

House of Representatives

**Annual Review
2007**



**THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE PALACE
VALLETTA – MALTA**

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Printed at the Government Press

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Foreword

Anton Tabone
Speaker of the House of Representatives



It is with pleasure and satisfaction to present this Annual Review for the second year running. This Annual Review outlines the legislative work and other activities undertaken during the last calendar year and is published in different format than the usual report incorporated with the Annual Report of Government Departments.

The tenth legislature is nearing its end. It was as challenging as it was rewarding. European Union membership in 2004 placed a heavier workload on the limited resources, financial and human, available at the House of Representatives. However, with the determination of Members from both sides of the House and in cooperation with the administrative staff at the House of Representatives, we have painfully overcome what, at times, seemed unsurmountable hurdles.

I cannot but reiterate that the House of Representatives has to function and deliver within specified timeframes as any other national parliament, no matter its size. The duties and responsibilities of our parliamentary institution have increased considerably and Members have to be better prepared and equipped to participate actively and effectively both at the local and international level.

During the outgoing legislature, I had raised, on various occasions, the urgent need to tackle reform and provide the tools necessary that will enable the House to better face the challenges ahead with more effective, efficient and professional structures. Above all, I had underlined the importance of the autonomous role that the House of Representatives should enjoy.

As a matter of fact, I had, some time back, requested the Management Efficiency Unit at the Office of the Prime Minister to draw up a report to achieve that end and to restructure parliamentary services. I had handed this report to the Government and Opposition side for their eventual consideration and evaluation. Again, I have been also toiling to conclude on the revision of the Standing Orders of the House. Once more, my appreciation and thanks go to President Emeritus, Dr Ugo Mifsud Bonnici whom I had requested to draw up a report with relevant amendments to the Standing Orders. All this, if agreed to, will provide a strong framework to build upon in the years ahead.

In this year's Annual Review, a special mention should go to the establishment of the Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean and to the second Assembly meeting in Malta in 2007. Both sides of the House should feel proud that the Maltese initiative to set up this Parliamentary Assembly has now been carried out to the full.

I wish to thank all Members of Parliament for their commitment and drive in their parliamentary work. I also express my gratitude and appreciation to the Staff at the House of Representatives and those who cooperated with me during my two terms as Speaker of the House.

Anton Tabone

(A) HOUSE BUSINESS

(1) Overview

During 2007, the House met 125 times, sitting an average of three sessions a week. Sittings were more frequent during discussions on the 2008 budget allocations to the various ministries. This year, as in the previous year, the budget was presented in Parliament in October.

Adjournment was availed of on 104 occasions, divided equally and alternating between Government and Opposition members. On 26th November the adjournment time was dedicated to the International Day Against Violence Against Women with the time being shared equally between the Hon Dolores Cristina (Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity) and Hon Helena Dalli.

Quorum was called 15 times. The House was adjourned for the next sitting day with the same agenda on three occasions. On the other occasions, the sitting was resumed after the interval of five minutes as provided for in the Standing Orders.

During the year under review, the Speaker of the House delivered five rulings, two of which related to alleged cases of breach of privilege.

In January, the House debated and approved the ratification of the agreement between Malta and the International Atomic Energy Agency with reference to the Convention on Nuclear Safety.

In March, the House debated and approved the transfer of Government property in Ricasoli, limits of Kalkara, to SmartCity (Malta) Limited.

In July and September, the Constitution of Malta was amended twice. Both amendments required a two thirds majority of the House to pass through the Third Reading.

In October, the House approved the transfer of property to the M.U.S.E.U.M. society in Pembroke; the transfer of properties in Santa Venera, Cospicua and Rabat to the Scouts Association of Malta; and the transfer of property in Floriana to the Floriana Football Club. This motion was originally discussed in the National Audit Office Accounts Committee but since it was not unanimously approved, it had to be presented to the House for debate and consequent approval.

In November, the House approved an amendment to the Schedule to the Disposal of Government Land Act (Cap. 268).

(2) Visit of EU Commission President, HE Mr José Manuel Durão Barroso

The visit of HE Mr José Manuel Durão Barroso, President of the EU Commission, to the House of Representatives on 15th June 2007, represented one of the year's highlights.

Prior to his address to the House, Mr Barroso called on the Speaker. Both personalities exchanged views on how inter-parliamentary cooperation amongst EU national parliaments and also with EU parliamentary institutions could be enhanced so that the parliamentary dimension could be further consolidated.

Maltese parliamentarians had the opportunity to meet Mr Barroso following his address to the House.

(3) *Legislative Programme*

During 2007, Parliament enacted 32 acts, nine of which were principal acts and 23 amendment acts.

(i) **Primary legislation and objectives behind the respective Bills**

- **Act IV of 2007 – The Budget Measures Implementation Act**

The objects of this bill were to implement various budget measures and other administrative measures.

- **Act V of 2007 – The Administrative Justice Act**

The objects of this bill were to introduce uniform procedures for administrative tribunals and to introduce the concept of the Administrative Review Tribunal, with the relative functions thereof.

- **Act XVI of 2007 – The Port Workers Ordinance**

The objects and reasons of this Bill were to establish a Port Workers Appeals Board and a Port Workers Board and to further regulate the registration and deployment of port workers.

- **Act XVII of 2007 – The Foster Care Act**

The objects of this Bill were to make special provision for foster care, to establish the Fostering Board and the Central Authority, to provide for the rights and responsibilities of foster carers and to protect the best interests of children in foster care.

- **Act XXII of 2007 – The Voluntary Organisations Act**

The purpose of this Bill was to regulate voluntary organisations, to establish the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations and to provide for privileges to be enjoyed by such enrolled organisations.

- **Act XXIV of 2007 – The Malta-USA Ship-Boarding Agreements (Ratification) Act**

The main object of this Bill was to ratify two agreements with the United States of America making provision for the boarding of ships in the circumstances laid down in the agreements.

- **Act XXV of 2007 - The Appropriation (2008) Act**

This Bill provided for the application of a sum not exceeding € 1,596,053,093 for the service of the financial year 2008 to meet expenditure under the different Votes in the Schedule to this Bill



- **Act XXVI of 2007 - The Second (2007) Appropriation Act**

This Bill provided for the application of a sum not exceeding Lm40,828,984 for the service of the financial year 2007 to meet expenditure under the Votes specified in the First Schedule to the Bill in addition to Lm693,045,027 appropriated by Act No. XVII of 2006 and for the appropriation of a further sum of Lm16 for the service of the financial year 2007 to repay an equivalent amount withdrawn from the Contingencies Fund during the financial year 2007 under the Votes specified in the Second Schedule to the Bill.

- **Act XXXII of 2007 - The Budget Measures Implementation Act**

The objects of this Bill were to implement various Budget measures and other administrative measures.

(ii) **Amendment Acts and objectives behind the respective Bills**

- **Act I of 2007 – The Central Bank of Malta (Amendment) Act**

The main object of this Bill was to amend the Central Bank of Malta Act (Cap. 204) and the External Transactions Act (Cap. 233) and to make consequential amendments.

- **Act II of 2007 – The Various Laws (Amendment) Act**

The object of the Bill was to make various amendments to the Income Tax Acts.

- **Act III of 2007 – The Code of Police (Amendment) Act**

The object of this Bill was to provide for penalties for any person who sells to, or purchases alcohol on behalf of, a minor or serves or supplies alcohol to a minor in any shop, street or public place. Likewise, a minor may not consume, procure or possess alcohol in any such places. The bill further provided for the introduction of a supervised working programme for an offender who is a minor consisting, among other provisions, in uncompensated community service work.

- **Act VI of 2007 – The Criminal Code (Amendment) Act**

The object of this Bill was mainly to effect amendments in the Criminal Code relating to the action which may be taken by the Attorney General when a person is discharged by the Court of Magistrates as a court of criminal inquiry, consequential to a recent judgment of the Constitutional Court.

- **Act VII of 2007 – The Code of Organisation and Civil Procedure (Amendment) Act**

The objects of this Bill were to introduce amendments to the Code of Organisation and Civil Procedure, as well as consequential amendments to other laws, in order to achieve a better and more expeditious administration of justice.

- **Act VIII of 2007 – The Civil Code (Amendment) Act**

The objects of this Bill were to introduce various amendments in the Civil Code.

- **Act IX of 2007 – The Income Tax (Amendment) Act**

The objects of this Bill were to apply the benefits and the exemptions referred to in subarticles (2) and (3) of article 9B of the Income Tax Act also to qualifying assets registered under the Currency and Bank Deposits Registration Scheme Regulations, 2007.

- **Act X of 2007 – The Maltese Citizenship (Amendment) Act**

The object of this Bill was to grant Maltese citizenship by registration to second and subsequent generations of persons of Maltese descent born abroad; the Bill also grants Maltese citizenship by registration to persons born abroad before 21st September 1964, to mothers born in Malta who became citizens of Malta on the said date.

- **Act XI of 2007 – The Medicines (Amendment) Act**

The object of this Bill was to amend the Medicines Act, 2003, which regulates medicinal products for human use and related pharmaceutical activities. This amendment was required in order to transpose the new EU requirements into national legislation, thus bringing it in line with EU legislation currently in force. Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6th November 2001 on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, has been amended by Directives 2004/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31st March 2004.

- **Act XII of 2007 – Malta Resources Authority (Amendment) Act**

The object of this Bill was to amend the Malta Resources Authority Act.

- **Act XIII of 2007 – The Civil Code (Amendment) (No 2) Act**

The purposes of this Bill were to regulate legal persons, their registration, their administration as well as outline the relevant legal norms and to regulate foundations and associations in detail.

- **Act XIV of 2007 – The Constitution of Malta (Amendment) Act**

The objects of this Bill were to constitutionally establish the office of Ombudsman and to increase the compulsory retirement age of the Attorney General and Magistrates to sixty-five years.



- **Act XV of 2007 – The Companies (Amendment) Act**

The object of this Bill was to make certain amendments to the Companies Act (Cap. 386) and a consequential amendment to the Duty on Documents and Transfers Act (Cap. 364).

- **Act XVIII of 2007 – The Housing (Decontrol) (Amendment) Act**

The objects of this Bill were to regulate the situation of a dwelling-house which is subject to an emphyteutical or sub-emphyteutical concession at the termination of a temporary emphyteusis or sub-emphyteusis.

- **Act XIX of 2007 – The Value Added Tax (Amendment) Act**

The objects of the Bill were to impose a duty for goods in transit to be supported by the necessary documents.

- **Act XX of 2007 – The Various Financial Services (Amendment) Act**

The main object of this Bill was to transpose the provisions of Directive 2004/39/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21st April 2004 on markets in financial instruments, the provisions of Directive 2006/48/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14th June 2006 relating to the taking up and pursuit of the business of credit institutions (recast), and the provisions of Directive 2006/49/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14th June 2006 on capital adequacy of investment firms and credit institutions (recast), as well as to affect some minor amendments to the Malta Financial Services Authority Act (Cap. 330), the Insurance Business Act (Cap. 403) and the Insurance Intermediaries Act (Cap. 487), and to further regulate regulated markets, central securities depositories and the status of the Malta Stock Exchange.

- **Act XXI of 2007 – The Constitution (Amendment) Act**

The object of this Bill was to provide that the island of Gozo and the islands of the Maltese Archipelago other than Malta shall not be divided between two or more electoral districts.

- **Act XXIII of 2007 – The Malta Enterprise Corporation (Amendment) Act**

The objects of this Bill were to update the provisions of the Malta Enterprise Corporation Act, to encourage the establishment of new business undertakings and the expansion of existing business undertakings in Malta.

- **Act XXVII of 2007 – The Various Laws (Energy Resources) (Amendment) Act**

The objects of this Bill were to make various amendments to the Enemalta Act (Cap. 272), and the Water Services Corporation Act (Cap. 355).

- **Act XXVIII of 2007 – The Housing Authority (Amendment) Act**

The object of this bill was to amalgamate all government entities related to social housing into one entity and to transfer certain related powers from the Commissioner of Land to the Housing Authority.

- **Act XXIX of 2007 – The Malta Standards Authority and Various Laws (Amendment) Act**

The object of this bill was to amend the various laws so as to review the activities of authorities and entities involved in the field of free movement of goods in Malta and to rationalise such activities under the umbrella of the Malta Standards Authority.

- **Act XXX of 2007 – Communication Laws (Amendment) Act**

The object of this Bill was to amend various laws relating to communications sectors enforced by the Malta Communications Authority including the Postal Services Act, Electronic Communications (Regulation) Act, and the Malta Communications Authority Act.

- **Act XXXI of 2007 – Criminal Matters (Amendment) Act**

The object of the Bill was to amend the Criminal Code, the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance and the Medical and Kindred Professions Ordinance. The Bill would incorporate the legislative enactments which would enable Malta to ratify and implement the Convention of the 29th May 2000 on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between the Member States of the European Union, and the Protocol to it; the Council Framework Decision 2004/64/JHA of 22nd December 2003 on Combating the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Child Pornography; the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography; the Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism (CETS No. 198), and the Convention on the Protection of the European Communities' Financial Instruments and the Protocols to it and the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CETS No. 197).

(4) *PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS*

During the year under review, 6,670 parliamentary questions were tabled out of which 70 requested a written answer.





Members of Parliament led by Hon Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives, in their 2007 greetings for the New Year to H.E. Dr Edward Fenech Adami, President of Malta



H.E. Dr Edward Fenech Adami, President of Malta, signing the Financial Estimates 2008



The President of the European Commission, Mr Josè Manuel Durão Barroso, addressing the House of Representatives

(5) **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

The following six ministerial statements were delivered:

- 31.01.07 - The Prime Minister and Minister of Finance delivered a statement on the resignation of the Director General of the National Statistics Office.
- 13.02.07 - The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice and Home Affairs made a statement on the proposed amendments to the Maltese Citizenship Act dealing mostly with persons born abroad to Maltese parents also born abroad. To date, Maltese citizenship had been limited to Maltese born abroad when at least one of their parents was born in Malta.
- 21.05.07 - The Prime Minister and Minister of Finance delivered a statement on the publication of two convergence reports on Malta, one by the European Commission and the other by the European Central Bank.
- 12.06.07 - The Minister of Education, Youth and Employment delivered a statement on the proposed Public Administration Bill and also on contracts issued for works in connection with the Foundation for Tomorrow's Schools.
- 25.06.07 - The Prime Minister and Minister of Finance made a statement on the conclusions of the European Council held a few days earlier in Brussels.
- 02.07.07 - The Minister for Competitiveness and Communications delivered a statement on the agreement reached with licensed port workers.

(6) **PETITIONS**

Six petitions were deposited in Parliament as follows:

- 12.02.07 - Hon Joe Mizzi presented a petition signed by residents of Triq Santa Domenica, Żabbar regarding the inconvenience caused to residents as a result of heavy traffic passing through this road.
- 13.02.07 - Hon Silvio Parnis presented a petition signed by parents of school children attending Gużepi Agius Primary School in Paola which school was to be changed to a college resulting in their children having to attend another school outside Paola.
- 21.05.07 - Hon Josè Herrera and Hon Chris Agius presented a petition signed by residents from Senglea regarding the warehouses in Maċina which were to be used by Birżebbuġa regatta club.
- 23.10.07 - Hon Chris Cardona presented a petition signed by residents of Triq G. Dimech Debono and Triq Parilja, Birkirkara regarding the use of a house in Triq G. Dimech Debono as a refuge for ex-drug addicts.
- 19.11.07 - Hon Angelo Farrugia presented a petition from Naxxar residents referring to the issue of a permit by the Malta Environment Planning Authority for the building of a lotto kiosk in 21st September Avenue.
- 03.12.07 - Four Members of Parliament, namely, Hon Michael Ascjak, Hon Angelo Farrugia, Hon Franco Galea and Hon Josè Herrera, presented a petition signed by numerous persons proposing the inclusion of the right to life of the unborn child in the Constitution.



(7) MOTIONS

The Office of the Clerk received 58 motions, 30 of which were for First Reading of Bills and four were private Members' motions.

The Office of the Clerk also received a motion from the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance on the financing of political parties.

The private Members' motions were:

- to amend Legal Notice No 4 of 2007 regarding the Euro Adoption (Dual display and Euro Pricing) Regulations presented by Hon Charles Mangion, Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca and Hon Joe Mizzi, which motion was debated in February;
- a motion of no confidence in the Minister for Urban Development and Roads presented by the Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Alfred Sant, and debated in July;
- a motion submitted by Hon Joe Brincat calling for the government to ratify the United Nations Convention against Corruption; and
- a motion with a draft bill to amend the Criminal Code, also presented by Hon Joe Brincat.

(8) PAPERS LAID

1,881 documents were laid on the Table of the House; 431 of which were legal notices.

Mr Speaker laid a number of documents on the Table of the House, amongst them, court sentences, reports submitted by the National Audit Office, Annual Review of the House of Representatives for the year 2006, replies to parliamentary questions submitted by Members of Parliament to Mr Speaker, and correspondence exchanged between the Ombudsman, the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition regarding the current situation on the appointment of an Investigating Officer in the Audit Office of the Malta Environment Planning Authority.

Mr Speaker also laid on the Table of the House a copy of a communication received from President Emeritus Dr Ugo Mifsud Bonnici on the revision of the Standing Orders.

The Deputy Speaker laid on the Table of the House a communication from the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association with the message from Queen Elizabeth II, Head of the Commonwealth, on the occasion of Commonwealth Day on 12th March.

(9) DIVISIONS

Divisions called and taken during the year under review, totalled 64.

(10) PARLIAMENTARY WHIPS

Whips are Members of Parliament appointed by each Party represented in the House of Representatives to organise their Party's contribution to parliamentary business. One of their responsibilities is making sure the maximum number of their Party members are in the House when a division is called. The Whips' job becomes more important when the majority of the Party to Government is small. Whips also manage the pairing system when a division is called.

The Hon Mario Galea is the Government Whip whilst the Hon Joe Mizzi is the Opposition Whip.



Hon Mario Galea



Hon Joe Mizzi



(B) 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 touch by which various issues are discussed in committee and recommendations may be submitted to the House for its consideration.

The Standing Committees have 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 streamed on the internet, thus facilitating an even closer relationship between the people and their elected representatives in Parliament.

The House has six 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 for Social Affairs
- Standing Committee for Consideration of Bills

The Standing Committee on Development Planning and the National Audit Office Accounts Committee ensue from the Development Planning Act (1992) (Cap. 356) and from the Auditor General and National Audit Office Act (1997) (Cap. 396), respectively.

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts is chaired by a Member nominated by the Opposition. This follows the system adopted in the UK House of Commons.

(1) *Standing Committee on House Business*



Hon Anton Tabone

Chairperson: Hon Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives

Members: Hon Tonio Borg, Leader of the House and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice and Home Affairs
Hon Mario Galea
Hon Frederick Azzopardi
Hon Charles Mangion
Hon Joe Mizzi

- “120C. (1) 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 **House Business Committee** met eight times during which it planned business and schedules of work in the House. The Committee discussed and approved the Ombudsplan for 2007 in January and the Ombudsplan for 2008 in November. The Committee also discussed arrangements regarding the address of the European Commission President, HE Mr Josè Manuel Durão Barroso, to the House on 15th June. It discussed the *Notte Bianca* activity which saw the opening of Parliament on 6th October 2007. The committee agreed that Parliament be included in the list of official buildings open to the public during the second edition of “*Notte Bianca, Lejl Imdawwal*”, a night of art and culture in Malta’s capital city.

(2) *Standing Committee on Privileges*



Hon Anton Tabone

Chairperson: Hon Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives

Members: Hon Tonio Borg, Leader of the House and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice and Home Affairs
 Hon Jason Azzopardi
 Hon Mario de Marco
 Hon Angelo Farrugia
 Hon Joseph Sammut

“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.





The Standing Committee on Public Accounts in session



The Standing Committee for Social Affairs in session



The Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs during talks with a delegation from the Australian Senate

- (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 provisions of 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 authorised to participate in the proceedings, but he shall in no case have a vote thereat.”

(3) *Standing Committee on Public Accounts*



Hon Charles Mangion

Chairperson: Hon Charles Mangion

Members: Hon Austin Gatt, Minister for Investment, Industry and Information Technology
 Hon Tonio Fenech, Parliamentary Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister and Ministry of Finance
 Hon Chris Agius
 Hon Robert Arrigo
 Hon Helena Dalli
 Hon Mario de Marco

- “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 Director of Audit;
 - (b) inquire into expenditure as is referred to in subsection (3) of section 103 and section 104 of the Constitution;
 - (c) examine the accounts of statutory authorities, including parastatal organisations, whose accounts are presented to Parliament;
 - (d) request the Director of Audit 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 Director of Audit, 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 Director of Audit;
 - (g) report to the House on any accounts, reports or documents referred in the previous paragraphs hereof;



- (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; and
 - (i) to discuss Malta's monetary policy and receive reports thereon from the Governor of the Central Bank of Malta.
- (2) The Public Accounts Committee shall consist of not more than seven members of whom four shall constitute a quorum. The members shall be chosen so as to fairly 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."

The **Public Accounts Committee** met ten times to discuss:

- the annual report of the Auditor General for the year 2005;
- funds from the Italian Protocol for the building of roads, which funds were administered by the Malta Transport Authority;
- the monetary policy of the Central Bank of Malta;
- the audited accounts of the Malta Tourism Authority for the year 2006 and financial estimates for the year 2007;
- the performance audit report on the Employment and Training Corporation's Job Matching Service; and
- the Water Services Corporation.

(4) *Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs (SCFEA)*



Hon Jason Azzopardi

Chairperson: Hon Jason Azzopardi

Members: Hon Michael Frendo, Minister for Foreign Affairs
 Hon Michael Ascjak
 Hon Evarist Bartolo
 Hon Leo Brincat
 Hon Mario de Marco
 Hon Josè Herrera
 Hon Clyde Puli
 Hon George Vella

“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:
 - (i) 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.
 - (ii) 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 -
 - (a) any proposals under the Community treaties for legislation by the Council or the Council acting jointly with the European Parliament;
 - (b) any document which is published for submission to the European Council, the Council or the European Central Bank;
 - (c) 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;



- (d) 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;
 - (e) any document (not falling within (b), (c) or (d) above) which is published by one Union institution and which does not relate exclusively to the consideration of any proposal for legislation; and
 - (f) any other document relating to European Union matters placed on the Table of the House by any Minister; and
- (iii) to represent the House of Representatives of Malta at the Conference of European Affairs Committees (COSAC).”

Apart from the tasks listed above, the Committee scrutinises on its own initiative legislative proposals or documents that emanate from European Union institutions dealing with EU issues and measures to be taken by the Council of Ministers.

The Plenary SCFEA scrutinises topics in relation to constitutional affairs, enlargement, development, external relations and trade, enterprise and information society, and competition.

Working Group 1



Hon Jason Azzopardi

Chairperson: Hon Jason Azzopardi

Members:
 Hon Leo Brincat
 Hon Michael Gonzi
 Hon Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando
 Hon George Vella

The objective of this Working Group is to analyse the EU *pipeline acquis* in preliminary scrutiny, that is, to determine 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 debate at the plenary SCFEA, Working Group 2, Working Group 3 or the Social Affairs Committee.

In 2007, Working Group 1 met nine times and scrutinised a total of 350 new EU legislative and non-legislative proposals. The documents comprised EU Commission communications, reports, staff working documents, White Papers, Green Papers as well as Proposals for Council Decisions, Directives and Regulations and Draft Framework Decisions, amongst others.

Working Group 2



Hon Michael Gonzi

Chairperson: Hon Michael Gonzi

Members: Minister responsible for the *acquis*
Hon Robert Arrigo
Hon Leo Brincat
Hon Charles Mangion

Working Group 2 addresses issues related to economic and monetary affairs, taxation, research, employment, education and culture, transport and energy, budget, regional policy, internal market and customs union.

Working Group 3



Hon Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando

Chairperson: Hon Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando

Members: Minister responsible for the *acquis*
Hon Joseph Abela
Hon Joseph Falzon
Hon George Vella

The areas of competence discussed within Working Group 3 include health and consumer protection, development and humanitarian aid, rural development, fisheries, justice and home affairs and the environment.

The **Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs** was convened 22 times. The topics discussed during these meetings dealt with foreign as well as European affairs. The exchanges with foreign counterparts, both during visits abroad of the committee and in the meetings held with incoming delegations, underlined the importance of parliamentary diplomacy.

As in previous years, the Committee held meetings with Ambassadors accredited to Malta whose countries held the 2007 EU Presidencies, namely HE Dr Karl Andreas von Stenglin, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany and HE Mr Antonio Russo Dias, Ambassador of Portugal to Malta. The Work Programme of their respective EU Presidency were discussed.

The personalities invited to address the Committee included amongst others, Dr Joe Borg EU Commissioner for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs; Mr Jacques Barrot, Vice President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Transport; Mr Richard Cachia Caruana, Malta's Permanent Representative to the EU; Ambassadors accredited to Malta; HE President Emeritus Dr Ugo Mifsud Bonnici; Mr Jo Leinen, Chairman of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs of the European Parliament; and Maltese Members of Parliament who reported on their participation in international parliamentary fora.

Furthermore, the Standing Committee met with foreign parliamentary delegations visiting Malta, namely, those from Slovenia, Lithuania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Australia, St Petersburg and Saudi Arabia.



The Committee held a video conference with Dr Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and Secretary General of the Council of the European Union.

(5) *Standing Committee for Social Affairs*



Hon Clyde Puli

Chairperson: Hon Clyde Puli

Members: Hon Frederick Azzopardi
Hon Karl Chircop
Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca
Hon Michael Farrugia
Hon Franco Galea
Hon Michael Gonzi

- “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.”

The **Standing Committee for Social Affairs** met 19 times. It concluded its debate on research, development and innovation within the context of the knowledge economy. Amongst the persons who addressed the Committee on this subject was Prof. Edward de Bono, an internationally renowned lateral thinker. Consequently, the Social Affairs Committee visited the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology, ST Microelectronics and the Malta Council for Science and Technology to exchange ideas with people knowledgeable in the field.

The Committee met with the Chairperson of the Justice and Peace Commission wherein it reflected on social justice, in particular, on housing and related matters.

The Committee held two meetings *in camera* where it was consulted on the appointment of the Commissioner for Children and the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations as provided for in the Commissioner for Children Act and the Voluntary Organisations Act, respectively. Later during the year, the Committee discussed the Commissioner for Children Annual Report for the year 2006.

The Committee met with the Executive Director of the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality and debated the promotion of equal opportunities through empowerment.

The Committee received a delegation from the European Parliament’s Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality. Discussions focused on the situation of women in Malta and around the European Union and the transposition of EU legislation pertinent to the issue in Malta and its implementation in daily life. They also discussed childcare facilities and the situation of part-time workers in Malta.

The Committee met with Ms Meglena Kuneva, EU Commissioner responsible for Consumers. The meeting focused on proposals for legislation to safeguard the rights of consumers.

Voluntary organisations were invited to meet the Committee as part of the debate on the Voluntary Organisations Bill, following which, the Bill was referred to the Standing Committee for the Consideration of Bills for discussion in committee stage.

The research analyst with the Social Affairs Committee informed the Committee on a conference organised by the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity in February, entitled “Enhancing Social Inclusion – Moving Forward Together”.

The Social Affairs Committee continued exercising its role of scrutinising European Union *acquis* referred to it by the working group within the Foreign and European Affairs Committee responsible for filtering and referral of documents. Five documents were scrutinised during the year under review. These documents dealt with:

- youth participation and information;
- the establishment of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund;
- the 2006 Consolidated Maritime Labour Convention of the International Labour Organisation;
- the demographic future of Europe – from challenge to opportunity; and
- the midterm review of the strategy on Life Sciences and Biotechnology.

(6) *Standing Committee for the Consideration of Bills*



Hon David Agius

Chairperson: Hon David Agius

Members: Seven Members, four Government Members including the Chairperson, and three Opposition Members appointed according to the Bill under discussion

The **Standing Committee for the Consideration of Bills** met 28 times to discuss in committee stage Bills which had been referred to it by a resolution of the House. No less than 20 Bills were discussed, approved and referred back to the House for Third Reading.

(7) *Standing Committee on Development Planning*



Hon George Pullicino

Chairperson: Hon George Pullicino, Minister for Rural Affairs and the Environment

Members: Hon Helen D’Amato, Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry for Health, Elderly and Community Care
Hon Tonio Fenech, Parliamentary Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister and Ministry of Finance
Hon Joe Brincat
Hon Charles Buhagiar

The **Development Planning Committee** met once wherein it was consulted on the appointment of an Audit Officer with the Malta Environment and Planning Authority, as provided for in the Development Planning Act.



(8) *National Audit Office Accounts Committee*



Hon Tonio Borg

Chairperson: Hon Tonio Borg, Leader of the House and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice and Home Affairs

Members: Hon Tonio Fenech, Parliamentary Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister and Ministry of Finance
Hon Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici, Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs
Hon Charles Mangion
Hon Joseph Sammut

The **National Audit Office Accounts Committee** met four times during the year under review. It discussed the 2005 Annual Report of the National Audit Office and the estimates of the same office for the year 2007. It also discussed a resolution on the transfer of property in Ricasoli, limits of Kalkara, to SmartCity (Malta) Limited. The motion was not unanimously agreed and was therefore referred to the House for discussion.

In October, the Committee also discussed a motion regarding the transfer of property to the M.U.S.E.U.M. society in Pembroke, the transfer of properties to the Scouts Association in Santa Venera, Bormla and Rabat in Malta and the transfer of property to the Floriana Football Club. The motion was not unanimously agreed and was therefore referred to the House for debate.



Mr Jaime Gama, Speaker of the Portuguese National Assembly receives Hon Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives, during the latter's official visit to Portugal



Hon Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives with the Maltese parliamentary delegation during talks at the Portuguese National Assembly



Personnel participating in the activities marking the 50th anniversary from the signing of the Treaties of Rome organised by the Italian Chamber of Deputies and the Senate



(C) INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

(1) *Mr Speaker*

In March, the Hon Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives, together with Hon Jason Azzopardi, Chairman of the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs, participated in the activities marking the 50th Anniversary of the Treaties of Rome held in Florence and Rome. The programme of events included a seminar at the European University at Fiesole as well as a ceremonial event at the Italian Senate in Rome. Participants discussed the role of a political Europe in the world and the role of parliaments at the heart of the European construction. Another subject discussed was the new era of renewable energies, that is, the green hydrogen economy. The establishment of a European wide renewable energy policy was seen as leading towards the third industrial revolution whereby the production and distribution of energy is offered in the most efficient and sustainable way.

In May, Mr Speaker, participated in the European Conference of Speakers of European Union Parliaments held in Bratislava, Slovak Republic. The focus of this annual meeting was the future of Europe, inter-parliamentary cooperation, assistance to parliaments of new and emerging democracies and raising national European awareness.

In June, Hon Anton Tabone participated at the canonisation of Dun Ġorġ Preca at the Vatican. Mr Speaker formed part of the Maltese official delegation that included the President, the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition.

At the bilateral level, Mr Speaker, accompanied by Hon Mario de Marco and Hon Roderick Galdes, paid an official visit to Lisbon in September. Apart from holding direct talks with HE Mr Jaime Gama, President of the Assembly of the Republic of Portugal, Mr Speaker addressed the Parliamentary Committee on International and European Relations.

Apart from meeting resident and non-resident Ambassadors accredited to Malta and also representatives from Maltese civil society, Mr Speaker received other foreign dignitaries, including Mr Lucien Weiler, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of Luxembourg; Mr Paul Calvert, President of the Senate of Australia; Mr Noel Kinsella, Speaker of the Senate of Canada; Mr Tijani Haddad, Minister of Tourism of Tunisia; Mr Anton Kokalj, Chairman of the European Affairs Committee of the Parliament of Slovenia; Mr Noel Davern, Chairman of the Committee on Members' Interest of Dail Eireann, Ireland; and Prof. Dan Drosu Saguna, President of the Romanian Court of Accounts.

(2) *Deputy Speaker*



Hon Carmelo Abela

In November, Hon Carmelo Abela, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, participated in the Second Small European States' Conference of Presidents of Parliament held in San Marino. The 2008 meeting will be held in Monaco.

(3) *Conferences hosted by the House of Representatives*

The Second Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean was held in Malta from 22nd to 24th November 2007.

The Second Plenary Session in Malta was a historic occasion for the Parliamentary Assembly as it marked the finalisation of several important aspects relating to the functioning of the Assembly. The Headquarters Agreement, officially recognising Spinola Palace as the seat of the Secretariat of the Assembly, was signed by the Hon Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, and Mr Abdelwahed Radi, President of the Parliamentary Assembly. Spinola Palace was officially inaugurated by HE Dr Edward Fenech Adami, President of Malta.

The Parliamentary Assembly was inaugurated on 22nd November 2007 by Hon Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives, who extended a warm welcome to all parliamentarians attending the meeting. Hon Tabone mentioned Malta's past and ongoing commitment to achieving unity in the Mediterranean. He referred to the important mission of the Assembly, and underlined its forthcoming role in promoting peace and stability as well as economic prosperity for the Mediterranean people. Hon Tabone highlighted the unique character of the Assembly as the only forum to unite all the Mediterranean littoral states. He stated that the Assembly should not be seen as a competing organisation but as a complement to the existing bodies dealing with Mediterranean issues.

The Strategy Paper entitled "Building on our Common Mediterranean Heritage" was discussed at length during the Assembly's proceedings. It was agreed that this document will be complemented by a 'Mediterranean Charter', the content of which is to be elaborated by the members of the Assembly in 2008.

The Assembly was also addressed by Ambassador Alain Le Roy who had been invited to present President Sarkozy's Mediterranean Union project.

The Maltese parliamentary delegation participated actively in the proceedings of the Assembly. Hon George Vella presented the resolution of the First Standing Committee on Regional Issues in the Middle East. The resolution was unanimously adopted by the Assembly.

Monaco will host the next Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly in 2008.

(4) *Outgoing visits of Maltese parliamentary delegations*

(a) *Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs (SCFEA)*

The active participation of the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs (SCFEA) at the international level continued with the Committee paying official visits to Italy, the Gulf States and India. Such visits had the objective of strengthening further relations at the parliamentary level and enhancing contacts with the foreign and European Affairs committees in the respective countries. Maltese Members of the Committee had the opportunity to exchange views on parliamentary work in general and discuss issues of common interest relating to our region and beyond.

In January, a delegation led by Hon Jason Azzopardi and comprising Hon Michael Ascjak, Hon Leo Brincat, Hon Mario de Marco, Hon Josè Herrera and Hon George Vella visited Italy where they discussed areas of cooperation between Italy and Malta such as the financial and cultural protocols, the problem of illegal immigration faced by Malta and the ratification of the Constitutional Treaty.





Hon Anton Tabone delivers his opening address during the second session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean



Signing of the Headquarters Agreement of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean



H.E. Dr Fenech Adami, President of Malta, unveils the plaque establishing Spinola Palace as the Headquarters of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean

In February, a delegation led by Hon Jason Azzopardi and comprising Hon Evarist Bartolo, Hon Leo Brincat, Hon Mario de Marco and Hon Josè Herrera visited the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. During its meetings in the Gulf, the Maltese delegation augured towards a stronger relationship between Malta and these countries, particularly at the parliamentary level.

In March, a delegation led by Hon Jason Azzopardi and comprising Hon Evarist Bartolo, Hon Clyde Puli and Hon Angelo Farrugia visited India. During its meetings, the Maltese delegation spoke of possible benefits to India because of Malta's strategic position as a new EU member state and its proximity to North Africa as well as being the only EU member state with a double taxation agreement with Libya.

The Chairman and designated Members of the SCFEA participated in the Conference of European Affairs Committees (COSAC) meetings. COSAC meetings, held biannually, are held in the capital of the country holding the EU Presidency. COSAC was created in May 1989 where the Speakers of the Parliaments of the EU member states agreed to strengthen the role of national parliaments in relation to the Community process by bringing together the committees dealing with EU affairs.

The XXXVII COSAC meeting held in Berlin in May was attended by Hon Clyde Puli and Hon George Vella while the COSAC Chairpersons meeting held at the beginning of the German Presidency in Berlin, in February, and at the beginning of the Portuguese Presidency in July, were both attended by Hon Clyde Puli.

(b) Standing Committee on Social Affairs

For the first time ever, the Social Affairs Committee was invited by the OECD to attend a High Level Parliamentary Seminar on Innovation and Equity held in Paris in October. The meeting was an integral part of the Social Affairs Committee's discussion on knowledge economy and was attended by Hon Carmelo Abela.

(c) Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Members: Hon Jeffrey Pullicino Orlando, Leader of the delegation
Hon Robert Arrigo
Hon Joe Debono Grech

Alternate Members: Hon Leo Brincat
Hon Helen D'Amato
Hon Joseph Falzon

The Maltese parliamentary delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) attended the four part sessions of the PACE held in Strasbourg in January, April, June and October.

In March, Hon Joe Debono Grech attended the meeting of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee held in Berlin, Germany while in December he attended the meeting of the same committee held in Florence, Italy.



(d) European Parliament

On the invitation of the European Parliament, Maltese parliamentarians had the opportunity to participate at various parliamentary meetings in Brussels as follows:

- February Hon Michael Asciaq and Hon George Vella participated in the 3rd parliamentary meeting on the Lisbon Strategy attended by representatives of the European Parliament and national parliaments;
- Hon John Dalli and Hon Charles Mangion participated in the interparliamentary debate with national parliaments of the EU member states on “Euro Zone - converging or drifting apart”; and
- Hon Charles Buhagiar and Hon Franco Galea participated in the parliamentary meeting on transport policy attended by representatives of the European Parliament and national parliaments.
- May Hon Jason Azzopardi participated in the meeting of chairpersons of EU member states’ committees on foreign affairs.
- June Hon George Vella participated in an inter parliamentary meeting on the Future of Europe with national parliaments of the EU member states.
- September Hon Angelo Farrugia attended the meeting of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs of the European Parliament.
- October Hon Roderick Galdes participated in the parliamentary meeting on Climate Change: Rising to the Challenge with national parliaments of the EU member states; and
- Hon Gavin Gulia attended the meeting of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs of the European Parliament.
- December Hon David Agius attended the 4th parliamentary meeting on the Future of Europe with national parliaments of the EU member states; and
- Hon Carmelo Abela attended the meeting of the Committee on Education and Culture of the European Parliament.

(e) European Union

Maltese Parliamentarians participated in meetings hosted by the German Presidency and the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union as follows:

- February Hon Jason Azzopardi, Chairman of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee, participated in the meeting of the Chairpersons of the Foreign Affairs Committees.
- March Hon Joseph Sammut participated in the Conference of Chairpersons of the Committees on Economic Cooperation and Development.

May Hon Gavin Gulia participated in the Conference of Chairpersons of Home Affairs Committees.

(f) Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)

Maltese parliamentarians attended various meetings organised by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association as follows:

February Hon Franco Galea and Hon Silvio Parnis participated at the CPA UK Branch seminar on restoring trust in the political process held at Westminster in London.

March Hon Joseph Cuschieri participated in the CPA UK Branch 56th Seminar on Parliamentary Practice and Procedure held at Westminster in London.

May Hon Mario Galea, Hon Chris Agius, Hon Frederick Azzopardi and Hon Stefan Buontempo participated in the 38th CPA British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference held in Belfast, Ireland.

September Hon Mario Galea, Hon Joe Mizzi and Hon Frederick Azzopardi participated in the CPA 53rd Conference and 27th CPA Conference for Small Countries held in Delhi, India.

November Hon Joseph Brincat and Hon Franco Galea participated at the CPA UK Branch international conference on climate change – tackling causes and managing impacts, held in London.

(g) Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA)

Members: Hon Mario Galea, Leader of the delegation
Hon Michael Ascik
Hon George Vella

Alternate Members: Hon Joseph Cassar
Hon Helena Dalli
Hon Joseph Falzon

The Maltese parliamentary delegation to EMPA attended various meetings of the three committees of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly, namely, the Committee on Improving Quality of Life, Exchanges between Civil Societies and Culture; the Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs, Social Affairs and Education; and the Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights.

In January, March, July and November, Hon George Vella attended the meetings of the Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights held in Brussels.

Hon Michael Ascik and Hon George Vella participated in the Third Ordinary Session of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly held in Tunis in March.



(h) Inter-Parliamentary Union

Executive Committee of the National Group

<i>President:</i>	Hon Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives
<i>Vice Presidents:</i>	Hon Lawrence Gonzi, Prime Minister Hon Alfred Sant, Leader of the Opposition
<i>Members:</i>	Hon Michael Gonzi Hon George Vella
<i>Alternate Members:</i>	Hon Mario Galea Hon Joe Mizzi

The 116th Assembly of the Inter Parliamentary Union held in Bali, Indonesia, in April, was attended by Hon Michael Gonzi and Hon Joe Mizzi.

(i) Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE PA)

<i>Members:</i>	Hon Jason Azzopardi, Leader of the delegation Hon Frederick Azzopardi Hon Angelo Farrugia
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The Maltese parliamentary delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE attended the meetings organised by the Assembly as follows:

February	Hon Jason Azzopardi, Hon Frederick Azzopardi and Hon Angelo Farrugia participated in the Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly held in Vienna, Austria.
July	Hon Jason Azzopardi, Hon Frederick Azzopardi and Hon Angelo Farrugia participated in the 16 th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly held in Kiev, Ukraine.
September	Hon Jason Azzopardi and Hon Angelo Farrugia participated in the Fall Meetings of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly held in Slovenia.

(j) Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)

<i>Members:</i>	Hon Michael Gonzi, Leader of the delegation Hon Michael Ascjak Hon Mario Galea Hon Joe Mizzi Hon George Vella
<i>Alternate Members:</i>	Hon Joseph Cassar Hon Justyne Caruana

February	Hon Michael Gonzi and Hon Joe Mizzi participated in the meeting of the Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean held in Geneva, Switzerland.
March	Hon Michael Gonzi, Hon Justyne Caruana, Hon Joseph Cassar, Hon Joe Mizzi and Hon George Vella participated in the meetings of the Standing Committees of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean held in Geneva, Switzerland.
September	Hon George Vella participated in the meeting of the Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean held in Rabat, Morocco.
November	The Maltese parliamentary delegation participated at the Second Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean held in Malta.

(k) Others

January	Hon Leo Brincat and Hon Franco Galea participated in the Fifth General Assembly of the International Parliamentarians Association for Information Technology held in Helsinki, Finland.
June	Hon Jason Azzopardi, Hon Michael Asciaq, Hon Joseph Abela, Hon Stefan Buontempo, Hon Joseph Cuschieri, Hon Angelo Farrugia, Hon Roderick Galdes, Hon Gavin Gulia, Hon Silvio Parnis, Hon Anton Refalo, Hon Joseph Sammut and Hon George Vella paid a visit to the European Commission.
October	Hon Joe Mizzi and Hon Clyde Puli participated in the EUFORES, 7 th Inter-Parliamentary Meeting on Renewable Energy held in Berlin, Germany.

(5) *Incoming visits of parliamentary delegations*

April The House of Representatives hosted an Australian parliamentary delegation led by the President of the Senate, Hon Paul Calvert. During its visit, the delegation referred to relations between Malta and Australia which have always been strong and positive and are underpinned by migration, community and Commonwealth links. In the 2001 Australian census, nearly 137,000 people claimed Maltese descent. During its meetings, the Australia delegation expressed interest in strengthening the commercial links between the two countries.

The House of Representatives hosted the Chairman of the Committee on EU Affairs of the National Parliament of the Republic of Slovenia. Slovenia, one of the ten European countries that joined the EU in 2004, is to assume the EU Presidency in January 2008.

May The House of Representatives received a delegation from the Foreign and European Affairs Committee of the Parliament of Lithuania. Topics discussed during meetings included the resettlement of six asylum seekers from Malta which process started as a result of the visit to Lithuania by a delegation from the Foreign and European Affairs Committee in June 2006.





Hon Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives, receives Mr Noel Kinsella, Speaker of the Senate of Canada



Hon Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives, receives Mr Lucien Weiler, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of the Duchy of Luxembourg



Hon Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives, receives Mr Paul Calvert, President of the Australian Senate

- September The House of Representatives hosted the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of Luxembourg, Hon Lucien Weiler, who was reciprocating the visit paid to Luxembourg by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon Anton Tabone, in November 2005. During Speaker Weiler's visit, issues of common concern and the identification of areas of cooperation between the two countries, were discussed.
- October The House of Representatives also assisted Mr Ostergaard, rapporteur of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population of the Council of Europe, during his two day visit to Malta. As part of the preparatory work on his report on large scale arrival of migrants and asylum seekers, Mr Ostergaard visited the Canary Islands, Greece, Lampedusa and Malta. When in Malta, Mr Ostergaard met with Maltese authorities including Ministers, the Armed Forces of Malta, non-governmental organisations and international organisations represented in Malta. He also visited the detention centres where he expressed concern at the prevailing conditions and the length of detention of asylum seekers.
- November The House of Representatives hosted a high level delegation from the Consultative Council of Saudi Arabia. This was a return visit to the Maltese Foreign and European Affairs Committee's visit to Saudi Arabia earlier in the year. The delegation acknowledged the close cooperation that existed between the two countries, especially the financial assistance given to Malta during the 1970s and 1980s. Areas of cooperation were identified in various sectors, namely, higher education, medical services, tourism, financial services and the teaching of English.

The House of Representatives hosted a parliamentary delegation from the Parliament of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia led by the Chairperson of the Committee on Foreign Policy. The aim of the visit was to develop cooperation at the level of foreign affairs committees as well as to develop overall relations between the two countries.

(6) *Parliamentary Friendship Groups*

In addition to official international activities, international links are also maintained by the Parliamentary Friendship Groups. A delegation from the Malta-Germany Parliamentary Friendship Group, namely, Hon Michael Ascjak, Hon Clyde Puli, Hon Carmelo Abela and Hon Joseph Cuschieri, visited Germany in September with the aim of further enhancing the existing good bilateral relations between the two countries as well as to promote other areas of cooperation. When in Germany, the Maltese delegation discussed topics of particular relevance to both sides, including illegal immigration, tourism, education, research, information and communication technology, bioethics, the current situation in the Middle East as well as European Union affairs.



(D) ASSOCIATION OF FORMER MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

During 2007, the Association of Former Members of Parliament held several meetings at the House of Representatives. The Association is a member of the European Association of Former Members of Parliament of the Member States of the Council of Europe or the European Union.

Dr George Bonello du Puis and Mr Lino Debono participated in the meetings of the Bureau of the European Association of Former Members of Parliament of the Member States of the Council of Europe or the European Union held in Paris in February and in Vienna in November, whilst Mr Lino Debono and Mr Alfred Portelli participated in the meeting held in Brussels in June.

(E) OTHER ACTIVITIES

(1) *Sette Giugno*

In his annual address the Hon Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives, underlined the importance of the *Sette Giugno* as a national day that commemorates the death of four Maltese who died on the 7th June 1919 and augured that future generations will continue to remember these activities that singled out Malta's road to freedom and democracy.

As the tenth legislature nears its end, the Speaker of the House of Representatives reiterated his eagerness to set up an efficient and professional parliamentary service that will facilitate the demanding work expected from Maltese parliamentarians. Hon Tabone remarked on the lack of feedback following the submission of two reports drawn up by the Management Efficiency Unit at the Office of the Prime Minister outlining the structures needed that will contribute towards a truly autonomous role of the House and the report drawn up by President Emeritus Dr Ugo Mifsud Bonnici on the revision of the Standing Orders of the House. Hon Tabone stated that Malta's role within European and international parliamentary fora demand a better equipped Maltese Parliament to be able to face the challenges ahead.

The Speaker augured that Members of the House show greater respect to one another and urged them to demonstrate greater commitment to their parliamentary duties.

(2) *National Student Travel Foundation (NSTF) Mini European Assembly*

The NSTF Mini European Assembly was launched in 1989 with its main objective being "to complement the formal education process of post-secondary and tertiary level students through "debate on relevant European institutional and current affairs and training in team-work, research, presentations, public speaking and mutual respect".

The chosen topic for this year's session held in the Parliamentary Chamber on 29th March, concerned a provocative question as to whether the EU should reconsider its ratification of the Kyoto Protocol that it had ratified on 31st May 2002 when it was made up of only fifteen members. The Kyoto Protocol is an agreement made under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change which commits countries to legally-binding targets to limit or reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.



Sette Giugno commemoration



Hon. Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives, receives a parliamentary delegation from Saudi Arabia



(3) *Conference on the External Dimension of the Bologna Process*

In April, a number of University students from various European countries assembled in Malta for a conference on the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area and the External Dimensions of the Bologna Process, which conference was held in the Parliamentary Chamber on 13th April.

The parliamentary meeting organised by the Kunsill Studenti Universitarji together with the European Students' Union (ESU) was the closing symposium in a series of conferences dealing with the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Agenda as we move closer to 2010. During the meeting, students discussed the problems international students faced with regards to tuition fees, integration and social needs and the mobility of students.

The Conference, part-financed by the European Commission, aimed to deliver a number of tools to participating members, amongst them the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the debate surrounding the external dimensions and the commodifications of Higher Education through globalisation. They also learnt how these issues tie in with the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Agenda.

(4) *Parliamentary session to commemorate Europe Day*

On 9th May, the House of Representatives Parliamentary Chamber provided the setting for a number of students to commemorate Europe Day and the closure of the activities marking the 50th anniversary from the signing of the Treaties of Rome. The theme selected for this year's activity, "If I were an EU Commissioner", was organised by the European Commission Representation in Malta in collaboration with the European Parliamentary Information Office (Malta) and the Ministry of Education.

Students from different schools presented their vision as European Commissioners of the future and received feedback from distinguished guests, notably Members of Parliament. Since the historic signing in Rome on the 25th March 1957, Europe witnessed a profound change that was brought about through the support of the people and the governments. The establishment of European institutions, the entrenchment of democratic values coupled with other major gains that included the free movement of labour, goods and services, and the single currency, all led to an enhanced integration of Europe's civil and cultural values that contributed in no small way to people's lives.

(5) *EkoSkola Parliament*

The third EkoSkola Parliament Session, an annual event that brings together students participating in the EkoSkola programme face to face with the country's official policy makers, was held in the Parliamentary Chamber on 6th June.

Amongst the recommendations put forward by the young participants, was the discontinuation of disposable utensils during the members' political meetings, the encouragement to clean up any waste left behind during the event and that separate bins for waste separation are used during these events.

The EkoSkola programme is an international environmental education programme. Around five million boys and girls from more than 13,000 schools in 33 different countries participate in the programme. Through Ekoskola, children take an active part in the decisions, planning and the implementation of environmental activities with the aim of improving the quality of life in their schools and the surrounding communities. Schools that have successfully achieved this goal are awarded a Green Flag – a prestigious eco-label testifying the school's commitment to fostering sustainable lifestyles.

(6) *National Youth Parliament*

On the 12th and 13th September, the National Youth Council organised the fourth edition of the National Youth Parliament in the Parliamentary Chamber, an event focusing on active participation and aimed at familiarising youths with politics and introducing them to parliamentary procedures. During the opening session, the Speaker of the House of Representatives said that despite the impression that some people have, the Maltese Parliament remains an example of how the principles of democracy are put into practice.

The students debated various issues, amongst them, issues pertaining to sustainable development, education, diversity and human rights, youth policy and cultural heritage.

(7) *Debate on the Millennium Development Goals*

On the 19th October, SOS Malta, with the support of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, organised a parliamentary debate on the Millennium Development Goals and Development Cooperation.

In 2000, 189 nations signed the UN Millennium Declaration which led to the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to eradicate poverty, fight hunger and disease, promote gender equality and access to education, stimulate investments in basic infrastructure, and combat environmental degradation. These eight MDGs are to be achieved by 2015.

The European Union plays a significant role in efforts towards reaching these MDGs and the ten countries, including Malta, that joined the European Union in 2004, as new and emerging donors forming part of the European Union, are committed to expanding their development cooperation and increasing the volume and the quality of the aid that they provide to developing countries.

This event that brought together decision makers, Members of Parliament, Members of the European Parliament, representatives of the European Commission and of UNDP, Ambassadors, non-governmental organisations, academia, as well as journalists and youth organisations, discussed national, European and global development policies.

(8) *Youth Ocean Parliament*

On 7th November, the first ever Youth Ocean Parliament met in the parliamentary committee room. This parliamentary session was an integral part of the activities of the 32nd Pacem in Maribus Conference marking the occasion of the 40th Anniversary of Ambassador Arvid Pardo's Speech at the United Nations General Assembly where the ocean was proclaimed a common heritage of humankind.

Pardo's historic speech at the United Nations eventually led to the New Law of the Seas that formed the new ocean regime. As the future generation, youth need to start looking ahead at the world which they are to inherit and eventually pass on.

The Youth Ocean Parliament helped kick off a mechanism for future cooperation with a view to assist governments and international organisations in a decision making process on the issues of ocean research, management and protection.





*Hon Anton Tabone,
Speaker of the House of
Representatives,
addressing police recruits*



*Delegates participating in the
European Conference
organised by the Kunsill
Studenti Universitarji and the
National Union of Students in
Europe*



*The House of Representatives opens its
doors during the Notte Bianca activity*

(9) *Disabled People's Parliament*

On 3rd December the parliamentary committee room was again the venue of the annual Disabled People's Parliament. People with a disability and their relatives had the chance to voice their concerns and aspirations during this special parliamentary session.

An appeal for better post-secondary education, the need for more teachers for students with hearing impairment, the importance of access to free medicines by people with certain conditions and for more respect towards people with a disability were amongst the issues discussed at this session.

The Kummissjoni Persuni b'Dizabilità (National Commission Persons with Disability) established in 1987, was marking its 20th anniversary. 2007 was also declared European Year of Equal Opportunities to all.

(10) *Notte Bianca activity*

The House of Representatives participated in the 2007 *Notte Bianca* activity. Parliament was included in the list of official buildings open to the public during the activity held on 6th October 2007. The staff at the House guided around the large crowds of people that visited the Parliament's building.

(F) ICT IN PARLIAMENT

Information and communication technologies (ICT) have become essential in supporting the work of our legislative institution. As these technologies have become more sophisticated, they have acquired the necessary flexibility and capabilities to assist our national parliament in its most important responsibilities: enacting laws that guide the nation; conducting oversight of the Executive as it carries out its mandate; and communicating with the citizens who ultimately determine who shall represent them. In today's "wired world" our Parliament must capitalise on the benefits of ICT in order to function effectively, to interact with the public and to collaborate with other parliaments around the world.

ICT improved the efficiency of a number of administrative tasks such as managing payroll and maintaining human resources information. Computers have also become indispensable in editing and printing operations, leading to the more rapid and efficient publication and distribution of agendas, minutes and debates of Parliamentary sittings and Committee meetings. To this effect, our computer network has been extended to cover all Ministerial, Members of Parliament (MPs) and staff offices in the precincts of the House as well as in the actual Parliamentary Chamber and Committee Rooms. MPs are also provided with internet/mail connectivity at their private residences, the use of which facility, in combination with the Parliament's official website, extends their access to parliamentary documents and services. Documents such as proposed legislation - both national and European - amendments, plenary and committee reports, motions, parliamentary questions and papers laid on the Table of the House are the core records of our legislature. Therefore, it follows that in order for our Parliament to function more efficiently these documents must be prepared quickly and accurately, and distributed, amended, revised and redistributed just as smoothly. Although there is much room for improvement, ICT is enabling this to occur in a way that provides MPs and committees more time and flexibility to consider and to draft their proposals and reports.



Legislative bodies around the world are increasingly turning to modern technologies to make their deliberations available in real time. In this respect, our Parliament has embarked on an audio streaming facility via our website of all the Parliamentary sittings and Committee meetings. Moreover, we have been able to maintain an electronic archive that allows on-demand access after the adjournment of each session. Apart from providing a record of parliamentary activities other than in printed or textual format, the above services give MPs the ability to observe plenary and committees at work without their actual presence in the Chamber, either because of unavoidable absence or because committee meetings are held concurrently. Given the ever increasing number of parliamentary meetings, the Parliament's website is becoming a necessary resource also for citizens, civil society groups, the press, government agencies and others who have an interest in being better informed.

The staff at the House of Representatives is also responsible for the updating of the Inter-Parliamentary EU Information Exchange (IPEX) website. The site is an inter-parliamentary cooperation exercise and is maintained by the national parliaments of the European Union and the European Parliament. Proposals and Communications from the European Commission are posted on the site and then, national parliaments add scrutiny information to each Commission document thus indicating their parliament's position about each EU proposal.

ICT is allowing legislators to be more mobile. SMS software utilities, cell phones, lightweight portable PCs, small hand held computers and email devices, coupled with the increasing ubiquity of the Web, enables MPs to conduct their work from many locations and with their constituents. While this kind of mobility may create certain challenges to traditional legislative processes, it opens a wide range of possibilities for Members to be in touch with citizens and therefore to conduct their work more effectively.

(G) LIBRARY

During the year under review, the Parliament's Library was enhanced with donations of books from foreign governments.

The books were presented by the Ambassadors of Italy, the United States of America, Austria and the High Commissioner of Australia on behalf of their respective governments. The Italian government donated no less than 137 diplomatic documents for the period between 1860 and 2003. These books contain information such as exchanges, *notes verbales*, and historical books dating back to the period of the Unification of Italy.

The books donated by the American government included biographies of American past and present statesmen as well as books on international relations and diplomacy in general.

The Austrian Ambassador and the High Commissioner of Australia presented a collection of parliamentary journals. All these publications will be of interest to researchers in the field of diplomacy and international relations.

(H) OBITUARIES

On 29th January, the House observed a minute's silence to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust following the United Nations resolution of the 21st November 2005 designating the 27th January as annual international day of commemoration to honour Holocaust victims.

On 24th September, the House expressed its grief for the loss of Mrs Antonia Zammit, the mother of Minister Dolores Cristina, who died on 18th September 2007.

On 3rd December, the House expressed its grief for the loss of Mr John Farrugia, an employee at the House of Representatives who died on 30th November.



MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

10th Legislature

Speaker of the House of Representatives : Hon Anton Tabone

Nationalist Party (Government)

Abela Anthony
Agius David
Agius Francis
Arrigo Robert
Asciak Michael
Azzopardi Frederick
Azzopardi Jason
Borg Tonio
Cassar Joseph
Cristina Dolores
D'Amato Helen
Dalli John
de Marco Mario
Debono Giovanna
Deguara Louis
Falzon Joseph
Fenech Antonio
Frendo Michael
Galea Censu
Galea Franco
Galea Louis
Galea Mario
Gatt Austin
Gonzi Lawrence
Gonzi Michael
Mifsud Bonnici Antoine
Mifsud Bonnici Carmelo
Mugliett Jesmond
Puli Clyde
Pullicino George
Pullicino Orlando Jeffrey
Vassallo Edwin
Zammit Ninu
Zammut Dimech Francis

Malta Labour Party (Opposition)

Abela Carmelo
Abela Joseph
Agius Chris
Bartolo Evarist
Brincat Joseph
Brincat Leo
Buhagiar Charles
Buontempo Stefan
Cardona Chris
Caruana Justyne
Chircop Karl
Coleiro Preca Marie Louise
Cuschieri Joseph
Dalli Helena
Debono Grech Joseph
Farrugia Angelo
Farrugia Michael
Farrugia Noel
Galdes Roderick
Gulia Gavin
Herrera Josè
Mangion Charles
Mizzi Joe
Parnis Silvio
Refalo Anton
Sammut Joseph
Sant Alfred
Vassallo Adrian
Vella George
Vella Karmenu

MEETINGS OF THE HON SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 2007

- 12 January Mr Speaker received HE Mr Jurek Juszczuk, High Commissioner of Australia.
- 9 February Mr Speaker received the Hon Noel Kinsella, Speaker of the Senate of Canada.
- 16 February Mr Speaker addressed the police constables participating in the 27th Basic Training Course organised by the Police Academy.
- 19 February Mr Speaker received HE Mr Liu Zhengxu, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, on a farewell call.
- 21 February Mr Speaker received Mr Gerard O'Connor, *Chargé d'Affaires* of the Republic of Ireland.
- 22 February Mr Speaker received HE Mr Jurek Juszczuk, High Commissioner of Australia.
- 23 February Mr Speaker received HE Mr Mohamed Ali Ganzoui, Ambassador of the Republic of Tunisia.
- 6 March Mr Speaker received Prof Salvino Busuttill.
- 3 April Mr Speaker received Mr Noel Davern, Chairman of the Committee on Members' Interests of the Irish Parliament.
- 5 April Mr Speaker received HE Mr Jurek Juszczuk, High Commissioner of Australia.
- 16 April Mr Speaker received Mr Anton Kokalj, Chairman of the European Affairs Committee of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia.
- Mr Speaker received the Hon Paul Calvert, President of the Australian Senate.
- 27 April Mr Speaker received HE Mr Chai Xi, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China.
- Mr Speaker received HE Mr Umberto di Capua, Ambassador of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.
- 4 May Mr Speaker received HE Mr Gideon Meir, Ambassador of Israel.
- 9 May Mr Speaker met the Hon Justinas Karosas, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament of Lithuania.
- 11 May Mr Speaker received HE Mr Zaal Gogsadze, Ambassador of Georgia.
- 16 May Mr Speaker received Mr E Rodney M Perera, High Commissioner of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.



28 May	Mr Speaker received Prof Dan Drosu Saguna, President of the Romanian Court of Accounts.
6 July	Mr Speaker received HE Mr Nikola Kaloudov, Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria.
9 July	Mr Speaker received Mr Giuseppe Catizone, Mayor of Nichelino, Italy.
16 July	Mr Speaker received HE Mr Tijani Haddad, Minister of Tourism of the Republic of Tunisia.
3 August	Mr Speaker received HE Mr Jean-Marc Rives, Ambassador of France.
17 September	Mr Speaker received Mr Lucien Weiler, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.
19 September	Mr Speaker received HE Mr Istvan Kovacs, Ambassador of the Republic of Hungary, on a farewell call.
5 October	Mr Speaker received HE Mr Antonio Augusto Russo Dias, Ambassador of Portugal.
12 October	Mr Speaker received HE Mr Douglas Frederick Lawrence Markes, High Commissioner of New Zealand.
19 October	Mr Speaker received Mr Sergio Piazzzi, Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean.
9 November	Mr Speaker received HE Mr Han Tae Song, Ambassador of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.
14 November	Mr Speaker received a parliamentary delegation from Macedonia.
	Mr Speaker received Mr Rudy Salles, Deputy President of the French National Assembly.
16 November	Mr Speaker addressed police recruits on the eve of their appointment as police officers.
19 November	Mr Speaker met with a delegation from the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Majlis Ash Shura – Consultative Council – of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
24 November	Mr Speaker met HE Mr Alan Le Roy, Ambassador in charge of the Mediterranean Union initiative.

**MEETINGS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON HOUSE BUSINESS
2007**

17 January	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. House Business2. Ombudsplan for the year 2007
19 February	House Business
25 April	House Business
6 June	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. House Business2. Address to the House of Representatives by HE Mr Josè Manuel Durão Barroso, President of the European Commission
11 July	House Business
20 September	House Business
3 October	House Business
14 November	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. House Business2. Ombudsplan for the year 2008



**MEETINGS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS
2007**

- 31 January Discussion on the Auditor General's Annual Report for 2005.
- 7 March Discussion in connection with correspondence sent by Hon Charles Buhagiar to the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee regarding expenditure of Italian Protocol funds on roadworks by the Malta Transport Authority.
- 21 March Discussion in connection with correspondence sent by Hon Charles Buhagiar to the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee regarding expenditure of Italian Protocol funds on roadworks by the Malta Transport Authority (cont.).
- 2 May Discussion in connection with correspondence sent by Hon Charles Buhagiar to the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee regarding expenditure of Italian Protocol funds on roadworks by the Malta Transport Authority (cont.).
- 9 May Discussion in connection with correspondence sent by Hon Charles Buhagiar to the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee regarding expenditure of Italian Protocol funds on roadworks by the Malta Transport Authority (cont.).
- 23 May Discussion on the monetary policy of the Central Bank of Malta.
- 6 June Discussion in connection with correspondence sent by Hon Charles Buhagiar to the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee regarding expenditure of Italian Protocol funds on roadworks by the Malta Transport Authority (cont.).
- 27 June Discussion in connection with correspondence sent by Hon Evarist Bartolo to the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee regarding the audited accounts of the Malta Tourism Authority for the year 2006 and financial estimates for the year 2007.
- 11 July Performance Audit Report on ETC's Job Matching Service.
- 4 September Correspondence from the Minister for Investment, Industry and Information Technology regarding the Water Services Corporation.

**MEETINGS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN
AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
2007**

- 10 January Meeting with Dr Gabriella Pace, CEO of *Forum Malta fl-Ewropa*.
- 17 January Meeting with Mr Joseph F X Zahra, Chairman of the National Euro Changeover Committee;
Meeting with HE Mr Gideon Meir, Ambassador of Israel.
- 30 January Meeting with a delegation from Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels;
Meeting with HE Mr Karl Andreas von Stenglin, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, on the work programme of the German Presidency of the EU between January and June 2007.
- 19 February Meeting with HE President Emeritus Dr Ugo Mifsud Bonnici on the European Commission for Democracy Through Law – The Venice Commission.
- 16 April Meeting with Hon Anton Kokalj, Chairman of the European Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Slovenia on the agenda of the Slovenian Presidency of the EU between January and June 2008 and other matters relating to the European Union.
- 17 April Meeting with a delegation from the Senate and House of Representatives of Australia.
- 26 April Presentation by Hon Michael Frendo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, on official visits abroad.
- 30 April Meeting with Mr Richard Cachia Caruana, Permanent Representative of Malta to the European Union, on the work programme of the German Presidency, on the Commission Legislative and Work Programme 2007 and on the 18 month programme of the German, Portuguese and Slovenian Presidencies.
- 9 May Meeting with a delegation from the Foreign and European Affairs Committee of the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania.
- 16 May Meeting with HE Ms Molly Bordonaro, Ambassador of the United States of America.
- 18 May Meeting with HE Dr Joe Borg, EU Commissioner responsible for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs: Towards a Maritime Policy for the European Union.
- 29 May Meeting with Mr Jo Leinen, Chairman of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs of the European Parliament.
- 20 June Presentation by HE Mr Nicholas Archer, British High Commissioner, on cost effective diplomacy.
- 27 June Meeting with Mr Marek Belka, Head of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and former Prime Minister of Poland, on The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe - strengthening economic cooperation in Europe.



- 5 July Meeting with Mr Jacques Barrot, Vice President of the European Commission and Commissioner responsible for Transport.
- 11 July Meeting with HE Mr Antonio Augusto Russo Dias, Ambassador of Portugal, on the work programme of the Portuguese Presidency of the EU between July and December 2007.
- 3 October Meeting with a Russian delegation from the region of St Petersburg; Presentation by Hon Michael Frendo, Minister for Foreign Affairs, on the latest developments on Kosovo and official visits abroad in relation to the Maltese candidature for Secretary General to the Commonwealth.
- 8 October Discussion on the French initiative of a Mediterranean Union.
- 17 October Meeting with HE Mr Jean-Marc Rives, Ambassador of France.
- 29 October Video conference with Dr Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union.
- 14 November Meeting with a delegation from the parliamentary committee on foreign policy of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
- 19 November Meeting with a delegation from the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Majlis Ash Shura – Consultative Council – of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

MEETINGS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS 2007

- 15 January Scrutiny of a Communication from the Commission to the Council on European policies concerning youth participation and information - Follow-up to the White Paper on New Impetus for European Youth: Implementing the common objectives for participation by and information for young people in view of promoting their active European citizenship;
Scrutiny of a proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund.
- 22 January Knowledge economy.
- 29 January Scrutiny of a Proposal for a Council Decision on authorising Member States to ratify, in the interests of the European Community, the 2006 Consolidated Maritime Labour Convention of the International Labour Organisation.
- 5 February Discussion regarding the conference organised by the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity on “Enhancing Social Inclusion – moving forward together”.
- 19 February Knowledge economy (cont.).
- 21 February Reflections on social justice: housing and related matters.
- 26 February Knowledge economy (cont.).
- 27 February Consultation on the appointment of the Commissioner for Children.
- 26 March Communication from the Commission on the demographic future of Europe - from challenge to opportunity.
- 27 March Knowledge economy (cont.).
- 2 May Equal Projects – promoting equal opportunities through empowerment.
- 7 May Meeting with a delegation of the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament.
- 6 June Knowledge economy (cont.).
- 13 June Knowledge economy (cont.).
- 25 June Commissioner for Children Annual Report for the year 2006.
- 3 July Knowledge economy (cont.).
- 17 July Discussion regarding the Voluntary Organisations Act.
- 10 September Meeting with HE Dr Meglena Kuneva, EU Commissioner responsible for Consumers.



10 December Consultation regarding the appointment of Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations;
Scrutiny of a Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the midterm review of the Strategy on Life Sciences and Biotechnology.

**MEETINGS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE
CONSIDERATION OF BILLS
2007**

12 February	Central Bank of Malta (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 86</i>)
21 February	Code of Police Laws (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 75</i>)
2 May	Code of Organisation and Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 77</i>)
14 May	Code of Organisation and Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill (cont.) (<i>Bill 77</i>) Civil Code (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 79</i>)
16 May	Civil Code (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 72</i>)
23 May	Civil Code (Amendment) Bill (cont.) (<i>Bill 72</i>)
5 June	Foster Care Bill (<i>Bill 89</i>)
6 June	Civil Code (Amendment) Bill (cont.) (<i>Bill 79</i>)
19 June	Maltese Citizenship (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 93</i>) Foster Care Bill (cont.) (<i>Bill 89</i>)
26 June	Civil Code (Amendment) Bill (cont.) (<i>Bill 79</i>)
27 June	Foster Care Bill (cont.) (<i>Bill 89</i>)
4 July	Medicines (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 95</i>)
4 July	Companies (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 88</i>)
10 July	Foster Care Bill (cont.) (<i>Bill 89</i>)
11 July	Malta Resources Authority (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 96</i>)
17 July	Foster Care Bill (cont.) (<i>Bill 89</i>)
17 July	Housing (Decontrol) (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 90</i>)
18 July	Various Financial Services (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 99</i>) Companies (Amendment) Bill (cont.) (<i>Bill 88</i>)
18 July	Port Workers Ordinance (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 100</i>)
7 September	Voluntary Organisations Bill (<i>Bill 80</i>)
13 September	Voluntary Organisations Bill (cont.) (<i>Bill 80</i>)
20 September	Voluntary Organisations Bill (cont.) (<i>Bill 80</i>)



26 October	Malta-USA Ship-Boarding Agreements (Ratification) Bill (<i>Bill 102</i>)
31 October	Various Laws (Energy Resources) (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 105</i>)
4 December	Housing Authority (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 107</i>)
10 December	Malta Standards Authority and Various Laws (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 98</i>)
10 December	Communications Laws (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 103</i>)
11 December	Criminal Matters (Amendment) Bill (<i>Bill 110</i>)

**MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
2007**

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 5 February | Annual report and financial accounts of the National Audit Office for 2005; Estimates of the National Audit Office for 2007. |
| 6 March | Resolution on the transfer of property in Ricasoli, limits of Kalkara, to SmartCity (Malta) Ltd. |
| 12 March | Resolution on the transfer of property in Ricasoli, limits of Kalkara, to SmartCity (Malta) Ltd (cont). |
| 10 October | Resolution on the transfer of property to the MUSEUM society in Pembroke, the transfer of properties in Santa Venera, Cospicua and Rabat to the Scouts Associations and the transfer of property in Floriana to the Floriana Football Club. |



**MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT PLANNING
2007**

30 April Appointment of an Audit Officer with the Malta Environment and Planning Authority.

PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP GROUPS

10th Legislature

Australia

Hon John Dalli
Hon Mario de Marco
Hon Frederick Azzopardi

Hon Leo Brincat
Hon Joseph Cuschieri
Hon Joe Mizzi

Estonia

Hon John Dalli
Hon Mario de Marco
Hon Franco Galea

Hon Stefan Buontempo
Hon Roderick Galdes
Hon Joe Debono Grech

France

Hon Jason Azzopardi
Hon David Agius
Hon Joseph Falzon
Hon Mario Galea

Hon Evarist Bartolo
Hon Leo Brincat
Hon Noel Farrugia

Germany

Hon Michael Asciak
Hon Jason Azzopardi
Hon Joseph Falzon
Hon Michael Gonzi

Hon Carmelo Abela
Hon Evarist Bartolo
Hon Leo Brincat
Hon Joseph Cuschieri

Italy

Hon Michael Asciak
Hon John Dalli
Hon Mario de Marco
Hon Franco Galea

Hon Carmelo Abela
Hon Evarist Bartolo
Hon Leo Brincat
Hon Joseph Cuschieri

Libya

Hon Jason Azzopardi
Hon Mario Galea
Hon Michael Gonzi

Hon Joseph Abela
Hon Leo Brincat
Hon Noel Farrugia

Saudi Arabia

Hon John Dalli
Hon Michael Asciak
Hon Mario de Marco

Hon Leo Brincat
Hon Roderick Galdes
Hon Joseph Sammut

Slovenia

Hon John Dalli
Hon Michael Asciak
Hon Joseph Falzon

Hon Carmelo Abela
Hon Leo Brincat
Hon Joe Mizzi

Tunisia

Hon Mario Galea
Hon David Agius
Hon Robert Arrigo

Hon Joseph Abela
Hon Chris Agius
Hon Stefan Buontempo
Hon Justyne Caruana

United Kingdom

Hon Mario Galea
Hon Jason Azzopardi
Hon Joseph Falzon

Hon Leo Brincat
Hon Angelo Farrugia
Hon Noel Farrugia



House of Representatives
Staff complement

Speaker's Secretariat

Diplomatic Officer

Office of the Clerk

Clerk of the House

Senior Clerk Assistant *

Clerk Assistants (3)

Research Analysts (4)

Committee Clerks (2)

Principals (3)

Assistant Principal

Recorder of Debates

Executive Officers (3) **

Senior Clerk

Clerks (9) ***

Officer in Charge Minor Staff

Messengers (2)

- * currently on parental leave
- ** 2 currently on parental leave
- *** 1 currently on parental leave

