

12 September 2022

The President  
Istitut tal-Ġurnalisti Maltin

Dear Matthew,

**Re: Reforms concerning the journalism profession**

We the undersigned, members and non-members of the IĠM, write to express concern about the ongoing process of preparing legislative, administrative, and policy reforms of journalism in Malta.

Although we are all directly involved in journalism, whether as media professionals, academics, students, media owners, and civil society activists, it is our firmly held view that enabling free expression and the unhindered exercise of journalistic liberties is a matter of universal public interest and an inalienable requirement for our society to be and remain a democracy.

As such we reject the notion that changes concerning freedom of expression and the journalism profession can be discussed by the government with anyone behind closed doors. It is inherent to our professional vocation that we inform the public of all matters that concern them. It is a betrayal of our mission that we keep from each other and from the public the content of discussions about the reform of journalism denying each other and the public any means of contributing to the debate.

We have no doubt that your participation and that of Kurt Sansone in the group of experts appointed by the Prime Minister is in good faith and that at all times your intent has been and continues to be to act in the profession's best interest. However, your participation in a process which lacks transparency and which has not even consulted the members of the profession is not in the profession's best interest.

Please consider our request for an urgent, open, public meeting with us and with anyone interested wherein you provide a full debrief of the discussions so far.

It is only when the veil of secrecy which shrouds this process is lifted that members of the profession and other stakeholders would be able to participate effectively in proposing and debating how the constitutional right to free expression can best be served by reforms and measures that could guarantee media freedom and the protection of journalists and those working in the media.

Transparency in this process of reform is also in the interest of the profession as it would already start to bring about the recognition of the importance of journalism within society and consequently ensure the effective implementation of any legislative amendments.

Failing this we have no choice but to distance ourselves from any consent to reforms as this would not have been given on our behalf.

We hope you will give this matter your immediate attention.

Yours sincerely,

Eleonora Rose Abela  
Monique Agius  
Nicky Aquilina  
Ian Attard  
Charmaine Attard Rossiter  
Andrew Azzopardi  
Peppi Azzopardi  
Steve Bonello  
Rebecca Bonello Ghio  
Julian Bonnici  
Joe Borg  
Andrew Borg Cardona  
Francesca Borg Costanzi  
Rosemarie Calleja  
Victor Calleja  
Gerard Caruana  
Andrew Caruana Galizia  
Matthew Caruana Galizia  
Paul Caruana Galizia  
Kevin Cassar  
Arnold Cassola  
Vicki Ann Cremona  
Manuel Delia  
Joanna Demarco  
Natalino Fenech  
Ranier Fsadni  
David Kenely  
Mary Anne Lauri  
Jon Mallia  
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Caroline Muscat  
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Karl Schembri  
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Tina Urso  
Louiselle Vassallo  
Corinne Vella  
Sasha Vella  
George Vital Zammit  
Darrin Zammit Lupi