



PR230948

20.06.2023

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PRESS RELEASE BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The Deputy Speaker of the Maltese Parliament participates in the 16th Conference of Presidents of Parliament of Small European States

Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives David Agius is participating in the 16th Conference of Presidents of Parliaments of Small European States which is taking place in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, and is bringing together Speakers and Presidents of Parliaments hailing from Andorra, Cyprus, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Montenegro and San Marino.

President of the Chamber of Deputies of Luxembourg Fernand Etgen emphasised the importance of democracy and the important role Parliaments play in securing the achievements that have been made so far.

During the discussion on the first theme of the conference: “Sustainability in tourism - a challenge and an opportunity for Small European States”, Deputy Speaker David Agius referred to the tourism sector as being crucial for the economies of the small countries represented at the conference. He also said that the sharing of expertise and ideas among countries facing the same challenges and opportunities is extremely important and can promote best practice to make the tourism sector greener and more sustainable.

After the first session the Speakers were granted an audience with the Grand Duke of Luxembourg, after which the Duke visited the stands of the Small States tourist offices set up in front of the Chamber of Deputies.

Addressing the conference during its consideration of the second theme: “The challenge of cyber security in the Parliaments of Small European States”, the Deputy Speaker stated that Parliaments are the cradle of democracy, which makes them a prime potential target for those whose agenda is to undermine the democratic system of government. With regard to local efforts in the fight against cybercrime, Deputy Speaker Agius referred to the setting up of the National Cyber Security Strategy Steering Committee, the Cyber Crime Unit within the Maltese Police Force and the Malta Information and Technology Agency (MITA), whose expertise in fighting cybercrime is available to the Maltese Parliament should this be required.

During the second session the Speaker of Cyprus, Ms Annita Demetriou, proposed the setting up of an informal forum to discuss cyber security amongst the small states. The proposal of Deputy Speaker Agius that every delegation nominate a Member to participate in this forum, with the conclusions of this specially appointed group being discussed during the next conference which will be held in Malta in 2024, was agreed to by all the participants.

Ambassador of Malta to Luxembourg and Belgium Clint Tanti is accompanying the Deputy Speaker at this conference.