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Registration Number  
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**To:**

**Prime Minister – Hon. Robert Abela**

**Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Health - Hon. Christopher Fearne**

**Permanent Secretary (Ministry of Health) - Mr. Joseph Rapa**

**Permanent Secretary of the People & Standards Department (Prime Minister Office) - Dr. Joyce Cassar**

**Principal Permanent Secretary (Prime Minister Office) - Mr. Mario Cutajar**

Brussels, 26 November 2020

**Concern: European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN) support to Malta Union of Midwives & Nurses**

Dear Prime Minister,  
Dear Minister of health,  
Dear Permanent Secretary (Ministry of Health),  
Dear Permanent Secretary of People & Standards Department (Prime Minister Office),  
Principal Permanent Secretary (Prime Minister Office),

The European Federation of Nurses Association representing over 3 million nurses from 36 European Union member national nursing organisations, stands in solidarity with the Malta Union of Midwives & Nurses.

The European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN) has been informed by our member association, the Malta Union of Midwives and Nurses, that the Ministry for Health in Malta has taken them to Court after the union issued Industrial directives to all its members. This action is highly condemnable in a so-called democratic country where nurses & midwives are being unjustly targeted by their government for fighting for their legitimate rights of equal pay and allowances as other health care professionals in the sector.

Using the law courts to stop a legitimate union to fight for the rights of its members is not acceptable! This mandate is an act of arrogance and betrayal to the front liners, coming from the Prime Minister and the Health Minister, and it clearly gives a message to all nurses and midwives that there is NO respect towards these two professions.

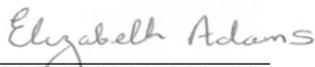
The nursing and midwifery professionals are taking the biggest impact on their daily duties due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the huge shortage of nurses. Having two important professionals risking their own lives being at bedside 24/7, caring with COVID-19 patients

and potential COVID-19 patients, which has placed huge risks not only on the healthcare professionals' lives but also on their relatives at home. To make matters worse the huge shortage of nurses and midwives in Malta is causing more stress and burnout due to the increased workload brought about by the pandemic.

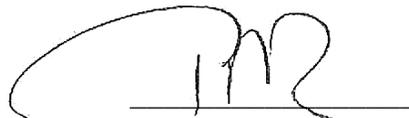
Therefore, the European Federation of Nurses Associations strongly condemns this action by the Maltese authorities against the Maltese Nurses and Midwives and fully supports our colleagues in the Malta Union of Midwives & Nurses. Standing up for nurses and nursing, giving voice to concerns and advocating for the requirement to ensure quality and patient safety for the Maltese population, should not be ignored. Frontline nurses and their leaders expect appropriate action. Nurses are a valuable resource and meeting their needs will allow them to stay within the profession and in Malta. It is imperative that the Malta government takes it seriously and engages with the Malta Union of Midwives & Nurses.

The European Union fully respects the contribution and potential of nurses to deliver on European wide health policies and initiatives. It is crucial that national governments respect professional and regulatory dialogue as outlined in the Proportionality Directive (2018/958), requiring governments to engage with all concerned stakeholders, co-designing better working environments. Together we can achieve more, and it is key that political players respect the contribution of the nursing profession and continue to support frontline nurses.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Elizabeth Adams  
EFN President



Dr Paul De Raeye  
EFN Secretary General

*For your information: The European Federation of Nurses' Associations (EFN) represents over 36 National Nurses' Associations and its work impacts on the daily work of 6 million nurses throughout the European Union and Europe. The EFN is the independent voice of the nursing profession and its mission is to strengthen the status and practice of the profession of nursing for the benefit of the health of the citizens and the interests of nurses in the EU & Europe.*