



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**10<sup>th</sup> February, 2021**

The Gozo Tourism Association refers to the Legal Notice 46 of 2021 regulating the licensed Accommodation for the period 9<sup>th</sup> February till 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 and notes that these regulations are favouring the operators of unlicensed properties as no fines for these units are contemplated.

The unlicensed properties are a permanent concern which the competent Authorities are aware of and the Gozo Tourism Association expected that at least this Legal Notice makes a distinction between the licensed operators/owners from the unlicensed ones. Yet even in this circumstance, such unfair competition is being left unpunished. It is worth reminding that such unlicensed properties are creating unfair level playing since these do not pay licenses, VAT and eco-contribution in normal circumstances let alone during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Furthermore the MTA licensed operator/owner is being held responsible and fined accordingly for overcrowding that sometimes can be out of his control. This should not be the case as it is practically impossible for the operator/owner to control the number of occupants of a Holiday premises.

Whilst fully understanding that Government is to take measures to safeguard the health of the population especially during a pandemic, yet the Gozo Tourism Association council expects that such measures should not be half baked or discriminating between establishments within the same sector.