



THE MALTA CHAMBER

PRESS RELEASE

17th August 2020

Lack of Discipline and Enforcement has led to a Retrograde Step in Covid Battle

The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry largely welcomed the measures announced by the Deputy Prime Minister and Superintendent of Public Health in an effort to curb further spread of COVID-19. The Chamber itself had, in fact, requested clearer guidelines for businesses to follow, to ensure public health and safety for all. The announcement made this morning certainly contributes towards this. Business and public health must go hand in hand.

The Chamber understands the need for restrictions in the serving of alcohol in bars and other restrictions announced. This was rendered necessary due to a clear lack of discipline and enforcement in certain sectors of the economy and in general as a country. The Chamber has always emphasized that the continuation of commercial operations depends on collective responsibility and adequate enforcement. It is deplorable that the weak appreciation and engagement of both has led to this inevitable backward step towards continuity.

Some requests for clarification have been received by the Chamber and it will endeavour to seek the necessary replies on behalf of its members.

The Malta Chamber also notes Government's commitment to reopening schools in September. This is seen by The Malta Chamber as crucial, not only for the proper functioning of the economy but also for ensuring that upcoming generations do not suffer educational gaps that would jeopardize their futures and the country's future HR capabilities.

Moving forward, the Chamber calls for lessons to be learned from the experiences of the last few weeks and the increased measures the country has had to resort to today. Our leaders, businesses and citizens alike need to understand the gravity and volatility of the situation and act in unison to avoid further retrograde measures. The Malta Chamber insists that Government plans a holistic exit strategy from the current restrictions with measured steps that are complementary to each other and to different sectors of society and the economy. The Chamber recommends that Government communicates this plan clearly with all stakeholders to ensure an efficient, safe and orderly implementation of measures for the country to sustain a quick and healthy recovery towards a future strategy in the presence of Covid.

A healthy recovery of our economy necessitates a healthy population. The Chamber has long insisted that our next and future steps need to be designed around the presence of Covid. Further to the Cabinet meeting held in the Chamber Building last week, the Chamber is pleased that Government's strategy largely reflects and is aligned with the proposals made by The Malta Chamber.

END