

## **Freedom of information White Paper to be published**

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Following the setting up of a Journalists' Committee to defend press freedoms, the government has confirmed that by the end of 2006, it will be publishing a White Paper on freedom of information following a period of public consultation on the Government's proposals.

In fact, interested parties wishing to propose any ideas for inclusion in the legislation are to send their submissions to the Office of the Principal Permanent Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister, Valletta CMR 02, or by e-mail on [pps@gov.mt](mailto:pps@gov.mt).

On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, the Institute of Maltese Journalists (Istitut tal-Jornalisti Maltin - IGM) is making a formal call on the government of Malta to ensure that the country will have a Freedom of Information Act.

This law is required in a democratic society because, apart from in instances where there is a threat to national security and in other exceptional cases, it would open wide to public scrutiny and to the press all information of a public nature to which the people has the right of access.

The Journalists' Committee, set up on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day on May 3, also said it would be campaigning for a Freedom of Information Act and is also planning to to organise a national seminar on Freedom of Information this year.

On a day to day basis, the Committee will be monitoring statements made by public figures concerning journalism and freedom of the press and about its members, new laws, regulations and decisions of government and public institutions that are of relevance to journalism, pending libel cases, court decisions and sentences.

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