

18th March 2021

Media Release

MEA reaction to the proposed Interpretation Act: 'No Kangaroo Courts, please!'

The Malta Employers' Association condemned the proposed amendment to the Interpretation Act and urged government take a step back to re-think these amendments. The Association said that what is being contemplated goes against the principle of due process, and divests the Courts of Justice of its fundamental role to prosecute any criminal offenses to authorities who should never have the right to impose criminal sanctions. The MEA reminded that this was also one of the objections it raised to the proposed Equality Bills, not because it is in any way opposed to the promotion of equality, but for the reason that persons or organisations accused of any criminal infringements should have a right to a fair hearing in a court of law, and not arbitrarily in front of persons of trust. The backlog in the law courts should not be an excuse to bypass the justice system which is enshrined in our constitution. What is required is efficient law courts, rather than denying people and companies their rights by taking them to a kangaroo court. Allowing public officers and authorities to impose penalties that go beyond administrative fines is unacceptable and unconstitutional. Such a measure could also lead to massive corruption and instances of a gross miscarriage of justice. Besides being intrinsically wrong, what is being contemplated could send a wrong message to potential investors and cause further harm to Malta's reputation.