

The Summit for Democracy

December 9-10, 2021

MALTA Contribution

(USA authorities requested preliminary feedback by 29 October)

The Biden Administration is looking for brief, big picture, concept-level preliminary commitments in line with the Summit's main goals of combating corruption, countering authoritarianism, and promoting human rights. These goals will continue to be refined and expanded on in the run up to the December 9-10 Summit, which Hon. PM will attend, when they will be formalized.

I. Fighting Corruption

- **UBO increased transparency** - As part of Malta's holistic plan to address the FATF action plan in a manner that is sustainable and ongoing and built on a risk-based approach, extensive work has been carried out to increase transparency of UBOs (Ultimate beneficial Owners). Guidelines for intra-agency cooperation have been developed and further actions for improvement of the mechanisms in place are planned.
- **Ensuring integrity of public officers** - as part of Malta's efforts to further strengthen the rule of law, transparency and accountability a project called 'Improving the integrity and transparency framework in Malta' has been launched to improve integrity standards among all those who hold public office, including members of cabinet and parliament, with the aim of restoring public trust in the policymaking process.
- **Implementation of the National Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy 2021-2023** - the new national anti-money laundering/combating terrorist financing/targeted financial sanctions (AML/CFT/TFS) strategy and action plan which will cover the next three years from 2021 to 2023. This new national strategy and action plan will provide a detailed list of the actions which each authority is required to implement.

II. Defending Against Authoritarianism

- **Anti-SLAPP legislation** – Government intends tabling an anti-SLAPP Bill aimed at protecting journalists and media freedom (through an amendment in the Media and Defamation Act).
- **Establishment of Committee of Experts on media reform and protection of journalists** – Terms of Reference are being discussed with Institute of Malta Journalists as well as the family of the late Daphne Caruana Galizia
- **Amendments to COCP (*Code of Organization and Civil Procedure Bill*) on penalties relating to threats to journalists** as well as libel suits relating to deceased authors
- **Introducing Standard Operating procedures for Police** – on how they deal with threats by journalists

III. Advancing Human Rights

- **Malta initiative on the sharing of info on de-flagged vessels by ship registries** -Malta is proposing the establishment of a global database for sharing of information on problematic vessels to diminish loopholes and lessen chances of the misuse of vessels for illicit purposes. Malta's efforts are supported by UNODC and IMO.
- **Reinforcing and investing in our judicial, investigative and law enforcement institutions** – Implementation of the reforms agreed by Parliament for judicial and institutional reform.

- **Digitalisation of the Law Courts** - The feedback received from the public for the draft Digital Justice Strategy, published for public consultation on 22 September 2021, will help formulate the final Digital Justice Strategy that will be launched later this year and that will run for 6 years between 2022 and 2027.