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# Press Release

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**PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**

*Speech by the President of Malta Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca at the launch of Prince's Trust International*

I extend a very warm welcome to you all, and in particular, to the Trustees, the team and the donors, of the Prince's Trust International.

It is indeed an honour for Malta to be the first country chosen, as an International partner of the Prince's Trust.

It gives me deep satisfaction to recall my visits to the Prince's Trust in London, in September last year and again, in March, this year, and the subsequent visits to Malta by officials of the Prince's Trust, where we discussed our potential collaboration and the way forward.

I was deeply touched by the dedication shown by all of you, and your commitment to the vision of your Trust.

I fondly remember the lovely occasion we attended to celebrate the success in March, where the efforts of British young people were acknowledged, as they embarked on a new life.

It is the need to empower such vulnerable young people who, due to their life circumstances, are experiencing a difficult life, are unemployed, marginalized or at risk of poverty, that drives our passion to do more.

A year and a half ago, I came to the Presidency with a special mandate, that of helping to address poverty and social exclusion.

In this regard, this Presidency is endeavouring to seek, in various ways, the wellbeing of all people in Maltese society, and in particular, children and young people experiencing inequalities.

In fact, earlier this year, I launched the President's Trust.

I am proud that we have created a structure that can give support to young people, to empower them to gradually change their lives, and to aim for a brighter future.

I am convinced that, when we invest in our young people, we are investing in our present, and in the future leadership of our country.

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The President's Trust is seeking to help to break the cycle of poverty, the cycle of social benefits, and the cycle of crime.

Hence, the President's Trust is encouraging vulnerable young people to improve their lives.

We are seeking empowerment, through learning adapted to their preferences, or training them in trades, learning how to start a business, and personal and social development.

The Trust will also be focusing on vulnerable young people who are in out-of-home care or had a brush with justice.

The work of the President's Trust is based on scientific evidence taken from local research.

The study entitled "Early School Leaving and Wellbeing in Malta and Beyond", due to be published imminently, by my Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society, found that, early school leaving, is strongly associated with greater feelings of social exclusion, serious financial difficulties and material deprivation.

Every young person is our concern, especially those not in employment or education or in vocational training.

Every young person in difficulty and lacking the psychosocial support, should worry us.

It is here where our collaborative efforts between our two Trusts, can multiply the positive outcomes that can be achieved.

We sincerely believe that each and every young person has the strengths, abilities and skills that can be further developed, empowered and put to good use, to ensure that everyone where possible reach their full potential.

In this way, every person can live with dignity, being an asset to society and contributing to the economy.

Your forty years of experience as the Prince's Trust, obviously proves that there are methods that work effectively.

On the other hand, I believe there is no magic wand. And without a doubt, our contexts are also different.

But with hard work, determination and professional interventions we can achieve our goals, for the benefit of our young people.

Today, I am delighted to be in touch with the first concrete actions taken by the President's Trust. The Get Into project and the XL programme are now alive.

In particular, Your Royal Highness, I join you in thanking HSBC, Marks and Spencer and Supermarkets 1960, for their invaluable support and contribution.

I am confident that many other businesses and private companies will hopefully follow suit compelled by the good cause of our initiative, understanding the responsibility that we share to fight poverty and social exclusion amongst our young population.

For the President's Trust, this is only the beginning....

Much more is still to come.

It is with great enthusiasm to be able to collaborate with you on this mission.

I would also like to augur the Prince's Trust International success on your new assignment outside the United Kingdom.

I am sure you will go far because the lives of young persons in vulnerable situations deserve this commitment and more.

Your Royal Highness, I appreciate your vision, your personal contribution and commitment, to the good of humanity.

In a globalised world, ameliorating the lives of the vulnerable is serving humankind.