



Union Interparlementaire
Pour la démocratie. Pour tous.

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Hon. Speaker of the Parliament of Malta,
President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean,
Secretary-General of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean,
Distinguished parliamentarians,
Honorable guests,

Over the last two days we closely observed the context in Europe and the Mediterranean region. Not only did we learn about the challenges and opportunities of the recent migratory trends across our countries, but we also acknowledged our political role in protecting the rights of migrants and refugees; promoting their inclusion into our societies for the benefit of both; and being outspoken against xenophobia, discrimination and racism. More importantly, through a rich and mindful dialogue, we arrived to fundamental proposals and strategies that will guide our efforts to guarantee the safety of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers.

Human mobility is intrinsic to the human condition. This social phenomenon is not new to the world, nor is it to our region. While it is true that the flow of people migrating across the Mediterranean was unexpected, so is it that our resilience has made it possible for us to see this challenge through. But this is not over. Now we must look beyond our borders. We must recognize the reality of the current international scene: appalling levels of poverty and inequalities, persistent violence and armed conflicts, hunger and disease.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear colleagues,

The negotiations for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration are a few months away and as representatives of the peoples in Europe and the Mediterranean we have a lot to contribute with. The knowledge and understanding gained through the experiences of our countries, our input, from a legislative perspective, will be crucial for the success of the Global Compact and its implementation.

The past two days have been fundamental to this end. Let us build on the momentum of this Conference and honor our commitment to bolster democratic values and social and economic development within our societies, and beyond. More than that, we encourage you, as parliamentarians and overseers of government action to work together,

bring to fruition the strategies discussed during this Conference and promote them into our domestic legislations and national policies. Let us heighten the public debate back home where the respect and protection of Human Rights are at the center of each of our efforts.

Last and certainly not least, we offer our sincere thanks to the Parliament of Malta and its staff, who has worked hardly with the IPU to make this Conference possible. We would also like to thank the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean and our distinguished guests and panelists. You all brought richness and meaning to our event and contribute to make of this a very constructive dialogue.

We particularly thank our fellows parliamentarians, who played a pivotal role in this Conference. Despite our different backgrounds, ideas and perspectives, we must continue working together to figure out ways in which we can tackle one of the biggest challenges of our days and transform it into a window of opportunity for the growth of all our societies.

Let us harness this spirit of cooperation and find the strength in our diversity. There is still a long way to go. On behalf of IPU and in collaboration with PAM, we invite you all to continue working together to guarantee the safety and well-being of the people who wish to find a

better life in our countries. We are certain that we can build a stronger and more resilient region with the participation of everyone in it.

Thank you.