



Press Release

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“Let us continue to sustain our European project by working together and putting all our efforts to ensure respect, dignity, peace and wellbeing for all”.

President of Malta, Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, presided over the inaugural concert held in Brussels to mark the beginning of the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union adding that it is “a celebration of our shared European identity and values”.

Naming this ‘a historical moment’ for Malta, President Coleiro Preca said that this legacy, with strong roots in the identities of our peoples, must continue to unite us in these uncertain times. “It is this legacy of democratic freedoms and fundamental human rights, which must continue to safeguard and promote the values we hold dear, and which form the spirit of our European family of nations”, the President said.

The values of respect, solidarity, dignity and resilience must continue to be our way forward to further develop the future potential of our European project.

Even though the European Union is one of the largest global trading blocs, and even though many of our citizens enjoy high standards of living and unprecedented opportunities for development, she said that we cannot allow ourselves to forget that there are individuals, families and communities who are not yet enjoying the benefits of this prosperity. The President stressed on the fact that our economic growth needs to be paralleled by the strengthening of our commitment to a European social solidarity approach.

The President appealed to all those present at the inaugural concert and said that, “we cannot allow ourselves to be isolated from the real concerns of our citizens. We must call for effective policies that speak to peoples’ experiences and embrace every member of society, especially the most vulnerable”, and went on to say that the thoughts and actions of all active players within the European Union should always be guided by a common commitment to solidarity, as they “continue to explore urgent issues, which include strategies for social inclusion, the safeguarding of security and the strengthening of the single market”.

We must be brave and we must speak the truth.

This, she said, is the only way through which the European Union can act effectively, so as to achieve sustainable peace and meaningful wellbeing in the lives of all.

President Coleiro Preca invited those present to continue working to make our Europe “a living example of the democratic ideals and commitment to active and inclusive citizenship, which have always defined us as Europeans, and which must continue to be our great contribution to the world”.

The President stated that “we must face today’s challenges courageously, as leaders and as peace-builders” and that everyone should endeavour to make the necessary effective and deep-rooted change which nurtures each member of our societies and allows them to achieve their full potential. In her concluding remarks, President Coleiro Preca reaffirmed Malta’s commitment to preside the European Union Council as a neutral mediator during these challenging times, “aiming to reunite our peoples and our nations”, whilst encouraging all to continue to sustain the European project by working together, “and putting all our efforts to ensure respect, dignity, peace and wellbeing for all, in our communities, across our nations, and within all of our European Union”.