

Parliament delegation on Malta mission after Caruana Galizia murder revelations

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News

The “fact finding” delegation, which comprises members from Parliament’s Civil Liberties committee, left for Malta on Monday for two days of meetings.



Daphne Caruana Galizia | *Photo credit: Press Association*

A delegation from the European Parliament has been despatched an “urgent mission” to look at the rule of law in Malta after recent revelations around the murder of Maltese journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia.

On Monday, a Parliament spokesman said it had decided to send a delegation after the “considerable developments which have rocked the island in last ten days.”

He said MEPs will meet several high-level people, including Joseph Muscat, Malta's under-fire Prime Minister, the country's attorney general, the Maltese Parliament speaker and government members.

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He said the delegation will also probably meet NGOs and journalists.

MEPs from every political group in Parliament is represented in the delegation, which is led by Dutch Renew Europe member Sophie in't Veld.

The Parliament spokesman added, "Parliament has been following developments in Malta and has voiced concerns about the rule of law there. The findings of this delegation visit will feed into the ongoing debate about Malta and a resolution to put to plenary in new year."

He said Parliament will also debate the recent revelations in Malta in the December Strasbourg plenary.

"Parliament has been following developments in Malta and has voiced concerns about the rule of law there" **European Parliament spokesman**

Commenting on the new developments, German Greens MEP Sven Giegold, who took part in the previous European Parliament mission to Malta following the assassination of Caruana Galizia, said, "In the last week the closest allies of Prime Minister Joseph Muscat have resigned and been questioned by the police about the murder of Malta's most prominent journalist."

"Questions around the independence of the judicial system and severe allegations of corruption at the highest levels means that the European Parliament mission to Malta is essential."

"Three government ministers have now resigned in connection to the murder of Galizia. The priority of the Parliament mission must be to investigate all potential links to the Prime Minister, who has protected and defended these ministers for so long."

"Malta must adhere to the rule of law and European values so that there can be justice for Galizia and her family."

He said urgent questions needed to be answered concerning the independence of the Maltese judiciary, adding, "Almost every day new questions appear around the independence of the judicial system and severe allegations of corruption at the highest levels."

Meanwhile, a war of words has erupted between Maltese Socialist MEP Miriam Dalli and the family of

Galizia.

Dalli said she feels “angry and betrayed” in the wake of the fallout from the investigation into the reporter’s murder.

Questions around the independence of the judicial system and severe allegations of corruption at the highest levels means that the European Parliament mission to Malta is essential” **Sven Giegold MEP**

Writing on Facebook on Saturday, Dalli, who has been touted as one of the possible candidates for the party's leadership, said people from different political backgrounds who have spoken to her said they felt “disorientated.”

"This is not an issue of Labourites and Nationalists. This is an issue that involves the entire country," she wrote.

But Galizia’s eldest son, Matthew Caruana Galizia, criticised the MEP, saying she was wrong about Muscat and that she “did not act when the country needed her to.”

In a letter to the MEP, he writes, “Dear Miriam Dalli – If you are angry and feeling betrayed, accept that you were wrong about the Prime Minister.”

Opposition politicians have repeatedly called for Muscat to quit and, in a televised message on Sunday, Muscat said he had informed the nation’s president that he would quit as leader of the governing Labour party on 12 January and that in the days after he would resign as Prime Minister.

On Saturday, close to 20,000 Maltese citizens protested in the capital, Valletta, in what was by far the largest turnout so far in weeks.

Elsewhere this week, Parliament's Human Rights Committee will host a debate via a video link with Joshua Wong, Secretary-General of the Demosisto Party in Hong Kong and one of the leading figures of recent protests there.

The ECR, in a statement, said, “We urge the Chinese government in Beijing in accordance with the status of “one country, two systems” to fully respect the outcome of the recent elections and to respond positively to the clearly expressed views of the people of Hong Kong.”

About the author

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