



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR  
THERAPEUTIC & COUNSELLING CHOICE

11<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

Maltese High Commissioner in London  
**Ambassador Joseph Cole**  
Malta High Commission  
Malta House  
36-38 Piccadilly  
London W1J 0LE

Dear Ambassador Cole

### **EX-GAYS: TREATMENT OF MR MATTHEW GRECH BY MINISTER HELENA DALLI**

I write to you on behalf of the Executive Board of the International Federation for Therapeutic and Counselling Choice regarding the Affirmation of Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression Act passed in 2016 in Malta. This law prohibits 'treatment, practice or sustained effort that aims to change, repress and, or eliminate a person's sexual orientation, gender identity and, or gender expression'.

For persons who wish precisely to move away from a homosexual or bisexual sexual orientation or transgender identity or expression that they do not desire, this law is unjust and discriminatory. As such it also discriminates against all persons who are able to provide treatment and support to those ends. Consequently not only is it having a negative effect on this population group in Malta but it will also unfairly impact on ex-gay communities in the United Kingdom and other countries should the government of Malta continue to promote it internationally.

This law violates several fundamental freedoms enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, such as freedom of speech (Articles 9 and 10), freedom of religion (Article 9), the right to respect for private and family life (Article 8) and other rights such as clients' right to self-determination in exercising therapeutic choice.

Regrettably the Minister for Equalities in the Maltese government made this law her pretext for launching an unprecedented personal attack in the press on Matthew Grech, a Maltese citizen who shared his personal journey away from a homosexual lifestyle through becoming a Christian in an interview broadcast on 'X Factor Malta' in October 2018. She argued that his interview could lead young people who want to 'come out' to attempt and even commit suicide. Indeed she went as far as attacking his desire to marry a woman and thus implied change from predominantly homosexual attraction to at least a degree of heterosexual attraction was 'irresponsible and duplicitous'. This is nothing less than an attack on the individual's right to marry (ECHR Article 12).

The best research shows that therapy for **unwanted** same-sex attraction increases clients' well-being (see the Appendix at the end of this letter). Also relevant is the evidence presented by clinicians in the field to the American Psychological Association for 130 years of work with clients resulting in moving away successfully from unwanted same-sex attraction (again, see the Appendix).

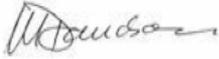
In reality the Minister of Equality's statements and newspaper opinion article were attacks on the dignity and rights of all people who have left LGBT self-identification and lifestyles. This was the first time in history that a government minister in any country launched an attack targeting an ex-gay person. It is all the more significant given that the Minister in question was responsible for passing the law under consideration, and thus reveals the real restrictions on the aforementioned rights as always having been intended.

Malta has clearly been used by international LGBT activists and their allies to pass this law in order to influence legislation in this area across the European Union and arguably also the Commonwealth. It is considered by international LGBT activists to be a 'gold standard' for how countries across the world should act. There is a real danger that such a law is passed by the government of the United Kingdom, something that would lower its reputation as a defender of human rights around the world including especially freedom of speech, religious

freedom and the right to respect for private and family life. Should Malta be deemed responsible for having influenced the United Kingdom in this direction, its reputation would suffer as well.

In light of these grave concerns, the International Federation for Therapeutic and Counselling Choice calls upon you to make the case to the government of Malta that it should repeal this unjust law at the earliest possible opportunity.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Michael R Davidson  
**Chairman, International Federation for Therapeutic and Counselling Choice**  
cc. Stuart Gill, OBE UK High Commission in Malta

### **Appendix**

130 years of evidence of change

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5987bcaeebbd1aa4143952f8/t/599670dbf43b5575e4b2fe93/1503031517761/What-research-shows-homosexuality.NARTH\\_.pd](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5987bcaeebbd1aa4143952f8/t/599670dbf43b5575e4b2fe93/1503031517761/What-research-shows-homosexuality.NARTH_.pd)

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**IFTCC Registered Office:** 70 Wimpole Street London W1G 8AX

Telephone +44 (0) 7833098998 | mike.davidson@iftcc.org | <http://www.iftcc.org> |