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MaLIA meeting with PL speaker on education and the media

Msida, -- 1 February 2009 -- During a meeting held at the PL headquarters with Mr Evarist Bartolo, Opposition speaker on Education and the Media, MaLIA representatives (Mr Robert Mizzi – Chairman, Mr Joseph Grima – Deputy Chairman, Mr Claudio Laferla – Secretary and Mr Laurence Zerafa, PRO) discussed the current state of libraries and archives in Malta and MaLIA's proposal for a state-of-the-art public library as part of a cultural centre in place of the Royal Opera House ruins.

The MaLIA representatives discussed the need for a state-of-the-art public library in a prime location. It was agreed that the current location of the Central Public Library in Floriana is not ideal, and that a modern library in a prime location in Valletta, such as is city gate, with modern state-of-the-art facilities good collections and services, is needed to entice people to visit the centre that should be a hive of activities focused on an informal learning environment and an information centre for the community and tourists. MaLIA is also proposing that this public library should have two unique collections, the first being a collection about the history and culture of Valletta and the second collection would include an audio-visual collection of all local artists of all times in digital format. Mr Bartolo stated that in principle, he agrees with the MaLIA proposal and also endorsed the proposal for the unique collections.

The need for professionally trained staff for libraries and archives and the recognition of the library and information profession were also discussed during the meeting. Mr Bartolo also commented that the need for a proper research library, staffed by library and information professionals is also felt in the Maltese Parliament.

The MaLIA iPetition and Facebook group (of which Mr. Bartolo is a member) were also discussed and the MaLIA representatives confirmed that a short report on the proposal together with details of the signatories of the iPetition (over 400) and the Facebook (over 570 members) group will be presented to the Prime Minister in the coming weeks. The iPetition and the Facebook group are both accessible from the MaLIA homepage at www.malia-malta.org

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