



PRESS RELEASE

21st August 2018

Employer Bodies to stop attending ERB meetings until impasse is solved

The four employer organisations namely the GRTU, The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry, Malta Employers Association and Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association are dismayed by the recent introduction by stealth of four legal notices related to industrial and employment relations.

These legal notices were introduced without the knowledge of and any form of consultation with employer bodies on the eve of 'Santa Marija' - the 14th August, a period commonly associated with shutdowns. The four organisations will therefore stop attending any future Employment Relations Board (ERB) meetings until the situation is rectified.

More than this, the four organisations lament the fact that there has been a significant departure from the spirit of healthy social dialogue which existed so far at the ERB. In fact, these four legal notices were never discussed at ERB, a board which was established in the role to advise the Minister concerned on any matter related to conditions of employment, a practice that so far was always observed.

The recently introduced Legal Notices deal with amendments to the protection of employment in the case of business transfers, temporary agency workers and new regulations on itemised payslips and annual leave. The employer social partners feel that without the necessary consultation the four Legal Notices are going to give rise to severe disruptions in the labour market. For this reason, the four organisations are officially requesting the Government to put these four legal notices on hold until they are brought forward for discussion at ERB level subject to any amendments which will be proposed during this period. Only then would the four organisations return to the ERB discussion table.

This procedure should have been followed in the first place and the employer bodies are surprised that in spite of their numerous attempts to create a balanced environment for social dialogue in the country, the authorities have decided to do away with consulting the main stakeholders represented on this Board.

The four organisations are also questioning the purpose of having a body like ERB in the first place, if normal procedure is not being followed and the authorities are introducing legal notices without prior consultation.

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