

Saturday, 14 June 2014

The Hon. Joseph Muscat,
Prime Minister of Malta,
Office of the Prime Minister,
Auberge de Castille,
Valletta VLT 2000

Dear Dr. Muscat,

I am writing to bring to your attention to vulgar and offensive statements made publicly by Mr. Joe Grima about our organisation and, in particular, about myself as aditus foundation's Director and spokesperson. In his posts, pasted below for you to read in their entirety, Mr. Grima comments that *"(M)in ghandu dawn il-veduti estremi mhu xejn hliet stupratur indecenti tal kultura u t-tradizzjonijiet taghna. Postu hi fid detention centre..."*¹ From information available to us at the time of writing this letter, these posts are no longer visible on Mr. Grima's Facebook page, yet of course you must understand that we will not be interpreting this convenient removal of the posts as either a retraction or an apology.

It seems that these statements were published on Mr. Grima's Facebook account during the afternoon of Friday 13th June, clearly in response to the publication and launch by aditus foundation of a report on the integration of third-country nationals. The report, available at <http://aditus.org.mt/aditus/Documents/MINreport.zip>, presents a series of technical recommendations on how we feel Malta could approach a national integration policy. The report is essentially an invitation to Malta to initiate a frank discussion about themes that so far are generally publicly approached with aggression, negativity, insults and high levels of misinformation. aditus foundation's function and role, as a civil society organisation, is to stimulate debate, encourage rapprochement and reiterate values and principles.

Given the nature of aditus foundation's activities, we are constantly on the receiving end of negative discourse, racist comments, threats and various accusations. We appreciate that, sadly, this is an integral component of working with and for migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees. Without ever endangering or risking to endanger our staff, interns and volunteers, we generally manage such insults by either ignoring them or by engaging with individuals or groups hoping to promote friendly dialogue and exchange of views.

Today, however, we are unable to ignore or to engage as we are prevented to do so by the level of disgust at the sheer vulgarity of Mr. Grima's statements and also due to his public position. We are appalled that an individual enjoying high-level Government support, as your special envoy to the World Tourism Organisation, is apparently ignorant or disrespectful of the serious responsibilities attached to such support, particularly with regard to the treatment of civil society organisations and their staff members.

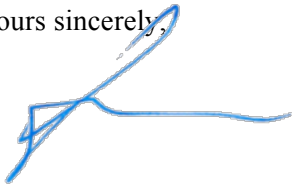
In a democratic society it is unacceptable that such figures feel it is appropriate, acceptable and possibly popular to publicly demean such individuals and organisations. The use of vulgar and derogatory words and phrases simply exacerbates the gravity of the situation.

¹ *"Whoever shares this extreme views is nothing but an indecent rapist of our culture and traditions. His place is in a detention centre..."*

Due to Mr. Grima's position, and your Office's legal and moral responsibility for it, we therefore urge you to ensure that appropriate and public action is taken against him and against his statements. As a minimum, we expect that Mr. Grima be required to publish and retain public a clear apology directed at aditus foundation and myself as the organisation's Director. Secondly, we will be looking forward to your Office issuing an equally clear condemnation of Mr. Grima's statements, indicative of Malta's zero tolerance of hate speech and of attacks against civil society organisations.

We would be willing to discuss this matter, and our broader concerns regarding negative public discourse on migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees, should your Office wish to explore the matter further.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Neil Falzon,
Director

CC.: Hon. Minister Helena Dalli
Various media agencies



Joseph Grima shared a link.

16 hours ago · Edited

MELA, SEWWA QED JGHID

Mela , sewwa qed jghid. Tridx nghidu lill Joseph jabdika bhal ma ghamel ir Re ta Spanja u ntellghu Prim Ministru wiehed mid detention centre? Tridx, voluntarjament nohorgu minn djajrna u naghtuhom lill immgranti biex ikunu verament paxxuti? Mela, sewwa qed jghid. Tridx ilkoll inlibbsu lin nisa taghna il burka u ma noqghudux nahlu flejjes fl-ilbies tal moda? Tridx inzewwgu lit tfal bniet taghna ta 7 jew tmien snin lill dawn kif inhi t-tradizzjoni f'hafna mill pajjizji minn fejn gejjin huma? Tridx naqbdlu l-knejjes taghna u nghamluhom kolla moskejiet? Tridx indaħhlu x-Sharia halli min jisraq naqtghulu jdejh. Kienu l-ewwel kollezzjoni ta jdejn tkun taghhom ghax fosthom tghidx kemm hemm hallelin.

U jekk dawn ikunu mill Balkani, tdridx inhajjruhom jittrenjawna halli nifthu gwerra fuq il girien taghna kif ghamlu hafna minnhom.

Jekk dan il provokatur qed jghamel dawn li statements biex jara sa fejn tasal ir rezistenza u r-rabja tal Maltin u l-Ghawdxin meta minn go nofshom johorgu stqarrijiet bhal dawn, u b'liema lingwagg kapaci jindirizzawh, nahseb li se jirnexxilu. Ghalija min jitkellem hekk huwa traditur tal valuri intrinsici li jghamlu lill pajjizna u lill poplu taghna dak li huma: Pajjiz u poplu civilizzat u demokratiku bi storja kristjana millenja . Min ghandu dawn il veduti estremi mhu xejn hlief stupratur indecenti tal kultura u t-tradizzjonijiet taghna. Postu hu fid detention centre, il Marsa. On your way, Mister.

M'ahniex intuhom xi sussidju mill gvern lill dawn ukoll? Ghax ahna tghidx kemm ahna bravi biex nimminaw il hajja demokratika taghna minn gewwa stess. Aditus? More like Traditus!!!!



Migrants should vote and stand in local elections - Aditus

www.timesofmalta.com

All migrant residents should have the right to vote and stand in local elections, according to human rights organisation Aditus. In its Malta Integration Network report published today, the...