

15.03.2017

## Louis Grech addresses the European Parliament days before the signing of a European declaration in Rome

Deputy Prime Minister also participated jointly in the first meeting on the implementation of the Joint Declaration on the EU's legislative priorities for 2017

*In Rome, member states will re-affirm our commitment to a united Europe. But the declaration is not an end in itself, far from it. Any progress registered on the future of Europe must be followed up and translated into action.*

The Deputy Prime Minister Mr Louis Grech addressed a high level EU Parliament debate together with the President of the European Parliament Antonio Tajani, President of the European Council Donald Tusk, President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, and Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni. This debate covered the future of Europe and the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Rome. The key note speeches were followed by an intense debate amongst MEPs.

Mr Grech said that the Union is not about Brussels, Strasbourg or the institutions, but it is about the 500 million citizens' hopes, fears and aspirations.

Grech pointed out that European value added has to be tangibly translated into citizen value added. The Maltese Presidency's principal objective, which is referred as 'rEUnion'; the creation and fostering of a climate in which the Union can once again regain the trust of the citizens and secure a viable and sustainable future.

Mr Grech remarked that citizens need a Europe that embraces the social dimension and narrow the gap in financial inequality, promotes job creation and economic growth through the single market, shapes globalisation, practices the fundamental value of solidarity when it comes to issues like migration, and ensures safety and security.

"Europe will only be credible if it delivers on its decisions. In Rome, member states will re-affirm our commitment to a united Europe. But the declaration is not an end in itself, far from it. Any progress registered on the future of Europe must be followed up and translated into action." said Grech.

Mr Grech stated that European institutions need to draw on this momentum to galvanize and energize that unites rather than divides. "We believe in a better Europe, our youths believe in a better Europe, and we believe it has what it takes to move forward", he concluded.

Representing the rotating Presidency of the European Council, the Deputy Prime Minister Louis Grech today also met European Parliament

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President Antonio Tajani and Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker to exchange views on monitoring the implementation of the joint declaration on the EU's legislative priorities for 2017, in a first of its kind meeting, in a series of tri-annual set.

The declaration signed on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2016 has as its aim the setting of an overarching scope to monitor at political level the implementation of the joint declaration.

Following this meeting Mr Grech emphasised that this is a landmark in the co-operation between the three institutions on legislation that will enable them to work better and more effectively on important proposals.

"This meeting provided us with a good opportunity to have an open and constructive dialogue on the priority files and confirm the willingness to move important key files forward" said Mr Grech.



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