



Din I-Art Helwa

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The Hon Marlene Farrugia, MP
Chairman, Standing Committee on Environment and Development Planning
House of Representatives
The Palace
Valletta

17th January 2014

Dear Ms Farrugia,

Strategic Plan for the Environment and Development (SPED)

The government has confirmed that the preparation of the Strategic Plan for the Environment and Development (SPED) is underway, as defined in the Environment and Development Planning Act, 2010 (Cap. 504).

The SPED will replace the Structure Plan adopted in 1992 which encompassed a 20-year period. The strategy of the Structure Plan was translated into subsidiary plans and policies, including seven local plans and several supplementary planning policies.

Cap 504 stipulates that the SPED must set out policies in relation to the development and use of land and sea. The SPED is to ensure that plans, policies and programmes issued under the Environment and Development Planning Act are holistic and comprehensive. Cap 504 also indicates that all subsidiary plans and policies should not extend the scope of or be in conflict with the SPED.

It follows that the new SPED should be finalised before the government embarks on major revisions to existing subsidiary plans and policies, or the formulation of new subsidiary plans and policies.

Din I-Art Helwa objects most strongly to the government's ongoing initiative to hastily revise and introduce a series of important plans and policies, without carrying out the necessary background studies, before the new SPED is concluded.

The revision and formulation of these plans and policies will have major and long-term environmental, social and economic implications. Din I-Art Helwa requests that the following initiatives are put on hold until the SPED is finalised:

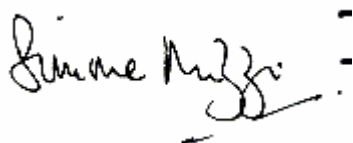
Revision of the Local Plans
Outside Development Zone Policy
Hotel Heights Adjustment Policy
Fuel Stations Policy
Fireworks Factories Policy

Floor Area Ratio Policy
Solar Farms Policy
Cemeteries Policy
Inner Harbour Area (Marsaxlokk) Development Brief

Furthermore, major land reclamation projects are being considered in the absence of a Marine Subject Plan. In 2013 the Commissioner for the Environment and Development called for a Marine Subject Plan but this call went unheeded and plans for land reclamation are still moving ahead. As a result of this approach, no strategic environmental assessment on land reclamation is being carried out.

Din I-Art Helwa would hereby like to request the Standing Committee on Environment and Development Planning to review the procedure that is currently being followed by the government in the preparation of the SPED and the revision and formulation of the plans and policies mentioned above. Din I-Art Helwa also requests to be given the opportunity to appear before the Committee when the review is discussed.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simone Mizzi', with a horizontal line underneath.

Simone Mizzi
Executive President
Din I-Art Helwa

cc. The Hon Anglu Farrugia, Speaker of the House of Representatives
The Hon Anthony Bezzina, MP
The Hon Charles Buhagiar, MP
The Hon Luciano Busuttill, MP
The Hon George Pullicino, MP