



DONINU MALTA MEDIA

Declaration

I, Pierre Calleja, in my capacity as an investigative journalist with Doninu Malta Media DMM001 (freelance), hereby declare that we are not affiliated with, nor aligned to, any party or interest group. Our sole duty is to act in accordance with journalistic law and ethics, and to inform the public of matters that are of genuine public interest.

Our work is guided by the responsibility to expose corruption, abuse of power by public officials, and actions by individuals that cause additional suffering to persons with disabilities.

I further declare that I have no connection whatsoever with Fondazzjoni Wens. I have never been employed by the foundation, nor have I received any financial benefit from it. I also confirm that I do not have any family members or related persons with disabilities who are residents of the said foundation.

Everything I do is driven by the intention to give a voice to vulnerable persons. I also declare that we have never intruded into private matters that do not affect the public interest, as we firmly believe in challenging actions and facts—not attacking individuals personally.

I further state that we have always acted in good faith, relying strictly on evidence in our possession. Reports were submitted to the competent authorities before any information was made public, in an effort to allow issues to be addressed and resolved prior to publication for the Maltese and Gozitan public.

Finally, I am prepared to list the laws and regulations that govern our duties as journalists, as well as the legal frameworks that protect and safeguard journalistic work.(Below)

Pierre Calleja

Legal Annex – Applicable Laws and Legal Frameworks

This annex outlines the principal legal and ethical frameworks governing investigative journalism, public-interest reporting, and the protection of journalists and sources.

A. Maltese Legal Framework

1. Constitution of Malta

- Article 41 – Freedom of expression and the right to receive and impart information without interference.
- Provides constitutional protection for journalism carried out in the public interest.

2. European Convention Act (Cap. 319, Laws of Malta)

- Incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into Maltese law.
- Article 10 ECHR protects freedom of expression, including investigative journalism and the disclosure of information of public interest.

3. Media and Defamation Act (Cap. 579, Laws of Malta)

- Protects journalists acting in good faith and in the public interest.
- Replaced criminal libel and strengthened safeguards for responsible journalism.
- Recognises the public interest defence and protection of sources.

4. Protection of the Whistleblower Act (Cap. 527, Laws of Malta)

- Protects persons disclosing information on wrongdoing, corruption, abuse of power, or threats to vulnerable persons.
- Applies to journalists receiving and reporting such information in good faith.
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5. Data Protection Act (Cap. 586, Laws of Malta)

- Permits processing and publication of personal data for journalistic purposes where this serves the public interest, subject to proportionality and necessity.

B. European Union Legal Framework

6. Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

- Article 11 – Freedom of expression and information, including media freedom and pluralism.
- Article 7 & 8 – Balanced against privacy and data protection, with explicit safeguards for journalism.

7. EU Whistleblower Protection Directive (EU) 2019/1937

- Protects disclosures of breaches of EU law.
- Recognises the role of journalists in receiving and publishing protected disclosures.

8. European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) Jurisprudence

- Consistently affirms that journalists act as “public watchdogs”, especially when reporting on:
 - Abuse of power
 - Mismanagement of public or charitable funds
 - Treatment of vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities

C. International Standards

9. United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

- Article 19 – Right to freedom of opinion and expression, including the right to seek, receive, and impart information.

10. UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

- Requires transparency, accountability, and protection of persons with disabilities from abuse and neglect.
- Supports public-interest reporting exposing violations of the rights of persons with disabilities.

11. UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression

- Recognises investigative journalism as essential to democratic accountability and the protection of human rights.

D. Ethical and Professional Principles

12. Journalistic Ethics and Public Interest Doctrine

- Duty to:
 - Act independently and without conflicts of interest
 - Verify information through evidence
 - Avoid unnecessary intrusion into private life
 - Prioritise public interest over private reputation where wrongdoing is alleged and supported by facts or by laws

Conclusion

All reporting and actions undertaken by Doninu Malta Media and its investigative journalists are conducted:

- Independently and without personal or financial interest
- In good faith
- Based strictly on documentary and testimonial evidence
- In line with Maltese, European, and international law
- With the sole objective of protecting the public interest and giving voice to vulnerable persons

SWORN STATEMENT

I, **Pierre Calleja**, holder registered No. DMM / 001, investigative journalist with **Doninu Malta Media**, **DO HEREBY SOLEMNLY DECLARE AND SWEAR** as follows:

1. Capacity and Role

I am an investigative journalist affiliated with **Doninu Malta Media**. In this capacity, I carry out journalistic investigations strictly in accordance with Maltese law, European law, and internationally recognised journalistic ethics.

2. Independence and Lack of Conflict of Interest

I declare that neither I nor **Doninu Malta Media** are affiliated with, controlled by, or acting on behalf of any political party, organisation, foundation, commercial entity, or private interest.

Our work is independent and motivated solely by the public interest.

3. No Relationship with Fondazzjoni Wens

I further declare that:

- I have never been employed by Fondazzjoni Wens;
- I have never received any financial or other benefit from Fondazzjoni Wens;
- I do not have any family members or related persons with disabilities who are residents of Fondazzjoni Wens;
- I hold no personal, professional, or financial interest in the said foundation.

4. Purpose of the Journalistic Work

My journalistic activity in relation to the matters reported was undertaken for the sole purpose of:

- Informing the public on issues of legitimate public interest;
- Exposing alleged corruption, abuse of power, maladministration, or misconduct by public officials or other persons exercising authority;
- Highlighting actions or omissions that may cause harm or additional suffering to persons with disabilities or other vulnerable individuals.

5. **Respect for Privacy and Proportionality**

I declare that I have never intruded into private matters that do not affect the public interest.

All reporting has been limited to facts, actions, decisions, and conduct that are relevant to public accountability.

I firmly adhere to the principle of challenging actions and facts, not attacking individuals personally.

6. **Good Faith and Reliance on Evidence**

I state that all reporting, statements, and publications were made **in good faith** and were based exclusively on:

- Documentary evidence, including emails, official correspondence, and records;
- Verifiable information obtained through lawful means;
- Testimonies or disclosures assessed for credibility and relevance.

7. **Prior Reporting to Authorities**

Before making information public, reports and relevant evidence were submitted to the competent authorities wherever possible, with the intention of allowing issues to be addressed, investigated, or remedied prior to public disclosure, in the interest of fairness and accountability.

8. **Legal Framework**

I declare that my actions are protected and governed by, inter alia:

- Article 41 of the Constitution of Malta;
- Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights;
- The Media and Defamation Act (Cap. 579, Laws of Malta);
- The Protection of the Whistleblower Act (Cap. 527, Laws of Malta);
- The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union;
- Relevant jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights recognising journalists as public watchdogs.

9. **Commitment to Cooperation**

I affirm that I am willing and available to cooperate fully with any lawful investigation and to provide supporting evidence where required by a competent authority or court.

10. Truthfulness

I make this declaration conscientiously, believing the contents herein to be

11. Protection of Sources

I expressly reserve all rights granted to me by law to protect the identity of all sources who provide information to Doninu Malta Media. I affirm that the confidentiality of journalistic sources is a fundamental pillar of press freedom and public-interest journalism, and I will not disclose such identities except where lawfully compelled by a competent court in strict accordance with the law.

12. False Allegations and Defamation

I categorically deny any allegations claiming that I, or Doninu Malta Media, have created fear, harassment, or intimidation against any individual. I declare that such allegations are false, unfounded, and defamatory. I respectfully request that the competent authorities take appropriate action against any person who knowingly spreads false information intended to damage our reputation, obstruct journalistic work, or intimidate journalists.

13. Whistleblower Protection

I affirm that the Protection of the Whistleblower Act safeguards not only journalists but also individuals who disclose information to journalists in good faith regarding corruption, abuse of power, misconduct, or violations affecting the public interest.

Any attempt to identify, intimidate, retaliate against, or penalise such sources constitutes a breach of the law.

14. Duty to Report Criminal and Abusive Conduct

I declare that where information received concerns alleged criminal acts, including theft, misappropriation of funds, abuse of power, or misconduct by public officials, it is my legal and ethical duty to report such matters to the competent authorities.

15. Reporting of Intimidation by Public Officials

I further declare that we report, based strictly on facts and evidence, instances where public officials attempt to interfere with, intimidate, or silence journalists by exerting pressure, issuing threats, or contacting other public officials with the intent of suppressing lawful journalistic investigations.

16. **Good Faith and Public Interest**

All such reporting is carried out in good faith, without malice, and solely in the public interest, particularly where vulnerable persons, including persons with disabilities, may be affected by abuse, neglect, or maladministration.

Legal Provisions That Cover and Protect These Actions

Maltese Law

1. Constitution of Malta – Article 41

- Freedom of expression and protection of journalistic activity.

2. Media and Defamation Act (Cap. 579)

- Protection of journalists acting in the public interest.
- Defence of truth, fair comment, and responsible journalism.
- Protection against abusive or strategic lawsuits (SLAPP-related principles).

3. Protection of the Whistleblower Act (Cap. 527)

- Protection of journalists and whistleblowers.
- Protection of confidential sources.
- Prohibition of retaliation or intimidation.

4. Criminal Code (Cap. 9)

- Offences relating to false accusations, defamation, obstruction of justice, and abuse of authority by public officials.

5. Data Protection Act (Cap. 586)

- Explicit exemptions for journalistic purposes where publication serves the public interest.

European Law

6. European Convention on Human Rights – Article 10

- Strong protection of journalistic freedom and source confidentiality.

7. European Court of Human Rights Case Law

- *Goodwin v. United Kingdom* – protection of journalistic sources.

- Journalists recognised as **public watchdogs**.

8. EU Charter of Fundamental Rights – Article 11

- Media freedom and pluralism.

9. EU Whistleblower Protection Directive (EU) 2019/1937

- Protection of disclosures to journalists.
- Protection against retaliation and intimidation.

International Standards

10. UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights – Article 19

11. UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

12. UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression

- Protection of investigative journalists and whistleblowers.

Optional Closing Sentence for the Affidavit

I make these additional declarations knowingly and in good faith, fully aware of my legal obligations and protections, and affirm that the above statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Declared on this 31st day of January 2026

Pierre Calleja