



Press Release

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STATEMENT BY THE SPOUSE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

I have been asked by numerous media for my comments following the conclusion of the independent inquiry on Egrant by Magistrate Aaron Bugeja.

First of all, I would like to endorse every single word that the Prime Minister, my husband, said on Sunday. It was extremely unfortunate that I was abroad on activities related to my voluntary work and could not be next to him, since we have been through all this, together, as a family.

The inquiry had me set foot for the first time in my life in a law court, to give evidence alone, without any assistance, as required by our laws. For some this might be run of the mill. For me, it was traumatic.

For us as a family, the result of the inquiry is no cause for celebration, since we would have preferred not to go through all this in the first place. But it is cause for relief, since what we knew from the very first moment, is now certified, and there for everyone to see.

Nevertheless, the pain will not just go away. Our family has suffered, and we were deeply affected on a personal and human level. Just imagine sitting down, as parents, with your 10-year-old daughters, explaining that what they were reading, watching, and hearing was simply not true. Fielding questions on what happens if we are taken to prison. Asking what exactly is an “istitut” since they read that someone suggested that they, our children, should be taken from us. We had to discuss how to deal with television crews and photographers who were hounding us everywhere, and how to react in a dignified manner at school and elsewhere, when necessary.

People might see our public persona, where we understand our institutional role, and try to fulfil it in the best of our capacities without letting our private life ever intrude. Some might also believe that I am some sort of heartless, vain woman, as the decade-long character assassination campaign targeting me personally goes at length to depict. But the scar that this deceitful conspiracy left on me personally, and on us as a family, has marked us for life. It is the basis for many decisions we have taken over the past 15 months, and those in the months to come.

I thank the thousands of persons of good will who have trusted us from the very start, without the need to see the result of any inquiry. I understand, and equally appreciate, the sentiments of those persons who were doubtful, given that the story was too good not to be true, and now have realised that they have been conned into believing the biggest lie in Maltese political history. I thank them too for the overwhelming support they are showing us.

Now that the truth has been established, I will devote even more energy to the Marigold Foundation. I feel I owe it to them. They stuck with me all along even though it would have been easier to dump me since a shadow was being cast on them too and on activities related to the Rare Diseases Alliance and Special Olympics. I am moved by the love shown by my fellow board members and by hundreds of volunteers, even when they were faced with the prospect of being hounded online and in real life simply for being seen with me.

Equally, my heart goes out to friends, like Michelle Buttigieg, whose reputation was tarnished simply because they are my friends, from way before we entered public life.

We have gone through this ordeal in the most serene manner possible not because we are perfect, but because we work hard to have a strong family. We found no help whatsoever from institutions who should know better. Those who stand for the protection of children shied away from pronouncing themselves on the way our daughters were being smeared. Those who usually have a lot to say about everything, never had a word to say to us, neither in private let alone in public, neither before nor after. Not that we expected any better.

As my husband already said, we are taking legal advice on what to do next. As a private and law-abiding citizen, I expect the institutions of the State to do their job and get to the bottom of who maliciously forged documents to try to implicate me, my husband and my family. As private citizens, we will sit down with our lawyers to decide a course of action. I do hope nobody will object to us doing so according to the Rule of Law.

This will give us nothing back, but there is not one parent I know who would not do so if their family had gone through what we did.

Finally, we will remain positive. My husband does not need to work on that since he is the eternal optimist, and his positivity is contagious. We look forward to spending some more time together as a family over summer, and then start preparing for the girls going to Senior School. We will do this together, as a family, as always.