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STATEMENT BY THE MALTESE EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE

A RESPONSIBLE AND FEARLESS COMMITMENT

During our meeting of Thursday, 7 August, 2008, we evaluated the discussion taking place in the country regarding marriage and the family. This situation, which developed after the last general elections, leads us to make the following considerations.

1. The Church, in her reflections about the human person, and strengthened by the Word of God, believes that marriage and the family are of fundamental benefit for the individual and society.
2. The Christian community may and should give its contribution in this discussion because the human person is the way of the Church. For many years it was the Church alone that offered formation and accompanied the couples in their experience of marriage and the family. It was also the Church that helped those who encountered difficulties in their married life, as well as their children.
3. Whatever weakens and breaks up marriage and the family, such as cohabitation and divorce, even if it may appear to solve some difficulties for individuals, has serious and lasting consequences on the common good of our society. The experiences of other countries bear witness to this.
4. Christians and those who believe in this value of marriage and the family should commit themselves according to their responsibilities. We understand that in the kind of culture we are living in this means that one has to go against the current. We hope that many will be those whose choice to give a contribution openly in favour of marriage and the family overcomes the choice to remain silent because of the fear of criticism.

+ Paul Cremona O.P., Archbishop of Malta
+ Mario Grech, Bishop of Gozo
+ Annetto Depasquale, Vicar General of Malta

Mgr. Joseph Magro, Secretary