

Speech during lunch hosted by Duke of Edinburgh's International Award

Your Royal Highness, I congratulate you for the vision you had in introducing the Duke of Edinburgh Award, that has run for so many years. This Award has changed the lives of so many young people. It has helped many to become responsible citizens.

It is with pleasure that I address you all, as former participants of the Duke of Edinburgh International Award. I am so pleased that, as former awardees, you had the foresight of choosing to enhance your personal development through your participation in the Award.

I truly admire you for your achievements. I am very proud of our Maltese young people.

I admire their enthusiasm for life.

I admire their creativity and entrepreneurship.

I truly admire their altruism in doing things for others.

Definitely, this Award helps to develop the talents and personal skills of young people, hence giving them the opportunity to reach their full potential.

The fact that participants experience team spirit, becoming aware of the needs of society in which they live, and decide to help in the development of their community, is so commendable.

More importantly, the Award promotes the values of inclusivity, respect, unity and active citizenship. I truly wish that every young person engages in such initiatives to acquire a sense of purpose in life.

In the face of today's scourge, that is, of young people encouraged to become radicalised, it is our responsibility to ensure that our young people are given the opportunity to engage in positive initiatives which we as their leaders today, need to provide for them.

Let's ensure that the voices of altruism prevail over those of extremism, to promote security, justice, democracy and opportunities for all, more vigorously.

I encourage our young people to believe in themselves, and in their capabilities:

I encourage our young people to develop the confidence in bringing about change, no matter how small.

I encourage our young people to develop into caring and inclusive individuals so as our communities who need our support, will find it.

I believe that every young person should be given the opportunity to develop their true potential and to learn skills that will give them a better chance in life, while we, as their leaders today, have the responsibility to create the necessary space that ensures their inclusion and wellbeing.

On concluding, I would like to emphasise my pride in your achievements, and for having the initiative, zeal and courage to take up the challenge and become better individuals, for yourselves, your families, your communities and our country.