

Students call on politicians to act on global warming

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The students in the courtyard of the President's Palace in Valletta, yesterday. Photo: Chris Sant Fournier

Students from various schools yesterday called upon politicians to use their position to address climate change and stressed the role that each person plays in reducing this global concern.

"We (students) are willing to join forces against global warming. You (politicians) have the necessary power in your hands to combat such problem. So now, let's stand up and do something," Mario Frendo, a student at Dun Guzepp Zammit Brighella School, told politicians during a debate to mark Europe Day.

Mr Frendo was one of a number of students who sat round a table with ministers, members of the Maltese and European parliaments and civil society representatives to share views during the debate held yesterday morning at the President's Palace in Valletta. There - in a room lit by two chandeliers and four spotlights and where the large window was shut - they agreed that climate change was an issue to be tackled and that energy was to be conserved.

After outlining various environment hazards resulting from global warming, Mr Frendo called on politicians present to "give us your word that you will invest in sustainable energy" and work to reduce global warming.

He also asked them to be more politically sensitive to the issue and stressed the importance of education. "There are people who would be willing to participate in battling this issue, only if they would be well-informed about what their contribution should be." Throughout the debate, various subjects were tackled such as the carbon dioxide released by the burning of fossil fuels, the effects of deforestation on the absorption of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, the effects

of rising global temperatures, extreme weather manifestations and the health risks posed by climate change. The importance of education was highlighted as was the fact that global warming was a global concern and it was up to each and every individual to contribute to reducing its effects.

At the end of the debate the students met President Eddie Fenech Adami in the Palace courtyard where the Armed Forces of Malta Band played the national anthem. Students then raised the 27 flags of EU member states as well as the EU flag.

A prize-giving ceremony followed during which schools were awarded prizes for projects related to Spring Day activities.

During a brief speech, Education Minister Dolores Cristina highlighted that this year was the European Year For Intercultural Dialogue, stressing the importance of such dialogue while maintaining the Maltese identity.

President Fenech Adami said he was glad to see how the students understood the EU's values that aimed to ensure a better future for all.

The activity was organised by the Maltese Office of the European Parliament, the Maltese Representation of the European Commission, Forum Malta FI-Ewropa, Europe Direct and the Education Ministry.
