



THE GOZO BUSINESS CHAMBER

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Press Release: The Importance of a Permanent Link for Gozo

The Gozo Business Chamber (GBC) would like to make reference to the speech made by the Leader of the Opposition Hon. Dr Bernard Grech here in Gozo, on Sunday 29th November, and the reference to the permanent link (subsea tunnel) between the two islands during his speech.

The Chamber would like to refer to the motion tabled in Parliament (Motion no. 233) on the 17th April 2019. The motion referred to the permanent link, which project had started during the 2008-2013 administration, and continued under subsequent legislatures with various studies which were published by Transport Malta. These can be accessed through the following [link](#). The motion was approved by both sides of the House.

The Leader of the Opposition made reference to a referendum to be undertaken on the project. Given the extensive period, work, the studies that have already been undertaken on the project, the publication of a pre-qualification questionnaire, and the submissions made, calling into question this project at this stage through a referendum would not be appropriate. Such a step should have been undertaken when this project was initially included in the national policy agenda. The feasibility and the continuation of the project should only be determined through the technical studies that have been and are still to be undertaken.

This is an important long-term project which envisages multiple legislatures. Within this context the motion that had been approved in Parliament, led to an agreement from both sides of the House on the strategic direction to be adopted on this project. Tinkering with such an important long-term project which has multiple benefits for the Gozitan society and economy is not acceptable. This would put back to the drawing board an important project which has been in the pipeline for many years.

As reiterated various times by the Gozo Business Chamber, the permanent link would level out the inequalities between the Gozitan and the Maltese economy. It would make living in Gozo a choice which is not constrained by the present physical limitations, whereby youths who want to settle in Gozo can do so freely.

From an economic perspective it would mean that the present limitations linked to insularity would no longer be the case.

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