



Press Release

PR 182225

16.10.2018

PRESS RELEASE BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Maltese Parliament delegation participates in the Inter-Parliamentary Conference for the CFSP and CSDP

A delegation of the Maltese Parliament, composed of MPs Alex Muscat and Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici, participated in the Inter-Parliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) held in Vienna, between 10 and 12 October 2018 in the framework of the parliamentary dimension of the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The debate revolved around current topics of foreign policy including parliamentary control of the EU foreign, security and defence policy, taking a closer look at the stabilisation of the Western Balkans, the Global Strategy of the EU, and the EU's role in international conflicts.

The conference recalled the need for a holistic EU approach to migration based on solidarity and full respect for human rights, which ensures coherence between the EU's internal and external policies, encompasses all migration routes, in compliance with international law. With regard to the European contribution to the improvement of the political and humanitarian situation in Syria, an inclusive dialogue should remain the EU's main priority by involving all different key stakeholders and urging them to return to the negotiation table. The UN-led Geneva process is the only path that can lead towards a peaceful, united, independent and truly democratic Syria, in all its diversity.

The conference also confirmed the unequivocal support and strengthened engagement for tangible progress in the EU accession of the Western Balkan countries, based on shared interests, values and principles. There have been reform efforts undertaken in the region but more political will is needed to resolve the remaining impasses through reconciliation, impunity and regional co-operation, thus ensuring a secure and sustainable European future for the Western Balkans. The conference reiterated its full support for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and the EU in order to undertake all possible efforts to ensure that the Iranian people continue to benefit from the nuclear deal.

The conference welcomed the concerted efforts made by EU institutions and member states to tackle the issues of military mobility within the framework of PESCO, while respecting the position of other non-participating EU member states. The conference also featured the Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE), a key partner in the East-West dialogue and an integral player in the Euro-Atlantic, Eurasian security and architecture. The Helsinki Principles and commitments remain fully valid and are key for sustainable peace in Europe.

At the end of the conference, the representatives of the parliaments of the South of the EU, including Malta, adopted a declaration outlining the common challenges faced by the countries of the South of

the EU in the field of European foreign affairs and defence. Migration demands a global approach, including a strengthening of dialogue and cooperation with origin, transit and destination countries for migrations, particularly Mediterranean and African countries. The initiative announced by President Juncker, in his State of the Union Speech delivered on the 12 September 2018, to further strengthen the European Border and Coast Guard to better protect the external borders of the EU with an additional 10,000 European border guards by 2020, was eagerly welcomed by the parliaments of the South of the EU and called on EU governments to put the EU burden-sharing plan into action. At the end, the representatives of the South invited the next presidencies to reinstate the practice of adopting conclusions at the end of the Conference for CFSP and CSDP.