



Press Release

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MALTA AND SWEDEN CO-HOST THE 2ND IDAHO FORUM TO MARK THE INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA CELEBRATED ON 17TH MAY

Maltese Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties Helena Dalli and Swedish Minister for Integration Erik Ullenhag address a joint press conference

The 2nd IDAHO Forum kicked in late yesterday afternoon at the Mediterranean Conference Centre in Valletta.

This international conference being held between the 13th and 14th of May is co-hosted between Malta and Sweden and is being attended by various ministers and delegates from different countries including Sweden, Ireland, Holland, Montenegro, Croatia, Slovenia, Denmark, Albania and Luxemburg. Various other government delegations from the majority of the EU countries are also participating.

Addressing a joint press conference together with Swedish Minister for Integration Erik Ullenhag, Hon. Helena Dalli Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties explained the significance of such conference, especially since it is being co-hosted with Sweden. The Swedish Government has been at the forefront on LGBTI matters for a very long time.

She noted how this forum will be bringing together the European continent in its fight for equality. Furthermore, it will provide an opportunity for fellow Mediterranean and Southern European countries to elevate LGBTI issues higher up on their national agendas as Malta did.

Minister Dalli emphasised how various reports published by the EU Fundamentals Rights Agency, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, ILGA-Europe and other organisations show that much remains to be done at the European level to ensure equality for all. She noted how events like these serve as a platform for commitment and concrete action by participating countries.

Dr Dalli explained how along with the call for an EU Comprehensive Approach on LGBTI issues that was signed by eleven countries last year and which will be extended this year, Malta will also be launching an IDAHO Declaration of Intent with the aim of gathering momentum for coordinated action at national, European and global levels.

In her concluding remarks, Minister Helena Dalli emphasised the need for governments to work together to ensure that equality wins over discrimination and of prejudice on LGBTI people.

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The press conference was also addressed by the Swedish Minister for Integration Erik Ullenhag.

Meanwhile, the official launch of the IDAHO Forum 2014 was marked by a symbolic ceremony whereby the Netherlands, as the first hosting country, handed over the 2013 IDAHO Forum banner to Malta.

Malta's Prime Minister Dr Joseph Muscat addressed the foreign delegates during a reception that was held last night to mark the occasion.

The IDAHO Forum 2014 proceeds this morning with keynote speeches by Malta's Minister for Social Dialogue Helena Dalli and Swedish Minister for Integration Erik Ullenhag during the plenary session.

The conference proceedings are being live-streamed on www.idaho2014forum.org