



Press Release

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Speech by President of Malta Marie Louise Coleiro Preca at a reception for the Honorary Consular Corps annual reception

[Presidents Emeriti]

[Honorable Members of Parliament]

Your Excellences

Distinguished guests

It is my pleasure to welcome the members of the Honorary Consular Corps of Malta to the Palace. Evenings such as this provide us with an opportunity to celebrate your accomplishments throughout the year, while also reaffirming the core values that underpin your work moving forward.

Now more than ever, as the world enters a period of increasing uncertainty, we must be strong in our commitment to these core values. We must affirm the centrality of democratic process; of the fundamental dignity of each and every person; and the safeguarding of the rule of law.

In all areas of political, economic, social, and cultural development, the honorary consular corps is well positioned to promote our dedication to the prosperity and wellbeing of our nations, our regions, and our world.

Consular diplomacy is becoming ever more essential in the globalised world and economy. Although honorary consuls often find themselves engaged in more traditional activities, like citizen services and cultural promotion, the expansion of this remit to include more explicitly socio-economic benefits has gained obvious importance.

Nations now expect their honorary consuls to nurture rich professional networks, which provide detailed information about local, national, and regional developments. The importance of business and commerce interests, in every corner of the globe, means that the need for a strong a consular presence must be a top priority.

Attachments: photos

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The value of honorary consuls to trade and investment promotion, tourism opportunities, and cultural engagement is clear to each one of us. Above all these, let me also encourage you to use your influence to become powerful catalysts for peace.

It is this focus, on fostering processes of sustainable and meaningful peace, that I wish you to advocate for, in the years ahead.

It is vital that each one of us considers, no matter our role, how we are helping to create what scholar Johan Galtung calls “a positive peace”. By this, he means something distinct from peace which is defined simply as the absence of violence, oppression, or conflict.

A positive peace is one in which the ideals of democracy are actively encouraged.

A positive peace is one in which each member of society is made to feel included, and is invited to participate in the political, social, economic, and cultural spheres.

A positive peace is one in which the legacy that we owe to our future generations is kept foremost in our minds, thereby encouraging us to develop strategies of long-term benefit for all.

Your role as members of the Honorary Consular Corps provides an opportunity to be of service, in the pursuit of positive peace. It provides an opportunity to be visible role models of the commitment we share towards achieving these urgent ambitions.

You serve as a point of reference, linking different groups and communities to national and international systems of governance and support. You are guardians of access and agents of connection, on behalf of the peoples you represent.

I am confident that you shall continue to build stronger relationships between the communities, the societies, and the nations that have extended hands of friendship to Malta, and have been greeted as friends in return.

In this way, we shall continue to develop opportunities for mutual benefit and sustainable growth in every sector.

The progress we have made, not only as nations but as one human family, must be safeguarded. We must not take for granted the great gains we have acquired in the upholding of Human Rights, in global economic expansion, and in the preservation of the rule of law.

In conclusion, let me express my gratitude, on behalf of the people of Malta, for the work you continue to do. As honorary consuls, you play a critical role in maintaining the complex interdependencies which unite our nations, and our world.

Your success will be measured by the ways you have been able to adapt to the changes occurring in international diplomacy; the ways you enable better trade, tourism, and investment promotion; and the links you are able to sustain in the social and cultural sectors.

Most essentially, your success must be measured in the ways that these benefits translate into the promotion of a positive peace, which ensures prosperity and wellbeing in the lives of our families, our communities, our societies and our nations.

Thank you and enjoy your evening.