



---

# Press Release

---

PR 190071

17.01.2019

## **PRESS RELEASE BY THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER**

### *The Speaker of the House of Representatives presides over the 8<sup>th</sup> High-Level Meeting of the Parliaments of the 5+5 Western Mediterranean Dialogue Member States*

For the first time, the Maltese Parliament is hosting the parliamentary meeting of the countries of the 5+5 Western Mediterranean Dialogue. The meeting is being organised together with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), acting as the secretariat of the parliamentary dimension of the 5+5 Western Mediterranean Dialogue.

In his opening address, after welcoming the delegates from the North and South of the Western Mediterranean, Speaker Anglu Farrugia reaffirmed the importance of recognising the unique composition of the 5+5 Western Mediterranean Dialogue, commonly known as the 5+5. Created in Rome on 10 December 1990, the 5+5 has in the past years been establishing a strong platform for dialogue by bringing together members from Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Mauritania, Malta, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and France. During the Second Summit of Heads of State and Government which took place in Malta in October 2012, it was proposed and agreed upon to introduce a parliamentary component of the said 5+5 Western Mediterranean Dialogue.

The Speaker explained that the meeting reasserts the shared belief that the Mediterranean is a sea of opportunity and a mosaic of traditions and people. Speaking on the agenda items of the meeting, Farrugia highlighted the fact that the three topics to be discussed during the meeting, namely sustainable development, migration, and youth, are three important elements in the Mediterranean and that a serious discussion on shared challenges and opportunities is important. Speaking about migration, the Speaker expressed regret that, in some cases, humanitarian assistance is delayed due to a futile war of words, especially on social media. He called on the Members of Parliament present to keep governments accountable and place the well-being of human lives before any political issues.

Speaker Farrugia further highlighted that Members of Parliament are best positioned to address any ongoing phenomenon and this through their legislative work, parliamentary diplomacy, and dialogue with the constituency. On this last point, the Speaker emphasised that maintaining an open dialogue with the constituency is very important, especially when discussing issues of grave concern such as the depletion of the environment, the future of young people, and perceptions linked to migration flows in the Mediterranean.

President of the Parliamentary Assembly for the Mediterranean Pedro Roque also addressed the participants during the opening session of the meeting. He underlined the importance of increasing cooperation, and promoting job creation and concrete economic opportunities to ward off radicalisation.

Various members of parliament from the 5+5 Western Mediterranean Dialogue Member States, including the Maltese PAM delegation, are also participating in this meeting.

The address by Speaker Farrugia is herewith attached.