Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

280 Republic Street
Valletta VLT 1112
Malta

Svetlana R. Curmi
Media Officer
T: *2590 9318*
E: *svetlana-rose.curmi@gov.mt*

PRESS RELEASE

Europe without Barriers: MEUSAC hosts Public Dialogue on Czech EU Presidency's Priorities and Programme

On the 1st of January 2009, the Czech Republic assumed the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the first six months of the year. The Malta-EU Steering and Action Committee together with the Embassy of the Czech Republic today, Thursday 15th January, organised a public dialogue during the course of which the Czech Ambassador to Malta Vladimír Zavázal presented the Priorities and Programme of the Czech Presidency. The Deputy Prime Minsiter and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Tonio Borg also participated and besides giving Malta's response to the Priorities and Programme, also outlined Malta's priorities as an EU Member State during the Czech Pesidency.

The Czech Ambassador outlined the main priorities of the Czech Presidency for the next six months, the so-called "3 E's": Economy, Energy and External Relations. On 'Economy', Ambassador Zavázal said that the Czech Presidency will strive to ensure that the EU makes a coordinated contribution for a solution to the financial crisis on a European and global level by reinforcing EU competitiveness. Fiscal sustainability and long-term employment should be the main driving forces.

280 Republic Street
Valletta VLT 1112
Malta

Svetlana R. Curmi
Media Officer
T: *2590 9318*
E: *svetlana-rose.curmi@gov.mt*

Another central theme during the Czech Presidency will be 'Energy'. Ambassador Zavázal stated that the Presidency's priority with regard to energy will be that of securing energy supplies in particular in relation to internal electricity and the problems faced recently in the gas market. The Czech Presidency will also be striving for energy efficiency and will play an active involvement in the international negotiations on climate protection after 2012.

On external relations, Ambassador Zavázal stated that the Presidency will be organising an EU-US summit which is scheduled to take place in February and which will be the first to take place following the inauguration of the new Obama Administration in the US. The Czech Presidency will strive to reach a new partnership agreement with Russia. As regards EU enlargement, accession negotiations will continue with Turkey and with Croatia. The latter's imminent accession to the EU is being perceived as a step forward to strengthen relations with the Western Balkans.

In his reaction to the presentation by the Czech Ambassador, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Tonio Borg stated that Malta understands the need to continue pursuing the Lisbon Strategy Agenda. Enlargement had strengthened the European Union further by creating the largest single market in the world serving 480 million people with a total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of more than €12 trillion. Deputy Prime Minister Borg emphasised the need to reinvigorate the Lisbon Strategy to make Europe the world's most competitive knowledge-based economy by 2010, by promoting research and innovation and by supporting

Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

280 Republic Street
Valletta VLT 1112
Malta

Svetlana R. Curmi
Media Officer
***T:** 2590 9318*
***E:** svetlana-rose.curmi@gov.mt*

SMEs. Dr. Borg also stated that the Maltese Government is satisfied with the comprehensive way in which the Czech Presidency has taken on board the energy and climate change challenge. The Minister of Foreign Affairs emphasised the need to diversify the EU's energy provision sources.

On relations with the Arab World, Minister Borg stated that Malta believes that the EU should intensify its efforts to nurture and enhance its relations with the Arab World, while also strengthening the EU's Eastern Partnership. He also mentioned the need to strengthen relations with North African countries. On immigration, the Minister of Foreign Affairs stressed that governments in countries of origin should live up to their responsibilities in this sphere.

Interventions from the floor focused on the EU's Mediterranean dimension in the Presidency's programme, illegal immigration, the impetus being generated by growing economies with particular reference to China and India, and the future of the Kyoto protocol. Those present for the Public Dialogue included Ambassadors and Heads of Mission of the diplomatic representations of the EU member States, Members of the national and European Parliament and other represntatives of the political parties, members of the MEUSAC Core Group and representatives of Civil Society Organisations.

The Public Dialogue was chaired by MEUSAC Head , Dr. Vanni Xuereb.

MEUSAC - 15.01.2009

Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

280 Republic Street
Valletta VLT 1112
Malta

Svetlana R. Curmi
Media Officer
T: *2590 9318*
E: *svetlana-rose.curmi@gov.mt*

STQARRIJA GĦALL-ISTAMPA

Ewropa mingħajr fruntieri: Il-MEUSAC jorganizza Djalogu Pubbliku dwar il-Prijoritajiet u l-Programm tal-Presidenza Ċeka tal-Unjoni Ewropea

Fl-1 ta' Jannar 2009, ir-Repubblika Ceka ħadet f'idejha l-Presidenza tal-Kunsill tal-Unjoni Ewropea għall-ewwel sitt xhur ta' din is-sena. Illum 15 ta' Jannar, il-*Malta-EU Steering and Action Committee*, flimkien mal-Ambaxxata tar-Repubblika Ċeka, organizza Djalogu Pubbliku fejn l-Ambaxxatur għal Malta Vladimír Zavázal ippreżenta l-Prijoritajiet u l-Programm tal-Presidenza Ċeka. Il-Viċi Prim Ministru u Ministru tal-Affarijiet Barranin, Dott. Tonio Borg spjega r-reazzjoni ta' Malta għall-prijoritajiet u l-Programm tal-Presidenza, filwaqt li żvela x'inhuma l-prijoritajiet ta' Malta bħala Membru tal-Unjoni Ewropea matul din il-Presidenza Ċeka.

L-Ambaxxatur Ċek spjega liema huma l-prijoritajiet ewlenin tal-Presidenza Ċeka għall-dawn is-sitt xhur li ġejjin. Dawn il-prijoritajiet huma imsejħa "t-3 E-ijiet": Ekonomija, Enerġija u Relazzjonijiet Esterni. Fuq l-'Ekonomija', l-Ambaxxatur Zavázal qal li l-Presidenza Ċeka se tissielet biex tassigura li l-UE tagħmel kontribuzzjoni koordinata għal soluzzjoni tal-kriżi finanzjarja kemm fuq livell Ewropew, kif ukoll fuq livell globali, billi terga' tenfasizza l-

Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

280 Republic Street
Valletta VLT 1112
Malta

Svetlana R. Curmi
Media Officer
***T:** 2590 9318*
***E:** svetlana-rose.curmi@gov.mt*

---

kompetittività fl-UE. Is-sostenibilità fiskali u l-impjieg fit-tul għandhom ikunu l-forzi ewlenin biex jgħinu dan.

L-Enerġija hija tema oħra ewlenija għall-Presidenza Ċeka. L-Ambaxxatur Zavázal stqarr li l-prijorità tal-Presidenza f'dan ir-rigward se tkun dik li tassigura l-provvista tal-enerġija, partikolarment tal-elettriku intern, u tal-problemi li għaddejin minnhom bħalissa fis-suq tal-gass. Il-Presidenza Ċeka se tkun qiegħda taħdem għall-effiċjenza fl-enerġija u se tkun qiegħda nvoluta bi ħġara fin-negozjati fuq livell internazzjonali għall-protezzjoni tal-klima wara l-2012.

Dwar ir-relazzjonijiet esterni, l-Ambaxxatur Zavázal qal li l-Presidenza se torganizza *summit* bejn l-UE u l-Istati Uniti, li huwa ppjanat li jsir fi Frar u li se jkun l-ewwel wieħed li se jsir wara l-inawgurazzjoni tal-Amministrazzjoni l-ġdida ta' Obama fl-Istati Uniti. Il-Presidenza Ċeka se taħdem biex jissaħħu r-relazzjonijiet mar-Russja. Dwar it-tkabbir tal-UE għandhom ikomplu n-negozjati għas-sħubija tat-Turkija u l-Kroazja. Is-sħubija imminenti tal-Kroazja fl-UE għandha tkun pass 'il quddiem biex isaħħah ir-relazzjonijiet mal-Balkani.

Fir-reazzjoni tiegħu għall-preżentazzjoni tal-Ambaxxatur Ċek, il-Viċi Prim Ministru u Ministru tal-Affarijiet Barranin Dott. Tonio Borg, qal li Malta tifhem il-ħtieġa li titkomplha l-ħidma biex titwettaq l-Aġenda ta' Lisbona. It-tkabbir tal-blokk Ewropew saħħaħ l-Unjoni Ewropea għax ħoloq l-ikbar suq intern, b' total ta' 480 miljun persuna u Prodott Gross Domestiku ta' iktar minn €12 triljun. Il-Viċi Prim Ministru Borg enfasizza l-bżonn li l-Istrateġija ta' Lisbona tingħata s-saħħa mill-ġdid biex tagħmel lill-Unjoni Ewropea l-iktar ekonomija kompetittiva sal-2010,

Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

280 Republic Street
Valletta VLT 1112
Malta

Svetlana R. Curmi
Media Officer
T: *2590 9318*
E: *svetlana-rose.curmi@gov.mt*

---

msejsa fuq l-għarfien billi tippromwovi r-riċerka u l-innovazzjoni u billi tgħin lill-intrapriżi ż-żgħar u ta' daqs medju. Dott. Borg qal li l-Gvern Malti huwa sodisfatt bil-pjan ta' ħidma tal-Presidenza Ċeka dwar il-bidla fil-klima u l-provvista tal-enerġija. Il-Ministru tal-Affarijiet Barranin enfasizza l-bżonn ta' diversifikazzjoni tas-sorsi li jipprovdu l-enerġija lill-blokk Ewropew.

Dwar ir-relazzjonijiet mad-dinja Għarbija, il-Ministru Borg saħaq li Malta temmen li l-Unjoni Ewropea għandha ssaħħaħ ir-relazzjonijiet tagħha mad-dinja Għarbija, kif ukoll isaħħaħ ir-relazzjonijiet tagħha mal-pajjiżi tal-Lvant permezz ta' dak li qed ikun imsejjaħ *Eastern Partnership*. Huwa semma' wkoll il-bżonn li jissaħħu r-relazzjonijiet mal-pajjiżi tal-Afrika ta' Fuq. Dwar l-immigrazzjoni, il-Ministru tal-Affarijiet Barranin qal li l-gvernijiet tal-pajjiżi ta' oriġini għandhom iġorru r-responsabbiltajiet tagħhom.

Tqajjmu diversi punti mill-parteċipanti fosthom, id-dimensjoni Mediterranja fil-programm tal-Presidenza, l-immigrazzjoni illegali, l-impetu li qed jiġi ġġenerat minn ekonomiji bħal ma huma dik Indjana u dik Ċiniża, kif ukoll il-futur tal-protokoll ta' Kyoto. Il-parteċipanti kienu jinkludu Ambaxxaturi u Kapijiet ta' missjonijiet diplomatiċi minn Stati Membri tal-Unjoni Ewropea, Membri Parlamentari u Membri Ewro-Parlamentari u rappreżentanti tal-partiti politiċi, membri tal-*Core Group* tal-MEUSAC u rappreżentanti ta' Għaqdiet tas-Soċjetà Ċivili.

Il-Kap tal-MEUSAC, Dott. Vanni Xuereb, mexxa d-Djalogu Pubbliku.

MEUSAC - 15.01.2009