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Ministry for Tourism and Consumer Protection and Malta Tourism Authority Welcome Announcement of Airport Reopening

The Ministry for Tourism and Consumer Protection and the Malta Tourism Authority expressed their satisfaction at the announcement of the reopening of the airport and the resumption of commercial flights to and from Malta as from July 1st 2020.

The first group of destinations that are being reopened for travel comprises: Germany, Austria, Sicily, Cyprus, Switzerland, Sardegna, Iceland, Slovakia, Norway, Denmark, Hungary, Finland, Ireland, Lithuania, Israel, Latvia, Estonia, Luxembourg, and Czech Republic. More destinations will be announced in due course, once clearance from the health authorities is received.

Minister for Tourism and Consumer Protection Julia Farrugia Portelli said that this decision reaffirms previous statements declaring that Malta is going to have a summer. The Minister added that the lifting of these measures was carefully studied in the past weeks with the health authorities and will give our people confidence while further sustaining our economy and tourism.

MTA Chairman Dr Gavin Gulia said that: *“Over the past two and a half months, the travel and hospitality industry across the globe has faced an unprecedented challenge. Members of the travel trade, from airlines to touroperators and travel agents, as well as hoteliers and restaurateurs, and the many others who earn a living directly or indirectly from tourism, had to endure the impact of an international travel ban. Now that the situation is improving in many countries, and we can finally reopen our borders, we look forward with cautious optimism to the weeks and months ahead. Whilst taking all necessary safety precautions, we can proceed to this important next phase with confidence.”*

MTA Chief Executive Johann Buttigieg, stated: *“The announcement that Malta International Airport - our primary gateway to the world - is reopening is of fundamental importance to all of us in the tourism sector, and we welcome it with enthusiasm. The difficulties we have managed to overcome together in the past weeks are testament to the resilience of the industry. New challenges lie ahead, but with them come new opportunities. MTA believes that Malta has all it takes to rebuild a profitable industry that provides a livelihood for thousands and is so important to the Maltese economy.”*

Carlo Micallef, MTA Deputy CEO and Chief Marketing Officer, said: *“Throughout the peak of the pandemic, when international travel was at a standstill, we made sure that the Maltese Islands remained top-of-mind for prospective travellers in our core markets by means of a campaign called “Dream Malta Now... Visit Later”. With the opening of our airport, we can now start to inform our*

overseas partners and customers, that the time to simply dream is over, and the actual visiting can begin once again. It will not happen all at once, and not from everywhere from day one. But it is an important first step, one that the industry and the public has been eagerly waiting for.”

Malta’s excellent performance with regard to the control of the coronavirus within its territory has been acknowledged by the European Commission, the Commonwealth, the World Health Organisation, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, and others. Various articles and reports in influential publications have included Malta amongst the safest countries to visit in a post-Covid scenario.

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