



Media Release

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GTA Annual General Meeting

The Gozo Tourism Association held its 17th Annual General Meeting on Thursday, 25th February 2016 at the Kempinski San Lawrenz Hotel, Gozo.

The Agenda of the Annual General meeting, included an address by the Chairman of the Association, Mr Paul Scicluna, the Administrative report by the Chief Executive Officer, Mr Joe Muscat, and the Financial report by the Treasurer, Mr Joe Muscat Sammut. The meeting was also addressed by the Hon Minister for Gozo, Hon. Dr. Anton Refalo, the Hon Dr. Edward Zammit Lewis, Minister for Tourism, Hon. Mr. Antoine Borg. The first part of the Annual General Meeting, also included a discussion with the participation of Mr. Joe Cordina, Chairman Gozo Channel, Mr. Joe Galea Deputy Chief Commercial Officer Air Malta and Mr. George Micallef, Advisor at the Ministry for Tourism. This panel discussion was animated by TVM journalist Mr. Keith Demicoli.

In his opening address the GTA Chairman Mr, Paul Scicluna said that during 2015, Gozo experienced an increase on the tourist arrivals on 2014. Mr Scicluna stressed the fact that the authorities concerned need to address the particular challenges faced by the Gozitan tourism sector particularly in strengthening tourism niches and specialised niches that can attract more tourists in the lean and shoulder months as well as opening horizons to other markets. In his welcome speech, Mr Scicluna mentioned accessibility to the Island and he stated that GTA is in favour of more accessibility especially by an airlink, as well as incentive schemes for the Domestic market, and the upkeep of the Tourism Product. The GTA chairman stated that the Association will continue with its lobby for the collating of accommodation statistics for the selfcatering accommodation sector on Gozo.

The GTA's Chief Executive Officer, Mr Joe Muscat delivered a presentation on the administration of the Association during 2015. He gave an overview of the Gozitan touristic performance during last year. During his presentation Mr Muscat gave a detailed report of the work and initiatives undertaken by the Association during the course of the past year 2015.

The AGM was also addressed by the Minister for Tourism, Dr. Edward Zammit Lewis. Whilst acknowledging the work being carried out by the Gozo Tourism Association, and despite the positive results registered, the Minister noted that seasonality remained a challenging issue for Gozo. The Minister for Tourism stated that Gozo's tourism product possessed great strengths in

areas such as quality accommodation, wellness, relaxation, scuba diving, and outdoor activities. Furthermore, he commended the GTA for being proactive in securing and benefiting from EU funding for marketing initiatives aimed at raising Gozo's international profile, whilst complementing the Malta Tourism Authority's (MTA) efforts in this regard.

The Minister for Gozo, Dr. Anton Refalo, stated that, once again Gozo registered an increase in tourist arrivals in 2015 when compared to 2014. Minister Refalo mentioned the recent survey conducted by the Gozo Tourism Association amongst the Gozitan tourist establishments, which concluded that the majority of the Gozitan tourist establishment reported better business performance in 2015 when compared to 2014. Dr Refalo said that the synergized approach by all stakeholders in marketing and promoting Gozo as a distinct tourist destination, yet complementary to Malta, will continue to contribute towards the reaping of these results.

Nationalist Party Spokesman for Tourism Mr. Antoine Borg M.P. also addressed the AGM and said that this is the second opportunity for him to address the Annual General Meeting of the Gozo Tourism Association. He attributed the fact that the numbers in tourism both in Malta and in Gozo are increasing is due to sound foundation laid in previous years. However he stressed that no divide exists between Government and Opposition with regards to tourism.

During this AGM the GTA council for 2016 was formed and is made up of the following members: Borg Monica (Hotel ta' Cenc), Bugeja Alda (Gozo Weaving), Busuttil Mark (St. Andrews Divers Cove), Caruana Brian (Cornocopia Hotel) Cassar Chris (Porto Vecchio Restaurant), Gatt Ludgard (Tamarisk Properties), Loporto Mario (Gozo Village Holidays), Meilak Brian (Baron Group), Mercieca Joseph (Country Terrace Restaurant) Muscat Sammut Joseph (Down Town Hotel), Rapa Joe (Ta' Salvina Restaurant), Scicluna Konrad (Links Travel) Scicluna Paul (Gozo Farmhouses), Spiteri Pauline (Mario's Rent a car), Spiteri Philip (Ta' Philip Restaurant), Veranneman Amand (Dhalia Real Estate), and Zammit Jamie (VJB Enterprises Ltd).

Other distinguished guests present for the Annual General Meeting, included, Mr. Paul Bugeja, MTA CEO, Ms. Esther Bajada, Director Tourism and Economic Development MGOZ, officials from both the Ministry for Gozo, and the Ministry for Tourism as well as Malta Tourism Authority officials, other guests and GTA members from the various sectors of the Gozitan Tourism Industry.

Joe Muscat
CEO
Gozo Tourism Association