
Address by H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta, on the occasion of the National Day of Egypt, 23rd July 2018

I appreciate your kind welcome, Ambassador, at this celebration of the anniversary since Egypt was declared a Republic.

I would like to convey my sincere regards on 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 continue to be strengthened between our countries, ever since they were officially established in 1965. However, the historical relations between our nations, and our peoples, go back hundreds of years.

In fact, many Maltese people laid down strong roots in Egypt throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, most notably in Alexandria, and some of their descendants are still living there today.

According to national indicators, there were some 400 Egyptian citizens living in Malta last year. This community is a great example of successful inclusion within Maltese society.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the Egyptian diaspora in Malta, for also contributing to the prosperity of our islands.

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.

We have a united history, due to the fact that we share the same Mediterranean Sea and many elements of the same Mediterranean identity.

I believe that nurturing such connections, between our respective peoples, is essential.

Egypt's position as one of the strongest economies in the African continent and Malta's extraordinary economic growth, in the middle of the Euro-Mediterranean Region, continues to create more scope for fruitful collaboration between our social and business communities.

There are many opportunities for Malta and Egypt to work together, and to be catalysts for the creation of greater prosperity throughout our Mediterranean Region.

By seeking further and closer collaborations, both of our countries will also be effectively promoting our mutual values of solidarity and friendship.

These values are evident in the fact bilateral meetings between our authorities have always been regular and constant.

Our continuous exchanges, at the highest political levels, are continuing to develop the already excellent bilateral relations between Malta and Egypt.

Let me also take this opportunity to underline the importance of the continued support, by the European Union, to Egypt.

Malta, as an active member of the European Union, will always support all European efforts to continue to nurture close relations 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, human trafficking, violent extremism, and migration.

To achieve these goals, let us continue to facilitate cooperative processes of peace building. Such 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, both of which are located at the University of Malta.

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 fundamental freedoms; and to safeguard the rule of law.

On concluding, let me take this opportunity to commend the efforts being made by the authorities of Egypt, in particular His Excellency President El-Sisi, to promote and encourage the effective participation of Egyptian women across the social, economic, and political sectors of society.

We must continue working together, for effective solidarity and peace within our countries, and among all the diverse cultures of our Mediterranean region. In so doing, we shall be enhancing economic prosperity and holistic wellbeing, for the benefit of our peoples.

Valletta's ongoing position as European Capital of Culture for 2018 has created new and enriching opportunities for cultural and social cooperation, not only among the nations of Europe but for all the peoples of the Mediterranean Region.

On this special occasion, as we celebrate Egypt's National Day, let us therefore reaffirm our commitment, to pursue a global solidarity approach, which effectively celebrates the dignity of each and every member of our human family.

Please enjoy the rest of the evening.