



Press Release

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Speaker Anġlu Farrugia addresses the closing ceremony of the annual conference of the MaltMUN—“It is a shared responsibility to ensure content shared online is true and is not intended to merge fictitious stories with facts”

Speaker Anġlu Farrugia addressed the closing ceremony and presented awards to participants taking part at this year’s Malta Model United Nations (MaltMUN) Society Conference hosted by the House of Representatives between 14 and 16 September 2018. The theme of this year’s annual conference was the digital age, ‘Universal Deceit: Control, ALT, Delete’.

The Speaker welcomed the society’s initiative and commitment to be a leading organisation in promoting greater participation and engagement by young professionals in UN-focused conferences and competitions, public-speaking, debating and diplomacy. Participants addressed the topic of privacy and misinformation through the simulation of UN Committees, mainly the UN Security Council, the Fourth Committee Special Political and Decolonisation, the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Environment Programme. The MaltMUN Society strategically identified the importance and centrality of a multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder approach integrating in their programme various interrelated elements directly or indirectly linked to the digital age.

The Speaker explained that today we live in an interconnected world where human interaction is facilitated and the exchange of ideas and knowledge is carried out in real time. Nonetheless, he highlighted that the internet is also home to a number of false or malicious content that has a direct effect on society and how citizens interpret national and international affairs. He questioned the responsibility of fact-checking sources, especially for journalists acting as the bridge between informative facts and the people. He also emphasised that the speed and quick reactions brought about by the digital age are forcing journalists to be less investigative and more sensationalistic, creating grave consequences for the type of news generated and distributed to the population.

Speaker Anġlu Farrugia recognised that it is a shared responsibility to ensure content shared online is truthful and is not intended to merge fictitious stories with facts. It is even more important for key political and religious figures to understand the power and influence they exert when reposting articles or writing tweets on issues of common concern. Therefore, he called for increased accountability and importance to promote critical literacy from a young age. Only through a thorough analysis of the content presented can citizens, especially the younger generation, be able to differentiate between facts and fabricated stories.

Upon concluding, the Speaker highlighted the need to employ a joint holistic approach to counter the universal deceit of the digital age and to use the internet as a peaceful and unifying tool.