 365 – 7 March	Statement by the Minister for Energy and Health, Hon. Konrad Mizzi, on the inquiry led by Judge Alberto Magri on the allegations of abuse in cemeteries administered by the State, in the last fifteen years
Sitting No. 371 – 4 April	Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon. Joseph Muscat, on the leaked international documents known as Panama Papers
Sitting No. 382 – 27 April	Statement by the Minister for Tourism, Hon. Edward Zammit Lewis, on the Memorandum of Understanding signed between Air Malta, the Government of Malta and Alitalia Società Aerea Italiana S.p.A.
Sitting No. 388 – 11 May	Statement by the Minister for Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change, Hon. José Herrera, on the Civil Code (Amendment No. 3) Act – Act XXV of 2016 - which defines the rules on the coastal perimeter and the foreshore, that was to be published on the following Friday, 13 May
Sitting No. 390 – 17 May	Statement by the Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity, Hon. Michael Farrugia, on the Caritas reports and statistics regarding poverty and the situation of vulnerable persons in Malta
Sitting No. 395 – 30 May	Statement by the Minister for Tourism, Hon. Edward Zammit Lewis, on the Memorandum of Understanding signed on 25 April 2016, between the Government of Malta, Air Malta and Alitalia Società Aerea Italiana S.p.A.
Sitting No. 408 – 22 June	Statement by the Minister for Finance, Hon. Edward Scicluna, on the agreement reached in the Council of Ministers for Economic and Financial Affairs (ECOFIN) on 20 June 2016, on the Anti Tax Avoidance Directive (ATAD)
Sitting No. 409 – 27 June	Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon. Joseph Muscat, on the outcome of the referendum on whether the United Kingdom should leave or remain in the European Union (Brexit), held in the United Kingdom on 23 June

Sitting No. 412 – 4 July	Statement by the Prime Minister, Hon. Joseph Muscat, on the conclusions of the European Council held in Brussels on 28 June, regarding the decision of the United Kingdom to leave the European Union
Sitting No. 425 – 11 October	Statement by the Minister for Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change, Hon. José Herrera, on the ratification of the Paris Agreement on climate change
Sitting No. 430 – 24 October	Statement by the Minister for Home Affairs and National Security, Hon. Carmelo Abela, on the incident involving the light aircraft that crashed shortly after take off in Luqa earlier that day
Sitting No. 458 – 5 December	Statement by the Minister for Education and Employment, Hon. Evarist Bartolo, concerning corruption allegations in the Foundation for Tomorrow's Schools
Sitting No. 464 – 20 December	Statement by the Minister for Health, Hon. Chris Fearne, on the results of two inquiries, one on the alleged irregularities in the election process of the Council of Nurses and Midwives which took place in August 2016, and the other, on the past its use-by date Tamiflu (Oseltamivir) that was given to patients, at Mater Dei Hospital earlier this year.

1.5 Petitions

The following two petitions were presented to Parliament during the year under review:

Sitting No. 422 – 25 July	Petition presented by Hon. Jason Azzopardi, signed by a number of Gudja residents on the allocation of a government-owned field in Gudja to let off the feast fireworks
Sitting No. 430 – 24 October	Petition signed by over 5,000 persons regarding a proposal for a car park adjacent to Mosta church. The petition was presented to the Speaker.

1.6 Motions

The Office of the Clerk received 137 motions during the year under review, 51 of which were for first reading of bills. Out of the total number of motions presented, 20 were private Members' motions.

The 20 private Members' motions received were the following:

Motion No. 310	1 st Reading Motion of a Bill to amend the Constitution of Malta and to establish by law the Judicial Services Appointment Authority, presented by Hon. Jason Azzopardi
Motion No. 322	Motion of no confidence in the Government presented by the Leader of the Opposition Hon. Simon Busuttil
Motion No. 326	Motion of no confidence in the Minister for Energy and Health, Hon. Konrad Mizzi, presented by Hon. Marlene Farrugia

Motion No. 329	Motion to cancel, revoke and annul Legal Notice No. 103 of 2016 on the entry into force of the Billboards and Advertisements Regulations of 2016, presented by Hon. Jason Azzopardi and Hon. Ryan Callus
Motion No. 338	Motion on the appointment of an <i>ad hoc</i> parliamentary committee to hear evidence on allegations against the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff, presented by Hon. Marlene Farrugia
Motion No. 339	Motion contesting a Ruling by the Speaker concerning censure motions, given in Sitting 391 on 18 May, presented by Hon. Mario de Marco and Hon. Francis Zammit Dimech
Motion No. 351	Motion calling for a moratorium on high-rise buildings pending detailed studies of their impact, presented by Hon. Marlene Farrugia
Motion No. 354	1 st Reading Motion of the Animal Welfare (Amendment) Bill, Cap. 439, presented by Hon. Mario Galea
Motion No. 358	1 st Reading Motion of the Criminal Code (Amendment) Bill, requesting the reinvestigation of a case by the Court of Criminal Appeal in cases of a potential miscarriage of justice, presented by Hon. Jason Azzopardi
Motion No. 361	Motion calling for the appointment of a Parliamentary Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise candidates nominated for senior positions in national, European and international institutions, presented by Hon. Mario de Marco, Hon. Kristy Debono and Hon. Francis Zammit Dimech
Motion No. 366	1st Reading Motion of a Bill to repeal and re-enact the Public Libraries Act, presented by Hon. Marlene Farrugia
Motion No. 384	Motion to substitute Standing Order 8 regarding the days of parliamentary sittings, presented by Hon. Mario de Marco
Motion No. 385	Motion introducing new Standing Order 33A regarding questions to the Prime Minister, presented by Hon. Mario de Marco
Motion No. 386	Motion to amend Standing Order 158 regarding Members on leave of absence, Standing Orders 144, 145, 146 and 150 regarding the procedure to be followed in the case of submission of petitions and to introduce new Standing Order 120K setting up the Standing Committee on Petitions, presented by Hon. Mario de Marco
Motion No. 389	Motion to amend article 57(b) of the Constitution of Malta regarding the age of persons qualified to be registered as voters for the election of Members of the House of Representatives, presented by Hon. Marlene Farrugia and Hon. David Agius
Motion No. 390	1 st Reading Motion of a Bill to amend the Constitution of Malta to extend the right to vote in the election of Members of the House of Representatives to those who are sixteen years and over, presented by Hon. Marlene Farrugia and Hon. David Agius
Motion No. 424	Motion on the health sector and the privatisation of certain services through contracts with Vitals Global Healthcare, presented by Hon. Marlene Farrugia

Motion No. 425 Motion contesting a Ruling on a breach of privilege complaint raised by the Minister for Justice, Culture and Local Government and given by the Speaker in Sitting 455 on 28 November, presented by Hon. Beppe Fenech Adami

Motion No. 430

1st Reading Motion of the Health (Amendment) Bill to enable persons who have reached the age of sixteen years to consent or refuse medical attention, care or treatment upon their own individual judgement if the medical practitioner decides that they have sufficient maturity and understanding to take such a decision, presented by Hon. Godfrey Farrugia and Hon. Deo Debattista

Motion No. 433 Motion to amend Legal Notice No. 404 of 2016 regarding the Regulations of 2016 on Electronic Register (Termination of Mandates), presented by Hon. Jason Azzopardi, Hon. Claudio Grech and Hon. Kristy Debono.

A number of other important motions were presented to the House during the year under review, including:

- a number of motions for the approval of the financial estimates of Government entities and corporations for the year 2017;
- motions concerning the parliamentary approval of the Budget and the financial estimates for 2017 and the supplementary estimates for 2016;
- a motion on the transfer of Government property in Valletta to Arkadia Marketing Limited;
- a motion for the House to authorise the Government to accede to the European Molecular Biology Conference;
- motions for the appointment of the Ombudsman, Auditor General and Deputy Auditor General;
- a motion to co-opt a new Member of Parliament, Hon. Karl Gouder, to fill the seat vacated by Prof. Albert Fenech following his resignation;
- a motion to amend the Standing Orders of the House with regards to the absence of Members during a parliamentary day;
- a number of motions amending the Standing Orders of the House, amongst which, to appoint the Standing Committee on Petitions;
- a motion on the transfer of Government property in San Blas, Haż-Żebbuġ, to the Foundation for the Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers;
- a motion on the transfer of Government land in the limits of Tal-Libwar, Siggiewi, to the Foundation for Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers;
- a motion on the transfer of Government property in Vittoriosa to the International Institute for Justice and Rule of Law Foundation;
- a motion on the transfer of Government property in Birkirkara to Dun Filippu Borgia Society;
- a motion on the transfer of Government property in Sa Maison to Marina di Valletta Limited;
- a motion on the transfer of Government property to Santa Lucija Football Club, The Rebel Riders Malta, Malta Judo Foundation, Hal Far Model Flying Association and Fgura United Football Club;
- a motion on the transfer of Government property in Ghajnsielem, Gozo, to Our Lady of Lourdes Institute; and
- a motion on the transfer of Government property in St John Street, Valletta, to Fondazzjoni Fortunata u Enrico Mizzi.

1.7 Papers Laid on the Table of the House

In 2016, a total of 1,913 documents were laid on the Table of the House. The majority of the documents were replies given to parliamentary questions submitted by Members of Parliament to the various Ministers, legal notices and annual reports and financial statements of Government entities and corporations.

A number of documents were tabled by the Speaker. These documents included reports received from the Office of the Ombudsman and the National Audit Office, reports of the Speaker and Members of Parliament following their participation in meetings abroad and replies to parliamentary questions addressed to the Speaker. The Speaker also laid on the Table of the House a petition signed by over 5,000 people regarding the proposed car park adjacent to Mosta church.

1.8 Rulings

In 2016, 33 rulings by the Chair on issues raised during debates in plenary as well as during committee meetings, were given as follows:

Sitting No. 344 – 13 January Ruling delivered by the Speaker concerning the power of committees to summon witnesses

Sitting No 346 – 19 January Ruling delivered by the Speaker with reference to a letter sent by the

Parliamentary Secretary for Planning and Administrative Simplification Hon. Michael Falzon to the Speaker on 18 January 2016, requesting an investigation on allegations of information leakage from the Office of the Speaker and/or the Office of the Auditor General to the media, regarding a report drawn up by the Office of the Auditor General, which investigation proved that there

was no such deficiency by either Office

Sitting No. 351 – 1 February Ruling delivered by the Speaker on a request by Hon. Robert Cutajar in the Sitting of 27 January for the Chair to intervene on the

replies given to a number of parliamentary questions that he had addressed to the Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity

Sitting No. 361 – 24 February Ruling delivered by the Speaker on two issues raised during the

meeting of the House Business Committee on 23 February (i) as to whether the private Member's bill put forward by Hon. Jason Azzopardi to amend the Constitution of Malta and establish the Judicial Services Appointment Authority, read for the first time in the Sitting of 15 February, could move to the second reading stage without the approval of the Government, taking into account that the bill required the President's message; and (ii) whether the following Thursday ought to be allocated for Government business or private Members' business in accordance with Standing Order

8(2)

Sitting No. 362 – 29 February Ruling delivered by the Speaker on a point raised by Hon. David

Agius in the Sitting of 24 February, concerning the alleged use of unparliamentary language by the Minister for the Economy, Investment and Small Businesses Hon. Chris Cardona, against the

Opposition

Sitting No. 365 – 7 March Ruling delivered by the Speaker on the point raised by Hon. Marthese Portelli in the Sitting of 29 February concerning the reply given by the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Hon. Joe Mizzi, to parliamentary question 23477 regarding advisors and persons of trust engaged with Transport Malta since March 2013 Ruling delivered by the Speaker on points raised by Hon. David Agius and Hon. Mario de Marco, during that same sitting, on whether a ministerial statement could be delivered by a Parliamentary Secretary Sitting No. 366 – 8 March Ruling delivered by the Speaker on a point raised by Hon. David Agius in the Sitting of 7 March concerning the agreement reached during meeting 35 of the House Business Committee of 23 February, for the Constitutional Reforms (Justice Sector) Bill to be discussed on 8 March Ruling delivered by the Speaker on a request made by the Minister Sitting No. 367 – 9 March for Transport and Infrastructure Hon. Joe Mizzi in the Sitting of 8 March, concerning remarks by Hon. Marthese Portelli relating to his replies to parliamentary questions Ruling delivered by the Speaker on a request made by Hon. Robert Sitting No. 369 – 15 March Cutajar in the Sitting of 14 March with regards to the reply given to his parliamentary question 23810 concerning the tabling of minutes of the meetings of Mellieha Local Council, addressed to the Minister for Justice, Culture and Local Government Hon. Owen Bonnici Sitting No. 371 – 4 April Ruling delivered by the Speaker on the point raised by Hon. Godfrey Farrugia at the Sitting of 15 March concerning media members in the Parliament precincts Sitting No. 373 – 6 April Ruling delivered by the Speaker on the request of Hon. David Agius in the Sitting of 5 April, to investigate the report on One news that on Monday, 4 April, a journalist was pushed by Hon. David Agius while trying to interview the Leader of the Opposition outside the Parliament building, which claim was rejected by Hon. Agius *Sitting No. 379 − 20 April* Ruling delivered by the Speaker on a point raised by Hon. David Agius concerning the exemption from reading lengthy replies to parliamentary questions Sitting No. 380 – 25 April Ruling delivered by the Speaker on a point raised by Hon. George Vella, Minister for Foreign Affairs, concerning the exemption from reading lengthy replies to parliamentary questions Ruling delivered by the Speaker concerning the allocation of Sitting No. 382 – 27 April Thursday sittings for private Members' business *Sitting No. 387 – 10 May* Ruling delivered by the Speaker on the point raised in the Sitting of 9 May by Hon. David Agius on behalf of the Opposition,

concerning information he had on the newly appointed Police Major assigned with the security detailed to Parliament, regarding

contemptuous comments he had made on Facebook against Hon. Claudette Buttigieg

Sitting No. 390 − 17 May

Ruling delivered by the Speaker on the point raised in the Sitting of 16 May by Hon. Robert Cutajar on the Minister's reply to parliamentary question 25344 regarding a request for a roundabout at the junction of Labour Avenue and Triq Frangisk Pisani, Naxxar

Ruling delivered by the Speaker concerning the Police Major in charge of security detailed to Parliament

Sitting No. 391 – 18 May

Ruling delivered by the Speaker on the request of the Leader of the Opposition Hon. Simon Busuttil made in the Sitting of 17 May, referring to an article on www.timesofmalta.com reporting that the original motion tabled by Hon. Marlene Farrugia on 16 May in respect of Mr Keith Schembri, Chief of Staff at the Office of the Prime Minister, was not admissible and that the Hon. Member was requested to modify that motion to be deemed admissible

Sitting No. 395 − 30 May

Ruling delivered by the Speaker on a point made by Hon. David Agius in the Sitting of 24 May with reference to an article on the blog of Glenn Bedingfield entitled 'The Opposition does not want to pair with Louis Grech'

Sitting No. 400 – 8 June

Ruling delivered by the Speaker on a point raised by Hon. David Agius concerning the agreement reached during meeting 39 of the House Business Committee of 30 May, for the Conduct Certificates Ordinance (Amendment) Bill to be discussed on 13 June

Sitting No. 408 − 22 June

Ruling delivered by the Speaker concerning the First Reading of private Members' bills

Sitting No. 409 − 27 June

Ruling delivered by the Speaker on a point raised by the Leader of the Opposition Hon. Simon Busuttil in the Sitting of 22 June concerning the reply to parliamentary question 26048 given by the Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties Hon. Helena Dalli, regarding payments to Malta-EU Information Centre (MIC) for advisory services

Ruling delivered by the Speaker on a point raised by Hon. David Agius in the Sitting of 22 June on the submission of two identical motions for the First Reading of the Animal Welfare (Amendment) Bill

Sitting No. 413 - 5 July

Ruling delivered by the Speaker on a point raised by Hon. Marthese Portelli in the Sitting of 4 July, regarding an article in the newspaper 'kullhadd' of Sunday, 3 July, entitled "Jikkritikawh fil-Parlament u jawgurawlu fuq Facebook" (Criticised in Parliament and congratulated on Facebook) concerning misreporting of what she said in Parliament in relation to the appointment of Ruben Abela as Chief Executive Officer at the Environment and Resources Authority (ERA)

Sitting No. 425 – 11 October

Ruling delivered by the Speaker on a point raised by the Leader of the Opposition Hon. Simon Busuttil, regarding which Minister is to answer questions raised by Members of Parliament following the delivery of a ministerial statement

Sitting No. 455 – 28 November

Ruling delivered by the Speaker on a breach of privilege raised by the Minister for Justice and Local Government Hon. Owen Bonnici against Hon. Jason Azzopardi in the Sitting of 23 November, in accordance with the provisions of article 11(4) of the House of Representatives (Privileges and Powers) Ordinance, in connection with tweets by Hon. Azzopardi stating that the Minister gave false testimony before the Standing Committee on Public Accounts on the contract awarded to Henley & Partners

Sitting No. 456 – 28 November

Ruling delivered by the Speaker on a request by the Minister for Education and Employment Hon. Evarist Bartolo, to the accusation made by the Leader of the Opposition Hon. Simon Busuttil that he was misleading the House when he answered a supplementary question to parliamentary question 27110

Ruling delivered by the Speaker on a request by the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Hon. Joe Mizzi, concerning the right to make a statement during question time

Sitting No. 457 – 30 November

Ruling delivered by the Speaker following a previous ruling given by the Chair in the Sitting of 28 November on the case of a breach of privilege raised in the Sitting of 23 November by the Minister for Justice, Culture and Local Government against Hon. Jason Azzopardi. Since to the Speaker's question to Hon. Azzopardi as to whether he was willing to withdraw the words "Owen Bonnici caught lying to Parliament", Hon. Azzopardi replied that he was not willing to withdraw his words, the Chair declared that Hon. Jason Azzopardi was guilty of *prima facie* breach of privilege against Hon. Owen Bonnici and referred the matter to the Standing Committee on Privileges

Ruling delivered by the Speaker on the request he received on 28 November from the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PAC) Hon. Tonio Fenech, as to whether the Committee could forward the request from the UHM Voice of the Workers and MAM, addressed to the PAC, to examine the contracts between the Government and Vitals Global Healthcare concerning three hospitals (St Luke's Hospital, Karin Grech Hospital and the General Hospital in Gozo) to the Standing Committee on Health

Ruling delivered by the Speaker on the request made by Hon. David Agius on 22 November regarding the reply to parliamentary question 28475 about consultants with the Department for Local Government within the Ministry for Justice, Culture and Local Government which allegedly did not match the answer given to a similar question, namely, parliamentary question 27616

Sitting No. 464 – 20 December

Ruling delivered by the Speaker to a request by Hon. Beppe Fenech Adami concerning the tabling of documents quoted in a ministerial statement.

1.9 Parliamentary Whips

Parliamentary Whips are Members of Parliament appointed by each political party represented in the House of Representatives to facilitate the contribution of the parliamentary political group to parliamentary business, so that it can proceed smoothly. By virtue of the nature of this role, both Whips are members of the House Business Committee.

Another responsibility of the Parliamentary Whips is to ensure the regular presence in Parliament of Members in their respective parliamentary group, especially when votes are taken and when divisions are called.

Whips are also responsible for keeping Members in their respective parliamentary group informed on the business of the House, propose Members to serve on standing and select committees and also nominate Members on delegations participating at meetings abroad.

During 2016, Hon. Godfrey Farrugia continued to serve as Government Whip whilst Hon. David Agius continued as Opposition Whip.



Hon. Godfrey Farrugia Government Whip



Hon. David Agius
Opposition Whip

1.10 Leader of the House



Hon. Louis Grech

The Leader of the House is defined in the Standing Orders as being the Minister responsible for Parliamentary Affairs. By virtue of this role, the Leader of the House is primarily responsible for the arrangement of Government business in the House, and for setting the parliamentary schedule of the House together with the Government and the Opposition Whips during the meetings of the House Business Committee, presided by the Speaker of the House.

Throughout 2016, the role of the Leader of the House continued to be occupied by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for European Affairs and the Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto, Hon. Louis Grech.

2. 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 slant to various issues 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 audio and video streamed, the latter as from 2012, 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.

In 2016 the Standing Orders of the House provided for the setting up of ten 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 the Consideration of Bills
- Standing Committee on Family Affairs
- Standing Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs
- Standing Committee on Health
- Standing Committee on Petitions.

Besides these ten standing committees set up in accordance with the Standing Orders, two other Standing Committees are set up by legislation, namely, the National Audit Office Accounts Committee set up by the Auditor General and National Audit Office Act, Cap. 396 and the Standing Committee on Environment and Development Planning which is set up as provided for in the Development Planning Act, Cap. 552, which superseded the Environment and Development Planning Act, Cap. 504, on 26 January 2016.

2.1 Standing Committee on House Business

The Standing Committee on House Business was set up by way of Motion No. 18 approved on 22 April 2013 and its composition, amended by way of Motion No. 40 approved on 28 May 2013, and by Motion No. 199 approved on 19 January 2015, is composed as follows:



Hon. Anglu Farrugia

Chairperson Hon. Anglu Farrugia,

Speaker of the House of Representatives

Members Hon. Godfrey Farrugia

Hon. David Agius Hon. Mario de Marco Hon. Louis Grech Hon. Deborah Schembri

- '120C. (1) Unless otherwise determined by the House, 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) Alternate 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. Correspondence received by the Speaker is also brought to the attention of the Committee.

The House Business Committee is also responsible to discuss the plan of the Office of the Ombudsman for the following year, the Ombudsplan, at which sitting the Ombudsman explains the plan.

The Standing Committee on House Business was convened 11 times in 2016 where, besides procedural House business and the Ombudsplan, it discussed:

- the event marking the World Autism Awareness Day;
- the revision of the Standing Orders of the House; and
- the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first six months of 2017.

2.2 Standing Committee on Privileges

The Standing Committee on Privileges was set up by way of Motion No. 19 approved in the House on 22 April 2013 and is composed as follows:



Hon. Anglu Farrugia

Chairperson Hon. Anglu Farrugia,

Speaker of the House of Representatives

Members Hon. David Agius

Hon. Godfrey Farrugia Hon. Louis Grech Hon. Chris Said

Hon. Deborah Schembri

Standing Order 120D outlines the powers and the composition of the Committee on Privileges as follows:

- '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 did not meet in 2016.

2.3 Standing Committee on Public Accounts

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts was set up by Motion No. 17 presented on 16 April 2013. Its composition was amended by way of Motions No. 129 and 187 approved on 7 May 2014 and 18 November 2014, Motion No. 202 approved on 14 January 2015 and Motion No. 364 approved on 11 July 2016. The Committee is composed as follows:



Hon. Tonio Fenech

Chairperson Hon. Tonio Fenech

Members Hon. Chris Agius

Hon. Ian Borg

Hon. Mario de Marco Hon. Claudio Grech Hon. Joseph Farrugia

Hon. Charles Mangion

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts is chaired by a member nominated by the Opposition, following the UK House of Commons model.

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 Auditor General;
- (b) inquire into expenditure as is referred to in articles 103(3) and 104 of the Constitution;
- (c) examine the accounts of statutory authorities, including parastatal organisations, whose accounts are presented to Parliament;
- (d) request the Auditor General 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 Auditor General, 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 Auditor General;
- (g) report to the House on any accounts, reports or documents referred to in the previous paragraphs hereof; and
- (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.
- (2) The Standing Committee on Public Accounts 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 2016, the Public Accounts Committee met a total of 18 times and discussed the subjects shown hereunder:

18 January Report by the National Audit Office - An Analysis of the Effectiveness of the Enemalta Corporation's Fuel Procurement dated July 2013 conclusion Annual Audit Report by the Auditor General – Public Accounts 2014: 27 January Office of the Prime Minister - Expenditure 15 February Annual Audit Report by the Auditor General – Public Accounts 2014: Ministry for Tourism Proposed Committee Workplan for 2016 22 February Report with the Committee's recommendations on the Henley & Partners contract relating to the Individual Investor Programme Annual Audit Report by the Auditor General – Public Accounts 2014: Analysis of the Financial Report 2014 1 March Annual Audit Report by the Auditor General – Public Accounts 2014: Ministry for Education and Employment 7 March Annual Audit Report by the Auditor General – Public Accounts 2014: Ministry for Gozo 14 March Annual Audit Report by the Auditor General – Public Accounts 2014: Malta Council for Science and Technology Expropriation of Property in Old Mint Street, Valletta - hearing of 25 April witness: Mr Carmel Camilleri 2 May Expropriation of Property in Old Mint Street, Valletta - hearing of witness: Hon. Michael Falzon 16 May Annual Audit Report by the Auditor General – Public Accounts 2014: Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity – Non-contributory Benefits; Foundation for Social Welfare Services – Agenzija Sedga 23 May Annual Audit Report by the Auditor General – Public Accounts 2014: Ministry for Health 30 May Annual Audit Report by the Auditor General – Public Accounts 2014: Ministry for Health: Koperattiva Linen Service Ltd – Income and Expenditure 13 June Annual Audit Report by the Auditor General – Public Accounts 2014: Ministry for Health - Gozo General Hospital - Contractual and Professional Services 28 June Malta Fiscal Advisory Council's first Annual Report and Statement of Accounts 2015

4 July Annual Audit Report by the Auditor General – Public Accounts 2014:

Arrears of Revenue

28 November Letter from UHM Voice of the Workers and MAM requesting the

Committee to look into the contracts between the Government and Vitals Healthcare Group regarding St Luke's Hospital, Karin Grech

Hospital and General Hospital in Gozo

5 December Letter from UHM Voice of the Workers and MAM requesting the

Committee to look into the contracts between the Government and Vitals Healthcare Group regarding St Luke's Hospital, Karin Grech

Hospital and General Hospital in Gozo - Continuation

12 December Joint meeting with the Committee on Foreign and European Affairs and

the Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs: Presentation by Mr Leo Brincat, Member of the European Court of Auditors, regarding the Annual Report of the European Court of Auditors on the European Union's Budget for the Financial Year 2015 and on the work of the

Maltese Member in this Court.

2.4 Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs

The Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs was set up by Motion No. 20 approved on 22 April 2013 and its composition, amended by way of Motion No. 41 approved on 28 May 2013, Motion No. 126 approved on 7 May 2014, Motion No. 201 approved on 19 January 2015 and Motion No. 309 approved on 15 February 2016, is as follows:



Hon. Luciano Busuttil

Chairperson Hon. Luciano Busuttil

Members Hon. Frederick Azzopardi

Hon. Toni Bezzina Hon. Michael Falzon Hon. Tonio Fenech Hon. Franco Mercieca Hon. Joseph M. Sammut

Hon. George Vella, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Hon. Francis Zammit Dimech

Standing Order 120F outlines the powers and the composition of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee as follows:

'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:
 - (a) 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;
 - (b) 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:
 - (i) any proposals under the Community treaties for legislation by the Council or the Council acting jointly with the European Parliament;
 - (ii) any document which is published for submission to the European Council, the Council or the European Central Bank;
 - (iii) 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;
 - (iv) 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;
 - (v) any document (not falling within (ii), (iii) or (iv) above) which is published by one Union institution and which does not relate exclusively to the consideration of any proposal for legislation; and
 - (vi) any other document relating to European Union matters placed on the Table of the House by any Minister; and
 - (c) to represent the House of Representatives of Malta at the Conference of European Affairs Committees (COSAC).'

Throughout 2016, the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs met 20 times in plenary. Details of the meetings held in 2016 are as follows:

18 January Revision of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)

Discussion on the ratification of Protocol No. 12 to the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;

Two 'Green Card' legislative proposals:

- Proposal for an initiative by national parliaments on *corporate social* responsibility, received from the European Affairs Committee of the National Assembly of France, regarding a legislative proposal aimed at strengthening corporate social responsibility to all enterprises having their headquarters in a European Union Member State, to ensure that the necessary measures are taken with respect to their business relations, their subsidiaries and their suppliers to prevent the overall human, social and environmental risks to which employees, local populations and the environment may be exposed owing to their direct or indirect business; and
- Proposal for the Revision of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive 2010/13, received from the European Affairs Committee of the Seima of the Republic of Latvia

29 February Discussion on the ratification of the Trade Agreement between the EU and Central America in terms of Article 4 (2) of the European Union Act

Consideration of a draft reasoned opinion on COM (2015)613 – Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on common rules in the field of civil aviation and establishing a European Union Aviation Safety Agency, and repealing Regulation (EC) No. 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council

Meeting with Hon. Paolo Gentiloni, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy

Consideration of a draft reasoned opinion in respect of COM (2016)26 - Proposal for a Council Directive laying down rules against tax avoidance practices that directly affect the functioning of the internal market

Presentation by Mr Karmenu Vella, Commissioner responsible for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, on the Commission Work Programme 2015 and the major initiatives in progress under his responsibility

Consideration of a draft reasoned opinion in respect of COM (2016)53 - Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing an information exchange mechanism with regard to intergovernmental agreements and non-binding instruments between Member States and third countries in the field of energy and repealing Decision No. 994/2012/EU

Discussion on the 2015 Annual Report of the Council for Maltese Living Abroad

Consideration of EU legislative proposals with regard to the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality

10 March

16 March

18 March

13 April

26 April

24 May Meeting with a delegation from the Germany-Malta Parliamentary Friendship Group Discussion in camera on the agenda of the COSAC Chairpersons Meeting 19 July scheduled for January 2017 in Malta, held within the framework of the parliamentary dimension of the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union 21 July Meeting with Mr Johannes Hahn, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement 27 September Agenda of the COSAC Plenary and CFSP/CDSP meetings scheduled for 28-30 May and 26-28 April 2017, respectively, in Malta, within the framework of the parliamentary dimension of the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union Consideration of EU legislative proposals with regard to the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality 7 October Joint meeting with the Committee on Social Affairs: Meeting with the Commission First Vice President Frans Timmermans, responsible for Better Regulation, Interinstitutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights Joint meeting with the Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs and the 18 October Committee on Environment and Development Planning: Meeting with a delegation from the Canada–Europe Parliamentary Association 21 October Joint meeting with the Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs: Meeting with Commissioner Andrus Ansip responsible for Digital Single Market 28 October Joint meeting with the Committee on Social Affairs: Meeting with Mr Karmenu Vella, Commissioner responsible for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, and Ms Věra Jourová, Commissioner responsible for Justice, Consumer Affairs and Gender Equality 2 November Meeting with the Commission Vice President Federica Mogherini and High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy 7 November Joint meeting with the Committee on Social Affairs: Meeting with Mr Dimitris Avramopulos, Commissioner responsible for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship 8 November Meeting with a delegation from the Committee on Federal and European Affairs of the German State of Sachsen-Anhalt Consideration of EU legislative proposals with regard to the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality 12 December Joint meeting with the Committee on Public Accounts and the Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs: Presentation by Mr Leo Brincat, Member of the European Court of Auditors, regarding the Annual Report of the European Court of Auditors on the European Union's Budget for the Financial Year 2015 and on the work of the Maltese Member in this Court

Consideration of EU legislative proposals with regard to the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality

20 December Consideration of EU legislative proposals with regard to the principles of

subsidiarity and proportionality regarding the Anti-Tax Avoidance Package (COM

(2016)683/685/686 u 687).

2.4.1 Reasoned opinions and political dialogue communicated to the European Commission

During 2016, the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs considered 102 EU legislative proposals in the context of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality as laid down in Protocol No. 2 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

97 Legislative proposals were deemed to comply with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, however, in respect of COM (2016)591 (Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications) the Committee engaged in a political dialogue with the Commission to address certain concerns. On the recommendation of the Committee, Parliament communicated to the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council five reasoned opinions with regard to:

COM (2016)53 - Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing an information exchange mechanism with regard to intergovernmental agreements and non-binding instruments between Member States and third countries in the field of energy and repealing Decision No. 994/2012/EU;

COM (2016)26 - Proposal for a Council Directive laying down rules against tax avoidance practices that directly affect the functioning of the internal market;

COM (2015)613 - Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on common rules in the field of civil aviation and establishing a European Union Aviation Safety Agency, and repealing Regulation (EC) No. 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council;

COM (2016)683 - Proposal for a Council Directive on a Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB); and

COM (2016)685 - Proposal for a Council Directive on a Common Corporate Tax Base.

2.4.2 Informal Meetings

During 2016, the Chairman and Members of the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs also had the following informal meetings:

3 February Two separate meetings with German Ambassador H.E. Gudrun Maria Sräga, and with

the Russian Ambassador H.E. Vladimir Malygin

26 February Meeting with the Ambassador of Turkey H.E. Reha Keskintepe

2 March Meeting with the Russian Ambassador H.E. Vladimir Malygin

11 May Meeting with Ms Barbara Kaufmann, Employment and Social Governance Director

of the European Commission

13 May	Meeting with Senator Vannino Chiti, President of the European Affairs Commission of the Senate, and H.E. Giovanni Umberto De Vito, Ambassador of Italy to Malta
30 May	Meeting with a delegation from the Malta-Algeria Parliamentary Friendship Group
8 June	Meeting with H.E. Kathleen Hill, Ambassador of the United States of America, Mr Terrence Flynn, Deputy Head of Mission, and Mr Adam Vandervort, political officer at the Embassy of the United States of America in Malta
28 June	Meeting with Dr Alastair Rabagliati, Director of Operations of the European Endowment for Democracy (EED)
5 July	Farewell call by H.E. Oren David, Ambassador of the State of Israel to Malta
2 August	Meeting with H.E. Jiang Jiang, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Malta, and Mr Zhang, First Secretary
19 September	Meeting with Mr Tomas Prouza, Secretary of State for European Affairs of the Czech Republic
20 October	Meeting with H.E. Mammad Ahmadzada, Ambassador of Azerbaijan
24 October	Meeting with Mme Elisabeth Guigou, Chairperson of the EU Affairs Commmittee of the French Assembly, and H.E. Beatrice le Fraper du Hellen, Ambassador of France to Malta
2 December	Meeting with Mr Martin Kotthaus, Director General for European Affairs at the German Foreign Ministry, Dr Christopher Schmidt and H.E. Gudrun Maria Sräga, German Ambassador to Malta.

2.4.3 Sub-Committees

In accordance with paragraph 3 of Standing Order 120F, the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs set up three working groups to assist it in its work. Their competencies are as follows:

(i) Working Group 1



Hon. Luciano Busuttil

Chairperson Hon. Luciano Busuttil

Members Hon. Deo Debattista

Hon. Michael Falzon

Hon. Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici Hon. Francis Zammit Dimech

The objective of this Working Group is to analyse legislative proposals with regard to the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality and also to scrutinise the EU pipeline *acquis*, 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 further debate either to the plenary of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee or to one of the following working groups or to other standing committees.

- (ii) Working Group 2 with regards to areas concerning home affairs, justice, education, youth, culture and sport.
- (iii) Working Group 3 with regards to areas concerning competitiveness (i.e. single market, industry, research and space), transport, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, fisheries and environment.
- (iv) The Standing Committee on Social Affairs with regards to areas concerning employment, social policy and consumer affairs.
- (v) The Standing Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs with regards to economic and financial affairs sectors.
- (vi) The Standing Committee on Family Affairs with regards to areas concerning family matters.
- (vii) The Standing Committee on Health with regards to areas concerning health affairs.

2.4.4 Meetings of the Working Groups

During 2016, Working Group 1 met 10 times. Besides considering legislative proposals for subsidiarity and proportionality purposes, it also scrutinised 138 legislative and non-legislative proposals, including reports, staff working documents and Green and White Papers.

2.5 Standing Committee on Social Affairs

The Standing Committee on Social Affairs, set up by Motion No. 21 approved on 22 April 2013 and its composition amended by way of Motion No. 43 approved on 3 June 2013, Motion No. 128 approved on 7 May 2014, Motion No. 203 approved on 19 January 2015, Motions Nos 304, 409 and 414 approved on 1 February, 19 October and 7 November 2016 respectively, is composed as follows:



Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis

Chairperson Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis

Members Hon. Robert Cutajar

Hon. Deo Debattista Hon. Godfrey Farrugia Hon. Clifton Grima

Hon. Paula Mifsud Bonnici

Hon. Stephen Spiteri

Standing Order 120G outlines the powers and the composition of the Social Affairs Committee as follows:

- '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.'

following: 9 March Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Family Affairs: Discussion and approval of the report on the *Age of Sexual Consent* - Continuation 19 April Discussion between the Members of the Committee on subjects to be addressed by the Committee Discussion on foster care in Malta 2 May 13 June Discussion with the Director of the European Institute for Gender Equality on the priority topics of the of Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union 28 June Discussion on foster care in Malta - Continuation 12 July Presentation of the Annual Reports for the years 2014 and 2015 of the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations Consultation meeting with Minister Carmelo Abela on the Strategy for the Police 18 July Force 20 July Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Family Affairs on the *morning after pill* 25 July Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Family Affairs on the *morning after pill* - Continuation 27 July Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Family Affairs on the *morning after pill* - Continuation 20 September Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Family Affairs on the morning after pill - Continuation; and on the report Il-Kontracezzjoni ta' Emergenza (Emergency Contraception) 5 October Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Family Affairs on the report Il-Kontracezzjoni ta' Emergenza (Emergency Contraception) -Continuation 7 October Joint meeting with the Committee on Foreign and European Affairs: Meeting with the Commission First Vice President Frans Timmermans responsible for Better Regulation, Interinstitutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of **Fundamental Rights** 28 October Joint meeting with the Committee on Foreign and European Affairs: Meeting with Mr Karmenu Vella, Commissioner responsible for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, and with Ms Věra Jourová, Commissioner responsible for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality 2 November Meeting with a delegation from the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs of the European Parliament

During 2016, the Committee was convened 19 times and the subjects that were dealt with, are the

3 November Joint meeting with the Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs: Meeting with Mr Georges Dassis, President of the European Economic and Social Committee

9 November Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Family Affairs

on euthanasia in Malta

Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Family Affairs

5 December on *euthanasia in Malta* - Continuation

14 December Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Family Affairs

on euthanasia in Malta - Continuation.

In addition to the formal Committee on Social Affairs appointed in terms of Motion No. 21, the House Business Committee, in its meeting of 17 October 2013, agreed on the terms of reference and the composition of the Social Affairs Committee when it meets to discuss the subject of illegal immigration. In such instances, it is composed as follows:



Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis

Chairperson Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis

Members Hon. Jason Azzopardi

Hon. Luciano Busuttil
Hon. Michael Falzon
Hon. Marlene Farrugia
Hon. Beppe Fenech Adami
Hon. Francis Zammit Dimech

In terms of the agreement reached in the House Business Committee, the Committee on Social Affairs (Illegal Immigration) is to discuss:

- the problem of illegal immigration in Malta in the context of national security including how
 these immigrants reach Malta, the responsibilities of the Maltese authorities with regard to the
 Maltese search and rescue area and the network of organised crime which leads these
 immigrants to Malta;
- the detention policy in Malta including the conditions in the detention centres and in the open centres, and how these can be improved in order to offer the immigrants better treatment;
- guarantees that ensure that the protection is given as soon as possible to those who have the right to it;
- the repatriation of persons not entitled to protection and who have entered Malta illegally; and
- measures that ensure greater solidarity by the Member States of the European Union both in terms of financial assistance and relocation of migrants.

In this formation, the committee met three times as follows:

17 February Meeting with a delegation from the Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action

against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA)

14 October Discussion on irregular immigration with the Committee for Administrative Issues

of the Parliament of Finland

7 November

Joint meeting with the Committee on Foreign and European Affairs: Meeting with Mr Dimitris Avramopulos, Commissioner responsible for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship.

2.6 Standing Committee on Family Affairs

The Standing Committee on Family Affairs, set up by Motion No. 23 approved on 22 April 2013 and amended by Motion No. 204 approved on 19 January 2015, Motions Nos 306 and 307 approved on 1 February and 15 February 2016, respectively, is composed as follows:



Hon. Godfrey Farrugia

0 1/

Chairperson Hon. Godfrey Farrugia

Members Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis

Hon. Robert Cutajar Hon. Etienne Grech

Hon. Paula Mifsud Bonnici

The principal task of the Committee on Family Affairs is to discuss matters and legislation related to family affairs. The work of the Committee is regulated by Standing Order 120H:

'120H. (1) The Standing Committee on Family Affairs shall deal with all matters relating to the family, including the appraisal, analysis and monitoring of current and future family legislation and policies, and such other matters relating to the family as may be referred to it by the House or by the Standing Committee on House Business.

- (2) The Standing Committee on Family Affairs shall consist of five members, three of whom shall be appointed from the Government side, one of whom shall be nominated as Chairman, and two from the Opposition side; a majority of all the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.
- (3) The provisions of paragraph (3) of Standing Order 120E shall mutatis mutandis apply to the Standing Committee on Family Affairs.'

The Standing Committee on Family Affairs met 20 times in 2016 as follows:

8 March	Discussion with the Commissioner for Children on parenting in a changing society
9 March	Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Social Affairs: Discussion and approval of the report on the <i>Age of Sexual Consent</i> - Continuation
14 March	Discussion with Dr Ruth Farrugia, Director General, President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society, on <i>parenting in a changing society</i> - Continuation
6 April	Discussion on parenting in a changing society - Continuation
20 April	Discussion on parenting in a changing society - Continuation

27 April	Discussion on parenting in a changing society - Continuation
4 May	Discussion on parenting in a changing society - Continuation
11 May	Discussion on parenting in a changing society - Continuation
24 May	Discussion on parenting in a changing society - Continuation
20 June	Discussion on the Committee's report parenting in a changing society
22 June	Approval of the report parenting in a changing society - Continuation
13 July	Discussion with Mr Joseph Magro on euthanasia in Malta
20 July	Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Social Affairs on the <i>morning after pill</i>
25 July	Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Social Affairs on the <i>morning after pill</i> - Continuation
27 July	Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Social Affairs on the <i>morning after pill</i> - Continuation
20 September	Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Social Affairs on the <i>morning after pill</i> – Continuation; and on the report <i>Il-Kontraċezzjoni ta' Emerġenza</i> (Emergency Contraception)
5 October	Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Social Affairs: Discussion and approval of the report <i>Il-Kontraċezzjoni ta' Emerġenza</i> (Emergency Contraception)
9 November	Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Social Affairs on <i>euthanasia in Malta</i>
5 December	Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Social Affairs on <i>euthanasia in Malta</i> - Continuation
14 December	Joint meeting with the Committee on Health and the Committee on Social Affairs on <i>euthanasia in Malta</i> - Continuation.

2.7 Standing Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs

The Standing Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs, appointed by Motion No. 25 approved on 23 April 2013 and its composition amended by way of Motion No. 47 approved on 11 June 2013 and Motion No. 205 approved on 19 January 2015, is composed as follows:



Hon. Silvio Schembri

Chairperson Hon. Silvio Schembri

Members Hon. Charles Buhagiar

Hon. Mario de Marco Hon. Kristy Debono Hon. Michael Falzon Hon. Claudio Grech Hon. Edward Scicluna

The work of the Committee is regulated by Standing Order 120I:

'120I. (1) The Standing Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs shall:

- (a) on its own initiative, consider from an economic and financial perspective, any decision, recommendation or report published locally, by the European Institutions or by international organisations, that could have an impact on the Maltese economy;
- (b) request persons appointed by the Government of Malta to represent it on the governing and administrative organs of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), as provided for in article 7 of the Participation and Granting of Financial Stability Support under the European Stability Mechanism Act, to appear before the Committee for the purpose of rendering account of the workings of the ESM and of the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF);
- (c) request the Governor of the Central Bank of Malta to appear before the Committee as provided for in article 8(6) of the Central Bank of Malta Act;
- (d) consider every matter or report that may be referred to it by the House or the Standing Committee on House Business; and
- (e) consider every matter or report that may be referred to it by a committee of the House.
- (2) The Standing Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs shall be constituted of not more than seven members, where four members shall constitute a quorum. The members should be chosen 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.
- (3) One of the members nominated by the Government shall be appointed as Chairman of the Committee.
- (4) The provisions of paragraphs (3) and (4) of Standing Order 120B shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to the Standing Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs.'

The Standing Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs met eight times during 2016 as follows:

31 May Discussion on the European Stability Mechanism 2014-2015 with Mr Alfred

Camilleri, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance

6 June Discussion on the Central Bank of Malta Annual Report 2015 with Prof. Josef

Bonnici, Governor, Central Bank of Malta

13 June Presentation by the Chamber of Commerce on the report *Economic Vision for Malta*

2014-2020

20 September Discussion (in camera) on the:

- (i) proposed agenda of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union to be co-organised by the Maltese Parliament and the European Parliament in Brussels in February 2017, within the framework of the parliamentary dimension of the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union; and
- (ii) proposed agenda for the Meeting of the Chairpersons of Economic Affairs and Environment Committees to be held in Malta in April 2017, within the framework of the parliamentary dimension of the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union
- 18 October

Joint meeting with the Committee on Foreign and European Affairs and the Environment and Development Planning Committee: Meeting with a delegation from the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association

21 October

Joint meeting with the Committee on Foreign and European Affairs: Meeting with Mr Andrus Ansip, Commission Vice-President responsible for Digital Single Market

3 November

Joint meeting with the Committee on Social Affairs: Meeting with Mr Georges Dassis, President of the European Economic and Social Committee

9 November

Discussion (in camera) on:

- (i) European Parliament's draft agenda for the 2017 European Parliamentary Week (EPW);
- (ii) Malta's agenda for the Article 13 Conference, which is part of the 2017 EPW; and
- (iii) the draft agenda of the meeting of the Chairpersons of the Economic and Environmental Affairs Committees on the economic opportunities of climate change, to be held within the framework of the parliamentary dimension of the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

2.7.1 Informal Meeting

During 2016 the Chairman of the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee met with a delegation from the International Monetary Fund on 15 December.

2.8 Standing Committee on Health

This Committee was set up following the unanimous approval in the House of a private member's motion presented by Opposition Member Hon. Claudio Grech on 18 November 2013. The Standing Committee on Health, appointed by Motion No. 106 approved on 12 March 2014 and its composition amended by way of Motion No. 127 presented on 7 May 2014 and by Motion No. 206 approved on 19 January 2015, is as follows:



Hon. Etienne Grech

Chairperson Hon. Etienne Grech

Members Hon. Claudette Buttigieg

Hon. Deo Debattista Hon. Chris Fearne Hon. Michael Gonzi

The work of the Committee is regulated by Standing Order 120J:

- '120J. (1) The Standing Committee on Health shall have the power to:
 - (a) on its own initiative, discuss policies and matters in the health sector which have strategic importance and are of material interest to patients, and report thereon to the House;
 - (b) evaluate all reports, strategic plans, task plans as well as all policies referred to it by the House, by the Minister or by any other Standing Committee;
 - (c) evaluate matters and items relating to capital and recurrent expenditure of such departments, statutory authorities and public organizations which operate in the public health sector;
 - (d) evaluate matters and issues relating to public health and the rights of the patient;
 - (e) discuss and analyse the impact of government and European Union decisions in the health sector;
 - (f) examine and report back to the House on reports and related documents, which are compiled by the Auditor General or by the Commissioner for Health;
 - (g) request the Commissioner for Health to appear before the Committee on matters related to his work; and
 - (h) request persons to appear before the same Committee in order to give a presentation or a statement regarding their tasks and responsibilities on matters which fall under this same Committee.
 - (2) The Standing Committee on Health shall be constituted of not more than five members, where three members shall constitute a quorum. The members shall be chosen 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.
 - (3) One of the Members nominated by the Government shall be appointed Chairperson of the Committee
 - (4) The provisions of paragraphs (3) and (4) of Standing Order 120B shall, *mutatis mutandis*, apply to the Standing Committee on Health.'

The Standing Committee on Health met eleven times in 2016 as follows:

24 February	Presentations by:
	- Mr Charles Messina, Commissioner for Health, on the report <i>Entitlement to the Free Supply of Medicinals under the Social Security Act</i> ; and
	- Mr Martin Scicluna on the Today Public Policy Institute (TPPI) report Why Malta's National Water Plan requires and Analytical Policy Framework
9 March	Joint meeting with the Committee on Family Affairs and the Committee on Social Affairs: Discussion and approval of the report on the <i>Age of Sexual Consent</i>
8 April	Meeting with Rt Hon. Nick Herbert, President of the Global TB Caucus
23 June	Meeting with Mr Vytenis Andriukaitis, Commissioner responsible for Health and Food Safety
20 July	Joint meeting with the Committee on Family Affairs and the Committee on Social Affairs on the <i>morning after pill</i>
25 July	Joint meeting with the Committee on Family Affairs and the Committee on Social Affairs on the <i>morning after pill</i> - Continuation
27 July	Joint meeting with the Committee on Family Affairs and the Committee on Social Affairs on the <i>morning after pill</i> - Continuation
20 September	Joint meeting with the Committee on Family Affairs and the Committee on Social Affairs on the <i>morning after pill</i> - Continuation
5 October	Joint meeting with the Committee on Family Affairs and the Committee on Social Affairs on the <i>morning after pill</i> - Continuation
5 December	Joint meeting with the Committee on Family Affairs and the Committee on Social Affairs on <i>euthanasia in Malta</i>
14 December	Joint meeting with the Committee on Family Affairs and the Committee on Social Affairs on <i>euthanasia in Malta</i> - Continuation.

2.9 Standing Committee for the Consideration of Bills

The Standing Committee for the Consideration of Bills was set up by Motion No. 22 approved on 22 April 2013 and its composition, as amended by way of Motion No. 132 approved on 7 May 2014, is as follows:



Hon. Silvio Parnis

Chairperson Hon. Silvio Parnis

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 in the second reading stage or by the House Business Committee. 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 45 times in 2016. 32 Bills were discussed, approved and referred back to the House for third reading.

Details of the meetings held in 2016 are as follows:

11 January	Bill 95 – Commissioner for Older Persons Bill
19 January	Bill 95 – Commissioner for Older Persons Bill - Continuation
20 January	Bill 111 – Police (Amendment) Bill
25 January	Bill 100 – Arbiter for Financial Services Bill
26 January	Bill 122 – Malta Travel and Tourism Services (Amendment) Bill
3 February	Bill 123 – Civil Code (Amendment) Bill
17 February	Bill 129 – Civil Code (Amendment No. 3) Bill
1 March	Bill 100 – Arbiter for Financial Services Bill - Continuation
2 March	Bill 100 – Arbiter for Financial Services Bill - Continuation
9 March	Bill 100 – Arbiter for Financial Services Bill - Continuation
15 March	Bill 88 – Maltese Sign Language Recognition Bill
16 March	Bill 130 – Social Work Profession Bill
18 April	Bill 148 – Civil Aviation (Amendment) Bill
26 April	Bill 115 – Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disabilities) (Amendment No. 2) Bill
3 May	Bill 136 – Persons within the Autism Spectrum (Empowerment) Bill
18 May	Bill 141 – Human Organs, Tissues and Cells Donation Bill
30 May	Bill 130 – Social Work Profession Bill - Continuation
8 June	Bill 154 – Consumer Affairs (Amendment) Bill
	Bill 151 – Parking Concessions to Persons with Disability Bill
13 June	Bill 143 – Employment and Industrial Relations (Amendment) Bill
14 June	Bill 140 – Education (Amendment) Bill
	Bill 158 – Various Laws (Transposition of Directive 20132/55/EU) (Amendment) Bill
15 June	Bill 139 – Institute of Tourism Studies Bill
20 June	Bill 160 – Accountancy Profession and other Laws (Amendment) Bill
27 June	Bill 150 – Academy for Disciplined Forces Bill
28 June	Bill 113 – Criminal Code (Amendment) Bill

5 July	Bill 150 – Academy for Disciplined Forces Bill - Continuation
	Bill 113 – Criminal Code (Amendment) Bill - Continuation
6 July	Bill 161 – Family Business Bill
11 July	Bill 155 – Transfer of Responsibilities (Various Laws) (Amendment) Bill
12 July	Bill 132 – Various Laws (Amendment and Repeal) Bill
	Bill 127 – Assignment of Statutory Ministerial Responsibilities Bill
18 July	Bill 137 – Parliamentary Service Bill
19 July	Bill 151 – Parking Concessions to Persons with Disability Bill (Recommittal)
	Bill 166 – Lands Authority Bill
20 July	Bill 166 – Lands Authority Bill (Recommittal)
25 July	Bill 139 – Institute of Tourism Studies Bill - Continuation
28 July	Bill 139 – Institute of Tourism Studies Bill - Continuation
12 October	Bill 45 – Child Protection (Out of Home Care) Bill
18 October	Bill 139 – Institute of Tourism Studies Bill - Continuation
25 October	Bill 45 – Child Protection (Out of Home Care) Bill - Continuation
26 October	Bill 169 – Aircraft Registration (Amendment) Bill
1 November	Bill 45 – Child Protection (Out of Home Care) Bill - Continuation
7 November	Bill 45 – Child Protection (Out of Home Care) Bill - Continuation
21 November	Bill 167 – Affirmation of Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression Bill
	Bill 170 – Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act and other laws (Amendment) Bill
30 November	Bill 45 – Child Protection (Out of Home Care) Bill - Continuation
5 December	Bill 45 – Child Protection (Out of Home Care) Bill - Continuation
6 December	Bill 45 – Child Protection (Out of Home Care) Bill - Continuation
19 December	Bill 45 – Child Protection (Out of Home Care) Bill - Continuation
20 December	Bill 156 – Civil Code (Amendment No. 4) Bill.

2.9.1 Adjunct Consideration of Bills Committee

The Adjunct Consideration of Bills Committee was set up by Motion No. 293 approved on 15 December 2015 and subsequently amended by Motion No. 308 approved on 15 February 2016 and by Motion No. 365 approved on 11 July 2016. Its composition is as follows:



Hon. Michael Falzon

Chairperson Hon. Michael Falzon

Members Seven members: four Government Members

including the Chairperson, and three Opposition Members appointed according to the Bill under

discussion

Motion No. 293, setting up the Committee, states the following:

Since Standing Order 120B provides that the House may, on motion made after notice, appoint such standing committees as may be necessary for the consideration of bills or other business committed or referred by the House to a standing committee;

And whereas by virtue of Motion 22, approved by the House on 18 April 2013, appointed a Standing Committee to consider Bills:

And whereas the House noted the volume of work before the said Committee, which volume of work justifies the creation of a new structure to facilitate that work and to ensure that the work does not accumulate;

Therefore, in accordance with the said Standing Order 120B:

The House is by way of this motion appointing an Adjunct Standing Committee to consider Bills and other business, hereinafter referred to as the Adjunct Standing Committee;

That same other business, besides the consideration of Bills, shall consist of business committed or referred by the House to the Adjunct Standing Committee;

By way of this motion, the House is fixing the number of members to serve on the adjunct 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. The committee shall consist of seven (7) members, whereas four will be from the Government, including the Chair, and three from the Opposition.

The House nominates as its Chair, Hon. Deborah Schembri, whereas the other members of the Committee will be nominated as provided for in Standing Order 120B(3);

Each side of the House shall have the right to substitute members as provided for in Standing Order 120B(4).

This motion was amended by way of Motion No. 365 approved in the House on 11 July 2016 that substituted Hon. Deborah Schembri by Hon. Michael Falzon.

During 2016, the Adjunct Consideration of Bills Committee met eight times in which it discussed and approved five bills, which Bills were referred back to the House for Third Reading.

15 March Bill 144 - Utilities and Services (Regulation of Certain Works) (Amendment) Bill

16 March Bill 144 - Utilities and Services (Regulation of Certain Works) (Amendment) Bill -

Continuation

23 March Bill 144 - Utilities and Services (Regulation of Certain Works) (Amendment) Bill

- Continuation

4 April Bill 144 - Utilities and Services (Regulation of Certain Works) (Amendment) Bill

- Continuation

25 April Bill 118 – Civil Code (Amendment) Bill

30 November Bill 176 - Maltese Language (Amendment) Bill

12 December Bill 178 – Cohabitation Bill

20 December Bill 175 - Coordination of Government Inspections Bill.

2.10 National Audit Office Accounts Committee

The National Audit Office Accounts Committee was set up by Motion No. 31 approved on 29 April 2013 in accordance with Part IV of the National Audit Office Act (Cap. 396). Its composition was amended by way of Motion No. 208 approved on 19 January 2015 and is composed as follows:



Hon. Louis Grech

Chairperson Hon. Louis Grech, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for European Affairs and the Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto

Members Hon. Chris Agius

Hon. Mario de Marco Hon. Tonio Fenech Hon. Silvio Schembri

The terms of reference of the National Audit Office Accounts Committee are:

- '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.'

The National Audit Office Accounts Committee met four times in 2016 to discuss the following:

13 January Resolution on the transfer of the Valletta Market to the Arkadia Group

- Continuation

Resolution on the transfer of property to Mellieha Sports Club

18 July Resolution on the transfer of property to:

Foundation for the Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers

International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law Foundation

Soċjetà Dun Filippu Borgia Santa Luċija Football Club

Rebel Riders Malta Malta Judo Foundation

Hal Far Model Flying Association Fgura United Football Club Yacht Marina Sa Maison

NAO Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year 2015 and NAO

Financial Estimates for the year 2017

27 July Resolution on the transfer of property to:

Lourdes Home, Gozo

Fortunato and Enrico Mizzi Foundation

10 October Resolution on the modification of the contract which regulates the use of SmartCity.

2.11 Standing Committee on Environment and Development Planning

The Standing Committee on Environment and Development Planning was set up by Motion No. 30 approved on 29 April 2013 in accordance with article 60 of the Development Planning Act (Cap. 552) which states that:

- '60. (1) There shall be a Standing Committee on the Environment and Development Planning which shall consist of five members appointed by the House, of whom three shall be members representing the Government, one of whom shall be appointed as Chairperson, and the other two shall be members representing the Opposition.
 - (2) The Standing Committee shall discuss any strategy, plan or policy referred to it in terms of articles 46 and 53 and any other matter referred to it in terms of the Environment Protection Act and prepare a report and refer it to the House of Representatives and to the Minister. Such a report may also include any dissenting opinion on the strategy, plan or policy. The Minister shall take cognizance of the report: Provided that where the said Standing Committee fails to prepare a report within the period stipulated in this Act, the Executive Council may adopt the said strategy, plan or policy and the Minister may also approve the said strategy, plan or policy as forwarded to him by the Executive Council'.

Motion No. 30 provides for a committee comprising three members from the Government, one of whom will be the Chairman, and two members from the Opposition. The composition of the Committee was changed by way of Motion No. 105 approved by the House on 12 March 2014, by Motion No. 207 approved on 19 January 2015, by Motion No. 230 approved on 4 May 2015, and by Motion No. 305 approved on 14 March 2016. The Committee is composed as follows:



Hon. Franco Mercieca

Chairperson Hon. Franco Mercieca

Members Hon. Charles Buhagiar

Hon. Ryan Callus Hon. Godfrey Farrugia Hon. Marthese Portelli

The Committee held 11 meetings in 2016. Details of the meetings are as follows:

25 April Solar Farms Policy as approved by the Malta Environment and Planning Authority

- Continuation

28 June Partial Review of the Grand Harbour Local Plan of 2002 – Marsa Park Site

5 October Paceville Integrated Development Framework

12 October Paceville Integrated Development Framework - Continuation

Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs: Meeting with a delegation from the

Canada–Europe Parliamentary Association

19 October Retirement Homes Height Limitations Policy

Partial Review of the Gozo and Comino Local Plan

26 October Partial Review of the Gozo and Comino Local Plan - Continuation

Retirement Homes Height Limitations Policy

2 November Paceville Integrated Development Framework - Continuation

28 November Final conclusions on the Paceville Integrated Development Framework

5 December Final conclusions on the Paceville Integrated Development Framework

- Continuation

12 December Marsa Park Site (Policy GM15) - Revised Draft

Partial Review of the North Harbour Local Plan of 2006.

2.12 Parliamentary Group on the European Capital of Culture 2018

The composition of the Parliamentary Group on the European Capital of Culture was established in the meetings of the House Business Committee of 25 June and 8 July 2013 and, as amended, was as follows during 2016:



Hon. Deo Debattista

Chairperson Hon. Deo Debattista

Members Hon. David Agius

Hon. Luciano Busuttil Hon. Karl Gouder

The Parliamentary Group on the European Capital of Culture met four times during 2016 to discuss matters in connection with the Valletta 2018 project as follows:

25 January Meeting with the Monitoring Advisory Panel of the European Commission on the

project Valletta European Capital of Culture 2018

31 May Meeting with Mr Jason Micallef, Chairman Foundation Valletta 2018, and Prof.

Alexiei Dingli, Mayor of Valletta, on the project Valletta European Capital of

Culture 2018

21 June Meeting with Hon. Owen Bonnici, Minister for Justice, Culture and Local

Government, and Dr Stefan Zrinzo Azzopardi, Chairman, Grand Harbour Regeneration Corporation (GHRC), on the project Valletta European Capital of

Culture 2018

12 July

Meeting with Hon. Owen Bonnici, Minister for Justice, Culture and Local Government, Mr Jason Micallef, Chairman Foundation Valletta 2018, and Prof. Alexiei Dingli, Mayor of Valletta, on the project *Valletta European Capital of Culture 2018*.

3. INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Throughout the year, the House of Representatives continued reaching out to inter-relate with other parliamentarians around the globe.

Besides hosting foreign visitors to the Maltese Parliament, the Speaker led several delegations drawn from both sides of the House on official visits to other parliaments and to participate in interparliamentary meetings overseas.

3.1 Outgoing visits and participation in international fora by the Speaker

3.1.1 23rd Conference of the Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth, Malaysia

The Deputy Speaker, Hon Censu Galea, participated in the 23rd Conference of the Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth held in Kota Kinablau, Sabah, Malaysia between 9 and 14 January. During this meeting, the Deputy Speaker Censu Galea was re-appointed Member of the Standing Committee of the Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPOC) and will be representing the British Isles and Mediterranean Region (BIMR) for the period 2016-2018. The topics on the agenda included the Challenges facing the Independence of Presidents; the Role of Speakers in the Security of Parliaments and their Precincts; Parliamentary Privilege and the Low Citizen Confidence in Parliamentary Institutions.

When speaking on the security of parliament buildings, the Deputy Speaker remarked that the move of the Parliament of Malta to a new building highlighted the importance of the responsibility of the Speaker towards the security of the institution. Hon. Galea also spoke about the issue of parliamentary privilege and argued that it is a tool that is often abused and that the removal of this privilege should be considered.

3.1.2 10th Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, Tirana, Albania

Speaker Anġlu Farrugia led a parliamentary delegation comprising Hon. Justyne Caruana, Hon. Tonio Fenech, Hon. Clyde Puli, Hon. Joseph M. Sammut and Hon. Silvio Schembri, to the 10th Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean in Tirana, Albania on 18 and 19 February. During the two day meeting, there were high-level debates on political developments and perspectives in the Mediterranean, economic and environmental challenges in the Mediterranean and inter-cultural dialogue and other social issues.

During this meeting, Speaker Farrugia was bestowed with the PAM 2015 Excellence in the Mediterranean Award as recognition for his active role in the region and contribution to the PAM's mission of promoting dialogue at parliamentary level.

3.1.3 Interparliamentary Conference on the European Social Charter and the Turin Forum on Social Rights in Europe, Turin, Italy

On the invitation of the President of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, the Mayor of the City of Turin and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Speaker Anglu Farrugia participated in the *Interparliamentary Conference on the European Social Charter and the Turin Forum on Social Rights in Europe* held in Turin on 17 and 18 March. When addressing participants at this Conference, Speaker

Farrugia said that social rights complement civil rights and liberties since the benefit from such rights can only be attained with a minimum of social security, adding that while social rights are acquired through the State's intervention, they also enable the citizen to obtain a certain amount of freedom.

Speaker Farrugia said that one has to consider and explore the possibility whether social rights should be entrenched in the Constitution, to ensure that such rights are not withdrawn by ordinary legislation.

3.1.4 Official visit to Israel and Palestine

On the invitation of the Speaker of the Knesset, M.K. Yuli Yael Edelstein, Speaker Anglu Farrugia led a parliamentary delegation composed of Hon. Michael Falzon and Hon. Silvio Parnis, to Israel, between 27 March and 1 April. This was the first visit of a Maltese Speaker to Israel. At the meeting with the Speaker of the Knesset, Speaker Farrugia remarked that both countries were strong democracies in the Mediterranean and both had an important role to play in the region.

At a meeting with Palestinian parliamentarians, reference was made to Malta's role in the Palestinian issue since the 1970s and also to Malta's efforts to include the Mediterranean region in the 1975 CSCM Helsinki Declaration. Speaker Farrugia also highlighted the cross-party consensus in Malta on the issue of Palestine.

3.1.5 Celebrations of the 1050th Anniversary of the Baptism of Poland, Poznan

Speaker Anglu Farrugia joined other Speakers of the EU National Parliaments to participate in the celebration of the 1050th Anniversary of the Baptism of Poland held in Poznan, Poland on 15 April. The special session at the Polish National Assembly, organised by the Marshal of the Sejm and the Marshal of the Senate of Poland, was addressed by Mr Andrzrej Duda, President of Poland.

During the meeting of Speaker Farrugia with the Speaker of the Senate of Poland, Mr Stanislaw Karczewski, the two dignitaries discussed current issues that are high on the EU agenda, and also on the importance of enhancing the parliamentary relationship between the two countries.

While in Poland, Speaker Anglu Farrugia met the Maltese representatives of the MUSEUM Society doing missionary work in Poznan, wherein he expressed his gratitude for the noble work carried out by these young Maltese missionaries who are dedicating their lives for the service of the people of Poland.

3.1.6 Conference of Speakers of the European Union Parliaments, Luxembourg

Speaker Anglu Farrugia attended the *Conference of Speakers of the European Union Parliaments* held in Luxembourg between 22 and 24 May. This meeting was held in the framework of the parliamentary dimension of the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The items on the agenda of this meeting were the *Management of migration flows; Strengthening the European Union; The role of national parliaments and interparliamentary cooperation;* and *Ensuring the safety of citizens whilst respecting their fundamental freedoms*. During the debate on migration, Speaker Farrugia intervened recalling the Valletta Summit in 2015 and how this event brought together European and African leaders to address the challenge of immigration, stressing a very important European initiative, that of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Stability, which is aimed to address the root causes of migration in the countries of origin.

On the role of national parliaments, Speaker Farrugia called for a greater role for Members of Parliament in European decisions, by citing as an example the access to reading rooms where the TTIP negotiation document could be seen by national parliamentarians.

When in Luxembourg, Speaker Farrugia met with the Trio Presidency Speakers, which meeting focused on the preparations involving the parliamentary dimension of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

3.1.7 Third Summit of Presidents of Parliaments and 12th Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean, Tangier, Morocco

Speaker Anglu Farrugia led a parliamentary delegation comprising Hon. Michael Falzon, Hon. Silvio Parnis and Hon. George Pullicino to the *Third Summit of Presidents* and the *12th Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean* held in Tangier, Morocco on the 28-29 May.

The meeting focused on the importance of sustained Mediterranean dialogue and the ambition to build better inter-cultural anchorage that would generate shared development in terms of peace and security. A point that was agreed upon during the meeting was that sustainable development needs to take into consideration climate change and the protection of the environment.

3.1.8 Meeting of the Speakers of the Trio Presidency, The Hague, The Netherlands

On 13 June, on the invitation of the Speaker of the Dutch Senate Ankie Broekers-Knol and the Speaker of the Dutch House of Representatives Khadija Arib, Speaker Farrugia, together with the Clerk of the House and the International Affairs Director, took part in a *meeting of the Speakers of the Trio Presidency* in The Hague. The visit was organised in the margins of the LV COSAC which was the last inter-parliamentary meeting organised within the framework of the parliamentary dimension of the Dutch Presidency. In the meetings with the Speakers of the Dutch Senate Ankie Broekers-Knol, of the Dutch House of Representatives Khadija Arib, of the Slovak National Assembly Bela Bugar and the project team responsible for the organisation of the meetings of the parliamentary dimension of the Dutch Presidency of the Council of the EU, the parliamentary dimension of the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union was discussed.

Speaker Farrugia, together with Hon. Luciano Busuttil and Hon. Frederick Azzopardi, who were participating in the LV COSAC held in The Hague, met with Mr Frans Timmermans, First Vice President of the European Commission responsible for relations with national parliaments. During this meeting, the two sides discussed the preparations of the Maltese Parliament for the 2017 Presidency of the Council of the European Union

3.1.9 Fourth Parliamentary Intelligence-Security Forum, Vienna, Austria

At the invitation of Mr Robert Pittegner, Member of the United States Congress and Chairman of the Congressional Taskforce on Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare, a parliamentary delegation led by the Speaker of the House, Hon. Anglu Farrugia, and composed of Hon. Etienne Grech and Hon. Chris Said, participated in the *Fourth Parliamentary Intelligence-Security Forum* held in Vienna, Austria, on 20 June. The items under discussion at this forum were financing of terrorist organisations; countering terrorism; cyber security and intelligence; and trade-based money laundering. During his intervention, Speaker Anglu Farrugia raised the idea that collaboration between the European and American banks, and Asian and African banks is essential to combat financing of terrorism, remarking that in fact, harmonization of legislation, upgrading of banking laws and transatlantic oversight is still missing between Europe and the United States. This means that origin of funds and the supply of armaments from laundered money is not always traceable, even in a neighbouring country like Libya, which is still a big issue in the Mediterranean.

3.1.10 European Conference of Presidents of Parliament, Strasbourg, France

The Speaker of the House of Representatives Anglu Farrugia addressed the *European Conference of Presidents and Speakers of Parliament* held in Strasbourg on 15 and 16 September 2016 on the theme 'National Parliaments and the Council of Europe - Together Promoting Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law'. This conference brought together some 350 delegates from the 47 Council of Europe member states and partner, observer and neighbouring countries, along with presidents of other international assemblies. In his intervention, Speaker Farrugia emphasised that rule of law can only be ensured if the three branches of the State are strongly and effectively established, and if the Constitution offers opportunities for redress, particularly against actions of the authorities.

Speaker Farrugia also had the opportunity of meeting the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe Mr Pedro Agramunt. During the meeting, both dignitaries discussed various topics of interest, in particular with regard to the relations between the Maltese Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and Malta's forthcoming Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

3.1.11 Referendum Observation Mission in Azerbaijan

Speaker Anglu Farrugia, together with Hon. Joe Debono Grech, Hon Anthony Agius Decelis and Hon. Deo Debattista, formed part of the *Referendum Observation Mission in Azerbaijan* organised by the European Academy for Elections Observation on 24-28 September. In the constitutional referendum, voters were asked to approve a number of constitutional amendments, which amendments were approved by a large majority. This referendum resulted in the creation of the Office of the Vice President and the extension of the presidential term from five to seven years.

3.1.12 Informal meeting of Speakers of EU Parliaments, Bratislava, Slovakia

In October, Speaker Anglu Farrugia participated in the *Informal Meeting of Speakers of the EU Parliaments* held in Bratislava, Slovakia. In his address, Hon. Farrugia said that the European Union is the driving force behind most economic activity in member states, the main promoter of human rights, and the political machine of the continent. He urged the European Institutions to be closer to the citizens, noting that some people felt that the EU was alienated and detached from citizens and thus do not feel European. He encouraged the EU to become more personal with its citizens and gain trust by being more available and reachable.

Hon. Farrugia later addressed a press conference together with the Presidents of the Parliaments of Slovakia and Estonia. At the press conference, Speaker Farrugia informed that poverty and social exclusion will be amongst the topics to be dealt with during the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union, in the hope that Europe 2020 targets will be promoted and that citizens will enjoy a better life in Europe.

3.1.13 Launch of the Middle East and North Africa Regional Chapter of the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, Tunis, Tunisia

On 1 and 2 December, Deputy Speaker Hon. Censu Galea and Hon. Frederick Azzopardi attended the Launch of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Regional Chapter of the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund held in Tunis, Tunisia; 51 participating MPs discussed the region's challenges, amongst them, youth unemployment.

The Parliamentary Network MENA Chapter is a platform for parliamentarians from the region to exchange knowledge and experiences on best practices on how to leverage their legislative and oversight roles in tackling pressing development challenges. Throughout a series of events and activities, the MENA chapter provides members with the space, network and resources to reflect and share experiences on best practices for tackling the region's common and most challenging issues.

The series of uprisings that swept across the MENA region since the beginning of 2011 have brought to the fore the critical importance of good governance and accountability to achieve sustainable development. As representatives of the people, parliamentarians are set to play an integral part in fulfilling that mandate.

3.1.14 Giornata dell'Artigianato e della Piccola e Media Impresa, Ragusa, Sicily

Following the successful and fruitful colloquium held in the Parliament of Malta in July 2016 resulting in a successful collaboration between CNA Ragusa and the GRTU, Speaker Anġlu Farrugia was invited to address the event commemorating the 70th anniversary of the *Confederazione Nazionale dell'Artigianato e della Piccola e Media Impresa Associazione* and the 45th anniversary of CNA Ragusa, held in Ragusa, Sicily on 3 December.

3.1.15 5th Parliamentary Intelligence Security Forum, Washington DC, United States of America

Speaker Anglu Farrugia participated in the 5th Parliamentary Intelligence Security Forum held in Washington DC, USA on 7 December. Some 100 Members of Parliament coming from about 30 countries participated in this Forum. On the issue of redress, Speaker Farrugia remarked on the importance for the US to provide equal redress to EU nationals when the sharing of information in combating terrorism financing is abused by the authorities, adding that this redress is available in Europe through the European Court of Human Rights.

$3.1.16~62^{nd}$ Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference and 35^{th} Small Branches Conference, London

In December, Hon. Anglu Farrugia led a parliamentary delegation to the 62nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) and 35th Small Branches Conference held in London between 11 and 17 December. The members of the delegation were Hon. David Agius, Hon. Clifton Grima and Minister Carmelo Abela, Executive Committee Member of the British Isles and Mediterranean Region (BIMR) of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Assembly.

The theme of this year's CPC was A Collaborative Commonwealth: Unity, Diversity and Common Challenges and the subjects under discussion were: The role of the Commonwealth in fostering freedom of religion or belief; Ending violence against women and girls; The impact of social media and the internet in perpetrating violence; The role of parliamentarians in implementing and monitoring policies relevant to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); The role of the Commonwealth in supporting the outcomes of the COP21 Paris Agreement on Climate Change; The radicalisation of young people and how we are dealing with this challenge throughout the Commonwealth; and The role of the media in promoting public mistrust of parliamentarians.

The Conference for Small Branches of the Commonwealth, held separately within the CPC, is organised for Commonwealth countries with a population of not more than 500,000.

When addressing the Small Branches Conference, Speaker Farrugia took Malta as an example of a small state addressing without fail, the challenges of climate change, saying that Malta is already advanced in having a power station depending on gas rather than heavy fuel oil, complemented by a domestic supported scheme to utilise solar energy by photovoltaic panels.

During this Conference, Speaker Anglu Farrugia was nominated and subsequently elected the first ever Chairperson representing the small branches of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. Speaker Farrugia was nominated for this role by Minister Carmelo Abela as Executive Committee Member of the BIMR, which nomination was seconded by the Speakers of the Cook Islands and Montserrat.

3.1.17 Official visit to Turkey

Speaker Anglu Farrugia led a parliamentary delegation comprising Hon. Etienne Grech and Hon. Frederick Azzopardi on an *Official visit to Turkey* between 20 and 23 December, the first high-level delegation led by the Speaker of the Parliament of Malta to Turkey. The delegation met with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey Mr Binali Yildirim, with the Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey Mr Ismail Kahraman and the Deputy Governor of Istanbul Mr Mehmet Uluteras.

During the visit, the Maltese delegation had talks with the Chairman of the Turkey-Malta Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey where both sides emphasised the importance of parliamentary democracy and the further strengthening of bilateral relations between both countries, particularly commercial relations.

3.2 Outgoing Visits of Maltese Parliamentary Delegations

3.2.1 Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs

COSAC is a bi-annual Conference of the Committees of the National Parliaments of the European Union Member States which brings together Members of Parliament dealing with European Union affairs as well as representatives of the European Parliament.

February Hon. Luciano Busuttil, President of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee,

attended the Meeting of COSAC Chairpersons organised by the Dutch Presidency on

7 and 8 February in The Hague

June Hon. Luciano Busuttil and Hon. Frederick Azzopardi participated in the LV COSAC

Meeting in The Hague between 12 and 14 June

July Hon. Luciano Busuttil attended the Meeting of the COSAC Chairpersons organised

by the Slovak Presidency in Bratislava on 10 and 11 July

November Hon. Luciano Busuttil and Hon. Francis Zammit Dimech participated in the LVI

COSAC Meeting in Bratislava between 13 and 15 November.

3.2.2 European Parliament and European Union Presidency Meetings

Members of Parliament participate in two types of interparliamentary meetings with the European Parliament: meetings of committee Chairs organised by the parliament of the country holding the rotating EU Presidency, and interparliamentary committee meetings organised by the committees of the European Parliament.

Interparliamentary committee meetings with national parliaments are proposed on the initiative of an individual parliamentary committee of the European Parliament, for which national parliamentarians from their corresponding committee are invited. These meetings are a continuation of existing practice and mainly cover the policy areas where the European Union has legislative powers using the codecision procedure. The aim of these meetings is to promote an exchange of views and best practice between European and national parliamentarians with a view to influencing the legislative decisions of the European Parliament and ensuring more transparency and openness in the decision-making process. They are co-organised by the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments and the European Parliament committee concerned.

During the course of the year under review, Maltese Members of Parliament participated in the following meetings of the European Parliament, European Commission and meetings held within the parliamentary dimension of the Dutch and Slovak Presidencies of the Council of the European Union:

February

Hon. Claudio Grech participated in the Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union and the Interparliamentary Meeting on the European Semester Cycles 2015/2016 as part of the European Parliamentary Week, held in the European Parliament in Brussels on 16 and 17 February

Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis and Hon. Francis Zammit Dimech participated in the *Interparliamentary Meeting with National Parliaments* organised by the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the European Parliament on *'Towards the NATO Summit in Warsaw'* and *'Conflicts in the MENA region'*, held in the European Parliament in Brussels on 23 February

March

Hon. Claudette Buttigieg participated in the *Interparliamentary Committee Meeting* on 'Women Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the EU', held in the European Parliament in Brussels on 3 March

Hon. Emanuel Mallia and Hon. Francis Zammit Dimech participated in the *Meeting on Human Trafficking in the Digital Age* held in The Hague on 13 and 14 March

April

Hon. Michael Falzon and Hon. Robert Cutajar participated in the *Interparliamentary Conference on Energy, Innovation and Circular Economy 'How to speed up the cost-effective transition towards a clean, competitive and secure energy future?' held in The Hague on 3 and 4 April*

Hon. Silvio Parnis and Hon. Toni Bezzina participated in the *Interparliamentary Conference on the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Police* (CFSP/CSDP), held in The Hague between 6 and 8 April

September

Hon. Luciano Busuttil and Hon. Jason Azzopardi participated in the *Interparliamentary Conference on the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy* (CFSP/CSDP) held in Bratislava between 2 and 4 September

Hon. Silvio Schembri participated in the *Inter-Institutional Conference with National Parliaments on the Future of the European Union* held in the European Parliament in Brussels on 7 and 8 September

Hon. Charles Mangion and Hon. Claudio Grech participated in the *Exchange of Views with National Parliaments on the European Semester for economic policy coordination: Implementation of 2016 priorities*, organised by the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee (ECON) of the European Parliament, held in the European Parliament in Brussels on 28 September

October

Hon. Karl Gouder participated in the *Interparliamentary Committee Meeting with National Parliaments on 'Cultural and Creative Sectors in the EU'* held in the European Parliament in Brussels on 11 October

November

Hon. Joseph M. Sammut and Hon. Jason Azzopardi participated in the *Interparliamentary Committee Meeting with National Parliaments on Europol and its* parliamentary scrutiny in the framework of the EU Internal Security Policies organised by the EP Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE), held in the European Parliament in Brussels on 28 November

December

Hon. Silvio Schembri, Hon. David Agius and Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis participated in the *Meeting of Chairpersons of the Economic Affairs Committees on Energy Union* held in Bratislava on 1 and 2 December.

3.2.3 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. Using its powers under the founding Statute, the Assembly can:

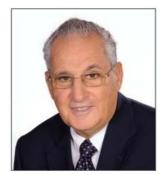
- demand action from 47 European governments, who must jointly reply;
- conduct probes to uncover new facts about human rights violations;
- question Presidents and Prime Ministers on any topic it chooses;
- observe elections and send delegations to mediate in crisis hot-spots;
- negotiate the terms on which states join the Council of Europe;
- inspire new national laws by proposing and giving opinions on treaties;
- request legal opinions on the laws and constitutions of member states; and
- sanction a member state by recommending its exclusion or suspension.

Though it has no power to pass binding laws, PACE holds a constant dialogue with governments, national parliaments, other international organisations and civil society which "sets the agenda". In this way, its texts filter down through law and practice to improve the lives of Europeans.

Through its recommendations, the Assembly demands action on behalf of the 800 million Europeans it represents, and the 47 governments of the Council of Europe represented in the Committee of Ministers are obliged to respond. In practice, the Assembly often acts as the driving force of the Council of Europe by promoting new ideas, setting strategic direction and initiating many of the Council's most important activities.

The Assembly sets its own agenda where it discusses European and international events covering issues related to human rights, democracy, protection of minorities and the rule of law.

In terms of Motion No. 16 adopted by the House on 15 April 2013 and Motion No. 130 adopted by the House on 7 May 2014, the Maltese delegation to the PACE is composed as follows:



Hon. Joe Debono Grech

Members Hon. Joe Debono Grech, Leader of the

delegation

Hon. Beppe Fenech Adami Hon. Deborah Schembri

Substitute Members Hon. Charlò Bonnici

Hon. Deo Debattista Hon. Joseph M. Sammut

The delegates are also members of the committees as shown hereunder:

Hon. Joe Debono Grech - Standing Committee of the Assembly

- Political Affairs and Democracy Committee

- Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe

(Monitoring Committee)

- Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights (substitute)

Hon. Beppe Fenech Adami - Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons

- Political Affairs and Democracy Committee (substitute)

Hon. Deborah Schembri - Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

- Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons

(substitute)

Hon. Charlò Bonnici - Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and

Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe

(Monitoring Committee)

- Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media

- Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable

Development (substitute)

Hon. Deo Debattista - Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable

Development

- Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media

(substitute)

Hon. Joseph M. Sammut - Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

- Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination (substitute).

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 Hon. Joe Debono Grech, Hon. Charlò Bonnici, Hon. Beppe Fenech Adami and Hon.

Joseph M. Sammut took part in the First Part of the 2016 Ordinary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe which was held in Strasbourg

between 25 and 28 January

March Hon. Joe Debono Grech took part in the Meeting of the Committee on Legal Affairs

and Human Rights on 7 March, in the Meeting of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy on 8 March and in the Meeting of the Monitoring Committee on 9

and 10 March. The three meetings were held in Paris

May Hon. Joe Debono Grech took part in the *Meeting of the Committee on Legal Affairs*

and Human Rights held in Rome on 17 and 18 May

June Hon. Joe Debono Grech, Hon. Joseph M. Sammut, Hon. Beppe Fenech Adami and

Hon. Charlò Bonnici took part in the *Third Part of the 2016 Ordinary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe* held in Strasbourg between 20 and

24 June

September Hon. Joe Debono Grech took part in the *Meeting of the Monitoring Committee* held

in Tirana on 22 and 23 September

October Hon. Joe Debono Grech, Hon. Charlò Bonnici, Hon. Beppe Fenech Adami and Hon.

Joseph M. Sammut took part in the Fourth Part of the 2016 Ordinary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe held in Strasbourg between 10 and

12 October

November Hon. Joe Debono Grech participated in the *Meeting of the Monitoring Committee*

held in Paris on 9 November

December Hon. Joe Debono Grech participated in the Meeting of the Committee on Legal

Affairs and Human Rights on 13 December, in the Meeting of the Monitoring Committee on 14 December and in the Meeting of the Committee on Political Affairs

and Democracy on 15 December. The three meetings were held in Paris.

During the year under review, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe also organised the following meetings:

February Conference of the Chairpersons of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committees of

the Council of Europe Member States on 'Democratic Security based on European Unity and Cooperation' in Sofia between 8 and 10 February, which Conference was

attended by Hon. Tonio Fenech

October Parliamentary Seminar on 'The Right of Children and Young People to Social, Legal

and Economic Protection' organised by the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, in Paris on 28 October. Hon. Michael Falzon and Hon.

Robert Cutajar participated in this seminar.

The resolutions and recommendations adopted or approved by the PACE during the 2016 Session, were laid on the Table of the House of Representatives.

3.2.4 Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean

Since the Helsinki process in 1973 which led to the setting up of the CSCE (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe), countries like Malta strongly underscored the principle of indivisibility of security and vehemently underscored that peace, security and stability in Europe and in the Mediterranean were intrinsically and inextricably interlinked. The 'Mediterranean dimension', better known as the CSCM (Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean), within the Charter of Paris for a New Europe signed in November 1990, is synonymous to Malta which advocated since the very start of the Helsinki process that there cannot be security in Europe without security in

the Mediterranean. To underscore the importance of this dimension and its commitment towards the region, Malta hosted a number of CSCE/OSCE seminars on the Mediterranean over a period of time.

Following seven Interparliamentary Conferences on Security and Cooperation in Europe between 1972 and 1991, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) decided on a similar process in the Mediterranean, launching the process of the CSCM under the auspices of the IPU and including all littoral states of the Mediterranean.

In April 1990, during the 83rd IPU Conference in Nicosia, a resolution entitled *The promotion of peace* and security in the Mediterranean region in the light of developments in Europe and the new spirit prevailing internationally recommended the convening of a Conference of Parliamentarians of all Mediterranean States to discuss measures addressing various fields of cooperation. The idea of an Interparliamentary CSCM was met with interest and support from among Parliamentarians around the Mediterranean. IPU decided therefore to launch an 'interparliamentary' CSCM which convened meetings in Malaga (Spain) in June 1992, in Valletta (Malta) in November 1995 and in Marseille (France) in April 2000.

The Malaga Conference confirmed the basic principles of the process and set up the general framework for cooperation between the Mediterranean partners; the Valletta Conference affirmed the need to give the CSCM process a solid institutional basis, both at governmental and parliamentary level, and further recommended, on Malta's initiative, the setting up of an Association of Mediterranean States. The Marseille Conference urged that 'concurrent action should continue to be taken to establish an interparliamentary cooperation structure as advocated in the Final Document of the Second Interparliamentary Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean, with a view to creating, in the long run, a Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean' and 'to establish an interparliamentary structure as advocated in the Valletta (1995) document' which enjoys a superior status, thus institutionalizing the CSCM process.

In February 2005, the Fourth and final CSCM Conference was held in Nafplion, Greece. During that meeting, representatives of national parliaments of the Mediterranean States finalized and adopted the Statutes of the Parliamentary Assembly and decided to hold the first meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) in Amman, Jordan in 2006.

During PAM's inauguration on 10-11 September 2006 in Amman, Jordan, Malta was unanimously selected to host the PAM's Secretariat at Palazzo Spinola in St Julian's.

The aim of PAM is to provide the Mediterranean with a unique parliamentary forum of its own and to 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.

PAM is a regional interstate organisation and is an Observer at the General Assembly of the United Nations. Over a short period, PAM has established itself as the main actor in parliamentary diplomacy in the region, and its commitment to the founding principles and its Charter, is guaranteed by the continued support of all its member parliaments.

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:

- First Standing Committee on Political and Security-Related Cooperation
- Second Standing Committee on Economic, Social and Environmental Cooperation
- Third Standing 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.

By way of Motion No. 27 approved by the House on 29 April 2013 and Motion No. 212 adopted by the House on 2 February 2015, the parliamentary delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean is composed as follows:



Hon. Justyne Caruana

Members Hon. Justyne Caruana, Leader of the delegation

Hon. Tonio Fenech Hon. Joseph M. Sammut Hon. Silvio Schembri Hon. Stephen Spiteri

Hon. Etienne Grech

Substitute Members Hon. Clyde Puli

Details of the delegation's participation in PAM meetings are as follows:

February Hon. Justyne Caruana, Hon. Tonio Fenech, Hon. Clyde Puli, Hon. Joseph M.

Sammut and Hon. Silvio Schembri participated in the 10th Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean held in Tirana on 18 and 19 February.

Speaker Anglu Farrugia also participated at this meeting

December Hon. Justyne Caruana participated in the High-Level Meeting on 'Interreligious

Dialogue to Counter Violent Extremism' held in Rome on 15 and 16 December.

3.2.5 Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM), formerly Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly, consists of 280 members: 132 EU members (83 members from the 28 EU national parliaments – three from each Parliament except for the UK that has two members – and 49 members from the European Parliament), 8 members from parliaments of the European Mediterranean partner countries (two for each delegation from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Monaco and Montenegro), 130 members from the ten founding countries on the Southern and Eastern shores of the Mediterranean (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey), and 10 members from the Parliament of Mauritania.

The Assembly has five parliamentary committees which are responsible for monitoring the following aspects of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership:

- Committee on Political Affairs, Security, and Human Rights
- Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs, Social Affairs and Education
- Committee on Improving Quality of Life, Exchanges between Civil Societies and Culture
- Committee on Women's Rights in Euro-Mediterranean countries
- Committee on Energy, Environment, and Water.

The Assembly may set up working groups whose membership and powers will be determined by the Bureau.

The PA-UfM is a consultative institution. Its resolutions and recommendations focus on the partnership's objectives and areas of cooperation and are not legally binding. At present, the PA-UfM is the main parliamentary dimension of the Union for the Mediterranean. It absorbed the Barcelona Process and was officially launched at the Summit of the Heads of State and Government of 43 countries held in Paris on 13 July 2008.

On 28 April 2010, the European Parliament adopted Motion 2009/2215(INI) on the Union for the Mediterranean whereby, in clause 37, 'stresses that the purpose of the EMPA is to become the parliamentary assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean, which will guarantee its democratic legitimacy, and supports the proposal of the 6^{th} plenary session of the EMPA held in Amman on 13 and 14 March 2010 and that the name of the EMPA should be changed to Parliamentary Assembly of the *Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM)*'.

By way of Motion No. 29 approved by the House on 29 April 2013 and Motion No. 345 adopted by the House on 23 May 2016, the parliamentary delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean is composed of the following Members:



Hon. Michael Falzon

Members Hon. Michael Falzon, Leader of the delegation

Hon. Čensu Galea Hon. Silvio Parnis

Substitute Members Hon. Luciano Busuttil

Hon. Karl Gouder Hon. Silvio Schembri

February

Hon. Censu Galea took part in the Meeting of the Committee on Improving Quality of Life, Exchanges between Civil Societies and Culture held in Rome, Italy on the 18-19 February

Hon. Michael Falzon took part in the Meeting of the Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights held in Brussels on 29 February

Hon. Michael Falzon, Hon. Silvio Parnis and Hon. George Pullicino attended the *Third* May Summit of Presidents and the 12th Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean held in Tangier, Morocco on the 28-29 May. This

delegation was led by Speaker Anglu Farrugia.

3.2.6 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 CPA works in the fields of good governance, of democracy and elections, and of human rights, while special attention is also paid to gender sensitising (thus the appointment of the branch of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians) and to promoting awareness of parliamentary democracy among the youth of the Commonwealth. It was founded in 1911 as the Empire Parliamentary Association.

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.

During 2016 Members of the Maltese House of Representatives took part in the following CPA events:

February	Hon. Justyne Caruana, Hon. Godfrey Farrugia and Hon. Marlene Farrugia participated in the <i>British Islands and Mediterranean Region Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Conference</i> held in Guernsey between 12 and 14 February
March	Hon. Tonio Fenech participated in the <i>World Bank Study Group on Public Accounts Committees Oversight of Responses to National Crises</i> , held in Kathmandu, Nepal on 11-12 March
April	Hon. Tonio Fenech participated in the <i>Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Association of Public Accounts Committees</i> (CAPAC) held in London on 12 April
May	Hon. Justyne Caruana, Hon. Carmelo Abela, Hon. David Agius, Hon. Mario Galea and Hon. Silvio Schembri participated in the 46 th British Islands and Mediterranean Annual Conference held in Jersey between 15 and 18 May
July	Hon. Tonio Fenech and Hon. Karl Gouder participated in the 6 th Westminster Workshop on Parliamentary Financial Oversight of Aid Effectiveness held in London between 4 and 7 July
November	Hon. Godfrey Farrugia and Hon. Ryan Callus participated in the 65 th Westminister Seminar on Parliamentary Practice and Procedure held in London between 21 and 25 November
December	Hon. Anġlu Farrugia, Hon. Carmelo Abela, Hon. David Agius and Hon. Clifton Grima participated in the 62 nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference and 35 th Small Branches Conference held in London between 11 and 17 December.

Hon. Carmelo Abela, member of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, participated in the *CPA Mid-Year Executive Committee Meeting*, held in London, United Kingdom between 27 and 30 April.

3.2.7 Inter-Parliamentary Union

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is an international organisation established in 1889 as a forum for political multilateral negotiations. To that end, it:

- fosters contacts, co-ordination, and the exchange of experience among parliaments and parliamentarians of all countries;
- considers questions of international interest and concern and expresses its views on such issues in order to bring about action by parliaments and parliamentarians;
- contributes to the defence and promotion of human rights an essential factor of parliamentary democracy and development;
- contributes to better knowledge of the working of representative institutions and to the strengthening and development of their means of action.

The Maltese Parliament, together with the parliaments of 165 other countries, is a member of the IPU which supports the efforts of and works in close cooperation with the United Nations and has a permanent observer status at the United Nations.

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

In October 2011, the IPU adopted its Strategy for 2012-2017 under the overall title *Better parliaments*, *stronger democracy*.

The parliamentary delegation to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, as set out in Motion No. 26 approved by the House on 29 April 2013 and by Motion No. 215 approved on 9 February 2015, is made up of:



Hon. Godfrey Farrugia

Members Hon. Godfrey Farrugia, Leader of the delegation Hon. Michael Gonzi

Substitute Members Hon. Joseph M. Sammut

Hon. Stephen Spiteri

During 2016 Hon. Godfrey Farrugia and Hon. Michael Gonzi participated in the 134th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and Related Meetings held in Lusaka, Zambia between 19 and 23 March.

3.2.8 Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE PA) was established following a decision of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) at a Ministerial Conference in Berlin in 1991. The first formal session of the Parliamentary Assembly was held in Budapest in July 1992. Currently, the OSCE PA is made up of 323 members from 56 parliaments, including the Maltese Parliament.

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. It offers a forum for political negotiations and decision-making in the fields of early-warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, and puts the political will of its participating states into practice through the unique network of OSCE field missions.

By way of Motion No. 28 approved by the House on 29 April 2013, Motion No. 131 approved on 7 May 2014, Motion No. 213 approved on 2 February 2015 and Motion No. 346 approved on 23 May 2016, the Maltese Parliament is represented in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe as follows:



Hon. Godfrey Farrugia

Members Hon. Godfrey Farrugia, Leader of the delegation

Hon. Frederick Azzopardi Hon. Franco Mercieca

Substitute Members Hon. Jason Azzopardi

Hon. Luciano Busuttil Hon. Michael Falzon

The Members of the Maltese delegation to the OSCE PA participated in the following meetings:

February Hon. Godfrey Farrugia, Hon. Emanuel Mallia and Hon. Frederick Azzopardi

participated in the Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly held in Vienna

on 25-26 February

June Hon. Joseph Farrugia participated in the Conference on the Code of Conduct:

Parliamentary Control and Oversight of the Security Sector held in Berlin on 2-3 June

Hon. Godfrey Farrugia participated in the panel discussion on *The Parliamentary Dimension of the OSCE* organised by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung in Georgia, held in

Tbilisi on 30 June

July Hon. Godfrey Farrugia and Hon. Frederick Azzopardi participated in the 25th Annual

Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly held in Tbilisi between 1 and 5 July

September Hon. Godfrey Farrugia, Hon. Frederick Azzopardi and Hon. Silvio Parnis participated

in the Autumn Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly held in Skopje,

Macedonia between 29 September and 2 October

October Hon. Robert Cutajar participated in the Workshop on the OSCE Code of Conduct on

Politico-Military Aspects of Security held in Amman, Jordan between 17 and 21

October.

3.2.9 Other meetings

January Hon. Justyne Caruana participated in the Meeting of the Focal Points of the United

Nations Alliance of Civilisations (UNAOC) held in New York on 15 January. Hon. Caruana attended this meeting on behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly of the

Mediterranean

February Hon. Michael Falzon participated in the *High Level Conference: European Parliament*

- Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on 'Capacity Building for Reform', held in the European

Parliament in Brussels between 29 February and 2 March

April Hon. Jason Azzopardi participated in the Parliamentary Workshop on Enhancing the

Role of Parliamentarians in Building Effective Counter-Terrorism Systems within a Rule of Law Framework' organised by the International Institute of Justice and the Rule

of Law in Istanbul on 20 and 21 April

Hon. Silvio Schembri participated in the Seventh Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilisations (UNAOC) held in Baku, Azerbaijan between 25 and 27 April

May Hon. Antoine Borg participated in the European Interparliamentary Conference on

Tourism '365 Days! Multi-Destination Tourism' organised by the Greek Parliament in

Athens between 15 and 17 May

September Hon. Francis Zammit Dimech participated in the 26th Economic Forum on 'United or

Divided?' organised by the Institute of Eastern Studies in Krynica Zdroj, Poland

between 6 and 8 September

October Hon. Silvio Schembri and Hon. Ryan Callus participated in the 16 Interparliamentary

meeting on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, organised by EUFORES, held

in Copenhagen on 7-8 October.

3.3 Incoming Visits and Conferences organised by the Maltese Parliament

During the year under review, the House of Representatives hosted a number of Parliamentary delegations coming from different continents.

3.3.1 Visit by the Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee

On 10 April, the Speaker of the House of Representatives Anglu Farrugia received a delegation led by Mr Yu Zhengshen, Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee (CPPCC) of the People's Republic of China.

The two dignitaries recalled the excellent bilateral relations between Malta and the People's Republic of China, which were established in 1972. The two sides discussed issues of mutual interest, including the Medium Term Co-operation Plan as well as increasing the collaboration between the parliaments of the two countries. In this regard, Speaker Farrugia proposed the setting up of a Joint Parliamentary Friendship Group between the two countries, which would further enhance the Sino-Maltese relationship. This proposal was welcomed by the Chairman of the CPPCC, who took the opportunity to express his gratitude for the assistance provided by Malta in the expatriation of a considerable number of Chinese citizens during the conflict in Libya in 2014.

At this meeting, Speaker Farrugia was accompanied by the Chairman of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee Hon. Luciano Busuttil, Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis, Hon. Godfrey Farrugia, Hon. Michael Falzon, and Hon. Tonio Fenech.

3.3.2 Visit by a delegation from the Germany-Malta Parliamentary Friendship Group

In May, a delegation of Members of Parliament from the Parliamentary Friendship Group between Malta and the Federal Republic of Germany visited Malta on the invitation of the Parliament of Malta. The German delegation was led by Hon. Mechthild Rawert and included Members of Parliament Marlene Mortler, Valerie Wilms, Christel Voßbeck-Kayser and Lothar Riebsamen. Also in attendance was H.E. Gudrun Sräga, Ambassador for the Federal Republic of Germany to Malta.

As part of their visit, delegates held a meeting with their Maltese counterparts and Members of the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs, wherein the very good relations between Malta and Germany were highlighted, which good relations are evidenced by German investment in Malta and the number of German tourists that visit Malta every year. Other topics of discussion included migration, the Mediterranean Region, the Union for the Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly, Turkey-EU accession negotiations and Germany's role in helping southern European countries in the financial crisis.

While in Malta, delegates also met with the President of Malta, H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, Speaker Anglu Farrugia, Minister for Home Affairs and National Security, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister for Health, Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties, NGOs and business representatives.

3.3.3 Visit by a delegation from the Algeria-Malta Parliamentary Friendship Group

In May, a delegation of Members of Parliament from the Parliamentary Friendship Group between Malta and the People's National Assembly of Algeria, established earlier in the year, visited Malta on the invitation of the Maltese Parliament. The Algerian delegation, led by Hon. Noura Boudaoud, President of the Algeria-Malta Parliamentary Friendship Group, and comprising members of the Algerian Parliament and a representative of the Algerian Embassy in Rome, met with the Speaker of the House of Representatives Anglu Farrugia on 30 May.

During this visit, Speaker Farrugia referred to the diplomatic relations that Malta and Algeria have enjoyed since 1975. The Speaker recalled his participation at the International Colloquy on Political Reforms in Algeria in June 2013, the official visit to Algeria by Prime Minister Joseph Muscat in November 2015 and the State visit by the President of Malta H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca in January 2016. The two sides discussed issues of mutual interest including migration, terrorism, the crisis in Libya, and the unresolved conflicts in the Middle East. Speaker Farrugia stressed that one can only find solutions to such long-standing issues through dialogue. The Speaker augured that the recent trade delegations between Algeria and Malta will increase trade and commercial ties between the two countries.

During their visit in Malta, the delegation also met with their Maltese counterparts and members of the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs, as well as the President of Malta H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, the Minister for Education and Employment, the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure and the Minister for Finance.

3.3.4 Visit by a delegation from the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association

In October, a delegation from the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association, led by Member of Parliament David Tilson and composed of Senator Percy Downe, Senator David Wells and Member of Parliament Don Davies, visited Malta. The Canadian delegation held a meeting with Speaker Anġlu Farrugia and a joint meeting with the Standing Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs and the Standing Committee on Environment and Development Planning. The main purpose of these meetings is to give parliamentarians the necessary space, time and tools to proactively contribute to ongoing discussions and act as an added asset to international diplomacy and cooperation.

During the meetings, reference was made to the fruitful relationship between Malta and Canada, particularly the strong presence of Maltese migrants in Toronto. In the meeting with the Speaker on 17 October, the Speaker highlighted Malta's priorities for the 2017 Presidency of the Council of the European Union, explaining that Malta is committed to give the parliamentary dimension of the

Presidency a strong role, with the House of Representatives hosting a number of meetings covering topics of a social, economic and environmental nature.

The main purpose of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association, established in 1980, is to provide a structured forum for the exchange of information and ideas between Canadian parliamentarians and parliamentarians from key European institutions and regional bodies. The Association proactively interacts with European countries utilizing the rotation of the Presidency as an opportunity to meet national parliaments and exchange ideas on issues of common concern.

3.3.5 Visit by a delegation from the Shoura Council, Saudi Arabia

In November, a delegation led by the Speaker of the Malis Alshura, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Abdullah Mohammed Alsheikh, and comprising Members of Parliament Saad Mohammed Alhareky and Hamdah Khalaf Alanazi, visited Malta.

Following a tête-à-tête between the Speaker of the House of Representatives Anġlu Farrugia, and the Speaker of the Malis Alshura Abdullah Mohammed Alsheikh, the two dignitaries had a meeting together with Members from the Parliamentary Friendship Group between Malta and Saudi Arabia, namely Hon. Joseph M. Sammut, Hon. Michael Falzon, Hon. David Agius and Hon. Toni Bezzina. During the said meeting, the two sides made reference to the strong bilateral relations that have existed between Malta and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia since 1975. They discussed issues of mutual interest, particularly of parliamentary importance, as well as how to enhance the trade and commercial ties between the two countries. Reference was made to the relations between Saudi Arabia and the European Union, and to the visit to Saudi Arabia in May by Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union and Vice-President of the European Commission. Malta's forthcoming Presidency of the Council of the European Union was also mentioned, particularly the parliamentary dimension of the said Presidency.

3.3.6 Visit by a delegation from the France-Malta Parliamentary Friendship Group

Another delegation received was that from the France-Malta Parliamentary Friendship Group in November. The delegation, led by Member of Parliament Patrice Prat, President of the said Friendship Group, included Members of Parliament Georges Fenech and Catherine Quere.

In their meeting with Speaker Anglu Farrugia, reference was made to the cordial relations that exist between Malta and France and the Maltese diaspora in France. With regards to the latter, the two dignitaries recalled the support that Maltese persons living in North Africa received from France following the North African uprising against the French.

During their visit in Malta, the delegation also had the opportunity of meeting the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties, the Minister for the Economy, Investment and Small Businesses, the Minister for Home Affairs and National Security, the Parliamentary Secretary for Rights of Persons with Disability and Active Ageing and the Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights.

3.4 Outgoing Visit by the Maltese Parliament

3.4.1 Visit by a delegation from the Malta-Germany Parliamentary Friendship Group

Maltese Members from the Malta-Germany Parliamentary Friendship Group visited their counterparts in Berlin, Germany, between 20 and 24 November. The delegation was composed of Hon. Charles Buhagiar, Hon. David Agius, Hon. Robert Cutajar, Hon. Joseph Farrugia, Hon. Beppe Fenech Adami, Hon. George Pullicino and Hon. Joseph M. Sammut. During the visit, the delegation had the opportunity to meet with several Members of the Bundestag, amongst them, Vice-President of the German Bundestag Ulla Schmidt, Chairperson of the Committee for the Interior Ansgar Heveling, Chairperson of the Defence Committee Wolfgang Hellmich, member of the Defence Committee Thomas Hitschler, Chairperson of the Committee for Health Edgar Franke, Federal Minister for Health Hermann Gröhe and Chairman of the Committee for European Affairs Gunther Krichbaum. The Maltese delegation also held discussions on current European-political topics and consumer protection with the Committee for European Affairs, Development Policy and Consumer Protection of the Brandenburg Landtag which comprised Barbara Richstein and Andreas Bernig under the direction of the Vice President of the Landtag Dieter Dombrowski. On the topic of migration, the Maltese delegation met with the Director General for European Affairs at the Federal Foreign Office Martin Kotthaus, and visited Tamaja Notunterkunft, an emergency shelter for refugees.

4. 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 2016. The Maltese Association also participated in meetings of the European Association of Former Members of Parliament of the Member States of the Council of Europe (FP-AP), in which Malta has been a member since 2006.

The principal objective of the FP-AP 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 works to make the European institutions better known to the general public and organises meetings and colloquies aimed at examining society's principal challenges. The reports of the FP-AP adopted at their colloquies are forwarded to the Council of Europe and to the European institutions.

On 26 February, Mr Lino Debono and Dr Noel Buttigieg Scicluna attended a meeting of the Bureau and the General Assembly held in Paris. Between 16 and 18 June, Dr Noel Buttigieg Scicluna and Mr Michael Bonnici participated in the meeting of the Bureau held in Stockholm, while on 10 and 11 October, Dr Noel Buttigieg Scicluna attended the colloquy on 'The challenges of Immigration' in Lyon.

5. OTHER ACTIVITIES

5.1 Meeting with Former Members of Parliament and Journalists

"Democracy remains alive if journalists maintain a serene and honest approach towards reporting when publishing real time articles, particularly in the House of Representatives." This was stated by Speaker Anglu Farrugia in his address to Former Members of Parliament and journalists on 5 January in the parliament's lobby.

The Speaker emphasised the importance of the role of journalists, especially when reporting parliamentary business, as the people judge on what is being delivered to them, calling for closer collaboration between the Institute of Maltese Journalists and the Maltese House of Representatives to discuss ethical standards.

At this gathering, the Speaker thanked the former Members of Parliament for their invaluable work and wished well former Member Mr Lino Debono for his candidature for the role of President of the European Association of Former Members of Parliament of the Member States of the Council of Europe.

5.2 Sri Chinmoy Oneness-Home Peace Run and the Baden Powell Scouts Peace Flame

In January, Parliament hosted two activities promoting peace: the *Sri Chinmoy Peace Oneness-Home Peace Run* and the *Baden Powell Scouts Peace Flame*. When meeting athletes participating in the Sri Chinmoy Oneness-Home Peace Run 2016 on 7 January, Speaker Anġlu Farrugia spoke about the importance of sustaining peace and dialogue among civilisations at governmental and non-governmental level, with the yearly Sri Chinmoy appointment of promoting peace on the international stage providing the perfect example. Speaker Farrugia, together with the Parliamentary Secretary for Research, Innovation, Youth and Sport Hon. Chris Agius, and Hon. Frederick Azzopardi, Assistant Opposition Whip, held the Peace Run torch as a symbol of political and national unity.

On the occasion of receiving the Baden Powell Scouts Peace Flame on 19 January, Speaker Farrugia stated that this flame symbolises the values of peace, love and righteousness. He encouraged those present to move beyond the symbolic to implement these values in everyday life. Also present for this activity were Government Whip Hon. Godfrey Farrugia and Hon. Frederick Azzopardi, Assistant Opposition Whip.

5.3 Report on the Awareness of the Maltese Constitution among the Maltese citizens

On 25 January, Speaker Anglu Farrugia was presented with the report of a *Study published by the Committee on Constitutional Awareness of the Maltese Constitution*. Speaking on this occasion, Speaker Farrugia stated that the aim of this Committee is to raise awareness about the Constitution of Malta in all Maltese citizens, adding that the study itself was the result of the hard work and commitment of the Committee.

The study, conducted between July and August of 2015 among 717 persons aged between 18 and 75 years, shows that 21% of the target population does not have enough knowledge about the Constitution of Malta, while 4% thinks that Malta does not have a Constitution.

Present for the meeting were Members of the Committee on the Awareness of the Constitution led by its Chairman, Dr Franco Debono. The Committee lauded the Speaker's active participation, especially in the journey towards the attainment of Parliamentary autonomy, which, according to the Committee, will constitute a 'constitutional revolution'.

5.4 Visit by the Malta Model United Nations Society

On 29 January, Speaker Anglu Farrugia received a courtesy *visit by the President and Members of the Malta Model United Nations Society* who presented him with the resolutions emanating from the First Edition of the International MaltMUN Conference held at the House of Representatives between 18 and 20 September 2015. Speaker Farrugia thanked the President of the MaltMUN Mr Warren Ciantar and those supporting MaltMUN. The Society endeavours to promote and stimulate the continuation of quality educational programmes that bring about the next generation of international leaders.

During this visit, Speaker Farrugia recalled parts from his address in September 2015 to the Malta Chamber of Commerce where he had stated that the UN, as a global organisation which transcends national boundaries, is based on four main pillars: establishing peace throughout the world; developing friendly relations among nations; providing assistance to deprived populations; and promoting respect of each other's rights and freedom.

Speaker Farrugia committed himself to forward the resolutions to the Maltese MPs to bring to their attention the feedback from young people on some of the most pressing issues that they are often called upon to debate and take legislative decisions as Maltese legislators and policy setters.

5.5 Memorandum of Understanding between CAPAC and the Parliament of Malta

On 2 February, Speaker Anglu Farrugia signed a *Memorandum of Understanding between the Commonwealth Association of Public Accounts Committees (CAPAC) and the Parliament of Malta*, on the hosting of the CAPAC Secretariat which sets down the concrete contribution of the Maltese Parliament to this Association. Hon. Tonio Fenech, CAPAC Chairman, thanked Speaker Anglu Farrugia and his Office for the support that they have continually given to this initiative. CAPAC was also well received during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held in Malta in November 2015.

The main aim of CAPAC is to further reaffirm that strong and independent parliamentary oversight, through Public Accounts Committees that are effective, independent and transparent, plays an important role in preserving the trust of citizens in the integrity of government. To date, CAPAC represents 24 countries out of 55 Commonwealth countries.

In his speech, Hon. Fenech stated that the Work Plan for the two years ahead is an ambitious one, as, apart from aiming to widen the membership of CAPAC, the Committee has already started work to establish common standards to help Public Accounts Committees achieve a sound level of effectiveness, independence and transparency.

Speaker Farrugia said that he is confident that the Maltese Parliament will fulfil this new responsibility and that this could be an enriching experience for parliamentary staff. He thanked the Chairman and the Executive Committee of CAPAC for their work and for entrusting this task in the hands of the Maltese Parliament.

The Maltese Parliament will be hosting the CAPAC Secretariat for a term of three years, a period that may be renewed. The administrative offices of CAPAC will be within the Maltese Parliament which will be also offering support to this international organisation through the secondment of two staff members.

5.6 Music Educational Programme and concert in the Parliamentary Chamber

A three-day *Music Educational Programme* organised by the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra and held in the Parliament's precincts, came to a conclusion with a final performance in the Chamber of the House of Representatives on 24 February. The programme was led by Dr Tony Harris, Head of Department of Education in Nottingham Trent University, and Mr Barry Russell, a renowned musician. The musicians who took part in the concert in the Parliamentary Chamber included members of the Malta Youth Orchestra, students of the Johann Strauss music school and local band players. Also present for this event were Government MP Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis and Opposition Whip Hon. David Agius.

In his welcome address, Speaker Anglu Farrugia stated that the aim of the programme was to enlighten and empower young musicians and audiences, and engage them with both the energy and drama that classical music provides. The event was also addressed by the Chairman of the Philharmonic Orchestra, Mr Sigmund Mifsud.

5.7 Commonwealth Day 2016

Commonwealth Day is celebrated annually on the second Monday in March, which this year was on 14 March. It is an opportunity for individuals, communities and organisations to renew their commitment to its shared values of tolerance, respect, and equality and to uphold its fundamental principles of democracy, human rights, the rule of law and sustainable socio-economic development.

When launching this year's theme, 'An Inclusive Commonwealth', Commonwealth Secretary-General Kamalesh Sharma said that this theme "refers to the values of tolerance, respect and understanding, as well as equity and fairness, set out in the Commonwealth Charter, and the richness of the Commonwealth as a family of nations in which each member state is valued equally and has an equal voice. In changing times, the need for the Commonwealth to act as an inclusive network for mutual support, development and growth of opportunity and rights for all is as great as ever." Among the many activities and events taking place globally, a multi-faith service at Westminster Abbey welcomed thousands of guests from around the world.

To mark the 52 years since Malta joined the Commonwealth, Speaker Anglu Farrugia hosted and chaired a special sitting where young people from all walks of life met and discussed with representatives of the 2015 CHOGM fora, namely the Business Forum, the Peoples' Forum, the Women's Forum and the Youth Forum, as well as representatives from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Members of Parliament actively involved in the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. The aim of this dialogue was to promote young people's understanding of global issues, international cooperation and the work of the Commonwealth to improve the lives of its citizens.

5.8 Malta Journalism Awards 2016

On 5 April, the House of Representatives hosted the award-giving ceremony of the *Malta Journalism Awards 2016*. The Speaker of the House congratulated the Institute for Journalists for the effort put into the strengthening of the journalism profession in Malta. He suggested the possibility of members of the public subscribing to the association and highlighted freedom of expression as part of fundamental human rights and freedoms. Speaker Farrugia spoke of the Maltese Constitution and the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which are legal bases that guarantee the highest protection an individual can seek.

Pointing out that the Institute of Maltese Journalists has an organisational structure which aims to address ethical behaviour of journalists at large, Speaker Farrugia said that journalists should focus on facts while striving to analyse and examine every situation. In their mission and profession, journalists should exercise moral behaviour and respect the dignity of every individual.

5.9 NSTF Mini-European Assembly

As in previous years, the final session of the *NSTF Mini-European Assembly*, this year entitled *Living in the Digital Era: How to protect our Cyber Rights?*, was organised at the House of Representatives. This session, held on 15 April 2016, was chaired by the Deputy Speaker Hon. Censu Galea.

In his address, the Deputy Speaker said that the digitalization of our daily lives generates opportunities as well as challenges. Whereas access to the internet could lead to economic and social development worldwide, challenges result from abuse and the conduct of illicit activities on the web. The preservation of open, free and secure cyberspace for all is a global challenge that requires global mechanisms.

The Deputy Speaker recalled Malta's appeal at the 2015 UN High Level Meeting on the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS+10) outcomes, adding that the legal concept of the Common Heritage of Mankind should also be applicable to the digital sphere. This notion implies that the internet should be equally shared by all.

Hon. Censu Galea concluded by acknowledging that any action taken by States to enhance cyber security should take cognizance of the individual's fundamental rights and freedoms. Therefore, on the one hand, governments need to strike the right balance between freedom of expression and access to information and privacy, whilst on the other hand, offer protection to citizens, State institutions and infrastructures from criminal activities.

5.10 Debate with Students from Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary School

On 4 May, Speaker Anglu Farrugia chaired a debate held among 150 students from Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary School.

Addressing participants, the Speaker explained important aspects of the Constitution and the safeguarding of democracy. He referred to the ongoing discussions regarding a "second Constitution" and the work of the Committee on the Awareness of the Constitution.

The students, accompanied by Systems of Knowledge lecturers, held a discussion on a number of issues and voted on each theme. The session was also addressed by the Minister for Education and Employment Hon. Evarist Bartolo, Hon. David Agius, Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis and Hon. Francis Zammit Dimech.

5.11 Welcome Project Conference: Migration and Human Rights at EU Borders

On 9 May, the Speaker of the House of Representatives addressed the *Welcome Project Conference*: *Migration and Human Rights at EU Borders*. During his address, Speaker Anglu Farrugia referred to the fact that in the course of the year since the opening of the new Parliament building, it has welcomed and hosted a number of dignitaries, exhibitions and conferences that dealt with the theme of migration.

Speaker Anglu Farrugia also made reference to the recent conference held in Florence, Italy, where both the Prime Minister of Malta and the Prime Minister of Italy discussed the Migration Compact which is currently on the European Agenda. The Speaker stressed that the responsibility of safeguarding human rights does not lie within one institution or one country, but is an issue of shared competence between the EU and its Member States.

5.12 12th Session of the EkoSkola Parliament

On 2 June, the House of Representatives welcomed 84 students from 42 schools during the 12th Session of the EkoSkola Parliament for which a number of MPs from both sides of the House were also present. These included Prime Minister Hon. Joseph Muscat, the Leader of the Opposition Hon. Simon Busuttil, the Minister for Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change Hon. Josè Herrera, Parliamentary Secretary for Research, Innovation, Youth and Sport Hon. Stefan Buontempo, Hon. David Agius, Hon. Robert Cutajar, Hon. Kristy Debono, Hon. Godfrey Farrugia, Hon. Mario Galea, Hon. Marthese Portelli and Hon. George Pullicino.

During the session, the young students had the opportunity to meet with the country's policy makers to propose concrete actions to combat climate change. The session was a follow up to the 6th EkoSkola Young People's Summit - We care about our future, held on 26 April 2016 in collaboration with MEUSAC, the European Commission Representation in Malta and the Climate Action Board wherein a declaration on climate change was drawn up.

The choice of this year's theme was spurred by the agreement approved by the 196 parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in the COP21 in Paris late last year. By way of this agreement, all countries pledged to work to keep a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius and to drive efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

The 12th Session of the EkoSkola Parliament was chaired by Speaker Anglu Farrugia, who, in his opening remarks, noted that the Parliament building was energy efficient and eco-friendly. He encouraged all Members and students present to commit to the objectives of the COP21 and to safeguard the best interests of our environment.

5.13 Sette Giugno Commemoration

Commemorating *Sette Giugno* in front of the *Sette Giugno* monument in Hastings Garden on 6 June, Speaker Anġlu Farrugia reflected on Parliament's work over the previous year and put forward several proposals for improving the smooth running of parliamentary business. In his speech, Speaker Farrugia highlighted two initiatives undertaken, these being the live transmission of parliamentary sittings on the parliamentary television channel and the temporary transfer of parliamentary archives to a building near the new Parliament Building. He hailed efforts towards making the Maltese Parliament administratively autonomous and augured that the Parliamentary Service Bill would shortly pass through all the parliamentary stages and enter into force.

Speaker Farrugia explained that initial plans had been made to transform the former train tunnel beneath the parliamentary building into another committee room, archives and a reference library. Also among Speaker Farrugia's proposals were shortening speeches made in Parliament, strenghtening support services extended to Members of Parliament by increasing the parliamentary staff complement and giving MPs an allowance with which to employ assistants, and revising the allocation of sittings for Private Members' business.

5.14 Public debate with the Director of the European Fundamental Rights Agency

On 30 June the House of Representatives hosted Professor Michael O'Flaherty, Director of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), for a *public debate dealing with the topic of the fundamental rights challenges facing the European Union* at this critical juncture in the context of Malta's upcoming Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Prior to the public debate in the Chamber, Prof. O'Flaherty paid a courtesy visit to the Deputy Speaker Censu Galea where they spoke about the work of FRA in the field of fundamental rights. They also discussed the contribution the Agency is ready to offer to Malta during the run up to its Presidency of the Council of the European Union, with a view to establish contact with standing committees of the Maltese Parliament, particularly with those dealing with fundamental rights issues.

The public debate, held in the Chamber, was chaired by Deputy Speaker Galea, who in his opening remarks spoke about the immigration phenomenon in Europe and the progress Malta has made in the safeguarding of rights of people who seek asylum in our country, with particular reference to children.

In his remarks, Prof. O'Flaherty spoke positively of the progress made by Malta in the field of the protection of the rights of LGBT individuals and in the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adding that in this field, Malta should serve as an example for other countries. He also spoke of the outcome of the Fundamental Rights Forum organised by FRA in Vienna in June this year that brought together representatives from EU Member States, experts from EU institutions, members of civil society and academics to discuss fundamental rights issues.

With regard to the relationship between FRA and national parliaments, Prof. O'Flaherty noted that national parliaments have a twofold role in ensuring the safeguard of fundamental rights, by way of legislation adopted, as well as scrutiny of the implementation of the same laws by the relevant standing committees. In the same context, he spoke about the importance of the network of the parliamentary focal points, which serves as a point of contact between Members of Parliament and FRA.

The event also included a question and answer session with the Director of the Fundamental Rights Agency and was attended by Members of Parliament from both sides of the House as well as representatives from civil society, public officers and non-governmental organisations.

5.15 Meeting with a delegation from the Province of Ragusa, Sicily

On 28 July, Speaker Anglu Farrugia welcomed a *delegation from the Confederazione Nazionale dell'Artigianato e della Piccola e Media Impresa from the Province of Ragusa*, led by its President Giuseppe Santocono. The Speaker hailed the work and initiatives carried out by the Confederazione Nazionale and its role in acting as a strong advocating voice for artisan, medium and small sized businesses in the Province of Ragusa.

Speaker Farrugia spoke of the long-established cooperation between Malta and Italy, notably, the special bond between Malta and Sicily. This was identified as having strong historical, cultural and linguistic foundations and which, over centuries, managed to develop into fruitful and durable business ventures.

Speaker Farrugia stated that one way of enhancing cooperation and understanding between the two communities, was by sustaining continuous parliamentary diplomacy, especially at a cross-institutional level, including the participation of the executive and legislative arms, as well as key organizations working closely with artisan, and small and medium sized businesses. The opportunity to enhance cooperation under Interreg Italia-Malta 2014-2020 European Regional Development Fund is an excellent example of how the two countries can consolidate further entrepreneurship ventures,

employment opportunities and increased labour mobility. Speaker Farrugia said that at this juncture, Malta Enterprise has a pivotal role to facilitate trade, whilst ensuring the highest standards and rights for workers. He augured that the Confederazione Nazionale and Malta Enterprise enter into a sustained dialogue on business challenges, opportunities and schemes aimed at facilitating businesses.

Speaker Farrugia referred to legislation recently passed in parliament, in favour of encouraging the regulation and governance of family businesses. This Act is intended to protect the investments of families in business and assist them to enhance their internal organisation. In an bid to facilitate the exchange of goods and people between Ragusa and Malta, Speaker Farrugia proposed the introduction of regular flights between Malta International Airport and Comiso Airport.

Present at the meeting were also the Minister for the Economy, Investment and Small Businesses Hon. Chris Cardona and Malta Enterprise representative Mr Mazzitelli.

5.16 Launch of the Parliamentary TV Studio

"With a now autonomous national parliament, we shall endeavour to continue strengthening parliamentary transparency". These were the words of Speaker Anglu Farrugia when on 17 August 2016 he announced that the Maltese Parliament is now equipped with the facility of a studio from which to broadcast discussions related to parliamentary democracy. This is another project aimed at bringing Parliament even closer to the people.

The Speaker added that the step towards an autonomous national parliament is being considered as an important milestone in transparency in the highest institution of the country and thus, an important development for parliamentary democracy.

The launching of the studio was attended by Government Whip Hon. Godfrey Farrugia, Opposition Whip Hon. David Agius and the Clerk of the House Mr Ray Scicluna.

The first informative television programme was aired on 2 September on the Parliament TV Channel where Speaker Farrugia and the two Whips discussed Parliamentary Question Time that is held during the first half hour of every parliamentary sitting. Parliamentary Questions are considered to be an effective means of holding the Executive to account.

5.17 Annual Conference of the Malta Model United Nations Society

The Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon. Čensu Galea, presided over this year's *Malta Model United Nations Society (MaltMUN) Conference* held at the House of Representatives between 9 and 11 September. The theme of this year's Conference was *State of Terror: Keeping Citizens Safe in a Terrorised World*.

In his introductory speech, the Deputy Speaker welcomed the Society's initiative and commitment to promoting greater participation and engagement in UN-focused conferences and competitions, public-speaking, debating and diplomacy among young professionals.

Participants addressed terrorism, closely analysing the phenomenon from different perspectives, namely, neutrality and military intervention; financing of non-state actors; a five-year review of the Biological Weapons Convention; protection of world heritage sites; and anti-terrorism educational programmes targeting youth radicalisation.

The Deputy Speaker highlighted the strategic role played by national parliaments in debating, drafting and enacting legislative measures that counter terrorism in concrete and tangible ways. Speaking of changes to the local legislation, he recalled amendments to various laws related to fighting money laundering and funding terrorism, enacted by the Maltese Parliament on 20 February 2015. Furthermore, Malta is also host to a number of regional and international organisations specifically addressing terrorism, whose core purpose is bringing closer parliamentarians, experts and professionals from the field. The Deputy Speaker called on MaltMUN participants to recognize and highlight the paradigm of finding the right equilibrium between tightened security and surveillance measures, and respecting freedoms and rights. Legislative and political progress geared towards counter-terrorism must be conducted within a human rights and rule of law framework.

At the end of the proceedings, Hon. Censu Galea presided over the Awards' Ceremony of the MaltMUN 2016 Conference.

5.18 National Youth Parliament

Deputy Speaker Hon. Censu Galea, presided over the annual session of the *National Youth Parliament* held in the Parliament Chamber on 13 September. This activity, organised by the National Youth Council and now established in the Maltese Parliament's calendar, brings together young people between the ages of 13 and 35 to debate a number of themes.

Youth aged between 13 and 18 years, addressed the issues of non-formal education; sustainable development; and leisure and safety, while those aged between 19 and 35 addressed the subjects of poverty and social justice; the accessibility of Gozo; and the constitutional reform.

The National Youth Parliament session was addressed by Opposition Leader Hon. Simon Busuttil, Parliamentary Secretary for Research, Innovation, Youth and Sport Hon. Chris Agius and Opposition Whip Hon. David Agius as well as the new President of the National Youth Council Mr Michael Piccinino. The Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties Hon. Helena Dalli, the Minister for Finance Hon. Edward Scicluna and Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis also participated in the session.

5.19 Notte Bianca 2016

Throughout the night of *Notte Bianca 2016*, on Saturday 1 October, the public was invited to visit the House of Representatives in Parliament. Parliamentary officials welcomed visitors upon their arrival and explained the functions of Parliament, parliamentary work and procedures. During the night, members of the public had the opportunity of viewing two exhibitions that were set up in the parliamentary building.

One exhibition was the 'Science in the House' exhibition set up as part of the Science Week in the City 2016 organised by the Science Department at the University of Malta in collaboration with the European Researchers' Night Consortium. This exhibition showcased research undertaken by science departments, in particular those relating to neuroscience, ICT, engineering, medical science and social science.

Another exhibition regarded the importance of taking care of the environment, which consisted of clothing made out of recycled newspaper and flower arrangements, organised by Connie Scerri Floral Class. Also present in Parliament on this evening was Mr Alex Gobey, Dementia Care Coordinator in the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity, who promoted awareness of this condition, informing the public about how to identify the first signs of dementia and how to support people suffering from

this condition. Members of the Transplant Support Group (TSG) encouraged Maltese people to register on the national Organ Donation Registry.

5.20 Session for Grandparents

On 7 October, the Parliamentary Chamber hosted a *Session for Grandparents*, organised by Fondazzjoni Nanniet Malta and presided by Deputy Speaker Censu Galea. Participants spoke about various matters relating to the role of grandparents in society, particularly grandparents' support in taking care of their grandchildren. Other matters mentioned included grandparents' mental health, their right to spend time with and enjoy their grandchildren, the need for adequate pensions, and the need for a legal framework for grandparents. Several Members of Parliament and Maltese Members of the European Parliament participated in this session.

The session ended with the approval of a resolution proposed by the Fondazzjoni Nanniet Malta, paving the way for a proposal to be made to the European Parliament to officially recognise Grandparents' Day in Member States of the European Union.

5.21 Conference of the Presidents of the European Parliament

On 8 December, the Maltese Parliament received the Conference of Presidents of the European Parliament led by the President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz. Traditionally, this conference takes place just before each Presidency of the European Council.

Chairing this special sitting, Deputy Speaker Censu Galea said that while the Presidency of the Council of the European Union presents an administrative challenge to the smallest state of the European Union, it also presents an opportunity for Malta to showcase its ability to adapt to such situations, proving that a small infrastructure results in better preparedness for the Presidency, which augurs success. The Deputy Speaker spoke of the ever-growing role of national parliaments, not only in European affairs, but also during the six-month Presidency of the European Council. He said that as elected representatives, Members of Parliament are best suited to serve as a bridge between Europe and the citizens, through their work in their respective constituencies.

Maltese Members from both sides of the House, together with the political parties' representatives of the European Parliament, had the opportunity to voice their views on the priorities of the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union during the first half of 2017 and on the EU's current reality. During the conference, three priorities were tackled, namely, migration, security and the Single Market.

Migration was the issue over which most members expressed their concerns. President Schulz noted that Malta has been tackling this issue long before joining the EU and consequently, long before the EU recognised migration as the crisis we have become familiar with today. Maltese MPs remarked that migration should be tackled in the most humane manner, respecting the individuals who would have gone through severe hardships to seek a better future while not giving in to underlying pressures of terrorism, xenophobia and racism, which might interfere with the successful handling of such a delicate situation.

On the second priority – security – the general attitude is that the European Union should present a more flexible approach to be able to accommodate the needs of citizens while meeting the requirements of the Union. It was also noted that European citizens must not be deprived of one of the EU's fundamental freedoms, that of free movement of persons, as such deprivation will result in a sense of insecurity within the Member States.

On the Single Market, the Union's greatest asset, it was noted that if all stakeholders, collectively, manage to fully exploit the Single Market and develop the Digital Single Market as well as complete the Internal Energy Market, this will bring about tangible benefits to economies, businesses and families by removing barriers to trade, improving access to services and protection for consumers. The Maltese Presidency aims to improve and conclude key legislation already being negotiated. The Capital Markets Union will also be given due importance during the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

President Martin Schulz remarked that in his various visits to national parliaments at the early stages of a Presidency, this was the first time he witnessed such significant involvement by Members of Parliament, adding that he believes that this was a positive sign of Malta's serious approach to its first Presidency of the Council. He stressed the importance of following in the footsteps of our forefathers who, thanks to the EU, left a legacy of long-lasting peace, a legacy that we are equally obliged to pass on to the next generations.

5.22 Exhibitions

During 2016, a number of exhibitions were held in the foyer of the Parliament building's administration block, which exhibitions were free of charge for the public to enjoy.

5.22.1 Photographic Exhibition: Women Refugees and Asylum Seekers

On 4 March, Speaker Anglu Farrugia and Ms Juana Lahousse-Juarez, Director-General for Communication in the European Parliament, inaugurated a photographic exhibition entitled *Women Refugees and Asylum Seekers* set up by the European Parliament (EP) in conjunction with the Parliament of Malta.

Speaker Anġlu Farrugia remarked that several displaced persons fleeing their homeland and seeking a better livelihood in Europe ended up victims of tragedies. He stressed that asylum seekers are vulnerable, with women and children being more vulnerable than men.

The ceremony was also addressed by Ms Umayma Elamin, a Somali and representative of the Migrant Women Association Malta, and Ms Hourie Tafech, a Palestinian refugee, both of whom gave an account of their personal experience. At the end of the inauguration ceremony, the Speaker of the House of Representatives Anglu Farrugia presented Mr Darrin Zammit Lupi with the award of Winner of the Photographic Competition. The joint runners up were Mr Ian Noel Pace and Mr Jonathan Borg. Present at this event was also Dr Peter Agius, EP Representative in Malta.

5.22.2 Din l-Art Helwa Architectural Heritage Awards 2005–2015

On 3 May, the Speaker of the House of Representatives inaugurated a retrospective photographic exhibition of all past winners of the *Din l-Art Helwa Awards for Architectural Heritage for the period 2005-2015*. The exhibition brought to a close a year of celebrations commemorating the anniversary of the inauguration of this voluntary organisation which started in July 1965.

Speaker Anglu Farrugia stated that Din l-Art Helwa has always been instrumental in bringing to the fore the importance of the preservation and protection of historical buildings and monuments. He said that Din l-Art Helwa has been innovative in its initiatives to achieve its mission of protecting the national heritage of our country in its broader sense, that is, including the environmental heritage and the Maltese flora and fauna.

Speaker Farrugia lauded the commitment of Din l-Art Helwa to enhance the knowledge and appreciation of the Maltese National Heritage, paired with educational and informative initiatives and public declarations in favour of the enforcement of laws and regulations regarding the protection of our countryside.

Present at the inauguration were, amongst others, Mrs Maria Grazia Cassar, President of Din l-Art Helwa and Hon. Karl Gouder, Opposition Spokesman for Culture.

5.22.3 Exhibition on the Marsa Power Station

On 16 May, Speaker Anglu Farrugia inaugurated a photographic exhibition put together by Enemalta plc, entitled *The Light of the Station: The Marsa Power Station from the Photographer's Lens.*

In his address, the Speaker stated that this exhibition is a fitting memory to the Marsa Power Station, which, from its opening in 1954 to its closing down on 9 March 2015, provided a leap forward for our country, particularly when for a number of years it was the only producer of electrical energy in Malta. The Speaker showed gratitude to all Enemalta employees for their hard work.

Since this exhibition was being held as part of a competition, the Speaker distributed the prizes to the winners. Members present at this event included Engineer Frederick Azzopardi, Executive Chairman of Enemalta plc, and Mr Kevin Casha, President of the Malta Institute of Professional Photography.

5.22.4 Art Exhibition by Walter Coccetta: I Deserti Bianchi

On 16 June, Speaker Anglu Farrugia inaugurated an art exhibition entitled *I Deserti Bianchi* by renowned Italian artist Maestro Walter Coccetta.

In his welcome speech, Speaker Farrugia said that through their work, artists share their thoughts with society. This interaction through art leads people to share individual life experiences, moments of happiness and sorrow, tragedies, and hopes for a better livelihood. These human experiences could be identified in the artworks of Maestro Coccetta, notably in his series entitled Sarajevo, *I Cecchini* (Snipers), *I Campi Minati* (The Minefields), *Le Ricostruzioni* (The Reconstruction - A new beginning) and *I Deserti Bianchi* (Migrants).

Speaker Farrugia spoke of the plight of migrants who seek a better livelihood in Europe as they are displaced from their homeland because of conflicts. He called on governments to extend solidarity towards the poor, the meek and displaced people. He also said that conflicts breed further hatred, and that it is only peace and reconciliation that can help to overcome differences and bring people together.

5.22.5 Exhibition on the embellishment of the entrance to Valletta

An exhibition on the designs for the *Embellishment projects of the entrance to Valletta*, namely the Valletta Ditch, the Triton square and the area known as "Il-Biskuttin", was inaugurated by Speaker Anġlu Farrugia on 1 August.

In his opening remarks, Speaker Farrugia stated that the said projects shall complement a number of projects that have already been effected at the entrance to our capital city, namely the former Royal Opera House and the new Parliament building. The Speaker also mentioned the restoration works done at Fort St Elmo and praised Heritage Malta for its commitment and for conducting such works in a professional way. He augured that similar projects will be undertaken in Fort St Angelo in Vittoriosa, Fort Ricasoli in Kalkara, as well as parts of the ramparts system in Cottonera. Speaker Farrugia spoke

about the need for headway regarding the project related to the historical archives of the Maltese Parliament, which should be implemented within the rest of the Valletta embellishment project.

The Speaker ended his comments by describing these projects as a link between the past, the present and the future.

The Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Hon. Joe Mizzi and the Chairman of the Grand Harbour Regeneration Corporation Dr Stefan Zrinzo Azzopardi were present at the official opening of this exhibition.

5.22.6 Exhibition on the history of the Police Force

On 4 July, the Speaker of the House of Representatives Anglu Farrugia inaugurated an exhibition on the *History of the Maltese Police Force*. This exhibition was part of a series of activities to mark the 202nd anniversary since the establishment of the Police Force on 12 July 1814.

In his introductory speech, the Speaker spoke about the importance of the role of the Police in maintaining public order to safeguard citizens' rights against criminal activity. The Speaker praised the work done by the Police, in particular in the area of illegal immigration where, together with the Armed Forces of Malta, on the one hand they protect the country from illegal immigration but at the same time fulfil their obligations by offering humanitarian aid to immigrants.

Dr Farrugia acknowledged the work done by present and veteran members of the Police Force, amongst them the former President of Malta Dr Anton Buttigieg who during the Second World War was a police inspector.

Amongst those present at the inauguration of the exhibition were the Minister for Home Affairs and National Security Hon. Carmelo Abela, the Acting Commissioner of Police Mr Lawrence Cutajar, and the Opposition spokesman on the Interior and National Security Hon. Beppe Fenech Adami.

5.22.7 Exhibition 'Unity in Diversity'

On 5 September, the Speaker of the House of Representatives Hon. Anglu Farrugia inaugurated an exhibition of drawings and paintings produced by the children attending Skolasajf 2016 at the centres in Qormi and St Paul's Bay, under the theme *Unity in Diversity*.

In his speech, the Speaker referred to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights which emphasises that all persons are born free and equal in dignity and rights. It also states that all persons should work hard to help one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Speaker Farrugia stated that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the plea of peoples who suffered the trauma of two world wars. Since then, conflicts around the world still exist and we still see autocratic governments that stigmatize victims and take away their dignity.

He stressed that, rather than looking at differences, we should seek to appreciate and help each other in order to improve our lives, our societies and our countries. This could be everyone's contribution towards a better world.

Speaker Farrugia expressed his appreciation to all those who contributed towards holding the exhibition, namely the Skolasajf centres involved, the Office of the European Commission Representation in Malta, as well as MEUSAC.

5.22.8 Exhibition on A National Information Campaign for more Awareness about Dementia

On 19 September, the Speaker of the House of Representatives Hon. Anglu Farrugia, together with Parliamentary Secretary for Persons with Disability and Active Ageing, Hon. Justyne Caruana, inaugurated an exhibition entitled *A National Campaign for more Awareness about Dementia in Malta* on the occasion of World Alzheimer's Day commemorated on 21 September.

Mr Alex Gobey, Dementia Care Coordinator within the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity, explained how dementia deteriorates the brain's functions which include memory, decision-making faculties, as well as communication, thereby having a negative effect on daily life.

In 2016, 1.5% of Maltese citizens lived with dementia, which statistic is set to increase due to Malta's ageing population. In fact, it is estimated that in 2030, around 10,000 individuals in Malta will be suffering from this condition. Parliamentary Secretary Justyne Caruana explained that the World Health Organisation (WHO) describes dementia as a "contemporary tsunami" and calls on every Member State to ensure that it is equipped with the right structures to overcome this challenge.

Speaker Anglu Farrugia welcomed the launching of the National Awareness Campaign about dementia and talked about the challenges dementia brings to sufferers, their families, society in general and public health. He emphasised the importance of training to overcome these challenges and mentioned that the staff of the House of Representatives underwent a training session on dementia given by experts in the field.

5.22.9 Exhibition 'Science in the House 2016'

On 29 September, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Anglu Farrugia, inaugurated an exhibition *Science in the House 2016*, which forms part of the *European Researchers' Night / Science in the City*. In his opening address, the Speaker described the exibition as a showcase of the academic work which Maltese scholars quietly carry out with a view to improve people's lives. This beautiful value should be recognised and appreciated by everyone. Speaker Farrugia added that people should be at the centre of all research carried out in the fields of medicine and surgery, lateral thinking, engineering, information systems and social sciences.

The Speaker said that he considers this exhibition as an annual report of Maltese researchers' work and studies carried out under the auspices of the University of Malta and other educational institutions in Malta, namely the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology, the Malta Council for Science and Technology and the Malta Life Sciences Park. The results achieved by Maltese researchers should strengthen our belief that more investment in research and learning is needed. Academics' and scholars' innovative ideas should receive the necessary support, particularly when these could lead to improving people's lives. In conclusion, the Speaker commended the large contribution given by all Maltese scholars.

Present at this event were Minister for Education and Employment Hon. Evarist Bartolo, Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties Hon. Helena Dalli, Parliamentary Secretary for Research, Innovation, Youth and Sport Hon. Chris Agius, Opposition Whip Hon. David Agius, Hon. Luciano Busuttil, University of Malta Rector Prof. Alfred Vella, and the Science in the City / European Researchers' Night Consortium Chairman Alex Felice.

5.22.10 Maltese Lace Exhibition

On 15 October, Speaker of the House of Representatives Anglu Farrugia presided over the awards ceremony of the 2016 *Maltese Lace exhibition* and competition, held at the House of Representatives.

In his address, Speaker Anglu Farrugia claimed that hosting this event at the Maltese Parliament served to promote Maltese lace and other artisan work. Lacework symbolises a healthy work ethic, creativity and beauty, and which has received the recognition that it deserves, both in Malta and overseas. The Speaker emphasized the importance of passing on artisan traditions to youth and appealed for more support in this area. Passing on artisan traditions does not only teach young people a skill but also good values which enable society to prosper.

5.22.11 Exhibition of art pieces from Africa and Peru MISSIO 2016

On 19 October, Speaker of the House of Representatives Anglu Farrugia inaugurated *Bantu/Nazca*, an exhibition of art pieces from Africa and Peru organised by the Missionary Office of Malta and Gozo (MISSIO).

Speaker Farrugia hailed missionaries from Malta and Gozo and all those who dedicate their lives to help those in need without expecting anything in return. Maltese missionaries' work in foreign countries included the digging of water wells and the building of homes, schools, clinics, hospitals and workplaces, to improve people's lives. The Speaker appealed to the Maltese and Gozitans to continue missionary work and also appealed to the public and the Maltese authorities to be more generous towards the work of Maltese missionaries abroad and more just with the weak and vulnerable immigrants in our country.

5.22.12 Exhibition in aid of Dar tal-Providenza

On December 14, Deputy Speaker Hon. Čensu Galea opened an art exhibition held at the House of Representatives in *Aid of Dar tal-Providenza*. Hon. Galea commended Mons. Mikiel Azzopardi who founded Dar tal-Providenza 51 years ago. Throughout this time, with the continuous generous support of the Maltese public, Dar tal-Providenza expanded from one house to many houses comprising Villa Monsinjur Gonzi, Villa Papa Giovanni, Villa Papa Luciani and four community homes. In addition to shelter, Dar tal-Providenza provides therapeutic, educational and recreational services to persons with disabilities with a view to improve their lives and enable them to integrate in and contribute to society.

The Deputy Speaker thanked the participating artists for the altruism shown in donating their works to raise funds for Dar tal-Providenza. He urged Maltese society to continue supporting Dar tal-Providenza and to be sensitive to the needs of others. Parliamentary Secretary for Rights of Persons with Disability and Active Ageing Hon. Justyne Caruana, Government Whip Hon. Godfrey Farrugia and Assistant Opposition Whip Hon. Frederick Azzopardi attended the event.

6. OBITUARIES

On 23 February, the House expressed its grief at the death of Dr Joseph Spiteri, former Member of Parliament, who passed away on that same day. Dr Spiteri had served in Parliament between 22 February 1962 and 13 April 1976.

On 25 January, the Speaker paid tribute to the memory of Mr Laurie Vella, parliamentary correspondent with The Times of Malta, who passed away on 24 January.

On 27 January the House commemorated the victims of the Holocaust and observed a moment of silence.

On 20 June, the House observed a moment of silence following the killing of the British Labour Party Member of Parliament Ms Jo Cox that took place on 16 June in West Yorkshire in the United Kingdom.

On 15 July, the Speaker wrote to his counterparts in the National Assembly and in the Senate of the Republic of France following the terrorist attack in Nice on 14 July that had left a number of people dead.

On 24 October, the Parliament conveyed its condolences to the National Assembly and the Senate of the Republic of France following the incident involving the light aircraft crash shortly after take off in Luqa that had left five French citizens dead.



Meeting between the Standing Committee on Health and the European Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis responsible for Health and Food Safety, 23 June



Joint meeting between the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs and the Standing Committee on Social Affairs with European Commissioners Karmenu Vella responsible for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries and Věra Jourová responsible for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, 28 October



Meeting between the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs and the Commission Vice President and High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini 2 November



Joint meeting between the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs and the Standing Committee on Social Affairs with European Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos responsible for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, 7 November



Hon. Clifton Grima signs the oath of allegiance as Member of Parliament, 11 October



Hon. Edwin Vassallo signs the oath of allegiance as Member of Parliament, 28 November



Hon. Peter Micallef signs the oath of allegiance as Member of Parliament, 28 November



Visit from a delegation from the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association, 17 October



Meeting organised by the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law on the role of parliamentarians to counter terrorism within a Rule of Law Framework, 8 November



Speaker of the House of Representatives welcomes musicians participating in the Music Educational Programme 22 February



The Speaker chairs a debate amongst students from Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary School in the Parliamentary Chamber, 4 May



12th Edition of the EkoSkola Parliament, 2 June



2016 Edition of the Youth Parliament, 13 September



Session for grandparents, 7 October



Speaker welcomes 120 new Police cadets, 13 October



Hon. Justyne Caruana awarded the prestigious title 'Women in Parliaments Global Forum Ambassador for Malta' 5 December



National Conference on Ethics in Journalism, 19 December



Public debate with the Director of the Fundamental Rights Agency, Professor Michael O'Flaherty, 30 June



First Vice President of the European Commission Frans Timmermans visits the Parliament of Malta 7 October



Meeting between the Members of Parliament and the Conference of Presidents of the European Parliament, led by the President of the European Parliament Mr Martin Schulz, 8 December





Speaker Farrugia meets with the President of the Swiss Confederation, Mr Johann Schneider-Ammann 9 September



Speaker Anġlu Farrugia meets Mr Pedro Agramunt, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 16 September



Speaker Anġlu Farrugia meets with the President of the Republic of Bulgaria Mr Rosen Asenov Plevneliev 17 November



Speaker Anglu Farrugia meets with the President of the Republic of Kosovo, Mr Hashim Thaçi 5 December



Speaker Anglu Farrugia, Hon. Carmelo Abela, Hon. David Agius and Hon. Clifton Grima attend the 62nd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference and 35th Small Branches Conference, London, 11-17 December



Exhibition of drawings themed 'Unity in Diversity' produced by the children attending Skolasajf 2016 at the centres in Qormi and St Paul's Bay, 5 September



Exhibition in aid of Dar tal-Providenza, 14 December



Exhibition 'Science in the House 2016', 29 September



MISSIO 2016 Exhibition, 19 October



Launching the Parliamentary TV Studio, 17 August



Launching of the book 'Contemporary Architecture in Malta' by Professor Conrad Thake, 4 October



Speaker Anġlu Farrugia presented with the book 'A Commentary on the Constitution of Malta' by Dr Tonio Borg, 24 October

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

12th Legislatureas on 31 December 2016

Speaker of the House of Representatives: Hon. Anglu Farrugia

GOVERNMENT OPPOSITION
Partit Laburista Partit Nazzjonalista

Honourable Honourable

Abela Carmelo
Agius Chris
Agius Decelis Anthony
Agrico Robert
Agropardi Frede

Bartolo Evarist Azzopardi Frederick
Bonnici Owen Azzopardi Jason
Borg Ian Bezzina Toni
Buhagiar Charles Bonnici Charlò
Buontempo Stefan Borg Antoine
Busuttil Luciano Busuttil Simon

Cardona Chris

Caruana Justyne

Callus Ryan

Dalli Helena

Cutajar Robert

Debattista Deo

de Marco Mario

Debono Grech Joe

Falzon Michael

Fenech Albert

Farrugia Godfrey

Buttigieg Claudette

Callus Ryan

Cutajar Robert

de Marco Mario

Debono Kristy

Fenech Albert

Fenech Tonio

Farrugia Joseph Fenech Adami Beppe

Farrugia Michael Galea Ċensu
Fearne Chris Galea Mario
Galdes Roderick Gonzi Michael
Grech Etienne Grech Claudio
Grech Louis Micallef Peter

Grima Clifton Mifsud Bonnici Carmelo Herrera José Mifsud Bonnici Paula Mallia Emanuel Portelli Marthese

Mangion CharlesPuli ClydeMercieca FrancoPullicino GeorgeMizzi JoeSaid ChrisMizzi KonradSpiteri Stephen

Muscat Joseph Vassallo Edwin
Parnis Silvio Zammit Dimech Francis

Refalo Anton

Sammut Joseph M. Independent Members

Schembri Deborah
Schembri Silvio
Honourable
Scicluna Edward
Debono Giovanna

Vella George Farrugia Marlene

Zammit Lewis Edward

ACTIVITIES OF THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

4 January	Farewell call by H.E. Vaqif Sadigof, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Malta
5 January	Speaker addresses former Members of Parliament and journalists at a gathering on the occasion of exchanging good wishes for the new year
7 January	Speaker receives the Torch-Bearer Award from the international organisation of Sri Chinmoy
15 January	Courtesy call by H.E. Luis Fernando Ayala Gonzalez, Ambassador of the Republic of Chile to Malta
18 January	Farewell call by H.E. Gina Abercrombie Winstanley, Ambassador of the United States of America to Malta
19 January	Speaker receives the Peace Flame from the Baden Powell Scouts
20 January	Presentation by the Auditor General Anthony Mifsud and the Deputy Auditor General Charles Deguara of the report titled <i>An Investigation of Government's Expropriation of Two-One Fourth Undivided Shares of the Property at 36 Old Mint Street, Valletta</i>
25 January	Presentation of a study made among the Maltese citizens by the Committee on the Awareness of the Maltese Constitution
28 January	Courtesy call by H.E. Gudrun Sraga, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Malta
29 January	Courtesy call by H.E. Alba Beatriz Soto Pimente, Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba to Malta
29 January	Presentation of the resolutions emanating from the 1st Edition of the International MaltMUN Conference, by the Malta Model United Nations Society
1 February	Farewell call by H.E. Rachid Marif, Ambassador of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to Malta
2 February	Courtesy call by H.E. Chryssoula Karkykopoulou-Vlavianou, Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to Malta
2 February	Speaker signs Memorandum of Understanding on the hosting of the CAPAC Coordinating Unit by the Maltese House of Representatives
3 February	Courtesy call by the wives of the Members of the Executive and Government Members of Parliament
5 February	Courtesy call by Mr Reuben Fenech, Director General, National Statistics Office
8 February	Courtesy call by Dr Elena Grech, Head of the European Commission Representation in Malta

11 February	Speaker inaugurates a new eco-friendly initiative with the acquisition of two electric bikes for the use of the staff at of the Parliament
12 February	Speaker visits the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) on the invitation of the President of the Board of Governors Dr Silvio De Bono
15 February	Presentation by the Auditor General Anthony Mifsud and the Deputy Auditor General Charles Deguara of the report titled <i>Performance Audit: Agreements between Government and Conservatorio Vincenzo Bugeja on Jeanne Antide and Fejda Homes</i>
15 February	Presentation by the Auditor General Anthony Mifsud and the Deputy Auditor General Charles Deguara of the report titled <i>Performance Audit: Service Agreements between Government and Inspire Foundation</i>
19 February	Speaker receives the PAM 2015 Excellence in the Mediterranean Award
22 February	Speaker welcomes the musicians participating in the launch of the Music Educational Programme organised by the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra
24 February	Speaker attends the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra's Music Educational Programme in the Parliamentary Chamber
26 February	Courtesy call by H.E. Marco Vinicio Vargas Pereira, Ambassador of the Republic of Costa Rica to Malta
26 February	Courtesy call by H.E. Patrick Vercauteren Drubbel, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium to Malta
3 March	Courtesy call by Ms Juana Lahousse, Director General of Communication in the European Parliament
9 March	Speaker addresses the Ninth Conference of the Association of the Mediterranean Ombudsmen
10 March	Speaker and Mrs Michelle Muscat launch the World Autism Day activities outside
	Parliament
10 March	
10 March	Parliament
	Parliament Courtesy call by Mr Paolo Gentiloni Silveri, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs
11 March	Parliament Courtesy call by Mr Paolo Gentiloni Silveri, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs Courtesy call by H.E. Bogdan Benko, Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to Malta Courtesy call by H.E. Calixte Batossie Madjoulba, Ambassador of the Republic of
11 March	Parliament Courtesy call by Mr Paolo Gentiloni Silveri, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs Courtesy call by H.E. Bogdan Benko, Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to Malta Courtesy call by H.E. Calixte Batossie Madjoulba, Ambassador of the Republic of Togo to Malta Courtesy call by H.E. Cao Chinh Thien, Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of
11 March 11 March 11 March	Parliament Courtesy call by Mr Paolo Gentiloni Silveri, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs Courtesy call by H.E. Bogdan Benko, Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to Malta Courtesy call by H.E. Calixte Batossie Madjoulba, Ambassador of the Republic of Togo to Malta Courtesy call by H.E. Cao Chinh Thien, Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to Malta Courtesy call by the Director of the Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Monsignor Giuseppe

14 March	Presentation by the Auditor General Anthony Mifsud and the Deputy Auditor General Charles Deguara of the report titled <i>Work and Activities of the National Audit Office</i>
17 March	Courtesy call on the Deputy Speaker by HE Yevhen Perelygin, Ambassador of the Republic of Ukraine to Malta
17 March	Courtesy call by a delegation from the Parliament of Canada
21 March	Speaker presents certificates to parliamentary officials who followed a basic fire fighting course
23 March	Speaker pays his respects to Archbishop Emeritus Ġużeppi Mercieca, lying in State at St John's Co-Cathedral
1 April	Speaker addresses the event during which the Parliament building is lit up in blue to mark World Autism Day
5 April	Speaker addresses the finalists in the 26th edition of the Malta Journalism Awards 2016 at the Parliament of Malta
8 April	Courtesy call by H.E. Juan José Guerra Abud, Ambassador of the United Mexican States to Malta
8 April	Courtesy call by the Rt Hon. Nick Herbert, British Member of Parliament leading a new Conservative group lobbying in favour of Britain staying in the EU
10 April	Courtesy call by Mr Yu Zhengshen, Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee of the People's Republic of China
15 April	Deputy Speaker chairs the final session of the 2016 edition of the NSTF Mini European Assembly in the Parliamentary Chamber
22 April	Presentation of the book <i>Thinking to Create Value – Bonting</i> by Prof. Edward de Bono
25 April	Speaker participates in ANZAC Day Commemorative Ceremony, held at the Pietà Military Cemetery
26 April	Presentation by the Auditor General Charles Deguara and the Deputy Auditor General Noel Camilleri of the report titled <i>Performance Audit: An Analysis on OHSA's Operations – the Construction Industry</i>
27 April	Speaker receives a delegation from MCAST
4 May	Speaker chairs a debate between students from the Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary School, in the Parliamentary Chamber
9 May	Courtesy call by members of the National Festivities Committee led by the Chairperson Joyce Guillaumier
9 May	Speaker addresses participants at the Welcome Project Conference: <i>Migration and Human Rights at EU Borders</i> , held at the Parliament of Malta
12 May	Farewell call by H.E. Dana Emanuela Constantinescu, Ambassador of the Republic of Romania to Malta

13 May	Courtesy call by Senator Vannino Chiti, Chairman of the European Policies Committee of the Italian Senate
16 May	Farewell call by H.E. Cai Jinbiao, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Malta
20 May	Courtesy call by H.E. Ricardo Neiva Tavares, Ambassador of the Federative Republic of Brazil
20 May	Courtesy call by H.E. Abraham Traore, Ambassador of Burkina Faso to Malta
20 May	Courtesy call by H.E. Željana Zovko, Ambassdor of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Malta
20 May	Courtesy call by H.E. Salem Issa Ali Alkattam Al Zaabi, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to Malta
20 May	Courtesy call by H.E. Awwad Khalid Eid Alserhan, Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to Malta
27 May	Courtesy call by Mr Khemaies Jhinaoui, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tunisia
31 May	Courtesy call by a delegation from the Algeria-Malta Parliamentary Friendship Group
31 May	Presentation by the Auditor General Charles Deguara and the Deputy Auditor General Noel Camilleri of the report titled <i>Information Technology Audit – Mater Dei Hospital</i>
1 June	Speaker presents a copy of the fourth volume of the publication Is-Sedja Titkellem to the Prime Minister
2 June	Speaker chairs the 12th Edition of the EkoSkola Parliament in the Parliamentary Chamber
6 June	Presentation of the book <i>Giuseppe Donati and Umberto Calosso – Two Italian anti-fascist refugees in Malta</i> by the author Giorgio Peresso
8 June	Presentation of the book <i>Nation, Pride and Identity: Borg Olivier and the National Anthem</i> by the author Prof. Joe Pirotta
17 June	Courtesy call by H.E. Antun Sbutega, Ambassador of Montenegro to Malta
17 June	Courtesy call by H.E. Michael Schwarzinger, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Austria to Malta
17 June	Courtesy call by H.E. Getrude Kasuba Mwape, High Commissioner of the Republic of Zambia to Malta
17 June	Courtesy call by H.E. Maria Manuela Lucas, High Commissioner of the Republic of Mozambique to Malta
22 June	Farewell call by H.E. Lars-Hjalmar Wide, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden to Malta
23 June	Courtesy call by Mr Vytenis Andriukaitis, European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety

27 June	Presentation by the Auditor General Charles Deguara and the Deputy Auditor General Noel Camilleri of the report titled <i>Performance Audit: The General Practitioner Function – the core of primary health care</i>
30 June	Courtesy call upon the Deputy Speaker by the Director of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, Prof. Michael O'Flaherty, followed by a public event chaired by the Deputy Speaker in the Parliamentary Chamber
4 July	Presentation by the Auditor General Charles Deguara and the Deputy Auditor General Noel Camilleri of the report titled <i>An Investigation of the 2016 Local Councils' Capital Projects Fund</i>
6 July	Presentation by the Auditor General Charles Deguara and the Deputy Auditor General Noel Camilleri of the report titled <i>An Investigation of Local Councils Funding Schemes launched between 2008 and 2013</i>
6 July	Farewell call by H.E. Oren David, Ambassador of the State of Israel to Malta
7 July	Courtesy call by Prof. Micrea Criste, Deputy Ombudsman of Romania
11 July	Presentation by the Ombudsman Anthony Mifsud of the Annual Report of the Office of the Ombudsman for 2016
28 July	Meeting with an Italian delegation from the Confederazione Nazionale dell'Artigianato e della Piccola e Media Impresa, Province of Ragusa, led by the President of the Confederation Giuseppe Santocono
29 July	Meeting with H.E. Reha Keskintepe, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to Malta
4 August	Farewell call by H.E. Robert Haydon Vernon Luke, High Commissioner of the United Kingdom to Malta
5 August	Farewell call by H.E. Birger Riis-Jørgensen, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark to Malta
17 August	Speaker launches the parliamentary television studio
29 August	Courtesy call by Mr Joseph Bossano, Minister for Enterprise, Training, Employment and Health and Safety of Gibraltar
2 September	Courtesy call by H.E. Jiang Jiang, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Malta
2 September	Courtesy call by H.E. Ahmad Bamarni, Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq to Malta
2 September	Courtesy call by H.E. Gaston Lasarte, Ambassador of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay to Malta
2 September	Speaker participates in the first TV information programme produced by the Office of the Speaker
6 September	Courtesy call by Mr Charles Albisetti, Honorary Consul of Malta to the Principality of Monaco

9 September	Speaker pays a courtesy call on Mr Johann Schneider-Ammann, President of the Swiss Confederation, at the Palace of the President of Malta in Attard
12 September	Deputy Speaker presides over the Awards Ceremony of the Annual Conference of the Malta Model United Nations Society, held in the Parliament of Malta
12 September	Courtesy call by H.E. Stuart Gill, High Commissioner of the United Kingdom to Malta
13 September	Deputy Speaker presides over the 2016 edition of the National Youth Parliament, held in the Parliamentary Chamber
18 September	Speaker pays a courtesy call on the Mayor and Councillors of Birgu Local Council, and visits various places in Vittoriosa
23 September	Courtesy call by a delegation from the Nanniet Malta Foundation
4 October	Speaker participates in the official launch of the book <i>Contemporary Architecture in Malta</i> written by Prof. Conrad Thake
7 October	Deputy Speaker presides over a session of <i>Parlament tan-Nanniet</i> , held in the Parliamentary Chamber
10 October	Courtesy call by H.E. Ali Saad A. Al-Kharji, Ambassador of the State of Qatar to Malta
10 October	Presentation by the Auditor General Charles Deguara and the Deputy Auditor General Noel Camilleri of the report titled <i>Performance Audit: Agreements between Government and Richmond Foundation Malta</i>
13 October	Speaker receives 120 new Police cadets at the House of Representatives
15 October	Speaker presides over the giving of awards to participants in the Malta Lace Competition
15 October	Speaker inaugurates the event marking 100 years of the Scouts in Mosta
17 October	Courtesy call by a delegation from the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association, led by Hon. David Tilson
17 October	Presentation by the Auditor General Charles Deguara and the Deputy Auditor General Noel Camilleri of the report titled <i>Performance Audit: Agreements between Government and YMCA Valletta</i>
18 October	Speaker receives a group of students from the Faculty of Arts, Department of International Relations, University of Malta
20 October	Courtesy call by H.E. Mammad Bahaddin Ahmadzada, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Malta
20 October	Courtesy call by H.E. Aleksandr Guryanov, Ambassador of the Republic of Belarus to Malta
20 October	Courtesy call by H.E. Cecilia Björner, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden to Malta
20 October	Courtesy call by H.E. Eyal Sela, Ambassador of the State of Israel to Malta

24 October	Presentation of the book <i>A Commentary on the Constitution of Malta</i> by its author Dr Tonio Borg
25 October	Speaker addresses the symposium on the notarial profession on the occasion of the <i>European Day for Justice Synergies of Certainty: The Notarial Profession Beyond</i> 2020, held in the Parliament of Malta
7 November	Courtesy call by a delegation from the Saudi Arabia-Malta Parliamentary Friendship Group, led by Speaker of the Malis Alshura Mr Abdullah Mohammed Alsheikh
8 November	Courtesy call by a delegation from the France-Malta Parliamentary Friendship Group
8 November	Speaker hosts the final meeting organised by the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IIJ) on the Role of Parliamentarians to counter terrorism within a Rule of Law Framework
10 November	Speaker receives a group of translators from the Directorate for Translation of the European Parliament
14 November	Presentation by the Auditor General Charles Deguara and the Deputy Auditor General Noel Camilleri of the report titled <i>Performance Audit: Managing and Monitoring the State Schools' Transport Service</i>
17 November	Courtesy call by the Management Committee of the German Branch of the European Association of Journalists
17 November	Speaker pays a courtesy call on the President of the Republic of Bulgaria Mr Rosen Asenov Plevneliev, at the Palace of the President of Malta in Attard
22 November	Courtesy call by H.E. Abdelhamid Senouci Bereksi, Ambassador of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to Malta
22 November	Courtesy call by H.E. Erik Vilstrup Lorenzen, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark to Malta
22 November	Courtesy call by H.E. Tomas Ferrari, Ambassador of the Argentine Republic to Malta
22 November	Courtesy call by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia Mr Edgars Rinkēvičs
23 November	Meeting with a monitoring delegation from the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
24 November	Courtesy call by H.E. Maria Elvira Velasquez Rivas-Plata, Ambassador of the Republic of Peru to Malta
24 November	Speaker inaugurates a new eco-friendly initiative for the House of Representatives relating to the separation of waste, in particular, electronic waste
25 November	Farewell call by H.E. Umberto Di Capua, Ambassador of the Sovereign Military Order of St John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta
29 November	Farewell call by H.E. Jane Elspeth Lambert, High Commissioner of the Commonwealth of Australia to Malta

29 November	Presentation by the Auditor General Charles Deguara and the Deputy Auditor General Noel Camilleri of the 2015 Public Accounts Annual Report
30 November	Presentation of the book <i>A Man of Cultural Achievements – Essays in honour of Joseph Attard Tabone</i> by Mr Joseph Attard Tabone
5 December	Speaker pays a courtesy call on the President of the Republic of Kosovo Mr Hashim Thaçi, at the Palace of the President of Malta in Attard
5 December	Speaker presents a certificate to Hon. Justyne Caruana upon her confirmation as Women in Parliaments Global Forum Ambassador for Malta
5 December	Presentation by the Auditor General Charles Deguara and the Deputy Auditor General Noel Camilleri of the report titled <i>Report by the Auditor General on the Workings of Local Government 2015</i>
8 December	Courtesy call on the Deputy Speaker by the President of the European Parliament Mr Martin Schulz
13 December	Courtesy call by Mr Leo Brincat, Member of the European Court of Auditors
14 December	Courtesy call by the Chairman of the Presidential Council of Libya and the Prime Minister of the Government of National Accord of Libya Mr Fayez Al-Sarraj, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Libya Mr Mohamed A.H. Syala
19 December	Speaker addresses the National Conference on Ethics in Journalism in Parliament
19 December	Presentation by the Auditor General Charles Deguara and the Deputy Auditor General Noel Camilleri of the report titled <i>An Investigation of Property Transfers between 2006 and 2013: The Acquisition of 233, 236 and 237, Republic Street, Valletta</i>
19 December	Presentation by the Auditor General Charles Deguara and the Deputy Auditor General Noel Camilleri of the report titled <i>An Investigation of Property Transfers between 2006 and 2013: The Transfer of Land at Ta' L-Istabal, Qormi</i>
21 December	Farewell call by H.E. August Parengkuan, Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Malta.