

National Statement by the Prime Minister of Malta, Robert Abela
– Summit for Democracy 2023

Excellencies.

Ladies and Gentlemen.

The ongoing aggression against Ukraine is a blatant violation of the core values of democracy: human rights, territorial integrity, sovereignty, and the rule of law.

This Summit comes at the right time to send a collective and unequivocal message: together, we stand with Ukraine, and uphold their right to peace, freedom, and democracy.

Excellencies,

Since the last Summit for Democracy, Malta has worked tirelessly to deliver on our commitments and to identify new goals.

We took decisive action to step up our fight against money laundering and corruption, implementing the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force.

Through extensive collaboration with stakeholders and dedication, last June, the FATF recognised our significant progress, leading to Malta's removal from the list of jurisdictions under increased monitoring.

Another priority was reinforcing Media as one of the main pillars of Democracy.

A Committee of Experts on the Media was established to analyse the journalistic and media sector, as well as to give feedback on legislative instruments proposed by Government to Parliament, aimed at affording the highest level of protection to journalists in Malta.

The overall goal was to consolidate the role of journalists and their significant contribution to the functioning of democracy.

Anti-SLAPP provisions as well as increases to penalties for crimes against journalists, and limitations to libel suits against deceased authors, will also be introduced as part of our commitment to advance democracy.

Democratic values are and will remain at the heart of our policies.

We are working to deliver improved access to justice and information. I am pleased to share that the Strategy for the Digitalisation of the Law Courts, a commitment made at last year's Summit has been finalised and is being implemented.

Malta is convinced that society cannot reach its full potential without enabling every individual to thrive without gender-based obstacles. We are determined to continue to build on the progress made and spearhead further reforms.

To this end, the first Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan was launched last year. This strategy aims at identifying

and eradicating gender obstacles, biases, and stereotypes by strengthening the gender perspective at all levels and stages of policy making.

Gender democracy is fundamental and remains a key priority for my government.

To conclude, Malta is proud to be part of the Summit for Democracy process. We stand firm in our resolve to work with all of you, on an ambitious set of commitments.

Our action, or inaction, will determine our future.

And I believe collective action, is crucial for our future.