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# media release

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## **MTA DEPLORES FALSE WARNINGS REGARDING BEACH SAFETY**

The Malta Tourism Authority deplores the false warnings circulated on social media advising beachgoers against swimming at a number of locations due to allegedly dangerous sea conditions. These warnings, claiming to be issued by the St. John's Ambulance, are an example of 'fake news' aimed at dissuading members of the public and tourists from frequenting local beaches and creating unnecessary fears.

MTA CEO Mr. Paul Bugeja commented: *"As in previous years, MTA has once again engaged a number of organisations to carry out lifeguard services at a number of popular beaches throughout summer, including several which have a Blue Flag designation. These lifeguards are providing an excellent service to swimmers and beachgoers, including a system of warnings by means of flags which give an indication of sea conditions and relative safety. These are reliable source of information for bathers and should always be obeyed."*

*"As for other sources of information, including unverified news making the rounds on the internet, one should always be wary,"* concluded Mr. Bugeja.

This year, lifeguard services fully funded by the Malta Tourism Authority are provided at a number of beaches in Malta, Gozo and Comino by two organisations: A-Medical in Malta and ERRC in Gozo and Comino. This is part of the services, improvements and enhancements that MTA carries out every summer to make popular beaches around the Maltese Islands better organised, cleaner and safer. Actions include the engagement of beach supervisors, the provision of waste separation bins and bags, accessibility facilities such as ramps, hoists and beach wheelchairs, signage and more. In Malta, the MTA-managed beaches are Għadira (Mellieħa Bay), Golden Bay, Perched Beach and Qawra Point (St Paul's Bay), St. George's Bay (St Julian's), Exiles and Fond Għadir (Sliema), Fajtata (Marsaskala), and Pretty Bay (Birżebbuġa). Six of these are Blue Flag beaches. MTA also manages beaches on Comino and supports operations at a number of other beaches, including several in Gozo.