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## Deputy Prime Minister inaugurates artistic project "Ilma u Melh" in Brussels



*"Malta's destiny has been linked with, defined by, and historically shaped by the Mediterranean"*

The Maltese Presidency of the Council of the EU unveiled an artistic project called "*Ilma u Melh*" (Water and Salt) in the Atrium of the Justus Lipsius building in Brussels. Inaugurated by the Deputy Prime Minister Louis Grech, in the presence of Parliamentary Secretary for the EU Presidency 2017 and EU Funds Ian Borg, this project is part of a tradition whereby the incumbent Presidency decorates the building which houses the Council of the EU with various exhibitions and installations.

*Ilma u Melh* entails a series of installations, conceptualised, designed and commissioned by Dr Antoine Zammit, Architect Monica Audrey Galea and their team from the Faculty of Architecture and Built Environment at the University of Malta. These installations are displayed throughout the Justus Lipsius building, as well as in the new Europa building where technical meetings, Ministerial Councils and meetings of EU Heads of State or Government are held. Inspired by the main themes of the Maltese Presidency and reinterpreted in different forms throughout the two buildings in different formats, the installations shall be on exhibit throughout the six months of Malta's Presidency in the first half of 2017.

Deputy Prime Minister Grech remarked that the Maltese artistic representation is apt and topical given that Malta has taken on the Presidency of the Council of the EU at a time in which the Union is facing rough 'seas' of its very own.

Malta's destiny has been linked with, defined by, and historically shaped by the Mediterranean. He recalled that in 1967 it was Malta that proposed that sea beds and oceans beyond national jurisdiction should be considered as the common heritage of mankind.

Mr Grech emphasised the duality of the Mediterranean, through its characteristics - a source of life, energy, and well being - but also having its dark and tragic sides - having been witness to tragic events related to migration.

*Ilma u Melh* will serve as a reminder and as an opportunity to engage through the sharing of stories and ideas and includes a 'citizen

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journalists' component, which is led by the Artistic Director Arien Berg.

This component is aimed at giving the possibility to connect with other peoples' stories and to share thoughts, ideas or anecdotes, thus contributing to the artistic expression in an active manner.

Mr Grech also referred to Malta's priorities for the next six months, "We have a focused Presidency, with a short, but targeted agenda. By adding incremental and viable efforts on key issues we can address the overarching principle of reunion: confidence and the restoration of public trust."

The inauguration was also addressed by the Secretary General of the Council Jeppe Tranholm Mikkelsen.



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