

**ADDRESS BY HE MARIE-LOUISE COLEIRO PRECA, PRESIDENT  
OF MALTA, ON THE OCCASSION OF THE NATIONAL DAY OF  
EGYPT**

**20 July 2017**

**Hon. Minister**

**Excellencies**

**Dear Friends**

**Your Excellency, I truly appreciate your kind welcome, at this celebration of the 65th anniversary since Egypt was declared a Republic.**

**Let me also take this opportunity to thank you for all the work you have done, throughout your time as Ambassador, and to wish you great success in all your future endeavours.**

**Please convey our best wishes for this occasion, in my name and on behalf of the Government and the People of Malta, to His Excellency, President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, and to the Government and the People of Egypt.**

**Excellent relations are continuously developing between our nations, relations that were officially established in 1965. However, our historical connection between our nations, and our peoples, is far older, than the start of our formal relations.**

**There was a time in our history when Maltese communities settled in Egypt, in search of new opportunities and prosperity for themselves and their families. Maltese people laid down roots in Egypt, most notably in Alexandria, and some of their descendants are still living there today.**

**Furthermore, the geographical proximity of our countries, and our shared commitment to peace and wellbeing in the Mediterranean, also creates opportunities for greater understanding between our nations.**

**I believe that nurturing such connections, between our respective communities and societies, is so essential. In this way, we shall promote our shared values of peace, of dialogue, and of friendship.**

**I am pleased to note that various meetings, held between Maltese and Egyptian officials, over the past months.**

**These meetings continued to strengthen the already excellent bilateral relations between Malta and Egypt, by expanding the scope of political, economic, and commercial ties between our two countries.**

**As we are all aware, Egypt is a major Mediterranean stakeholder. Moreover, it is one of Africa's largest economies, and it is strategically located, close to Malta.**

**For this reason, cultivating closer links between our peoples, including our respective business communities and cultural sectors, should continue to be encouraged.**

**Let me also take this opportunity to commend Egypt's efforts to address the phenomenon of migration, through various efforts which have been undertaken.**

**I must also underline the importance of continued EU support to Egypt, and the need for all stakeholders to implement the outcomes of the Joint Valletta Action Plan on Migration, in order to address the challenges being posed by the reactivation of the Central Mediterranean migration route.**

**We must continue to support each other, fostering synergies between national authorities and civil society activists, to safeguard the dignity of all people who are caught up in dangerous journeys, to rescue their lives or in search of a better life.**

**Furthermore, Malta fully supports European efforts to develop a close relationship with Egypt. There is much scope for enhanced cooperation between the European**

**Union and Egypt, to effectively address the underlying factors, and drivers of terrorism and extremism.**

**We must do more to create united responses, between all stakeholders of goodwill, to nurture peace within our Mediterranean Region and beyond.**

**Therefore, Malta looks forward to the forthcoming EU-Egypt Association Council, and I am confident that these meetings will offer increased opportunities for dialogue and cooperation, on diverse matters, between the European Union and Egypt.**

**Let us continue to facilitate cooperative processes of peaceful social transformation, with benefits throughout our Mediterranean Region. Malta will certainly keep building on such opportunities for peace building.**

**These opportunities for peace building are reflected, for example, through the educational opportunities being offered by MEDAC, the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, and the International Maritime Law Institute, at the University of Malta.**

**I believe we must keep fostering links between the University of Malta and Universities in Egypt, thereby encouraging person-to-person contacts and academic exchanges, which will broaden the scope of our bilateral cooperation.**

**In all of our efforts within the Mediterranean Region, Malta is firmly committed to promote inclusive processes of democratic participation; to uphold universal human rights; and to emphasise the rule of law.**

**Let us continue working together, to achieve solidarity and peace between the cultures and communities of our**

**Mediterranean region. In so doing, we shall be promoting economic prosperity and holistic wellbeing, for all our peoples.**

**On this special occasion, as we celebrate Egypt's National Day, let us therefore reaffirm our commitment, to pursue a global solidarity approach, which recognises and celebrates the dignity of each and every individual, family, and community in our Mediterranean, and beyond.**

**Your Excellency, let us drink to your health and your future, and to the health of all our peoples.**

**Please enjoy the rest of the evening.**