

Society



1. A toast
2. The Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Malta H.E. Mr Klaus-Peter Brandes and Mrs Brandes and the Czech Consul General Tonio Casapinta
3. Minister for Foreign Affairs and Mrs Vella and H.E. Mons. Aldo Cavalli, Apostolic Nuncio
4. H.E. Petr Burianek welcoming Prof. G. Pirotta, Malta's Ambassador to the Czech Republic
5. Mr & Mrs Fedcenko-Carbonaro and Mr & Mrs Ronnie Micallef
6. H.E. Prof. Godfrey Pirotta in conversation with Ambassador Petr Burianek and Ms Adela Rubesova, Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Rome
7. Soprano Marketa Matlova was accompanied by Irina Fedcenko-Carbonaro on the piano
8. The President of Malta with the soprano and pianist

The Czech National Day celebrations in Malta

Czech Nationals joined Malta's members of government, the Diplomatic and Consular Corps and other distinguished guests lead by the President of Malta and Mr Preca to celebrate the Czech Republic's National Day. The event took place in the elegant setting of the Phoenicia Ballroom and Main Lounge where a vocal celebrity concert was held to mark not only national day but also the Year of Czech Music - 2014.

Soprano Marketa Matlova gave a splendid performance and sang various arias from Verdi, Arditi, Dvořák, Offenbach, Smetana, Janáček and others. She was accompanied on the piano by Irina Fedcenko-Carbonaro. This year is another remarkable year for Czech music, with over sixty promi-

nent Czech composers, performers, and musical organizations celebrating anniversaries.

During the reception that followed, speeches were delivered by H. E. the Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Malta Petr Burianek who flew purposely for the event accompanied by Ms Adela Rubsecova, Deputy Head of Mission at the Czech Embassy in Rome, and by H.E. the President of Malta, Dr Marie Louise Coleiro-Preca.

In his speech, Ambassador Burianek spoke at length on the excellent relations existing between Malta and the Czech Republic and on the various activities held during the current year. He recalled the very important day of the Czech Republic's modern history, 17th November, the day when Prague witnessed the start of the 'Velvet Revolution' which

signalled the end of the communist totalitarian regime.

Ambassador Burianek hailed just one name, Václav Havel, "a real statesman and extraordinary man," the first President of what was then Czechoslovakia.

Havel had a particularly friendly relationship with Malta and had spent several beautiful days here in 2002, following his State Visit to the Island. Last year Havel was again remembered when together with The Hon. Minister George Vella, Ambassador Burianek unveiled a memorial in his honour at Hastings Gardens, Valletta.

Ambassador Burianek also praised the Jesuit Refugee Service of Malta for being short-listed amongst the three finalists for the Vaclav Havel Human Award 2014. He mentioned the participation of a Czech Air Force plane taking part in the

Malta International Airshow and the three Czech sailing boats which participated in this year's Rolex Middle Sea Race.

Ambassador Burianek also congratulated H. E. Prof Godfrey Pirotta following his presentation of credentials as Malta's ambassador to the Czech Republic.

Ambassador Burianek then conveyed his warm wishes to the President of Malta and thanked the sponsors who had supported the Consulate General in Malta to organise this rich cultural event.

In her speech which followed President Coleiro-Preca remembered the 100th anniversary since the outbreak of the First World War - a war that brought devastating results, the effects of which are still felt today.

It is only when we come to terms with memory and the im-

plications it has on our life that we can learn not to repeat the mistakes of the past, stated the President.

She then dwelt on the relations between Malta and the Czech Republic. Both countries resolved to collaborate closer through an array of initiatives which while most laudable, require a new injection to move to another level of cooperation.

Following speeches and toasts, Soprano Matlova accompanied by Irina Fedcenko-Carbonaro on the piano performed the Czech and Maltese National Anthems bringing to an end the formal part of the celebrations.

The evening then proceeded with a reception which enabled the various guests to network in the pleasant surroundings of the Main Lounge of the Hotel Phoenicia.