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Media Release

Air Malta and Industrial Action

The MEA has absolutely no objection to the recent Court ruling confirming Unions' right to strike, that is guaranteed by the Constitution. Fundamental issues, in the industrial field, like the right to strike, should not be questioned on the basis of obvious economic damage that may derive. It is up to the Unions to responsibly utilise the drastic and powerful strike weapon.

Unions must make an objective assessment of the ultimate possible harm, including Company closures and job losses, that a strike action, under critical circumstances, may cause. It is up to the Unions to determine what objectives they set and what price they are determined to pay to achieve them. The right to strike is balanced by a right of Employers to effect lock-outs, and in both instances no wages are payable for the duration of such actions.

It is not ruled out that drastic industrial action may, in particular instances, cause irreparable harm to a Company, with dire consequences. Irreparable harm too may be caused when Unions, as it is within their right, resort to partial industrial action. An Employer too, in such circumstances, may react to defend his interests. It is also the duty of an Employer to commercially responsibly manage a company.

The MEA is of the opinion that the current industrial impasse at Air Malta should be handled by the Unions with calm restraint and by the Employer with an engaging, open and informed dialogue. It is to be kept in mind that Air Malta is not just about the Company's employees.