08 August 2023

MEPs and MPs
Members of the European Parliament and national Parliaments
Brussels, Belgium

Honourable Robert Abela
Prime minister of Malta
Auberge de Castille
Valletta VLT 106, Malta

Subject: Urgent Appeal to Address Recent Developments in Malta's Abortion Legislation

Dear Hon. Minister Abela,

We are writing to you as members of the European Parliament and national Parliaments, with deep concern regarding the recent developments in Malta’s abortion legislation.

A week ago, the Maltese government reneged on its promise to enact legislation that would allow abortion in cases where the health of the pregnant person is in grave jeopardy. We are profoundly disappointed by the passing of the law through parliament, which removes Malta’s total ban on abortion only when the life of the person is in immediate danger. This regressive step has effectively revoked the previously included cases such as mental health issues, health complications potentially leading to disability, including severe disability, and other health matters that would have been addressed under the proposed law.

Moreover, the new legislation imposes a requirement for the confirmation of life-threatening circumstances by three medical professionals, instead of allowing the pregnant person to consult with their trusted medical doctor of choice. This additional burden is concerning, as it potentially delays access to necessary healthcare services and puts the lives of all pregnant women and girls in Malta at even greater risk. Individuals facing circumstances like Andrea Prudente’s would once again be forced to travel abroad to access the healthcare they desperately require.

We would also like to draw your attention to a previous letter submitted by MEPs for SRR members on 28 November 2022, regarding the urgent need for comprehensive and inclusive abortion legislation in Malta. In that letter, the members highlighted the importance of ensuring access to safe and legal abortion services for all individuals in accordance with international human rights standards. We urge you to refer to this letter as it provides valuable insights and recommendations on addressing the pressing issue of reproductive rights in Malta. You can find the letter at the following link: https://www.epfweb.org/node/1000.
As representatives of the European and national Parliaments, we believe that access to safe and legal abortion is a fundamental right that should be guaranteed to all individuals, and an essential component of women's health care. Malta’s current stance jeopardizes the health, well-being, and human rights of pregnant women and girls living there. We urge you to reconsider the recently passed legislation and take immediate action to protect the reproductive rights and health of all women and girls by:

1. Reinstating the provisions that were removed from the legislation, ensuring that cases involving mental health issues, potential disabilities, and other relevant health matters are considered when determining the permissibility of abortion.
2. Restoring the autonomy of the pregnant person to consult with their chosen medical doctor to confirm life-threatening circumstances, rather than imposing a requirement for confirmation by three medical professionals.
3. Creating a legal framework that allows for safe, accessible, and compassionate healthcare services for all women and girls seeking abortion care within Malta’s borders, to prevent the need for individuals to travel abroad.

By taking these steps, you would demonstrate a commitment to upholding the rights and well-being of pregnant women and girls in Malta. It is imperative to ensure that individuals facing challenging circumstances can access the healthcare they need in a safe and timely manner, without undue burdens or the need to seek assistance abroad.

We kindly request your prompt attention to this matter, as the lives and well-being of many people depend on swift action. We are hopeful that you will prioritize the protection of reproductive rights and healthcare in Malta, and we are prepared to support any efforts that promote these principles.

Thank you for your attention, and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,
Hon. Petra Bayr - Austria
Hon. Malin Bjork - European Parliament, Sweden
Hon. Morgana Danielė - Lithuania
Hon. Heléne Fritzon - European Parliament, Sweden
Hon. Mikki Francis-Lawton - United Kingdom
Hon. Alice Mary Higgins - Ireland
Hon. Baroness Hussein-Ece Obe - United Kingdom
Hon. Sophie In’t Veld - European Parliament, Netherlands
Hon. Evin Incir - European Parliament, Sweden
Hon. Lina Lopes - Portugal
Hon. Predrag Fred Matic - European Parliament, Croatia
Hon. Maria Noichl - European Parliament, Germany
Hon. Baroness Northover - United Kingdom
Hon. Carina Ohlsson - European Parliament, Sweden
Hon. Joanna Scheuring-Wielgus - Poland