
*Speech by H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta during the
Official Dinner hosted by H.E. Petro Poroshenko, President of Ukraine*

17th October 2017

**Your Excellency, Pedro Poroshenko, President of Ukraine, Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,
Dear friends,**

It is my pleasure to be in your beautiful country, for this historical State Visit.

This visit has created further opportunities to connect, and to explore and develop new and diverse collaborations, in areas of trade, education, industry, and other sectors.

I am even more convinced after today's constructive deliberations, that there is ample scope to explore new avenues of cooperation at all levels, as there is the necessary political will, between our two countries, to achieve results.

The signing of the Memoranda of Understanding on Bilateral Consultations, which we signed last May, enables us to further strengthen dialogue and cooperation between our two governments.

Of equal importance are the proposed Programme of Cooperation in the Youth Field, the Field of Physical Culture and Sports, and the Agreement between the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise, and Industry, and the Ukraine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which have been concluded during this visit.

These agreements will certainly open further opportunities, in a variety of areas.

Dear President, let us continue to nurture and encourage stronger ties at all levels, both governmental and within civil society, for the benefit of both of our peoples.

Your Excellency,

The friendship that has developed between our nations also reflects our commitment to shared values. Our firm determination to build sustainable peace within our respective regions, and to achieve solidarity between all nations of goodwill, shall continue to strengthen the ties between us, and our peoples.

We must continue to develop links between our countries, and across the various regions of Europe and beyond, through an ongoing process of dialogue.

Let me take this opportunity to encourage our social, cultural, and business communities to achieve the same aims.

This is an exciting time, for both of our nations.

There are many other new opportunities, which I hope will be explored, in areas that include the tourism industry, aviation services, financial and banking services, the insurance sector, pharmaceuticals, I-gaming, healthcare, education, and the teaching of English as a foreign language.

Furthermore, Malta has been, and shall continue to be, a champion of democracy, and for this reason it is a strong supporter of the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Your Excellency,

I would also like to take the opportunity to commend you for the progress your country is making. The substantial improvements that have been made, and I am convinced Ukraine shall continue to make, are definitely strengthening the resilience and wellbeing of the Ukrainian people.

Let me also highlight the commitment that all nations, including our own, have made, through the United Nations' Agenda 2030 and its seventeen Sustainable Development Goals, to create a culture of equity, equality, inclusion, and peace, for the benefit of all the inhabitants of our world.

I believe that we must continue to build upon our efforts, and those of the international community, with a strong focus on education.

It is only in this way, that children and young people, will enjoy a world that is conducive to peace, prosperity, and wellbeing.

We must also continue to promote deeper person-to-person encounters, between our peoples.

Your Excellency,

Finally, I believe that it is our responsibility to keep exploring further opportunities for our children and young people to come together, in a spirit of friendship.

Our children and our young people are the leaders of tomorrow. It is in this context that we must do our utmost to enhance their understanding of the ideals of peace; the principles of democratic participation; respect for universal human rights and fundamental freedoms; and the upholding of the rule of law.

Let us raise our glasses, and toast to the health of President Poroshenko, the good relations between Malta and Ukraine, and to the peaceful prosperity and holistic wellbeing of both of our peoples.