

## PRESS RELEASE BY THE MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS: Official meetings on the side -lines of Med Forum 2016

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Earlier today, Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr George Vella and Mr Lamberto Zannier, Secretary General, OSCE held an official meeting on the side-lines of the MED FORUM of the Anna Lindh Foundation currently convening in Valletta.

In the context of the long-standing engagement between the OSCE and the Mediterranean, and Malta's crucial role since the inclusion of a dedicated 'Mediterranean Chapter' in the text of the Helsinki Final Act, Minister Vella and the Secretary General agreed to continue working together on those projects that promote and facilitate dialogue between the Organisation and its southern littoral. The two sides also agreed on the need to further reaffirm the strategic value of the OSCE's co-operation with its Mediterranean Partners.

Malta has long been a strong promoter for a more robust inclusion of the Mediterranean dimension in the OSCE which is deemed as fundamental importance for Europe's and the OSCE's own security and stability.

On the margins of the ALF Med Forum, Minister Vella also held a meeting with Mr Nicholas Westcott, Managing Director (Middle East and North Africa) in the European External Action Service (EEAS). Discussions revolved the latest developments in Libya and Tunisia, the situation in the Middle East as well as the upcoming priorities of Malta's EU Presidency, in particular those relating to the Mediterranean, besides the programme of cooperation between Malta and the EEAS during the Presidency of the Council of the EU in the first six months of 2017.

