

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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Karl Schembri
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Tina Urso
Louiselle Vassallo
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Sasha Vella
George Vital Zammit
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