



Press Release

PR 160176

29.01.2016

PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

Speaker of the House of Representatives receives the Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba

Speaker Anglu Farrugia has this morning received a courtesy visit from Alba Beatriz Soto Pimentel, Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba to Malta.

With diplomatic relations established in 1977, Speaker Farrugia expressed positive remarks on the long-standing diplomatic cooperation between the Republic of Malta and the Republic of Cuba, and welcomed the prospects of deepening relations between the two countries.

Speaking on the multiple prospects for cooperative ventures, the two dignitaries agreed that discussion and exchange on areas of mutual interest such as; trade, health, culture and education, could present novel opportunities for both sides. In addition, Speaker Farrugia spoke about and underlined the significant value to use Parliamentary Diplomacy as a catalyst for re-kindled political and economical relations between Malta and the Republic of Cuba. Turning the focus towards Cuba's relation with international partners, Speaker Farrugia, welcomed the resumption of Cuban diplomatic relations with the US and the lifting of the embargo by the latter.

From a European perspective, ongoing negotiations on the EU-Cuba Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement and the EU-CELAC Summit are important to support mutually-benefitting trading relations between the two regional blocks. Speaker Farrugia explained that this is an excellent time to enhance commercial opportunities, but also reinforce dialogue at a people to people level. Furthermore, both dignitaries agreed that the upcoming Malta's EU Presidency and the EU-CELAC meeting in Bolivia in 2017 could serve as important leverage to step up relations and deepen the political dialogue at both bilateral and multi-lateral levels.

The Cuban Ambassador was accompanied by Mr Jesús Felix Caballero Rodríguez, First Secretary for Cultural and Scientific Affairs at the Embassy of the Republic of Cuba.