Ministerial Conference on Strengthening Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation through Research and Innovation

4th May, 2017
Grand Master’s Palace, Valletta

MEDIA BACKGROUND NOTE
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The Ministerial Conference will be chaired by Hon. Chris Agius, Maltese Parliamentary Secretary for Research, Innovation, Youth and Sports, and moderated by Ms. Aminda Leigh. The meeting will be split into several sessions as follows:

- **09:00 – 09:40** Opening Remarks and High-Level Speakers
- **09:40 – 10:40** PRIMA - Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area
- **11:00 – 12:00** Addressing the Root Causes of Migration through R&I
- **12:00 – 13:00** R&I for Blue Jobs and Growth in the Mediterranean
- **13:00 – 14:00** Concluding Remarks and Endorsement of the Valletta Declaration
- **14:00 – 14:15** Press Conference

This Ministerial Conference will be an opportunity for EU and non-EU Ministers in charge of Research to meet and discuss how to consolidate the regional dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean area through cooperation in Research and Innovation.

**Opening Remarks and High-Level Speakers**
The meeting will commence with the introductory remarks of Hon. Agius and several speeches by high-level speakers, which include Carlos Moedas, EU Commissioner for Research and Innovation. Three thematic sessions will then take place: each session commencing with introductory speeches by two high-level speakers, which will then be followed by a Ministerial discussion.

**PRIMA - Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area**
The first session will be dedicated to the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (‘PRIMA’), which is set to develop much-needed novel solutions for sustainable water management and food production. The partnership is expected to boost business and investment opportunities, thereby addressing unemployment and migration issues in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The
discussion comes at an important juncture of the interinstitutional negotiations within the European institutions, with the conclusion of the Trialogue negotiations under the Maltese Presidency in April 2017.

**Addressing the Root Causes of Migration through R&I**
The second session will be dedicated to addressing the root causes of migration through R&I, a topic which has gained ground in the past year or so primarily as a result of migrant flows in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

**R&I for Blue Jobs and Growth in the Mediterranean**
The third session will focus on R&I for Blue Jobs and Growth in the Mediterranean, a topic which ties in to other efforts being made throughout Malta’s Presidency to shine a spotlight on BlueMed and Blue Growth initiatives in the region.

**Concluding Remarks and Endorsement of the Valletta Declaration**
Prior to the conclusion of the meeting and after the concluding remarks, the Ministers will endorse the *Valletta Declaration on Strengthening Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation through Research and Innovation*. The Declaration focuses on the role that Research and Innovation can play in delivering solutions to the challenges that the Euro-Mediterranean region is currently facing, as well as in boosting economic growth and fostering social well-being.

**Press Conference**
Hon. Agius and Commissioner Moedas will then meet the press from 14:00 to 14:15.

**Press/Media Contacts**

**Malta (Primary contacts during the Ministerial Conference)**

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