

**Closing Speech delivered by H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta  
on the occasion of the Domain Group Graduation Ceremony, 15 March 2019**

**[Salutations]**

**Dear faculty,**

**Distinguished guests,**

**and most especially, dear students.**

**I would like to thank Domain Group for inviting me to this important event, over the past years.**

**It is my pleasure to join you and to offer some reflections, about the opportunities that lie ahead of you in your lives, as new graduates.**

**I would also like to commending the Domain Group faculty, for their hard work to provide educational opportunities to so many young people and adults, thereby helping them in their career development and professional life.**

**Nick and Mireille, like me thank you personally for your vision, and for your endeavours during the past ten years, to motivate so many young people to face the world with new skills and knowledge.**

**On the other hand, to all of the students present here today, I would like to convey my heartfelt congratulations of your success.**

**Graduating after completing a course of studies is just an end to one chapter. However, it is definitely the beginning of something new and exciting.**

**Graduation day is also an occasion, where you can feel proud of your achievements, but also, to think about the responsibilities that you will carry into your professional life.**

**I do hope that throughout your future professional endeavours, you will have a vision which embraces a sense of solidarity, social solidarity, and an ethical perspective, towards all those you work with, and with whom you come in contact.**

**The need for such values to be embraced, by each and every one of us, cannot be more urgent than today, when the world seems to be becoming more egocentric and more uncertain.**

**As a result, social tensions and conflicts are not only still prevailing and increasing, but also preventing us from embracing fundamental human rights in their entirety.**

**Therefore, the values of solidarity, social responsibility, and an ethical perspective, are essential to address the worrying current state of affairs, in Europe and around the world, where the vociferous voices of populists and hate-mongers are attempting to drown out our attempts to create a peaceful environment, in which prosperity can flourish.**

**There can never be prosperity, without peace.**

**Each and every one of us share the responsibility to create this environment of peace, and as new graduates who have continued to develop your potential, I believe that you are well placed to be advocates for positive and sustainable change.**

**I believe that peace will always be stronger, because it speaks directly to our hearts and minds, reminding us of our duty to care for one another in a spirit of solidarity.**

**However, inequalities remain a challenge. There are too many people that are being affected by inequalities and injustices, due to their gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, nationality, disabilities, and so many other concerns.**

**Dear graduates, I would like you to perceive that you have a responsibility, now more than before, to help our communities and society, to address such challenges and to make a difference.**

**There is no fixed method in which you can address and overcome these challenges, so you must be bold, creative, and innovative.**

**My generation was guided by our own experiences and convictions, and I believe that it is time for us to make way for you, and to support your generation to lead.**

**However, I also believe that the people of my generation can share some important advice.**

**Most importantly, I would like to emphasise that, as the leaders of tomorrow, you must always guide yourselves by the principles of social justice, of equality, and of freedom.**

**Without these three fundamental values, there can never be a healthy democracy that upholds the processes of sustainable peace and inclusive prosperity.**

**It is not always easy to be a champion of social justice ... or to be a voice for equality ... or to be a defender of freedom.**

**Sometimes, standing up for these values brings us into conflict with others, or even worse, it sometimes feels like it brings us head-to-head with the rest of the world.**

**Therefore, I augur that you will be courageous, and face such challenges with passion and determination. Your success will give you the resilience to ensure that you can contribute to make a real difference, not only in your lives but also in the lives of others.**

**On concluding, let me urge you to make this occasion a momentous turning point in your lives, to commit yourselves towards the values of solidarity, social responsibility, and an ethical perspective.**

**I believe that is the commitment which all of us must make in order to transform our world into a better place, for the benefit of our generation and future generations.**

**Finally, let me once again congratulate you on your achievement, and convey to each and every one of you my very best wishes for the future.**

**Thank you.**