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# media release

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## **MALTA PARTICIPATES IN WORLD'S LEADING TRAVEL TRADE EVENT**

The Malta Tourism Authority is currently participating in the 51<sup>st</sup> edition of ITB Berlin (*Internationale Tourismus-Börse*), the world's largest tourism trade fair. The MTA and the Ministry for Tourism, together with Air Malta, the Ministry for Gozo as well as several other Maltese and Gozitan industry partners, are representing the Maltese Islands at this important annual travel trade event.

Over the course of the fair, officials from MTA's Head Office and Frankfurt Office are having meetings with a number of leading German and international tour operators, travel companies and media representatives. The Malta delegation includes MTA Chairman Dr Gavin Gulia, MTA CEO Mr. Paul Bugeja, MTA Deputy CEO and Chief Officer of Strategic Development Mr. Leslie Vella, MTA Chief Marketing Officer Mr. Carlo Micallef, Director Germany Mr Peter Cauchi and Advisor to the Minister for Tourism, Mr Josef Formosa Gauci. The meetings focus on joint promotional activities with tour operators and airlines in support of existing and new routes for summer and winter.

Once again, one of the major attractions on the Malta stand is the culinary counter, where Chef Mr. Victor Aquilina from renowned Ta' Victor Restaurant in Marsaxlokk is serving some of his mouth-watering creations.

The Ambassador of the Republic of Malta to the Federal Republic of Germany, H.E. Dr. Albert Friggieri, hosted the annual reception at the Maltese Embassy in Berlin. The event was very well attended by the Maltese and Gozitan ITB delegation, as well as other guests and business partners.

Commenting on the importance of this event, MTA CEO Mr. Paul Bugeja stated that: *“ITB is an annual appointment for the world’s travel trade and offers a perfect opportunity for us to meet with our partners from Germany and beyond to take stock of past performance, and plan ahead for the future. In 2016, the Maltese Islands saw a marginal increase from the German market when compared to 2015, however, 2017 has started off on the right foot, with inbound tourists from Germany increasing by 20% during January when compared to the same month in 2016. Moreover, the feel we are getting from the trade is very positive and we are confident that this market will perform strongly in the coming months.”* Mr Bugeja continued by saying that *“Even though we live in a world that is constantly connected through technological means, there is still no better way of doing business than through meeting people face to face. In this context, ITB continues to be one of the most important annual appointments for bringing Malta to the attention of the international travel trade.”* Mr. Bugeja concluded by thanking all those involved in setting up the Malta stand, and the many co-exhibitors for their continuous efforts to promote the Maltese Islands.

About ITB 2017: Held from the 8th to 12th March 2017, the 51<sup>st</sup> edition of ITB is expected to play host to over 10,000 exhibitors from 187 countries and territories, from 5 continents, promoting the latest products and trends of the global tourism industry on 1,069 stands in 26 Halls. The organisers estimate that over 120,000 international trade visitors, over 26,000 Convention Visitors and over 60,000 private visitors will attend this year’s ITB.

Photo 1 Caption (from left to right): MTA Deputy CEO and Chief Officer of Strategic Development Mr. Leslie Vella, MTA Chief Marketing Officer Mr. Carlo Micallef, Chef Victor Aquilina of Ta’ Victor Restaurant, MTA CEO Mr. Paul Bugeja, MTA Chairman Dr Gavin Gulia, & Director Germany Mr Peter Cauchi

Photo 2 Caption: The meeting area of the MTA stand



