



**Statement of the International Freedom of Expression Mission
as delivered at the meeting with Prime Minister Muscat
15 October 2018, Valletta**

We are in Malta as representatives of an international freedom of expression mission, comprised of the Committee to Protect Journalists, the European Centre for Press and Media Freedom, the International Press Institute, PEN International, and Reporters Without Borders, to raise our concerns about a lack of justice for the murder of investigative journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia on the one-year anniversary of her assassination. A full year on, there has been no meaningful result in the investigation beyond identifying three suspected hitmen. Those who ordered the assassination have yet to be identified and brought to justice. We are concerned about the independence and the limited scope of the current investigation; has it explored all possible lines of inquiry, such as whether her assassination was related to her reporting on corruption at the highest levels in Malta?

We also call on you, as Prime Minister, to immediately establish a judicial public inquiry under the Inquiries Act into whether Daphne's murder could have been prevented, and to take steps to ensure this cannot happen to anyone ever again. We are deeply concerned by the impact of Daphne's assassination on journalists who continue to do public interest investigative reporting. They work in a climate of fear, and self-censorship has become widespread.

The way Daphne has been treated is a disgrace. In the course of her 30 years as a journalist she received countless threats, her home was set on fire, her family dogs were killed, her face was plastered on derogatory billboards, she faced misogynistic attacks... let us stop here as the threats and violence she was subjected to were innumerable yet tolerated, and helped create an environment in which she could be *murdered* with impunity.

The vilification of Daphne - notably from authorities at the highest levels of government including members of the staff of the Office of the Prime Minister and the Chair of Valletta 2018 - continues. Despite widespread national and international condemnation, there has been no

accountability for the repeated public denigration of Daphne by Jason Micallef, Chair of Valletta 2018, tasked with promoting culture and media. PEN once again calls for his resignation.

In fact, the campaign of harassment against Daphne and her family continues today with 30 active libel cases against Daphne posthumously, including lawsuits filed by you, Prime Minister, against her and her son.

The removal of the protest memorial to Daphne in front of the Great Siege monument is another part of this manufactured hate. The memorial, a form of peaceful protest against her assassination and a demand for justice, has been destroyed more than 20 times, most recently last night, after we went to lay flowers and candles in solidarity. We call on the Minister of Justice to restore access to the monument and allow the peaceful protest memorial to remain until justice has been achieved.

We have not witnessed such ongoing vilification campaigns by authorities against a journalist, both before and after her death. Malta, a democracy and member of the European Union and the Council of Europe, is not living up to its obligations to guarantee and safeguard freedom of expression as required by the European Convention on Human Rights. Malta's international image has been tarnished. We never thought we would need to come to Malta on an international mission to ask the government to protect journalists. But here we are. The only way to start to repair this damage to Malta's reputation will be to achieve real, full justice for Daphne Caruana Galizia.

Prime Minister, will you commit today to immediately and unequivocally set up a public inquiry into whether Daphne's assassination could have been prevented?