



Press Release

PR 190944

03.05.2019

PRESS RELEASE BY THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

EUFOREA – Malta Symposium 2019

Speaker of the House of Representatives Anglu Farrugia presided over the Malta Symposium 2019 of the European Forum for Research and Education in Allergy and Airway Diseases through the implementation of digital and educational solutions in a changing world.

In his opening address, the Speaker dealt on the state of the environment, the adverse effects of air pollution upon human beings, and the obligations of governments towards their citizens and humanity. Governments are obliged to:

- a. Ensure the implementation of national plans aimed at improving the state of the environment,
- b. Ensure to everyone the right to life, and the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and the well-being of human individuals, including food, clothing, housing and medical and necessary social services, and
- c. Ensure special care to mothers and their children.

Whereas most European countries safeguard these rights to their citizens, they need to constantly improve the economic and social conditions of their people. In respect of air quality levels, EU member states are obliged to acknowledge the right of European citizens to require national authorities to implement a short-term plan that aims to maintain or achieve compliance to the air quality levels prescribed in EU Legislation.

Speaker Anglu Farrugia quoted indices about the harmful effects of air pollution on human life. In its 2014 Report, the World Health Organisation (WHO) estimated that air pollution caused the deaths of around 7 million people worldwide. The study ‘Air pollution exposure in cities’ by the European Environment Agency reported that “Up to 30% of Europeans living in cities are exposed to air pollutant levels exceeding EU air quality standards....and around 98% of Europeans living in cities are exposed to levels of air pollutants deemed damaging to health by the WHO’s more stringent guidelines.” Air pollution emissions expose people to increased health problems, such as respiratory disease, including cardiovascular disease, childhood asthma, cancer and other health problems.

Participants at the EUFOREA – Malta Symposium discussed progress in the treatment of patients suffering from the harmful effects of air pollution, measures aimed at improving the quality of life, and collaboration amongst scientific research institutions. The Malta Symposium was also addressed by Prime Minister Joseph Muscat, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Health Chis Fearné,

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Leader of the Opposition Adrian Delia, and Opposition Spokesperson for Active Ageing, Persons with Disability and the Fight against Dependencies and other forms of Addiction Maria Deguara.