



Press Release

PR 170115

20.01.2017

PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Exchange of New Year's Greetings with the Honorary Consular Corps

“We must never lose sight of the fact that the underlying and basic purpose of all our institutions and authorities is to promote wellbeing; to safeguard universal human rights; and to secure meaningful peace for all”

At The Grandmaster's Palace in Valletta, the President of Malta Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca welcomed members of the Honorary Consular Corps for the annual exchange of greetings for the New Year.

During her address, President Coleiro Preca expressed her gratitude to the Honorary Consuls for all their work, “to ensure that the complex relationships which unite our peoples are able to function more smoothly.”

“The centre of your work is therefore the importance of relationship building”

The President said that the Honorary Consuls create an environment in which the needs and aspirations of others can be transformed into opportunities for prosperity, with lasting benefits across societies.

“Consuls are expected to develop professional networks, which keep our countries informed about national and regional opportunities, while also providing citizen-centred services, and promoting cultural exchanges,” President Coleiro Preca said.

In light of the fact that the rise of aggressive populism in many of our countries poses a dangerous threat to healthy relationships, as well as being a growing threat to fundamental human rights, the President said that we all must work together, ‘as people of goodwill’, to affirm the centrality of our free democracies. She added that consuls have the great responsibility to promote the dignity of each and every person, while also safeguarding the rule of law, calling this the “fundamental standard to which we must all be held accountable”.

The President said that she is hopeful that Malta's Presidency of the Council of the European Union will provide a platform from which to reaffirm our commitment to our democratic values. “Whether in the political, economic, social, or cultural sectors, the honorary consular corps must continue to uphold our shared values,” the President added.

“The prosperity of our peoples, our nations, our regions, and indeed our world, depends on how faithfully we abide by the hard-won legacy of universal rights and freedoms, which define us as an enlightened human family”

The President said that the role of consular diplomacy in our globalised world, as a champion of this legacy, is essential.

The President encouraged all those present not to allow themselves to be closed from the potential of relationships, and said that they have the ability to be powerful agents of peace within their own spheres of influence, among the many different individuals and entities with whom they come into contact.

President Coleiro Preca appealed to all Honorary Consuls present to include in their activities, a steadfast commitment to a global solidarity approach, and said that “we cannot limit ourselves to securing our own national interests at the expense of a more global and all-embracing vision for the future of our world”.

“Stronger businesses can only flourish in an environment of solidarity and peace. Healthier relationships can only be built in an environment of solidarity and peace. Closer collaborations between our nations can only take root in an environment of solidarity and peace,” the President stated.

Finally, the President said that nothing must be taken for granted “because we are seeing how quickly circumstances can change.” She called for those present to be vigilant, and to embrace their responsibility to be vocal and active champions of solidarity, of peace, and of wellbeing.