

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Malta Chamber of Commerce on behalf of Ethical Business urges Prime Minister to do the right thing

The Malta Chamber, on behalf of all upstanding and ethical businesses on the island, is compelled to once again comment on the current situation unfolding, as it has done vociferously and repeatedly in the last weeks.

There are defining moments in history that determine the future trajectory of a country, and Malta is currently in one such moment. This is when the integrity of our leaders matters most, when so many people are genuinely upset and feel profoundly betrayed, when flattery is out of place and provocation is dangerous.

It is the humility to bow out promptly, modestly and responsibly without any shadow of a doubt that distinguishes the statesman from the self-serving politician. This applies to all politicians irrespective of which political party they are from and whether in power or in opposition. The independence of the country's institutions is another serious objective we have all come to appreciate more.

The Malta Chamber appreciates the Prime Minister recognising the gravity of the situation, that has implicated his office and his person. His announced resignation was the right thing to do. The Prime Minister has claimed that he intended to vacate his position in January, which means that he remains head of Government till then. In a separate communication however he has also informed journalists that he shall only be taking care of day-to-day matters until his formal resignation. This has unfortunately brought the country to a standstill, characterised by a level of uncertainty which we seldom experienced in the past.

This sense of prolonged uncertainty for businesses and investment, is rendered even more serious by the negative attention our country is attracting, with potentially unimaginable consequences. The hiatus the country has descended into must be lifted.

Therefore, moving forward the Malta Chamber calls for the following:

- The country needs to deal with all forms of allegations of political corruption since every hour of inaction is considered damaging to the country.
- Ethical standards are there to be respected by all members of our society including the entire political class.
- Chamber expects a full, deep and immediate clean-up of the whole system in the shortest period of time.
- People have every right to protest responsibly. This sacrosanct right must be assured and crowds should be provided all the opportunity to do so, while any form of confrontation avoided. All parties need to ensure that their crowds are managed appropriately.
- Though limited by his role as determined by the Constitution, the President of the Republic is called upon to advocate balance and statesmanship during these troubled times.

In 2016 the Chamber of Commerce through its highest structures and including past presidents, made a series of similar recommendations to Government in the wake of the

Panama Papers scandal. This call was followed up through its national economic vision recommendations as a priority.

Thus, on behalf of all hard-working entrepreneurs and ethical businesses, who provide jobs and a livelihood for thousands of Maltese families, the Malta Chamber calls on the Prime Minister to once again rise to the occasion and do the honourable thing expected of a true statesman.

The Prime Minister can bring an end to this stalemate the country has crashed into. Within the context of current confusion and instability, history will remember him for it.

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