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Media release

Selection of Mr. Vince Farrugia as an employers' representative on EESC is Arrogant, Irregular, and Undemocratic

The Malta Employers' Association issued a strong reaction to the selection of Mr. Vince Farrugia as an employers' delegate on EESC by government. Mr. Pierre Fava, MEA president addressed a press conference during which he stated that the decision to exclude MEA once again from the EESC is an insult to the Association and its members. He explained that none of the MCESD members on the employers' side – i.e. COCE, MHRA, and MEA – had nominated Mr. Farrugia and, for some reason, Mr. Farrugia is being imposed as an employers' delegate.

He explained that EESC representation has been a thorny issue for quite some time. Before EU accession, MEA had a representative on EESC who was replaced without consultation by a GRTU member. MEA has never accepted this decision, yet Government has persisted in its mistake, even when calls for nominations were issued in 2006.

Mr. Fava referred to a statement by GRTU which claims that there was an agreement between MEA, Dr. Lawrence Gonzi and GRTU, that MEA would be the employers' representative on ILO (International Labour Organisation) and that GRTU would represent employers on EESC. MEA is contending that such an agreement never happened and challenges GRTU to state when this agreement came about, and with whom was it signed. MEA is certain that there was no verbal or written agreement to this effect.

MEA is also calling on the Prime Minister - once it is alleged that he was party to this 'contract' - to state whether such an agreement was signed or agreed to verbally, or to deny that anything of the sort ever happened.

Mr. Fava stated that MEA cannot accept this arrogance from the Government. It is common knowledge, backed by a solid reputation, that MEA is the leading employer body on social dialogue issues, and has a rightful place on EESC in the interest of all Maltese employers. Under these circumstances, MEA feels that in the absence of good faith from the government, it will suspend its attendance in social dialogue fora in which the government is involved – i.e. MCESD, Employment Relations Board and MEUSAC.

Mr. Fava called for a dignified solution to this situation which acknowledges MEA's role and contribution to social dialogue in Malta.