



MALTA HOTELS
& RESTAURANTS
ASSOCIATION



2nd March 2020

Corona Virus - Employer bodies call for Sensible Social Dialogue

The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry, the Malta Employers' Association, the Malta Chamber of SMEs and the Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association hope that the MCESD meeting of the 5th March will be conducted in the right spirit and will come up with recommendations that will prevent or contain the spread of the COVID-19 Corona Virus and thus minimise the social and economic harm which it might cause.

The constituted bodies stated that COVID-19 Corona Virus is, without question, a real threat to Maltese society, and measures are necessary to protect public health to prevent the disease from reaching Malta and spreading among its population.

This is primarily a matter of public health, and it is the duty of the health authorities to determine the necessary measures and educate the public, including employers, on the best way to mitigate the impact of this disease.

The employer bodies called for unity of purpose among social partners, and stressed that there should be no room for controversies and confrontation. There should be consensus between employers and unions at social dialogue level whereby all Maltese employees, irrespective of whether they are employed in the public or private sector, should be entitled to government paid quarantine leave of absence, under strict terms which will be discussed and agreed between the social partners. It should be taken into consideration that companies will already be facing serious productivity issues due to absence, even if quarantine leave is paid by government.

The outbreak of the virus abroad, which will hopefully not occur in Malta, may endanger many jobs in the private sector, and employers will seek Union support to convince government to set up an emergency fund or similar measures to assist companies that might end up facing difficulty resulting from this epidemic.

The bodies deplored the cancellation of the urgent meeting of the Employment Relations Board which was scheduled for the 2nd March, and hope the MCESD meeting will lead to tangible solutions to the concerns that are being raised by the social partners.