

Malta Economy Minister Issues four Libel Suits and Warrants Against Blogger Daphne Caruana Galizia



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Country : Malta

Category : C. Harassment and intimidation of journalists

Source of threat : State

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Alert level : Level 2

Malta Independent journalist and blogger Daphne Caruana Galizia is having her bank accounts frozen with precautionary warrants for 47,460 EUR after a court upheld on 8 February 2017 a request by Maltese Economy Minister Chris Cardona and his consultant Joe Gerada to issue garnishee orders alongside four libel suits they have filed against her. The journalist is sued for publishing on her blog an article reporting that both men visited a brothel in Velbert (Germany) while on government business. Cardona has denied the allegation. According to media reports, the effect of the precautionary warrants on her assets means her bank accounts will remain frozen until the case is concluded and that could take many years. In a statement published on her blog, Daphne Caruana Galizia denounced an attempt to gag the press. The Institute of Maltese Journalists called on the minister to reconsider his action, highlighting the exaggerated nature of the legal action.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- [Report published on the Mapping Media Freedom platform: "Malta: Four libel suits and warrant for assets freeze filed against blogger"](#)
- [Statement of the Institute of Maltese Journalists: "L-IĠM jinnota l-passi fil-Qorti fil-konfront ta' Daphne Caruana Galizia "](#)
- [Statement of the European Federation of Journalists: "Malta: Libel suits and warrants against Daphne Caruana Galizia "](#)
- [Statement of Daphne Caruana Galizia: "The Minister for the Economy and his 'policy officer' have frozen my bank accounts: My statement issued to all media"](#)
- [Article published by Daphne Caruana Galizia: "Malta's Economy Minister, Labour Party deputy leader in German brothel tonight"](#)