

## **Notes in Preparation for Testimony**

**in**

**A) Court Case No. 395/2017: Ben Nasan Khaled Ibrahim Pen vs. Minister of Health, etc.**

**B) Court Case No. 220/2016: Gafà Neville vs. Lindsay David**

**C) Court Case No. 221/2016: Gafà Neville vs. Lindsay David**

These notes contain a summary of the assertions, evidence and testimony relating to the allegations that there have been illicit sales of Schengen Visas at the Maltese Consulate in Tripoli and in the issuance of Humanitarian Medical Visas by persons in the Office of the Maltese Prime Minister. If the allegations are correct, then corrupt officials have issued up to 88,000 Schengen Visas and an unknown number of Medical Visas, permitting an inflow in to the European Union of persons that could be potential security threats and/or illegal migrants. Furthermore, there are indications that persons that should have been entitled to Medical Visas free of charge might have been forced to pay for them or, in some cases not been able to access healthcare that under government agreements were guaranteed. The scheme, if the assertions prove to be correct, has netted the persons involved millions of euros.

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## Background

This document contains the notes that I have written in preparation for my testimony in the civil case of Ben Nasan Khaled Ibrahim Ben vs. Minister of Health, etc.<sup>1</sup> and two different court cases for standard libel both Neville Gafà vs. David Lindsay.<sup>2</sup> Earlier there was a fourth court case of criminal libel<sup>3</sup> that the Maltese Police had launched against David Lindsay.<sup>4</sup> The reason I'm making these notes public is that I believe there is a public interest in understanding what I'm basing my testimony on.

The first case has been launched by Mr Khaled Ben Nasan, a Syrian-born Libyan national and resident of Malta, to secure the return of € 38.000 that he alleges Mr Neville Gafà – a Maltese government official that previously worked for the Ministry of Health, currently works as a political appointee in the Office of the Prime Minister, and also has a seat on the ruling Labour Party's national executive – charged for medical visas that were never issued. In both of the two remaining court cases Neville Gafà has sued the editor of the Malta Independent on Sunday Mr David Lindsay for standard libel.

These law suits ought to be of general interest, since the courts implicitly – though not formally – will examine the allegations that government officials illicitly have been charging to issue visas. The first case can be viewed as a test of the allegation that the government official Neville Gafà has been illicitly taking large amounts of money in exchange for medical visas between the years 2014 – 2017. Formally, the court will examine Khaled Ben Nasan has the right to recoup € 36,675 that he alleges he paid to Neville Gafà for unissued medical visas (see below).

If the court case uncovers examples of persons that have been forced to pay for medical visas, these payments will in and of themselves be an indication that something has been seriously amiss, since medical visas according to an agreement between Malta and Libya should be free of charge. And, if it is proven that payments were made for medical visas, the question naturally arises to whom these payments were made and who benefitted if no income from fees were registered to the government accounts. Furthermore, there is a moral issue that goes wider than the question of potential corrupt issuing of visas, since it has been alleged that officials refused to issue medical visas to patients in critical need of specialist care not available in war torn Libya. This resulted in sick and injured persons being unable to get access to vital medical procedures and for some of these patients to pass away for lack of medical attention to which they should have been entitled.

I have been asked to give testimony in these court cases because I have been looking in to the allegation of misconduct in the issuing of visas since the subject first came to light on the TV program *Exodus* which I presented on the Maltese television station F Living. *Exodus*, which was broadcast nationally three time per week, investigated and reported on political issues and embraced studio discussions of topical political subjects.

This document links the allegations that there have been illicit sales of Schengen Visas at the Maltese Consulate in Tripoli and in the issuance of Humanitarian Medical Visas by persons in the Office of the Maltese Prime Minister to evidence and testimony that already was in the public domain and the additional information that I have found in my research. Should these allegations be found to be correct, corrupt officials can have enabled the inflow of up to 88,000 persons though Schengen visas and an additional, but unknown, number individuals though the issue of Medical Visas, in to the European Union. The persons that received these visas could be potential security threats and/or illegal migrants. Furthermore, there are indications that persons that should have been entitled to Medical Visas free of charge might have been forced to pay for them and, that persons unable to pay in some cases have not

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<sup>1</sup> Civil Court, First Hall, Court reference number: 395/2017, Registration date:08/05/2017

<sup>2</sup> Civil Court of Magistrates, Gafà Neville vs. Lindsay David, Court reference number: 220/2016, Registration date: 02/09/2016 and Civil Court of Magistrates, Gafà Neville vs. Lindsay David, Court reference number: 221/2016; Registration date: 02/09/2016.

<sup>3</sup> Malta has two forms of libel: "standard libel" and "criminal libel". Individuals normally sue only for pecuniary compensation under standard libel, but in in this case the editor is being sued for criminal libel which carries a penalty of prison.

<sup>4</sup> Court of Magistrates, The Police vs Lindsay David (Complaint by Neville Gafà).

been able to access healthcare that under government agreements had been guaranteed. The arrangement can have earned the persons involved millions of euros.

Working on this document, I have encountered many witnesses that allege that they have paid for their visas, and who are willing to testify in court, but fear repercussions by the Maltese authorities if they do. As the formal issuers of the visas, the Maltese authorities could easily revoke their visa and would be right – legally – to do so, based on these witnesses' own admission of their method of obtaining the visas. Given this situation, these witnesses are unwilling to give their testimony without some form of guarantee. I have therefore redacted some of the information in this report.

Given the importance of the functioning of the visa system and the witnesses lack of trust in the Maltese government it might be wise and prudent for the European Commission to provide for some form of guaranteed anonymity – or, some form of amnesty or pardon – that ensures that the witnesses can testify without the fear of deportation or losing their present rights.

This document is not intended as an accusation against any individual or party, or indeed the government. Everyone is – and, must be considered to be – innocent until convicted in a court of law. But by collecting the various rumours, reports, allegations and accusations of corruption in the issuance of visas at the Maltese consulate in Tripoli and issuance of medical visas and their possible connection to officials in the Ministry of Health and the Office of Prime Minister and Partit Laburista (PL), I want to simplify for the media and the judicial system to review the assertions and enable for those that allegedly have broken the law to defend themselves.

On a personal note, I'm sad to have to release this material in the form of a somewhat rough note since I was planning to present it in the form of a larger report or a book.

Because this note to a large extent is based on quotes from other sources and contains many news articles I will revert to myself in third person to maintain a consistent and unambiguous language.

Ivan Grech Mintoff

Malta 17<sup>th</sup> June 2018

## Introduction

Mr Khalid Ibrahim Ben Nasan was a guest on Exodus programme “The Libyan Visa Scandal”.<sup>5</sup> On this programme he publicly admitted that he had been the middleman between the various Libyan Authorities and the Maltese Ministry of Health. Khalid Ben Nasan, the person that in the media initially was called “the whistle-blower”, confirmed that he had been involved in transactions in which Libyans paid to get medical visas. A transcript of program is available in appendix 11.

Before the program was aired, but after it had been made public that Khalid Ben Nasan would be the guest of the program, he received threats (appendix 10). Such were the threats – and I’m willing to testify about them – that the television station wouldn’t allow the program to be broadcast and it was instead published on YouTube on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September 2016.

The two main allegations discussed in this document – the sale of medical visas and the sale of Schengen visas are interrelated at some points. However, for clarity, the document is divided in to two chapters each outlining one allegations. The documentary evidence for the respective allegations and the transcript of interviews with witnesses referenced in the text is relegated to the different appendices.

The court proceedings might also shine a light on the allegations that officials in the Maltese Consulate in Libya over a period of around 14-months in 2013 and 2014 illicitly sold Schengen visas.<sup>6</sup> In this period the Maltese consulate in Libya issued a total of 88.000 Schengen visas – that is more than 300 visas a day including Saturdays and Sundays.

## The Three Libel Cases

There have been three libel cases filed against David Lindsay in his capacity as editor of The Malta Independent on Sunday. Two standard libel cases that have been filed by Neville Gafà regarding articles on the Libyan medical visas issue. These two civil cases are currently before the Courts of Malta. Originally, there was also a third criminal libel case with charges filed by the police based on a complaint by Neville Gafà. Criminal libel differed from a standard libel in that the former could result in a prison sentence while the latter only can result in an order for monetary compensation.

It is entirely appropriate that Neville Gafà file civil lawsuits if he feels his reputation has been slandered. However, there are numerous reasons why it is objectionable for Neville Gafà to instigate criminal libel charges and abhorrent that the police accepted to file such a complaint.

## The Criminal Libel Case: Police v David Lindsay (Complaint by Neville Gafà)

Maltese politicians routinely use criminal libel in their attempts to gag the media. In 2014 alone, there were 36 criminal libel cases filed by politicians and political functionaries. In most of these cases, the politicians and functionaries had not availed themselves of their legal remedy of a right of reply as prescribed by law. Under the Press Act a media outlet is obliged to give a right of reply with equal prominence to a person who feels they have been mistreated in the press. Nor have these persons, in most of these cases, availed themselves of the civil court remedy of standard libel.

Criminal libel is in most cases disproportionate – the police get involved, they arrest a journalist, start a criminal prosecution and the journalist could end up in prison and with a criminal record. The Institute of Journalists have long called on the government to remove criminal libel from Maltese law. And, as a result of legislation passed by the Maltese Parliament, as part of the Media and Defamation Act 2018 abolishing criminal libel, the courts have found that the criminal libel charges against David Lindsay to have been

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<sup>5</sup> The Exodus programme can be viewed at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l\\_yriUgcw\\_M&t=2781s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_yriUgcw_M&t=2781s).

<sup>6</sup> The period for which we have statistical covers a slightly longer period and includes some time before the 14-month period.

automatically dropped. It is, however, still instructive to look at the background of the filing of criminal charges since it clarifies the way in which relations between politics and police operate in Malta.

Firstly, the criminal charges were filed just days after the government made its intention to remove criminal libel from the statute books. Mr Gafà, as a government functionary, and his legal counsel, undoubtedly were aware of the fact that criminal libel was about to be abolished. The same must be true for the current Police Commissioner. This was the last criminal libel case to be registered in Malta. With their last-minute filing, Gafà and his legal counsel evidently thought it appropriate to seize the last opportunity to intimidate the editor and the newspaper to stop the reporting on the allegations against Mr Gafà.

Secondly, it is remarkable and questionable for an individual under suspicion of criminal activity to seek a prison term for a newspaper editor over the placement of a right of reply. The formal reason for the police to file the criminal libel case was that the newspaper published Mr Gafà's right of reply not as a separate news item on its front page, but, rather, incorporated the right of reply into a lengthier article. Mr Gafà's right of reply was reproduced in full in both the daily edition and on the internet portal. The case revolves "around legal technicality rather than around the truth of the published facts. The pretext here is that the Malta Independent failed to publish a proper right of reply, because it included the right of reply as part of an article and was not published as a standalone piece. [... This ...] is purely a pretext to bully the Malta Independent into silence." (Appendix 2.14)

Third, the police, at the behest of government functionary Neville Gafà's legal counsel the former Police Commissioner Peter Paul Zammit filed a case of criminal libel against David Lindsay. Such a case could not have been launched except with the approval of the current Police Commissioner. The Police Commissioner has been criticised because "instead of investigating [the] allegations, the Police Commissioner is now appearing as being in cahoots with Gafà' and his legal representative, in an attempt to send a newspaper editor to prison." (Appendix 2.14)

Fourth, it is debateable whether Neville Gafà's legal adviser Peter Paul Zammit has a conflict of interest in these cases. Peter Paul Zammit was reinstated in to the police and promoted to Police Commissioner by the government after having left the force as mid-ranking police officer years before to work as a legal procurator (a legal advisor that is not a lawyer). He was Police Commissioner from the 12 April 2013 to 9 July 2014, when he was forced to resign after a board of Enquiry, and he has since left the police force again. During his time as Police Commissioner the police investigated the issue of Schengen Visas and found no wrong doing (see relevant chapter below).

According to Daphne Caruana Galizia Peter Paul Zammit is a friend of Manuel Mallia the Minister that was responsible for the police and "was made police commissioner by incoming Police Minister Manuel Mallia when he sacked John Rizzo to stop him prosecuting John Dalli".<sup>7</sup> Peter Paul Zammit has also been criticised by Giovanni Kessler, the Director-General of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), over the handling of the SNUS corruption case, because he refused to cooperate with OLAF on three requests to assist in the investigation concerning former European Commissioner John Dalli and also refused to arraign Dalli. Former Police Commissioner John Rizzo told the Privileges Committee of the House of Representatives that he had agreed with the agreed with the Attorney General that criminal action should be taken against John Dalli and Silvio Zammit,<sup>8</sup> but that he was transferred by the Prime Minister before this could be realised. (Appendix 2.17) The then leader of the opposition, Simon Busuttill, claimed that Peter Paul Zammit had not arraign Dalli because of 'interference from the Prime Minister.' Police Commissioner Zammit was found by the Data Commissioner to have illegally leaked the personal file of a

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<sup>7</sup> <https://daphnecaruanagalizia.com/2015/05/corruption-update-police-commissioner-instructed-officers-not-to-issue-charges-against-his-former-client/> and <https://daphnecaruanagalizia.com/2015/05/corruption-update-police-commissioner-instructed-officers-not-to-issue-charges-against-his-former-client/>

<sup>8</sup> Silvio Zammit is not related to Peter Paul Zammit.

police inspector to a newspaper and he was also suspected of using his influence to have charges of assault against a person he had represented as a legal counsel dropped.<sup>9</sup>

#### The Standard Libel Cases: Gafà Neville vs Lindsay David (220/2016)

The first standard libel suit has been filed in regard to the article 'Government official was netting up to €150,000 a month in medical visas scam', published on 21 August 2016 in The Malta Independent on Sunday (appendix 2.16). The author of the article and editor of the paper David Lindsay claims the article was based on information and representations received from Khaled Ben Nasan as well as telephone conversations with high-ranking Libyan security sources who spoke on condition of anonymity. Their names were withheld in the article for fear of repercussions in Libya.

Following the article's publication, Mr Gafà's Right of Reply was published on the same day on the website of The Malta Independent, the following day in their daily edition and in the following Sunday's edition, as required by law and journalistic practice. In the Right of Reply Neville Gafà denies all allegations of misconduct and bribery in the article alleges and that he has ever received any monies in any way or manner aside from his government salary. He also asserts that the story is based on unfounded allegations and outright lies and that it hides behind alleged anonymous [a] high ranking Libyan secret service officer.

#### The Standard Libel Cases: Gafà Neville vs Lindsay David (221/2016)

Following the publication of the the article 'Government official was netting up to €150,000 a month in medical visas scam', published on 21 August 2016, and Neville Gafà's reply, David Lindsay meet again with Khaled Ben Nasan and Ivan Grech Mintoff. Khaled Ben Nasan had taken exception to Neville Gafà's reply in which Neville Gafà flatly denied ever receiving monetary remuneration in return for the issuance of medical visas for Libyan nationals.

At the meeting, Khaled Ben Nasan produced a carbon copy booklet of hand-written 'receipts', which are better described as invoices or records of payments to Neville Gafà for visas for Libyan nationals. These include the names of the individuals requesting visas, their identity numbers and the amounts Khaled Ben Nasan says were paid by him to Neville Gafà on behalf of his clients. Some of these have been scanned and are included in this report as appendix 4. These receipts show 84 payments worth a total of €34,575 payments made to Mr Gafà between the end of August 2015 and the beginning of October 2015. While the amounts per person varied, these averaged out at €411 each.

This material resulted in the article 'Receipts show €35,000 in payments made to Neville Gafà by Libyan middleman', published on 28 August 2016 in The Malta Independent on Sunday (Appendix 2.8). At that stage, Ivan Grech Mintoff also present voice recordings of conversations with a number of Libyan nationals who confirmed that they and/or family members were asked for monetary remuneration from Neville Gafà in return for Maltese visas.

The article included Neville Gafà's right of reply to an earlier article of similar subject matter, which had already been carried on the website and daily edition and includes his full explanation. Furthermore, the opening paragraph of the article in question also clearly states that Neville Gafà "has insisted with this newspaper that no Libyan national had ever been charged for visas to obtain medical treatment – not even the standard €66 visa fee".

Neville Gafà claims the article has a clear political bias and that the "lack of contact on the part of the journalist with Mr Gafà for his comments give the article a one-sided biased unfounded and downright libellous view so acute that [...] libel proceedings will be initiated in the coming days against the said David

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<sup>9</sup> [http://theshiftnews.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/The-Rule-of-Law-in-Malta\\_release14Apr2018.pdf](http://theshiftnews.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/The-Rule-of-Law-in-Malta_release14Apr2018.pdf), p.14-15

Lindsay, Simon Busuttil and all other persons, political or otherwise, who participate in the spreading of such libellous unfounded allegations.” (Appendix 9)

### The Civil Suit: Ben Nasan Khaled Ibrahim Pen vs. Minister of Health, etc.

Khaled Ben Nasan has sued the former health ministry employee Neville Gafà, the Health Minister (current Chris Fearne and former Konrad Mizzi), the government’s Chief Medical Officer and the Foundation for Medical Services in an attempt to recoup €36,675 that he claims Neville Gafà owes him for fees paid for unissued visas for wounded Libyans. Khaled Ben Nasan claims that part of the amount owed was repaid by Neville Gafà, but that an unpaid balance of €36,675 remains.

Neville Gafà has denied any wrongdoing and says that Libyan patients were never charged a single cent for the medical visas, not even the standard visas processing fees. He asserts that he has not received any funds apart from his government salary.

In the case filed Khaled Ben Nasan describes himself as an intermediary between the Libyan and Maltese authorities for the purpose of bringing Libyan nationals to Malta for medical treatment. He alleges that paid Neville Gafà for medical visas but that the visas were not issued, and the funds not returned. As a result, Khaled Ben Nasan claims in his court case that a number of would-be patients who paid out the funds were never able to be brought to Malta.

Khaled Ben Nasan has listed nearly 40 people by name as witnesses; including several Libyan ministers and politicians, Libyan military personnel and Libyans who allegedly paid for treatment for family members. The list of witnesses also includes current and former colleagues of Neville Gafà, the Maltese foreign affairs minister and current and former ministry employees.

Khaled Ben Nasan claims that although he repeatedly requested the funds to be repaid, Neville Gafà has failed to accede to the request. To support his claim Khaled Ben Nasan in addition to the testimony of the witnesses will produce transcripts of Viber message conversations between himself and Neville Gafà and statements of the payment of ‘fees’ made by Libyan would-be patients. These chats show that Khaled Ben Nasan regularly asked Neville Gafà to return the funds in the first three months of 2016 and that Neville Gafà never questions or denies Khaled Ben Nasan's claims for reimbursement for the Libyan nationals who did not receive their visas. On the contrary, Neville Gafà acknowledges the fact but continually postpones various requested meetings. Neville Gafà has denied the veracity of these chats and documents.

## Illicit sale of Medical Visas 2014–2017

### The Allegations

On Exodus programme “The Libyan Visa Scandal” released on 10th of September 2016, Khalid Ben Nasan publicly admitted that he had been the middle man in transactions in which Libyans paid to get medical visas. Khalid Ben Nasan alleges that Libyans were forced to make such payments to Neville Gafà, who at that time was the official at the Ministry of Health charged with issuing medical visas, for visas to be issued. Neville Gafà since then has been promoted and is currently working as a political appointee in the Office of the Prime Minister as a person of trust.

Khalid Ben Nasan claims that he took payments from persons wishing to procure a medical visa and handed the money to Neville Gafà. According to Khalid Ben Nasan, also patients that requiring urgent medical intervention were also forced to pay to receive visas (appendix 11, Lines 55 – 63). On at least on one occasion, Khalid Ben Nasan alleges that Nevil Gafà took the money but did not issue the medical visas or return the money. This is the reason that Khalid Ben Nasan gives for his decision to go public (appendix 11, Lines 58 – 63).

Neville Gafà has acknowledged that there was an agreement between the Libyan Authorities and the Maltese government that the medical visas would be issued free of charge (appendix 2.1, 2.8d, 2.8j) but has rejected the allegations of wrongdoing.

Following on Neville Gafà rejection of the allegations, Khalid Ben Nasan produced Viber chat messages between himself and Neville Gafà, in which he is pleading with Gafà to return the 38.000 Euro in 'fees' that he took for the visas that he then did not issue. In one message Khalid Ben Nasan writes “Please, please, please. All I need is the people's money back” – to which Neville Gafà replies in writing without disputing that people are owed any money, “We will meet tomorrow”. Not once in the Viber chat messages does Neville Gafà ask what fee Khalid Ben Nasan is referring to, and from the communication it is apparent that Neville Gafà is familiar with the problem being discussed (appendix 3 and appendix 2.5). Neville Gafà denies authenticity of Viber chats (appendix 2.4, appendix 9). Khalid Ben Nasan has produced what he claims are receipts for money allegedly passed to Gafà by him in exchange for medical visas (appendix 4).

### The Police Investigation

The police investigation which eventually resulting in “no wrong doing” being found by the investigators, leaves a lot to be desired. Despite the fact that the police have had the receipts (appendix 4) in their possession for many months, they did not carry out the simplest investigation to verify whether the people named in the receipts (with names, passport numbers, dates etc) were willing to acknowledge whether they did in fact paid Neville Gafà for their visas or not. I have spoken to a number of persons that would be willing to do so, if they are given guarantees that they will not be extradited as a result of their testimony. Even when the existence of the receipts became public (appendix 2.8a) the police did not investigate the matter.

Furthermore, when the police asked to interview me about my knowledge of these matters the fact that I was going to be interviewed was leaked to a pro-government newspaper by someone with knowledge of the matter – in all likelihood someone in the police – before the interview actually took place. The leaking of such information constitutes a crime in Malta (appendix 2.6 and 2.7).

After the Exodus programme was released I was contacted by individuals that confirmed the story and some of them stated a wished to testify in court against Gafà and confirm that money was paid to him to issue medical visas. In my interview with the police, we confirmed that the police already had the contact details of these potential witnesses, but these potential witnesses were never interviewed by the police.

## The Media Reaction

Pro-government media have not investigated the claims but instead written a number of articles with the intent of discrediting Khalid Ben Nasan and intimidating those investigating the allegation including myself (appendix 2.3, 2.4, 2.8h, 2.8i, 2.9a, 2.9b and 2.13c). A number of suits of libels have been opened up in court against the Malta Independent after writing about the allegations (appendix 2.8j).

## The Political Fallout

The Office of the Prime Minister has denied the allegations but has not ordered an internal investigation despite the mounting circumstantial evidence against one of its officials (appendix 2.8h, 2.8i, 2.8j). The Prime Minister has personally denied any knowledge of potential payments for medical visa before police investigations (appendix 2.9a). The Office of the Prime Minister also denied that there had been any attempts by the Libyan authorities to send an official ministerial delegation to discuss why the Libyans were being asked for such payments (appendix 2.2)

The leader of the opposition has stated that there is a clear link between Office of the Prime Minister and criminal corruption (appendix 2.13d, 2.11a, 2.2) and that the actions reported raise concerns for Malta's security and stability (appendix 2.13e). The opposition has accused the Prime Minister of a cover up and the leader of the opposition has held a special meeting of the parliamentary group at which he accused the Prime Minister of lying and suppressing the misconduct of Neville Gafà (appendix 2.10 and 2.11).

## The Threats and Offers

The author of this report has been approached by persons claiming that they have been sent by members of the Office of the Prime Minister. The first time these persons offered me 'any job' that I wanted in exchange for not pursuing this matter further. The second time I was told to 'name your price in order to shut up', and the third time I was told that the messenger represented five high ranking police officers who wanted me to stop investigating and exposing Khalid Ben Nasan's allegations and told that Khalid Ben Nasan "will go down" and that they did not want me to go down with him.

Khalid Ben Nasan claims that he and his family have been threatened twice and that the evidence of this is on his mobile (appendix 10). Normally, in cases of this type, the police would ask the telephone companies to trace the text messages and if the threat was credible immediately offer protection. No attempt to trace the text message was done and despite the fact that the Alleanza Bidla Party and the opposition in parliament repeatedly asked that Khalid Ben Nasan be given protection, but no such protection was afforded (appendix 2.12, 2.13.).

## The New Witnesses and Corroborating Testimony

I have continued my investigation of the visa scandal after the release of the Exodus programme. After the programme a number of individuals have come forward to confirm the story to me. Some of these have been willing to go on record and to testify in court. Serraj Essa, Ali S Gamati, Ayman Alzintani, Osama Mohamed Zaidi and Ali Algoal have been willing to be interviewed on tape and their interviews have been transcribed (appendix 5, 6,7 and 8). These witnesses have all confirmed their willingness to testify in a court of law. These witnesses, who wish to testify that Neville Gafà asked them for money in exchange for visas have so far not been given the opportunity to testify, and neither have they been contacted by the police for interviews even though the police have been given their details. During my testimony I will present the recordings and transcriptions of my interviews with these witnesses to the court.

Despite all the media attention, and the fact that Neville Gafà is in court for several separate investigations/court cases, there are allegations that Neville Gafà is still engaged in illicit sale of visas from his position in the Office of the Prime Minister.

#### Witness Serraj Essa

Mr Serraj Essa holds the rank of general and works in the international co-operation department in the office of the United Nations recognised Libyan Prime Minister. A copy of General Serraj Essa's passport can be found in appendix 5 and a transcript of my interview with him can be found in appendix 6.

In the taped interview General Serraj Essa confirms that he is willing to testify. General Essa verifies that there was an agreement with Maltese government for free treatment corroborates the fact that Khalid Ben Nasan was the link to Neville Gafà. He also says he had a meeting with Neville Gafà together with Khalid Ben Nasan regarding 22 wounded individuals that urgently required medical assistance. General Serraj Essa alleges that Neville Gafà asked, and got, € 1,750,000 to issue these 22 medical visas.

General Serraj asserts that Neville Gafà intervened to prevent the then Libyan Deputy Prime Minister / Minister of Health and an official delegation from coming to Malta to hold official meetings with their Maltese counterparts in order to discuss why the Libyan government was being asked for payments when there was an official agreement of free treatment and why all medical visas had been stopped. He also claims that Neville Gafà intervened and prevented correspondence between the Libyan and Maltese Health Ministers. He then confirms that Neville Gafà told the Libyan Health Ministry delegation to proceed Tunisia where it would be issued with the relevant visas for their travel. The delegation waited for days for their visas to be proceed, but Neville Gafà simply switched off his mobiles and they never received the promised visas. General Essa has the documentation to prove this allegation. He also confirms that even when no visa was issued to the wounded the money was not returned.

#### Witness Ali S Gamati

Mr Ali Gamati is a senior police officer working on security related issues. A copy of Ali Gamati's passport can be found in appendix 5 and a transcript of my interview with him can be found in appendix 7.

Ali Gamati claims he tried for 6 months to get medical visas from Maltese Consulate in Libya, but no visas were issued until he got in contact with Khalid Ben Nasan. Ali Gamati corroborates the fact that Khalid Ben Nasan was the link to Neville Gafà. Ali Gamati alleges that Neville Gafà asked him for € 3,000,000 to be deposited in a bank account and for payments of Euro 3,500 to be made for each medical visa that was issue. This was later 'discounted' to Euro 3,000 per medical visa.

#### Witnesses Ayman Alzintani

Mr Ali Alzintani is an official in charge of an airport VIP lounge and use to work with the logistics for injured patients that need treatment in Malta for the Libyan Ministry of Health. Ayman Alzintani's passport copy can be found in appendix 5 and a transcript of my interview with him can be found in appendix 8.

Ayman Alzintani alleges that Neville Gafà asked for € 2,000-2,500 to be paid in order for medical visas to be issued for wounded from his region. He also claims that Neville Gafà asked a person by the name of Ahmed Fenir of Zintan for Euro 25,000 because his hand was amputated, and he needed an artificial replacement.

#### Witness Osama Mohammed Zaidi

Mr Osama Mohammed Zaidi is a patient who underwent medical treatment in Malta. Osama Mohammed Zaidi's passport copy can be found in appendix 5 and a transcript of my interview with him can be found in appendix 8.

Osama Mohammed Zaidi claims he was in Malta because of a serious injury. He was allowed into Malta to be operated upon and a few days after operation – despite still not being fully recovered – was kicked out of Malta by Neville Gafà because he had not paid Gafà for the visa. Osama Mohammed Zaidi alleges that Neville Gafà asked for the money personally via the translator Mabrouk Garsalla.

#### Witness Ali Mohammed Algool

Mr Ali Mohammed Algool who is in charge of logistics for people injury from his region and works in Tobruk Parliament's Office of the Prime Minister. A copy of Ali Mohammed Algool's passport can be found in appendix 5- A transcript of my interview with him can be found in appendix 8.

Ali Mohammed Algool's role is to accompany patients to Malta. He also alleges that Neville Gafà asked for the money personally via the translator Mabrouk Garsalla. Furthermore, Ali Mohammed Algool describes a situation in which he was forced to leave Malta and when leaving was forced to sign a document in English that he did not understand, but which he later understood to have the effect that he can't enter the Schengen zone for 5 years.

#### Witness Abdulhakim S.A. Mreshigh

Abdulhakim S.A. Mreshigh was in charge of correspondence between the Libyan Ministry of Health of Neville Gafà. Abdulhakim Mreshigh's passport copy can be found in appendix 5. I have not conducted a taped interview with him. He has, however, stated his willingness testify that Neville Gafà prevented a ministerial delegation including the Libyan Minister of Health from visiting Malta to enquire why money was being demanded for the medical visas.

#### Witness Naji Ejudi Duw Almabrouk

Naji Ejudi Duw Almabrouk is the uncle of two patients who underwent medical intervention in Malta. Naji Ejudi Duw Almabrouk's passport copy can be found in appendix 5. I have not conducted a taped interview with him. He has, however, stated his willingness to testify that Neville Gafà asked for money for their medical visas and also posted such an accusation on Facebook.

## Illicit sale of Schengen Visas 2013-2014

### The Allegations

In the Exodus program Khalid Ben Nasan alleged that for a period of around 14 months in 2013 and 2014, legitimate Schengen Visa applications that were submitted in the formally correct manner were purposefully delayed and/or not processed for up to 6 months by the Maltese consulate in Libya and at the same time visas submitted via middlemen and accompanied by illicit cash payments were issued in a matter of days. During this period the Maltese consulate issued 88,000 visas – or, 300 visas a day, every day including the weekends – appendices 1.1h, 1.3h, 1.4b, 1.4d. Should this allegation prove to be correct, these Schengen visas would have allowed the entry into any EU state of non-EU citizens from an area where ISIS was active, and many war crimes had been committed (see appendix 11, lines 31-38).

In the program, Khalid Ben Nasan alleged that Ms. Marisa Farrugia, the Maltese Consul in Tripoli at the time, was the contact person within the consulate for such illicit trade (see, appendix 11, Line 35). Ms. Marisa Farrugia has rejected the allegation made by Khalid Ben Nasan.

### The Police Investigation

Several newspaper have claimed that Ms. Marisa Farrugia was called back to Malta for a police investigation which seem to corroborate the allegations made by Khalid Ben Nasan (see appendices 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4). Furthermore, these newspapers claim that the police could/would not investigate the matter properly because of a lack of co-operation from the government and/or direct interference of the Office of the Prime Minister. One way, but by no means the only way, to interpret the lack of co-operation is that the government felt they might have something to conceal.

The police investigation took place when Peter Paul Zammit was Police Commissioner, the same person that now is acting as Neville Gafà's legal adviser.

There is also purported to be evidence in the form of paper trail unavailable to the public; including, a container full of visas thought to be in the care of the police. Despite all the evidence the police investigation has concluded that there is not enough evidence to prosecute Ms. Marisa Farrugia. This conclusion was reached without contacting any of the witnesses or any of those persons mentioned in the receipts having paid for visas. No court action was ever taken against Ms. Marisa Farrugia or anyone else in this matter.

These accusations merit very serious investigation by relevant EU authorities because Malta's as well as the other EU countries' security and stability might have been seriously compromised.

### The Political Fallout

Currently there has been no real political fallout in Malta and no proper investigation has been carried out regarding these matters. Should the allegation be proven to be correct there would likely be political repercussions not only for Malta but also in many other EU states and for the public trust in the Schengen visa system. If the allegations of abuse prove to be correct it would indicate a deficiency in the Schengen system and indicate that EU countries can't necessarily trust their partners with regards to security.

## Appendix 1 – Articles on visa abuse at Maltese Consulate in Libya

### 1.1 Maltese consul in Libya probed in investigation over ‘massive’ visa scam<sup>10</sup>

#### Main points:

Police probing suspected visa racket inside Tripoli consulate. Allegations of fraud in the issue of Maltese visas to Libyan nationals. Maltese companies claim that their letterheads were falsified for recommendations and official invitations used to issue visas for Libyan businessmen.

#### Allegations:

- a) Visa scam,
- b) Fraud,
- c) Falsification of business letterheads,
- d) Falsification of official invitations.
- e) Someone directly involved in crime with a Libyan criminal gang.
- f) Gang offering Businessmen immediate Maltese visa for €1,500.
- g) The Maltese embassy would give preference to issuing ‘fraudulent’ visas before bona fide applications
- h) Tripoli embassy issues up to 300 visas to Malta every day.
- i) Allegations that the Consulate was charging up to €3,000 per visa applications (normally €70).

Published by Malta Today on 2014-05-12 at 9:53 am

#### Maltese consul in Libya probed in investigation over ‘massive’ visa scam

Police probing suspected visa racket inside Tripoli consulate



Malta's consul in Tripoli Dr Marisa Farrugia has been recalled back to Malta for urgent police questioning, after police took action in a request by the government over documented evidence of extensive fraud in the Maltese embassy, in the issuing of travel visas for Libyans.

On Friday, Farrugia arrived in Malta and was interrogated by senior police officers from the Criminal Investigations Department in Floriana, where she was questioned over allegations of fraud in the issue of hundreds of Maltese visas to Libyan nationals.

The investigations took place after a number of Maltese companies raised the alarm when they realised that their letterheads were being used on recommendations and the official invitations used for the issuing of a visa for Libyan businessmen – allegedly copied and falsified to issue visas for other Libyan nationals.

PAGE 1 Malta's consul in Tripoli Dr Marisa Farrugia was recalled to Malta for urgent police questioning at the CID on Friday, after police took action over documented evidence of extensive fraud in the Maltese embassy, in the issuing of travel visas for Libyans.

The investigations took place after a number of Maltese companies claimed that

their business letterheads were being falsified for recommendations and the official invitations used for the issuing of a visa for Libyan businessmen.

The scam appears to have been an ongoing affair, with allegations that someone in the Maltese embassy in Tripoli was responsible and directly involved in the crime – in conjunction with a criminal gang.

A Libyan criminal ring appears to have been responsible in approaching Libyans businessmen and offering them an immediate Maltese visa for €1,500.

The investigations have been ongoing since March 2013, when the police were approached about the issue of falsified letterheads by an unknown individual in the Maltese embassy.

This is not the first time that allegations about impropriety at the Maltese embassy have been reported.

The police investigations also showed that the Maltese embassy would give preference to issuing ‘fraudulent’ visas before bona fide applications.

At present the Tripoli embassy issues up to 300 visas to Malta every day.

In June 2013, the Foreign Affairs ministry had issued a statement confirming that the alleged abuse in the issuing of visas by the Maltese Consulate in Libya had been under investigation for weeks.

However, despite confirming that a preliminary internal investigation was initiated upon the order of foreign affairs minister George Vella, government never revealed the outcome of the investigations.

Following allegations that the Consulate was charging up to €3,000 for visa applications which actually cost €70 (120 Libyan Dinars), the processing of applications and back-office work was outsourced to a private company.

Farrugia was posted to Libya during this period and was entrusted with overseeing the transition of the visa application process to VFS Global, a global outsourcing and technology services specialist for diplomatic missions and governments worldwide. However, company is not involved in the investigations underway.

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/38916/maltese\\_consul\\_in\\_libya\\_probed\\_in\\_investigation\\_over\\_massive Visa scam](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/38916/maltese_consul_in_libya_probed_in_investigation_over_massive Visa scam)

## 1.2 Malta Police seize files from Tripoli Consul during travel visa fraud investigation<sup>11</sup>

### Allegations:

- a) Files at the Maltese consular office in Tripoli were seized as part of a police investigation into alleged travel visa fraud, according to the Foreign Ministry.
- b) Marisa Farrugia, is being investigated by the police over a case of alleged visa fraud worth millions of euros.
- c) The ministry confirmed it had been receiving numerous reports of allegations of wrongdoing in the way travel visas were being issued by the consular office in Tripoli.

Published by Times of Malta on 2014-05-20 at 12:01 am

### Police seize files from Tripoli consul during travel visa fraud investigation



Files at the Maltese consular office in Tripoli were seized as part of a police investigation into alleged travel visa fraud, according to the Foreign Ministry.

Officials were in the Libyan capital over the weekend to oversee the collection of documents that were necessary to determine how the consular office worked.

The ministry was reacting to media reports that Malta's consul, Marisa Farrugia, is being investigated by the police over a case of alleged visa fraud worth millions of euros.

Dr Farrugia was called back for police questioning last week but the ministry insisted yesterday it was not privy to the discussion between the consul and the police.

"As expected, the ministry has not communicated with the police and the official on the contents of their meeting... the ministry is not informed of any charges that were levelled or could be levelled," the statement said.

It was for this reason that the ministry refrained from commenting on the official

who was identified by Malta Today as allegedly being involved in the scam.

The ministry did not answer when asked whether it would be taking any action against Dr Farrugia pending the outcome of the police investigation but insisted that "where necessary" it was ready to take any administrative action.

However, the ministry confirmed it had been receiving numerous reports of allegations of wrongdoing in the way travel visas were being issued by the consular office in Tripoli.

It said that most of the reports contained conflicting information that made it impossible to determine what was wrong.

Over the past months consular officials held meetings with officials from the Foreign Ministry, the Home Affairs Ministry and the Office of the Prime Minister in an exercise to analyse the visa issuance process.

The ministry said the working environment of the Maltese consulate was very difficult given the state of security in Libya and the pressure by Libyans, who wanted visas to leave their country. The Maltese embassy in Tripoli is one of the few EU missions still operational there and as a consequence handles hundreds of visa requests per day.

As part of the Schengen arrangement, a visa issued by Malta will allow Libyans into the EU.

Malta withdrew its consul in Benghazi, Libya's second city, last year after receiving death threats. The Benghazi office used to issue travel visas as well.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20140520/local/police-seize-files-from-tripoli-consul-during-travel-visa-fraud.519699>

### 1.3 Embassy staff 'had a year to cover tracks' on visa fraud.<sup>12</sup>

Main point:

Police investigators looking into visa racket claim and foreign ministry was slow in reacting to reports of visa fraud.

Allegations:

- a) Government dragging its feet
- b) Embassy staff had one year to cover tracks
- c) Alerted in June 2013 but only in May 2014 are suspects investigated for fraud.
- d) An average of 300 visas are issued every day for Libyans to travel to Malta.
- e) 1500 Dinar for fast-tracked visas

Published by Malta Today on 2014-05-21 at 7:16 am

#### **Embassy staff 'had a year to cover tracks' on visa fraud**

Police investigators looking into travel visa racket claim foreign ministry was slow in reacting to reports of visa fraud



Tripoli embassy staff suspected by police investigators of having formed part of a travel visa racket may have spent the past year covering their tracks, a source close to the police has informed MaltaToday.

The Maltese foreign office was first alerted to a suspected visa scam in the Tripoli consulate in June 2013, but only two weeks ago MaltaToday revealed that Maltese consul Marisa Farrugia had been investigated over the alleged fraud – sources claiming that millions in Libyan dinars were paid to the racket.

Some 300 visas every day are issued by the Maltese embassy to Libyans demanding travel permits to Malta.

In a statement issued Monday the foreign ministry claimed that the majority of reports it received in 2013 “had been conflicting” and that the ministry was unable

arrive at a conclusive decision on what was going wrong, or who was responsible.

Consul Marisa Farrugia was recalled back to Malta for questioning by the police about the alleged fraud, but this newspaper has been told that police investigators are still waiting crucial embassy files to be handed over to them.

Farrugia was only questioned once by the police from the Economic Crimes Unit over allegations of fraud in the issuing of Maltese visas to Libyan nationals.

MaltaToday is informed that up to 1,500 Libyan dinars was being charged for a fast-track visa application when the normal visa cost €70, or 120 Libyan Dinars. The processing of applications and back-office work is outsourced to a private company also used by other embassies in Libya.

Police sources told MaltaToday that as things stand, there is “insufficient information, evidence or witnesses to proceed with the investigations.”

The “racket” was uncovered by a number of Maltese companies that realised that their letterheads were being falsified to be used as recommendations and official invitations, to issue visas for unknown Libyan nationals.

Last year in June 2013, after a story in GWU daily l-Orrizont, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had issued a statement saying that investigations were already underway before the case was reported in the media.

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/court\\_and\\_police/39239/embassy\\_staff\\_had\\_a\\_year\\_to\\_cover\\_tracks\\_on\\_visa\\_fraud](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/court_and_police/39239/embassy_staff_had_a_year_to_cover_tracks_on_visa_fraud)

## 1.4 Confirmation that Visas run into tens of thousands or 300 visas to Malta each day<sup>13</sup>

### Allegations:

- a) Police widen investigation over visa scam that uses companies with false stocks as vehicle to obtain long-term residency.
- b) Almost 75,000 visas have been issued by the Maltese embassy in Libya since 2011
  - i. in 2011, 4,923 (79% of the total) requests were acceded to;
  - ii. in 2012, 14,626 (92%) visas were issued;
  - iii. in 2013, a record 37,486 (84%) visas were issued,
  - iv. in 2014 a total of 16,333 (72%) visas were issued.
- c) Until the date of publication in 2015, 1,592 (99%) of total requested visas being issued.
- d) 300 visas to Malta each day,
- e) Malta's consul in Tripoli, Marisa Farrugia mentioned.
- f) Farrugia had been recalled back to Malta for urgent police questioning over documented evidence of extensive fraud at the Maltese embassy.
- g) Nationals from other countries seeking a hassle-free entry into the border-less, European Schengen area
- h) On the other hand, the EU commission states that no visas were issued in 2015 & 2016 by Malta to Libyans.

Published by Malta Today on 2015-09-14 at 09:06 am.

### Over 74,000 visas to Libyans by Maltese embassy since 2011

Police widen investigation over visa scam that uses companies with false stocks as vehicle to obtain long-term residency



Almost 75,000 visas have been issued by the Maltese embassy in Libya since 2011, figures obtained by MaltaToday show.

Peaking at 44,789 requests and 37,486 visas issued, 2013 alone saw half of all visas issued in the past four years.

It now transpires that the police have widened investigations over a suspected visa scam pertaining to Libyan nationals and their sponsors in Malta, following the arrest of auditor Joe Sammut.

Police are also looking into the visas that have been issued since 2011. According to sources, the investigation is "wider than originally thought".

Ever since Libya plunged into civil war in 2011, ousting dictator Muammar Gaddafi, the country has been left in a shambles, with rival governments seated in Tripoli and in Tobruk.

But during this time, Libyan nationals seeking a way out of their war-torn country travelled to Malta legally on the strength of a travel visa: since 2011, a total of 91,331 requests were made and 74,958 visas issued.

While the figures differ significantly from one year to the next, the rate of

approval also changed: in 2011, 4,923 (79% of the total) requests were acceded to; in 2012, 14,626 (92%) visas were issued; in 2013, a record 37,486 (84%) visas were issued, and in 2014 a total of 16,333 (72%) visas were issued.

So far in 2015, 1,592 visas – 99% of total requests – have been issued.

MaltaToday understands that although issued by the Maltese embassy in Tripoli, not all visa recipients could necessarily be Libyan – they could be also nationals from other countries seeking a hassle-free entry into the borderless, European Schengen area.

MaltaToday has in the past reported how the Tripoli embassy would issue up to 300 visas to Malta each day, leading to investigations – so far unsuccessful – into whether Malta's consul in Tripoli, Marisa Farrugia, was aware of any irregularities. Farrugia had been recalled back to Malta for urgent police questioning over documented evidence of extensive fraud at the Maltese embassy.

At the time, a number of Maltese companies had claimed that their business letterheads were being falsified for recommendations and the official invitations used for the issuing of a visa for Libyan businessmen.

The information also reveals that four individuals were listed as recommenders a total of 10,394 times, making them the four most 'popular' main recommenders.

The four are GRTU council member Mario Debono, auditor Joe Sammut, a certain Joanna Debono, and D Holdings, a company owned by Iuris Fiduciary Ltd.

D Holdings was listed as a recommender 1,245 times between 2012 and 2014; 983 visas were issued. Joanna Debono appeared as a main recommender on 2,204 visa requests between 2011 and 2015, of which 1,826 visas were issued.

On the other hand, Debono and Sammut appeared as main recommenders 3,531 and 3,414 times respectively of which 3,055 and 2,512 visas were issued.

However, contacted by MaltaToday, Mario Debono explained that he was suspicious about the data concerning him.

"I don't recall ever recommending over 2,000 visa applications in 2013. I am aware that my company letterheads were falsified by Libyan nationals, and that is something that I could not stop."

Debono said he had been questioned by police over his visa requests, and that he explained to them that his company letterheads had been falsified. "We do a lot of business in Libya and this kind of thing is bound to happen."

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/57086/over\\_74000\\_visas\\_to\\_libyans\\_by\\_maltese\\_embassy\\_since\\_2011](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/57086/over_74000_visas_to_libyans_by_maltese_embassy_since_2011)

## Appendix 2 – Articles on abuse of Medical Visas in the Office of the Prime Minister

Articles with allegations of abuse in issue of Medical Visas by Neville Gafà in the Office of the Prime Minister.

### 2.1 Eurosceptics vow to blow top off medical visa ‘scandal’<sup>14</sup>

Main point: Neville Gafà's lawyer claims that Neville Gafà received no money. Gafà states no fees or charges levied by himself.

Allegations:

- a) False Statements:
- b) "His lawyer, the former police commissioner Peter Paul Zammit, reiterated that Gafà “never received any monies in any way or manner” aside from his government salary."
- c) “All expenses as regards the patient are entered into a government account as debt is subsequently settled by the Libyan authorities. No fees or charges were levied by myself or the respective departments for the vetting of the persons concerned,” Gafà

Published by Malta Today on 2016-06-26 at 12:51 pm

#### **Eurosceptics vow to blow top off medical visa ‘scandal’**

Alleanza Bidla leader Ivan Grech Mintoff claims to have "more evidence" over alleged medical visa scam



Ivan Grech Mintoff, a right-wing conservative who in 2014 unsuccessfully contested the European elections, is claiming to have “more evidence” in hand as to an alleged medical visa scam.

Grech Mintoff, self-styled chairman of the minuscule eurosceptic formation Alleanza Bidla, was catapulted into the limelight after police investigators said they had no conclusive evidence to arraign Neville Gafà, an official of the health ministry, on bribery charges.

According to Libyan national Khaled Ben Nasan, Gafà would have pocketed some

€150,000 a month to issue medical visas to Libyan nationals – allegations his lawyer, Leslie Cuschieri, sent in writing to then health minister Konrad Mizzi in April 2016.

Ben Nasan, a Libyan import-export trader, had back in 2014 claimed to have played the part of interlocutor with militiamen who had kidnapped Martin Galea outside Tripoli, Libya. The claims were reported by MaltaToday but never reliably confirmed.

That a police investigation has found nothing with what to conclusively arraign Gafà, a man close to the government’s top brass, has rankled those who criticise the government of exerting undue influence on the institutions.

Grech Mintoff on Friday called a press conference, confidently announcing that Libyan army and government top brass would be willing to testify as to the way visas are issued by the Maltese government, evidence of which he had been “shown” by way of receipts, footage, voice recordings, Viber screenshots and other documents that would confirm the alleged bribery.

Some of those Viber screenshots were published in the Malta Independent.

In painting a larger-than-life picture of his politician’s role, Grech Mintoff said Ben Nasan was ignored by both government and the Opposition, until he met the Alleanza Bidla leader. And since news broke of the fruitless police investigation, Grech Mintoff claims the Nationalists “jumped on the bandwagon to score political points” by taking to task the Labour government over the medical visa investigation.

After his press conference on Friday afternoon, at 3:38pm the police called Grech Mintoff to submit any information he had in hand.

But Grech Mintoff decided against going to the police, ostensibly because MaltaToday had been “fed sensitive information” by publishing the inconsequential news that the police had taken an interest in Grech Mintoff’s allegations, which it reported that day at 4:40pm.

On legal advice, Grech Mintoff decided to drop in at the police HQ and this time

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/69006/eurosceptics\\_vow\\_to\\_blow\\_top\\_off\\_medical\\_visa\\_scandal](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/69006/eurosceptics_vow_to_blow_top_off_medical_visa_scandal)

praised the police force, saying he was “convinced they are doing diligent work” but claimed that they were under political pressure.

When MaltaToday spoke to him yesterday, Grech Mintoff demanded the newspaper reveal its source as to how it was informed that police had spoken to him. When the newspaper refused - leaks are par for the course in this business - Grech Mintoff said he would not speak to the journalist.

From then onwards, Grech Mintoff said he would not share any information with the police, but broadcast what he knows on the programme *Exodus*, a programme he and another Alleanza Bidla figurehead – Anthony Calleja – present on F-Living TV.

“If I were now to divulge anything very serious to the police, will it also end up in the media of the progressive liberals like MaltaToday? I hereby urge the investigating officers to investigate this leak to the press so that confidence from my side in the police may be restored,” Grech Mintoff thundered in a statement yesterday evening.

On his part, the health ministry official, Neville Gafà, has claimed he will sue The Malta Independent and Opposition leader Simon Busuttil over a report and other claims that were made since news broke that police were closing investigations on the bribery allegations.

His lawyer, the former police commissioner Peter Paul Zammit, reiterated that Gafà “never received any monies in any way or manner” aside from his government salary.

According to Ben Nasan’s allegations, reported in the Malta Independent, Gafà was said to have “personally made between €2 million and €3 million from the racket since it began operating in 2014”.

Ben Nasan claimed that Gafà had started a new medical visa application process through which Libyans would send over their passports in advance, and Gafà would charge varying prices for the courtesy.

Adding yet more flavour to the story was some cloak-and-dagger accusations from

Gafà himself, who claims the allegations originally stem from an “anonymous high-ranking Libyan secret service officer” – if not the whistleblower Ben Nasan, then some client he represents.

Gafà said that under a memorandum between both countries, a medical visa for a person injured in the Libyan conflict had to be first reviewed by the Libyan authorities, and then screened by the Malta Security Service, police, immigration and medical departments as agreed between both governments. “All expenses as regards the patient are entered into a government account as debt is subsequently settled by the Libyan authorities. No fees or charges were levied by myself or the respective departments for the vetting of the persons concerned,” Gafà said.

But Gafà had been featured in screenshots of Viber chats as having entertained a demand by Ben Nasan to meet and settle the return of some €38,000 after some medical visas to various Libyans did not transpire.

While the chats and their contents raise suspicion about Gafà’s relationship with the whistleblower – for the civil servant was clearly on more than professional terms with him – Gafà alleges the Viber chats show Ben Nasan was a sort of middleman collecting monies from others “on the unfounded pretext of having Libyan or Maltese clearance.”

Ben Nasan also showed Grech Mintoff the chats and voice recordings, leading the Alleanza Bidla figurehead to hold his own press conference on Friday and claim they were “just the tip of the iceberg”.

## 2.2 Medical visas scandal - Libyan Ministers 'ready to speak' if granted access to Malta<sup>15</sup>

### Main points:

Ivan Grech Mintoff handed a lot of evidence to the police and insists that they have enough material to carry out a proper investigation, if the authorities do not do their duty, he will release the information.

Grech Mintoff alleged that Khaled Ben Nasan even made some form of contact with the Prime Minister. The government remains unresponsive.

Libyan Ministers who are ready to speak more about the issue if they are granted permission to come to Malta.

Khaled Ben Nasan currently holds refugee status in Malta. There are more people who are willing to give testimony if given amnesty for their part in the scam.

The opposition claims this shows a link between Office of the Prime Minister) and crime.

The Government claims that there is no information about any official contact attempts by the Libyan government to send a ministerial delegation.

Published by the Malta Independent on 10 September 2016, 12:20

### Updated: Medical visas scandal - Libyan Ministers 'ready to speak' if granted access to Malta



Leader of the Alliance Bidla, Ivan Grech Mintoff this morning made some fresh, serious allegations surrounding the Libyan medical visa scandal.

In a press conference, Mr Grech Mintoff distributed a link to a video of the programme which was originally meant to be aired on F Living Channel but for some reason, was never broadcast. He explained that it was the channel's decision to withhold the video from going public.

He explained that he has already handed a lot of evidence to the police and insists that they have enough material to carry out a proper investigation. Mr Grech Mintoff said that if the authorities do not do their duty, he would be releasing the information he is in possession of himself.

Although many of the questions by journalists were replied to with a reference to the video, Mr Grech Mintoff alleged that Mr Khaled Ben Nasan, the whistleblower, even made some form of contact with the Prime Minister. He said that Mr

Ben Nasan decided to contact him because he simply does not trust the Malta Police Force. "Technically, he is not a whistleblower, as he does not fall under the

whistle blowers act. He did not choose to go through the normal procedures because he does not trust the local authorities."

Sources close to the medical visas scandal who had spoken with this newspaper were incredulous that the police have not found enough evidence in the medical visas racket with which to proceed against government official Neville Gafa after he was accused of misappropriating €38,000 in questionable visa 'fees'.

Transcripts from Viber conversations between middleman Khaled Ben Nasan and Mr Gafa made available to this newspaper show how the former regularly hounded Mr Gafa for the funds to be returned to the applicants over the first three months of the year. In the transcripts, Mr Gafa never questions or denies Mr Ben Nasan's claims for reimbursement for the Libyan nationals who did not receive their visas, and instead acknowledges the fact but continually postpones various requested meetings.



Neville Gafa

Mr Grech Mintoff said that many genuine Labourites have contacted him but they were concerned to speak out as they feared repercussions. He said that Alliance Bidla reached out to the two major parties with the government remaining unresponsive and the Nationalist Party 'partially accepting' the invitation for further discussions.

"I have reason to believe that the authorities in Libya are going to call for Mr Ben Nasan's extradition. I fear that if this happens, he will go to Libya and disappear

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2016-09-10/local-news/Medical-visas-scandal-Libyan-Ministers-ready-to-speak-if-granted-visas-6736163562>

forever," he explained while saying that the Libyan man has full support from the internationally-recognised Libyan government.



He further added that there are at least five Libyan Ministers who are ready to speak more about the issue if they are granted permission to come to Malta. Mr Ben Nasan currently holds refugee status in Malta.

"There are more people who are willing to give testimony. All of this is clearly shown in the programme."

He called on the Attorney General to give amnesty to some of those who played part in the scam so that all of the truth can come out.

Mr Ben Nasan is not in hiding but according to Mr Grech Mintoff, he has received various threats. Asked several times on how he met Mr Ben Nasan, Mr Grech Mintoff said he was approached by the Libyan after watching his programme.

Ivan Grech Mintoff held a meeting with a police commissioner last Saturday. He did not divulge what was said or to whom he had spoken from the Police Force. "But following the evidence I gave them, the police inspector promised further

investigation. I trust him, but I do not trust the authorities."

#### **'Link between Castille and crime' - PN**

The PN said that, in light of the serious allegations made this morning, the PM should immediately give access and protection to anyone who had new information about the scandal.

"A serious Prime Minister does not defend those who allegedly took part in corrupt practices but uses all his powers at law to ensure that the truth comes out and that the police conduct a serious investigation so that the corrupt face justice."

It said that, up till now Joseph Muscat had chosen to defend those who were involved in the alleged scandal. The PM should grant protection and access to anyone willing to come forward with information.

The PN said this scandal "confirmed the link that exists between Castille and crime" and said that more details were emerging with every passing day that showed how big the scandal actually was and how it included corruption at the highest levels of power.

#### **'No official contact made' - Government**

In reply the government said the PN was relying on a series of allegations that had surfaced some time ago and were still being investigated by the police.

"Malta has a good relationship with Libya and there are continuous diplomatic contacts. Contrary to what is being alleged by Mr Grech Mintoff, there is no information about any official contact attempts."

The government said it would be better if the Opposition verified the statements being made by Mr Grech Mintoff instead of taking them on board just because they were against the government.

## 2.3 Skandlu tal-Visas Medici: Akkuzi serji fil-konfront tal-Gvern<sup>16</sup>

Main point: Libyan Authorities refused visas to come and hold minister-to-minister talks on the matter of money being asked for, for visas by Neville Gafà. The article discusses false statements and misinformation to malign those investigating the visa issues and their message.

Allegations:

- Libyan Ministers refused visas to enter Malta by Neville Gafà so that they may not reveal what they know on alleged Medical Visa scam.
- No protection given to whistle blower after receiving multiple threats
- Pro-Government media on a campaign to undermine whistle blower's credibility through mud and lies.
- “Press conference was marked by pro-government media trying to catch Mr Mintoff in a lie....”

Published by Net News on 2016-09-10 at 12:36pm

### Skandlu tal-Visas Medici: Akkuzi serji fil-konfront tal- Gvern

Is-Sibt, 10 ta' Settembru 2016



Hames Ministri Libjani, li lesti jġu Malta biex jiżvelaw dettalji dwar l-iskandlu tal-visas medici mhux jinharġulhom il-permessi tal-visas, bl-iskop ikun li l-informazzjoni tibqa' taht it-tapit u ma ssirx maghrufa.

Dan żvelah Ivan Grech Mintoff, mill-Alleanza Bidla, li fl-ahhar ġimghat kien qed johroġ sensjela ta' dettalji godda dwar l-iskandlu tal-visas medici. F'konferenza tal-ahbarijiet, Grech Mintoff, ghamel akkuzi mill-iktar serji fil-konfront tal-Prim Ministru Joseph Muscat, il-Kummissarju tal-Pulizija u l-Avukat Generali.

Grech Mintoff ikkundanna lill-awtoritajiet li s'issa ma laqghux it-talba ghall-protezzjoni mill-persuna li qed tikxef id-dettalji dwar dan l-iskandlu. Dan wara li l-istess persuna, li kellu kuntatti diretti mal-Prim Ministru

Joseph Muscat, ghal darbtejn ġie mhedded, anke b'familu, fosthom hajet uliedu.

Ivan Grech Mintoff qal li l-awtoritajiet, immexxja mill-Uffiċċju tal-Prim Ministru, qed jinqdew bil-media, fosthom One, l-Orizzont, l-News u l-Malta Today biex jifgħu sensjela ta' hmieg u gideb bl-ghan li jtappnu l-kredibilita tal-whistleblower u dawk kolha li qed jikxfu dan l-iskandlu.

Kompla li dan qed isir bl-ghan li ssir talba minn awtoritajiet mhux rikonoxxuti ghall-estradizzjoni ta' din il-persuna lejn il-Libja, bl-iskop li jisparixxi. U b'hekk, il-verita' tibqa' mistura.

Madankollu Ivan Grech Mintoff wissa' li kemm-il darba dan isehh, l-istorja ma tiqafx hawn ghaliex hemm hafna xhieda, li l-ammont tagħhom jaf jitla' saħansitra għal 100 persuna, li lesti jiżvelaw iżjed dettalji.

Izda qal li dawn il-persuni, fosthom hames Ministri Libjani, mhux jinharġulhom permess biex jġu f'Malta bl-iskop li dak li għandhom jgħidu jibqa' mistur. Qal ukoll li hafna Libjani f'Malta qed jibzghu jikkellmu għax jinsabu taht theddida li jiġi revokat il-permess ta' residenza tagħhom.

Fid-dawl ta' dan sfida lill-awtoritajiet biex jinvestigaw sew, jew inkella jekk qed jgħdeh, kif il-ġurnalisti tal-Partit Laburista qed jipruvw jagħtu x'wiehed jifhem, allura jifthulu libell.

Fil-fatt, il-konferenza tal-ahbarijiet kienet ittimbrata wkoll mill-aġir tal-ġurnalista ta' One News, f'attentat biex il-mexxej ta' Alleanza Bidla – li jiġi n-neputi tal-eks Prim Ministru Dom Mintoff – johroġ ta' għidieb.

Għalhekk hu sfida lill-Gvern mill-għid biex jekk m'għandux x'jabbi jfittxu b'libell għal dak li qed jgħix u allura jth l-opportunita li jressaq lix-xhieda kollha. L-istess xhieda li l-Gvern ma jridx johorġulhom permess biex skont hu ma jikxfux il-korruzzjoni li għaddeja ... mhux biss dwar il-visas medici imma wkoll dwar skandli oħra.

Sfida wkoll lill-istazzjon tal-Partit Laburista, One, biex fid-dawl tal-akkuzi li qed jagħmel jistednux għal diskussjoni u jtnni mill-għid l-akkuzi li qed jagħmel.

**Ikkummenta**

<sup>16</sup> <http://netnews.com.mt/2016/09/10/skandlu-tal-visas-medici-akkuzi-serji-fil-konfront-tal-gvern/>

## 2.4 Eurosceptics vow to blow top off medical visa 'scandal'<sup>17</sup>

Main Point: Gafà denying authenticity of Viber chats. Pro-government media defending Gafà and attacking the integrity of anyone who talks about Gafà's actions.

Allegations:

- a) "Police claim no conclusive evidence on Gafà taking money for Libyan Medical visas"
- b) "police investigators said they had no conclusive evidence to arraign Neville Gafà, an official of the health ministry, on bribery charges"
- c) "Ivan Grech Mintoff, a right-wing conservative who in 2014 unsuccessfully contested the European elections..."
- d) "Grech Mintoff, self-styled chairman of the minuscule euro-sceptic formation Alleanza Bidla..."
- e) "Gafà alleges the Viber chats [appendix 3] between him and the whistle blower show Ben Nasan (whistle blower) was a sort of middleman collecting monies from others "on the unfounded pretext of having Libyan or Maltese clearance."

Published by Malta Today on 2016-06-26 at 12:51 pm

### Eurosceptics vow to blow top off medical visa 'scandal'

Alleanza Bidla leader Ivan Grech Mintoff claims to have "more evidence" over alleged medical visa scam



Ivan Grech Mintoff, a right-wing conservative who in 2014 unsuccessfully contested the European elections, is claiming to have "more evidence" in hand as to an alleged medical visa scam.

Grech Mintoff, self-styled chairman of the minuscule eurosceptic formation Alleanza Bidla, was catapulted into the limelight after police investigators said they had no conclusive evidence to arraign Neville Gafà, an official of the health ministry, on bribery charges.

According to Libyan national Khaled Ben Nasan, Gafà would have pocketed some

€150,000 a month to issue medical visas to Libyan nationals – allegations his lawyer, Leslie Cuschieri, sent in writing to then health minister Konrad Mizzi in April 2016.

Ben Nasan, a Libyan import-export trader, had back in 2014 claimed to have played the part of interlocutor with militiamen who had kidnapped Martin Galea outside Tripoli, Libya. The claims were reported by MaltaToday but never reliably confirmed.

That a police investigation has found nothing with what to conclusively arraign Gafà, a man close to the government's top brass, has rankled those who criticise the government of exerting undue influence on the institutions.

Grech Mintoff on Friday called a press conference, confidently announcing that Libyan army and government top brass would be willing to testify as to the way visas are issued by the Maltese government, evidence of which he had been "shown" by way of receipts, footage, voice recordings, Viber screenshots and other documents that would confirm the alleged bribery.

Some of those Viber screenshots were published in the Malta Independent.

In painting a larger-than-life picture of his politician's role, Grech Mintoff said Ben Nasan was ignored by both government and the Opposition, until he met the Alleanza Bidla leader. And since news broke of the fruitless police investigation, Grech Mintoff claims the Nationalists "jumped on the bandwagon to score political points" by taking to task the Labour government over the medical visa investigation.

After his press conference on Friday afternoon, at 3:38pm the police called Grech Mintoff to submit any information he had in hand.

But Grech Mintoff decided against going to the police, ostensibly because MaltaToday had been "fed sensitive information" by publishing the inconsequential news that the police had taken an interest in Grech Mintoff's allegations, which it reported that day at 4:40pm.

On legal advice, Grech Mintoff decided to drop in at the police HQ and this time

<sup>17</sup> [https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/69006/eurosceptics\\_vow\\_to\\_blow\\_top\\_off\\_medical\\_visa\\_scandal](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/69006/eurosceptics_vow_to_blow_top_off_medical_visa_scandal)

praised the police force, saying he was “convinced they are doing diligent work” but claimed that they were under political pressure.

When MaltaToday spoke to him yesterday, Grech Mintoff demanded the newspaper reveal its source as to how it was informed that police had spoken to him. When the newspaper refused - leaks are par for the course in this business - Grech Mintoff said he would not speak to the journalist.

From then onwards, Grech Mintoff said he would not share any information with the police, but broadcast what he knows on the programme *Exodus*, a programme he and another Alleanza Bidla figurehead – Anthony Calleja – present on F-Living TV.

“If I were now to divulge anything very serious to the police, will it also end up in the media of the progressive liberals like MaltaToday? I hereby urge the investigating officers to investigate this leak to the press so that confidence from my side in the police may be restored,” Grech Mintoff thundered in a statement yesterday evening.

On his part, the health ministry official, Neville Gafà, has claimed he will sue The Malta Independent and Opposition leader Simon Busuttil over a report and other claims that were made since news broke that police were closing investigations on the bribery allegations.

His lawyer, the former police commissioner Peter Paul Zammit, reiterated that Gafà “never received any monies in any way or manner” aside from his government salary.

According to Ben Nasan’s allegations, reported in the Malta Independent, Gafà was said to have “personally made between €2 million and €3 million from the racket since it began operating in 2014”.

Ben Nasan claimed that Gafà had started a new medical visa application process through which Libyans would send over their passports in advance, and Gafà would charge varying prices for the courtesy.

Adding yet more flavour to the story was some cloak-and-dagger accusations from

Gafà himself, who claims the allegations originally stem from an “anonymous high-ranking Libyan secret service officer” – if not the whistleblower Ben Nasan, then some client he represents.

Gafà said that under a memorandum between both countries, a medical visa for a person injured in the Libyan conflict had to be first reviewed by the Libyan authorities, and then screened by the Malta Security Service, police, immigration and medical departments as agreed between both governments. “All expenses as regards the patient are entered into a government account as debt is subsequently settled by the Libyan authorities. No fees or charges were levied by myself or the respective departments for the vetting of the persons concerned,” Gafà said.

But Gafà had been featured in screenshots of Viber chats as having entertained a demand by Ben Nasan to meet and settle the return of some €38,000 after some medical visas to various Libyans did not transpire.

While the chats and their contents raise suspicion about Gafà’s relationship with the whistleblower – for the civil servant was clearly on more than professional terms with him – Gafà alleges the Viber chats show Ben Nasan was a sort of middleman collecting monies from others “on the unfounded pretext of having Libyan or Maltese clearance.”

Ben Nasan also showed Grech Mintoff the chats and voice recordings, leading the Alleanza Bidla figurehead to hold his own press conference on Friday and claim they were “just the tip of the iceberg”.

## 2.5 Messages show middleman pleading for return of €38k in medical visa 'fees'<sup>18</sup>

Main points: Viber chats between Neville Gafà and whistle blower. Media defending Gafà.

Allegations:

- a) Viber Messages show middleman pleading for return of €38k in medical visa 'fees'.
- b) whistle blower asks for money held by Gafà to be returned as Gafà did not issue visa but kept the (underhand) money for them

Published by the Independent on 2016-08-24 at 09:26am.

### Messages show middleman pleading for return of €38k in medical visa 'fees'

*'We will meet tomorrow'*

Sources close to the medical visas scandal speaking with this newspaper yesterday were incredulous that the police have not found enough evidence in the medical visas racket with which to proceed against government official Neville Gafà after he was accused of misappropriating €38,000 in questionable visa 'fees'.

Transcripts from Viber conversations between middleman Khaled Ben Nasan and Mr Gafà made available to this newspaper show how the former regularly hounded Mr Gafà for the funds to be returned to the applicants over the first three months of the year. In the transcripts, Mr Gafà never questions or denies Mr Ben Nasan's claims for reimbursement for the Libyan nationals who did not receive their visas, and instead acknowledges the fact but continually postpones various requested meetings.

The transcripts show Mr Ben Nasan had repeatedly pleaded for the return of the €38,000 in visa 'fees' since early January of this year, claims that are never denied by Mr Gafà.

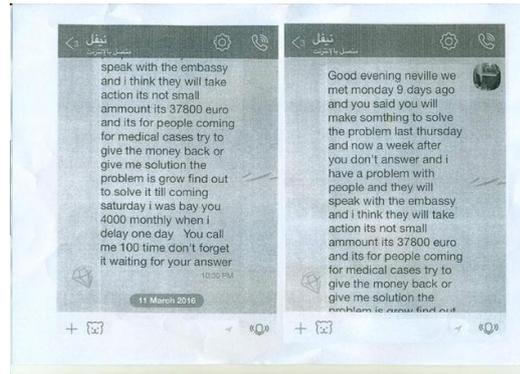
Sources have also confirmed that the police had interviewed the whistleblower, Libyan middleman Khaled Ben Nasan, soon after his lawyer Dr Leslie Cuschieri had written to then health minister Konrad Mizzi in April and his successor Chris Fearn in May in an attempt to recover €38,000 in medical visa 'fees' that applicants were owed when their passports were returned without the visas they believed they had paid for.

Sources also confirmed that Mr Ben Nasan, when interviewed at the time, had given the police copies of written, detailed receipts that show the €38,000 in payments for 42 applications to Mr Gafà for visas that never materialised.



Mr Gafà allegedly collected €2,500 in monthly fees from Libyan nationals injured in hostilities to be granted visas to receive treatment in Malta, plus another €100 per patient. The system, in which patients would simply send photocopies of their passports, is said to have operated for a good 15 months.

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2016-08-24/local-news/Messages-show-middleman-pleading-for-return-of-38k-in-medical-visa-fees-6736162798>



That system was eventually changed and Mr Gafā began asking for applicants' actual passports and other documentation to be sent over to Malta in advance. Mr Gafā allegedly also asked to be paid for each visa application separately so as to cover visa fees and hospital bookings. While amounts per visa allegedly varied from €500 to €2,500, the overall sum for the last batch of passports that were to be processed through Mr Gafā amounted to €37,800.

Those visas, however, never materialised and the passports were eventually returned to Mr Ben Nasan but the fees were not refunded. Mr Ben Nasan alleges through Dr Cuschieri that Mr Gafā told him he had used the funds to purchase a new BMW.

We will meet tomorrow - Gafa

According to the transcripts given to this newspaper, at one point in late January Mr Ben Nasan is heard in a voice message to Mr Gafā pleading for the return of the missing fees, saying, "Please, please, please. All I need is the people's money back" - to which Mr Gafā replies in writing without disputing that people are

owed any money, "We will meet tomorrow".



familiar with the problem at hand.



That meeting never took place and subsequent messages become more and more insistent, and the transcripts show Mr Gafā making continual excuses.

**Plenty of evidence, sources claim**

"Good morning Neville, the people need their money and they can't wait any longer," reads one message from Mr Ben Nasan. "...I remind you that two weeks ago we met and you said you will solve the problem in a couple of days and you don't answer me when I call you... So the people give me problems... You took the money and I got the problems."

Sources close to the investigation also claim there is plenty of evidence, in addition to the receipts given to the police by Mr Ben Nasan. Such evidence, sources claim, could easily include CCTV footage from the ministry and questioning of ministry staff, the majority of which, sources claim, are familiar with the situation. They also say that Mr Ben Nasan had not given police full access to all the documents in his possession as he wanted to hand them directly to the minister.

Another reads, "I have a problem with these people and they will speak with the embassy and I think they will take action. It's no small amount, it's €37,800 and it's for people coming for medical cases. Try to give the money back or give a solution. The problem will grow - find out how to solve it till this coming Saturday...When I delayed your payment for one day you called me 100 times."

**Tip of the iceberg**

Not once does Mr Gafā ask what Mr Ben Nasan is referring to, apparently well-

The missing €38,000 in visa fees, however, may very well be the tip of the iceberg. Authorities in Libya following the situation closely have expressed frustration with this newsroom that Libyans are not being treated as per agreement with Malta.

They allege that the racket was such that it was not always injured Libyans who were the recipients of the visas. So much so that those who received the visas to come to Malta came under the guise of an agreement between Malta and Libya to treat Libyans injured in hostilities.

Expressing angst over the state of affairs, high-ranking Libyan sources speaking with this newsroom last week claimed that many of the visas intended for Libyans genuinely injured in hostilities had gone to criminals and others who were willing to fork out thousands of euros for visas to Malta.

A senior Libyan security source this week told this newspaper on condition of anonymity considering the sensitivity of the situation in the country, "They [the perpetrators of the racket] stole money from injured children who never got their visas to be treated in Malta. Some of those children, and adults, have died in the meantime because they did not get the treatment.

"In contrast, the Italians come for the injured themselves and take them to Italy for treatment with no money asked for. Malta asks us for money and then we never get the visas...and in this latest case they did not even get their money back, let alone the visas to come to Malta for life-saving treatment."

They also allege that Mr Gafà was making up to €150,000 a month from the visa scam.

#### **Gafà denies wrongdoing**

On his part, Mr Gafà has denied wrongdoing, labelling this newsroom's reportage on the story as "pure fabrication devoid of any serious sources".

Mr Gafà was employed at the Office of the Prime Minister and was later transferred to the Health Ministry. After that, and presumably when news of his machinations came to light, he was reportedly transferred to the Foundation for Medical Services.

He insisted this week that, "Firstly, I have not only denied any allegations which were made by dubious individuals, but also personally asked the Police and also the Permanent Secretary in the Health Ministry to investigate these allegations. I

have fully cooperated in the Police investigation and gave them any information and made any information available. Secondly, I immediately asked the ministry to relieve me of such duties until investigations are over."

## 2.6 Police invite Ivan Grech Mintoff to share information on alleged medical visas racket<sup>19</sup>

Main Point: The police break the law and give Malta Today newspaper confidential information relating to an ongoing case.

Allegations:

- a) This newspaper breaks the story that Ivan Grech Mintoff was to visit the police the next day. They did this one hour after the police called me and I agreed to go. When I received the call from the police and whilst the paper was breaking the story I was with two witnesses who can confirm that I contacted no one. Yet the paper somehow found out about this. I asked for the police to investigate the illegal act on their behalf and so far nothing wrong has been found with this situation.

Published by Malta Today on 2016-08-24 at 09:26am.

### Police invite Ivan Grech Mintoff to share information on alleged medical visas racket

After holding a press conference to announce that what has been reported in the media so far is ‘just the tip of the iceberg’, investigating officers get in touch with Alleanza Bidla boss



The Police have contacted Alleanza Bidla leader Ivan Grech Mintoff following his assertions that the “Libya medical visas scandal is just the tip of the iceberg”.

Grech Mintoff this morning held a press conference in Valletta, outside Europe House, to share his concern over the 80,000 Libyan visas issued by the embassy and permits for residency.

But while claiming that there were a number of “Libyan high-ranking military officers, ministers and people in high places within the Libyan government” willing to testify, Grech Mintoff confirmed with illum.com.mt that he had not approached the Police with the information he had seen.

Informed sources told MaltaToday that the Police called in Grech Mintoff this afternoon.

It is unclear why Grech Mintoff did not approach the police earlier, although he said that he “did not have the evidence in hand” but he had been “shown the evidence”.

Grech Mintoff said that he was “shown” copies of receipts, footage, voice recordings, Viber screenshots and other documents that would confirm the alleged bribery that went on.

“The medical visas racket is just the tip of the iceberg ... the scandal reaches residence permits,” Grech Mintoff said.

According to Grech Mintoff, ‘whistleblower’ and Libyan businessman Khaled Ben Nasan, had approached both the government and the opposition but the claims were, reportedly, ignored. The whistleblower then approached Grech Mintoff – the latter argued that the Nationalist Party then jumped on the bandwagon to score political points.

Neville Gafa, the health ministry official at the centre of the allegations, has [denied any wrongdoing](#).

In a letter to the Ministry for Health last April, Ben Nasan alleged that Gafa had started a new medical visa application process through which Libyans would send over their passports in advance and Gafa would charge varying prices.

<sup>19</sup>[https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/68964/police\\_invite\\_ivan\\_grech\\_mintoff\\_to\\_share\\_information\\_on\\_alleged\\_medical\\_visas\\_racket](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/68964/police_invite_ivan_grech_mintoff_to_share_information_on_alleged_medical_visas_racket)

## 2.7 Grech Mintoff loses faith in the police after sensitive information is 'fed' to newspaper<sup>20</sup>

Main point: The timeline showing how the police themselves broke the law in the investigation of Gafa.

Allegations:

- a) “At 03:38 pm yesterday, the police called me on my mobile and 'invited' me to go and discuss the matter with them. I willingly agreed to go, and a date and time was set for us to meet. I did not call or speak to anyone about this matter as I felt that this whole issue is of national importance. Within one hour after the police called me, at 4:40pm, the Malta Today portal had already posted that the police had ‘invited’ me to talk to them,” Mr Grech Mintoff said”.

Published by the Independent on 2016-08-27 at 16:45 am.

### Grech Mintoff loses faith in the police after sensitive information is 'fed' to newspaper



Alleanza Bidla leader Ivan Grech Mintoff has declared that he has no faith in the police and will not be handing over any information about the medical visas scandal after sensitive information was leaked to Maltatoday.

Following a press conference yesterday, Mr Grech Mintoff was invited by the police to share any information he had with them. Within minutes of the phone call, Maltatoday ran a story saying that he had been contacted by the police.

“During yesterday’ s press conference, I explained that more facts will be coming out in the media regarding the Libyan visa scandal and that we should all work together quickly to prevent more harm to Malta’s reputation. As opposed to what was reported, I praised the police for the work done so far. I explained that they had not yet seen the evidence that we had recently seen. I said that I would be most willing to co-operate with them, if they felt I could contribute.



Neville Gafa

At 03:38 pm yesterday, the police called me on my mobile and 'invited' me to go and discuss the matter with them. I willingly agreed to go and a date and time was set for us to meet. I did not call or speak to anyone about this matter as I felt that this whole issue is of national importance.

I was therefore totally surprised and shocked when very soon after this call, other phone calls started coming in, asking me if I was arrested! Within one hour after the police called me, at 4:40pm, the Maltatoday portal had already posted that the police had ‘invited’ me to talk to them,” Mr Grech Mintoff said.

“I did not give Maltatoday any information, so how did they get it? What confidence can one actually have that any serious investigation on something so nationally serious will actually take place by the police when Maltatoday is “fed” such sensitive information without my consent by the police themselves before they even talk to me?

If I was now to divulge anything very serious to the police, will it also end up in the media of the progressive liberals like the Maltatoday?”

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2016-08-27/local-news/Grech-Mintoff-loses-faith-in-the-police-after-sensitive-information-is-fed-to-newspaper-6736162975>



He urged the police to investigate the leak so that his confidence in the force could be restored.

“Furthermore, Neville Gafa’s lawyer is ex Police Commissioner Peter Paul Zammit, appointed as such during this present government’s legislature. He recently resigned his post. Serious allegations were made by the head of the EU’s anti-fraud agency, Giovanni Kessler regarding his conduct on the Commissioner Dalli case. He was found by a police investigation board to have ‘unjustly’ ordered the withdrawal of charges against former client of his.

It was also reported in the press that ‘A Data Protection Commission investigation revealed that the files in question, police inspector Elton Taliana’s personal record with the corps, had been in Zammit’s office when they were leaked.’

Despite all this, the Prime Minister himself is on record as saying that this person is another one of those ‘men in his trust.’ He is obviously, still connected with the government, the security/police as well as the legal system.”



**Peter Paul Zammit**

Mr Grech Mintoff said that “regrettably, all this, together with Maltatoday’s behaviour yesterday further increases my own concerns on the full matter.

After taking legal advice, as well as discussing the matter with the witnesses themselves, and despite all of the above, I nevertheless kept my appointment with the police who are carrying out the actual investigations this morning. I am convinced that they are doing diligent work. Yet, bearing all these facts above in mind, I am also convinced that no proper legal conclusion on this very serious national matter will be allowed by certain politicians and their friends.

Until these officers are allowed to work properly, free of maneuvers seen so far, there will not be any information divulged from my end to an institution that leaks important data to the press so easily. However, so that the public will become fully aware as to what is actually going on, the independent media will be used instead to inform all concerned of the evidence at hand.

I therefore urge the public to follow the newspapers on Sunday (tomorrow) as well

as to watch our next programme of Exodus on F-Living TV Channel at 3:30 pm this coming Tuesday 30th of August, where more evidence will be produced.”

## 2.8 Updated: Receipts show €35,000 in payments made to Neville Gafà by Libyan middleman<sup>21</sup>

Main Point: Newspaper reveals receipts by whistle blower for medical visas issued by Neville Gafà

Allegations:

- a) Receipts show payments of close to €35,000 made to Neville Gafà by the whistle blower between end of August 2015 and the beginning of October 2015.
- b) Viber messages [appendix 3] between Neville Gafà and Whistle blower mentioned
- c) High ranking ministers from Libya wanted to come to Malta to discuss the matter of the high charges when it is clearly stated that there should be no fees charged.
- d) Gafà denies receiving any money. "I have never received any monies in any way or manner aside from my due government salary."
- e) "The persons concerned were not requested to pay anything, not even the 66 EUR visa fee, which was waived by the Maltese government. Only accompanying family members were requested the visa fee. No fees or charges were levied by myself or the respective departments for the vetting of the persons concerned".
- f) Viber messages between whistle blower and Gafà where whistle blower is pleading with Gafà to return the e38k 'fees' that he took for the visas that he then did not issue. "Please, please, please. All I need is the people's money back" – to which Neville Gafà replies in writing without disputing that people are owed any money, "We will meet tomorrow". Not once in the transcripts does Mr Gafà ask what Mr Ben Nasan is referring to, apparently well-familiar with the problem at hand."
- g) "High-ranking sources from Libya speaking with this newspaper are not taking the matter lightly and they are concerned that it was not only genuinely injured Libyans who were always the recipients of the medical visas. Speaking with this newspaper earlier this week, they provided a letter sent to Mr Gafà last year requesting visas for a senior delegation from Libya to "follow up our patients and injured whom we sent to get medical treatments". They explain that the delegation, which included the then health minister and a ministry finance director, had wanted to look into what they considered to have been inflated fees charged for treatment and other related matters. The visas, Libyan authorities allege, were denied after the delegation had been left waiting for days in Tunisia for visas and their flight to Malta. Those visas, however, allegedly never materialised."
- h) "In a statement this morning, the Office of the Prime Minister replied to the story that was published in The Malta Independent on Sunday.... This is nothing short of another deliberate blatant lie by the journalist as the Office of the Prime Minister said in its reply to The Malta Independent on Sunday that "the said person (Khaled Ben Nasan) also insisted regularly in getting further private meetings with the Prime Minister but these were refused after he did not pass the necessary clearances".
- i) "The journalist relies on a personal message of Ben Nasan to reach the wrong conclusion that this person is "close" to the Prime Minister and that he was going to meet in the PM's office."
- j) "From the outset I must declare that the first time I saw the purported receipts was during Police questioning. I was told that the receipts were given to them by Khaled Ibrahim Ben Nasan as proof that I owed him money. I state what I already told the Police under investigation that I had never been shown or given any receipts. As already stated I have never received any monies, let

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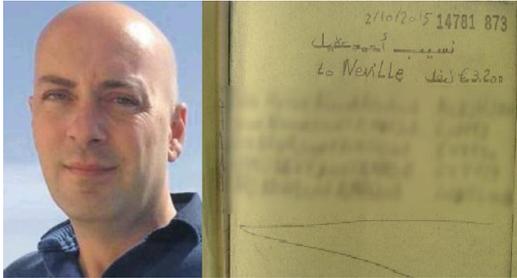
<sup>21</sup> <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2016-08-28/local-news/Receipts-show-35-000-in-payments-made-to-Neville-Gafà-by-Libyan-middleman-6736162996>

alone being given receipts for them. As already stated by the Police, I have been investigated, and no evidence of impropriety was found on my part.”

k) “Tomorrow I will be filing a libel proceeding against this paper.

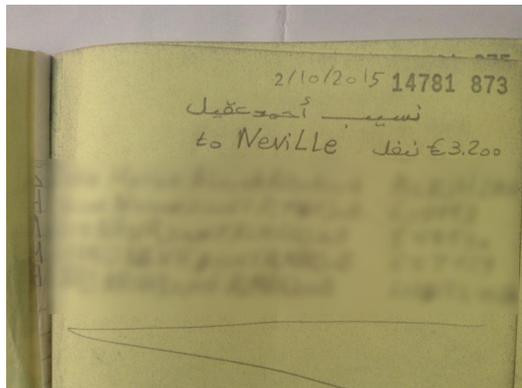
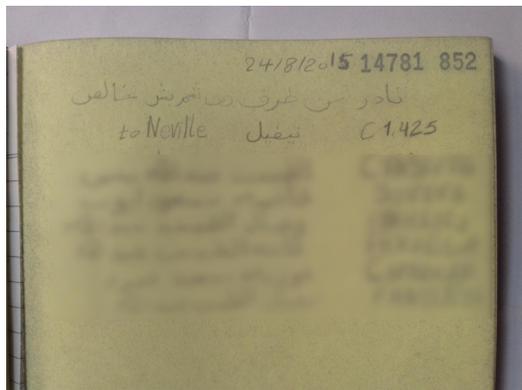
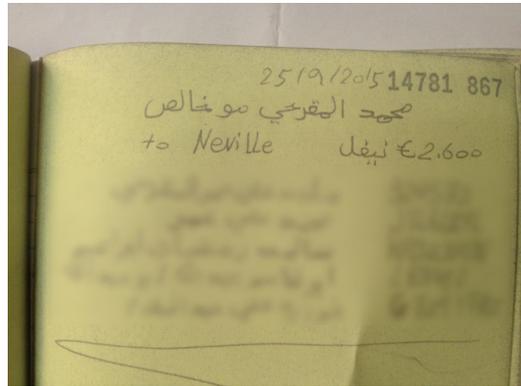
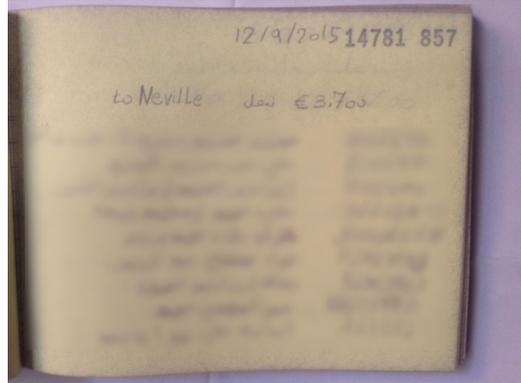
Published by the Independent on 2016-08-28 at 10:00 pm

### Updated: Receipts show €35,000 in payments made to Neville Gafà by Libyan middleman



While the individual at the centre of the medical visas scandal, Neville Gafà, has insisted with this newspaper that no Libyan national had ever been charged for visas to obtain medical treatment – not even the standard €66 visa fee – receipts made available to this newspaper purport to show payments of close to €35,000 made to Mr Gafà between the end of August 2015 and the beginning of October 2015.

A carbon copy book of hand-written receipts, which are alleged to have been issued by Libyan middleman Khaled Ben Nasan to Mr Gafà, was shown to this newspaper this week. The top of each hand-written receipt clearly indicates ‘To Neville’, and goes on to list the names of the ‘patients’, their Libyan identity card numbers and the total payments made from each batch of applicants.



[In a right of reply to this newspaper](#), signed by Mr Gafà’s legal representative, former police commissioner Peter Paul Zammit, Mr Gafà states, “I have never received any monies in any way or manner aside from my due government salary.”

In his right of reply, sent to this newspaper last Friday, Mr Gafà makes no reference to extracts of Viber conversation transcripts published by our sister daily newspaper two days earlier, on Wednesday.

Mr Gafà goes on to explain, “The persons concerned were not requested to pay anything, not even the 66 euro visa fee, which was waived by the Maltese government. Only accompanying family members were requested the visa fee. No fees or charges were levied by myself or the respective departments for the vetting of the persons concerned”.

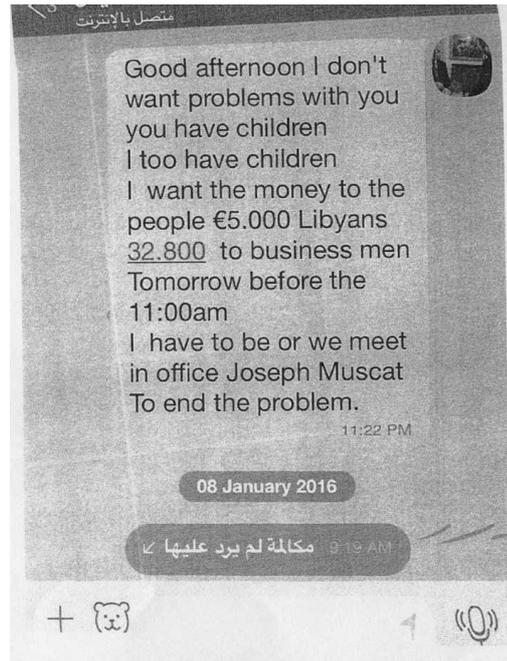
The receipts, however, appear to show a different version of events. They show €34,575 in payments, some of which clearly indicate that the payments have been made in respect to medical visas. These particular receipts are dated to Konrad Mizzi’s tenure as Health Minister.



### Prime Minister confirms he knew Libyan middleman

This newspaper also sought answers from the Prime Minister, former health minister Konrad Mizzi and current Health Minister Chris Fearné as to whether they had ever met Mr Ben Nasan or discussed the allegations with Mr Gafà.

From the replies supplied, it transpires that Dr Muscat had met the Libyan middleman during the Libyan revolution when he was still Opposition leader and on random occasions after he was elected Prime Minister, and he has never spoken to Mr Gafà about the case.



However, Mr Ben Nasan clearly states in his Viber messages to Mr Gafà that he is close to Joseph Muscat, to the point that he insists with Mr Gafà that their next meeting will take place in the Prime Minister's Office if Mr Gafà fails to cough up the funds.

In his replies to The Malta Independent on Sunday the Prime Minister said that on becoming Prime Minister, he met with the same person as part of a wider outreach with foreign communities in Malta and during public events. The said person also insisted regularly on having further private meetings with the Prime Minister but these were refused after he did not meet the necessary clearance requirements.



Dr Mizzi, meanwhile, says he has never met the Libyan middleman and that he had referred allegations of impropriety to the Attorney General "for guidance".

But for some strange reason the matter was not immediately referred to the police by then Health Minister Konrad Mizzi while Neville Gafà retained his office and position at the Health Ministry.



Mr Fearné, meanwhile, explains that he has never met Mr Ben Nasan and had been made aware of the accusations related to Mr Gafà a few days after becoming Health Minister, and gave immediate instructions to the Permanent Secretary to report the matter to the police.

He adds that Mr Gafà was transferred from his Health Ministry office and his involvement with medical visa issues was stopped. He explains that Mr Gafà denied the allegations and adds that, "In the event of a court arraignment by the police, Mr Gafà would have been suspended pending the court outcome."

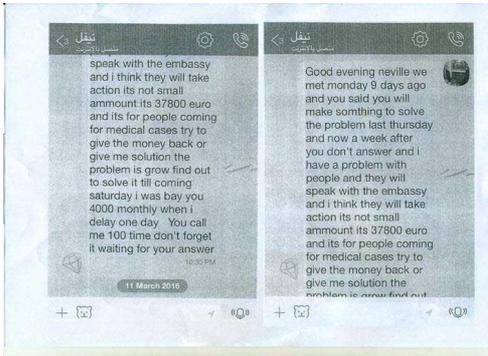
### Libyan health minister denied visa for fact-checking mission

High-ranking sources from Libya speaking with this newspaper are not taking the matter lightly and they are concerned that it was not only genuinely injured Libyans who were always the recipients of the medical visas. Speaking with this newspaper earlier this week, they provided a letter sent to Mr Gafà last year requesting visas for a senior delegation from Libya to "follow up our patients and injured whom we sent to get medical treatments".

They explain that the delegation, which included the then health minister and a

ministry finance director, had wanted to look into what they considered to have been inflated fees charged for treatment and other related matters.

The visas, Libyan authorities allege, were denied after the delegation had been left waiting for days in Tunisia for visas and their flight to Malta. Those visas, however, allegedly never materialised.



**Messages show middleman pleading for return of €38k in medical visa 'fees'**

This week, our sister daily newspaper was provided transcripts from Viber conversations between middleman Khaled Ben Nasan and Mr Gafā. They show how the former regularly hounded Mr Gafā for the funds to be returned to the applicants over the first three months of 2016.

In the transcripts, Mr Gafā never questions or denies Mr Ben Nasan's claims for reimbursement for the Libyan nationals who did not receive their visas, and instead acknowledges the fact but continually postpones various requested meetings.



The transcripts show Mr Ben Nasan had repeatedly pleaded for the return of the €38,000 in visa 'fees' since early January of this year, claims that are never denied by Mr Gafā.

According to the transcripts made available to this newspaper, at one point in late January Mr Ben Nasan is heard in a voice message to Mr Gafā pleading for the return of the missing fees, saying, "Please, please, please. All I need is the people's money back" – to which Mr Gafā replies in writing without disputing that people are owed any money, "We will meet tomorrow".



That meeting never took place and subsequent messages become more and more insistent, and the transcripts show Mr Gafā making continual excuses.

"Good morning Neville, the people need their money and they can't wait any longer," reads one message from Mr Ben Nasan. "... I remind you that two weeks ago we met and you said you will solve the problem in a couple of days and you don't answer me when I call you... So the people give me problems... You took the money and I got the problems."



Another reads, "I have a problem with these people and they will speak with the embassy and I think they will take action. It's no small amount, it's €37,800 and it's for people coming for medical cases. Try to give the money back or give a solution. The problem will grow – find out how to solve it till this coming Saturday... When I delayed your payment for one day you called me 100 times."

Not once in the transcripts does Mr Gafā ask what Mr Ben Nasan is referring to, apparently well-familiar with the problem at hand.



In a statement this morning, the Office of the Prime Minister replied to the story that was published in The Malta Independent on Sunday

"The front page story on The Malta Independent on Sunday which claims that the Prime Minister knew of allegations with regards to an alleged visa scam is a blatant lie trying to maliciously mislead its readers.

"In this case, and whenever the Prime Minister received any allegations, he has always taken the appropriate action and passed any information to the relevant authorities. It is simply a vicious spin that in this case he acted differently.

"The journalist relies on a personal message of Ben Nasan to reach the wrong conclusion that this person is "close" to the Prime Minister and that he was going to meet in the PM's office.

"This is nothing short of another deliberate blatant lie by the journalist as the Office of the Prime Minister said in its reply to The Malta Independent on Sunday that "the said person (Khaled Ben Nasan) also insisted regularly in getting further private meetings with the Prime Minister but these were refused after he did not pass the necessary clearances".



Meanwhile Neville Gafa wrote to the paper.

Reference is made to the Malta Independent on Sunday front page story entitled "Receipts show €35,000 in payments made to Neville Gafa' by Libyan middleman".

It is now evident more than ever that the Malta Independent on Sunday is relying on very dubious sources whose intention is solely to mount a frame up on me, to hide their misdeeds.

From the outset I must declare that the first time I saw the purported receipts was during Police questioning. I was told that the receipts were given to them by Khaled Ibrahim Ben Nasan as proof that I owed him money.

I state what I already told the Police under investigation that I had never been shown or given any receipts. As already stated I have never received any monies, let alone being given receipts for them.

As already stated by the Police, I have been investigated, and no evidence of impropriety was found on my part.

This has clearly left these individuals disarmed with their only way remaining to sustain their lies is by passing them to the media in an exercise of conjecture.

I note with very deep regret that The Malta Independent on Sunday is playing along this one dubious source and once again did not have the basic decency to ask for my version of the story.

As I did I remain open further investigation and will cooperate as I did until now with all authorities to get to the bottom of this issue.

Tomorrow I will be filing a libel proceedings against this paper.

Neville Gafa'.

## 2.9 Prime Minister denies knowing of medical visas scam before police investigations<sup>22</sup>

Main Point: The Prime Minister denies any knowledge of Medical visa scam before police investigations.

Allegations:

- a) In a statement, the Office of the Prime Minister said the front-page report by the Malta Independent on Sunday – which reported that Muscat “knew of the allegations weeks before they flagged to the police by health minister Chris Fearne” – was a “blatant lie” and intent of “maliciously misleading readers.”
- b) The newspaper construed this message as meaning that Ben Nasan was “close” to the Prime Minister – a conclusion, which according to the Office of the Prime Minister, was “nothing short of another deliberate blatant lie by the journalist”.

Published by Malta Today on 2016-08-28 at 10:29 am.

### Prime Minister denies knowing of medical visas scam before police investigations

Office of the Prime Minister denied reports that Prime Minister Joseph Muscat knew of allegations surrounding medical visas racket before details were reported to the police



The Office of the Prime Minister has refuted reports that the Prime Minister Joseph Muscat had knowledge of the racket involving medical visas before it was reported to the police.

In a statement, the Office of the Prime Minister said the front-page report by the Malta Independent on Sunday – which reported that Muscat “knew of the allegations weeks before they flagged to the police by health minister Chris Fearne” – was a “blatant lie” and intent of “maliciously misleading readers.”

“Whenever the prime minister received any allegations, as is in this case, he always took the appropriate action and passed any information to the relevant authorities. It is simply a vicious spin that in this case he acted differently,” the OPM underlined.

The remarks were made against the backdrop of an alleged racket involving medical visas. Neville Gafa, a health ministry employee and a political appointee, was accused by a Libyan whistleblower of allegedly masterminding the racket, but [a police investigation has cleared him of masterminding the racket.](#)

The allegations were raised by Libyan national Khaled Ben Nasan, a Libyan businessman turned whistleblower who had allegedly served as middleman

between Neville Gafa and Libyan patients. In a letter to the Ministry for Health last April, Ben Nasan alleged that Gafa had started a new medical visa application process through which Libyans would send over their passports in advance and Gafa would charge varying prices.

For over a year, Gafa allegedly charged Libyans a €2,500 monthly fee to secure medical visas, treatment and accommodation in Malta, as well as an additional €100 charge. However, Ben Nasan told then-health minister Konrad Mizzi in April and his successor Chris Fearne a month later that Gafa had not refunded €38,000 in payments for 42 medical visas that never materialized.

Transcripts from Viber conversations between the two were leaked to the Malta Independent on Wednesday, showing that Ben Nasan had been demanding the return of the €38,000 since January.

Moreover, new transcripts published on Sunday show Ben Nasan insist with Gafa that their next meeting will take place in the Prime Minister’s office if the latter fails to return the monies paid.

The newspaper construed this message as meaning that Ben Nasan was “close” to the Prime Minister – a conclusion, which according to the Office of the Prime Minister, was “nothing short of another deliberate blatant lie by the journalist”.

“The journalist relies on a personal message of Ben Nasan to reach the wrong conclusion that the person is ‘close’ to the Prime Minister and that he was going to meet in the PM’s office,” it said.

The newspaper also reported comments by Muscat who confirmed that he met with Ben Nasan during the Libyan revolution and on becoming prime minister,

they met against during a wider outreach programme with foreign communities in Malta.

The prime minister also insisted that Ben Nasan’s requests for further private meetings were turned down as he did not meet the necessary clearance requirements, and that he has never spoken to Gafa about the case.

On Sunday, newspaper Illum reported that [an application by Khaled Ben Nasan to obtain a residence permit in Malta was refused twice.](#) The newspaper reports that Syrian-born Ben Nasan, who holds a Libyan passport, had his applications refused by the Security Services and immigration police after failing security checks, and after being declared to have used “unreliable information”.

<sup>22</sup>[https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/69003/prime\\_minister\\_denies\\_knowing\\_of\\_medical\\_visas\\_scam\\_before\\_police\\_investigations#.WwrFO0iFOUK](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/69003/prime_minister_denies_knowing_of_medical_visas_scam_before_police_investigations#.WwrFO0iFOUK)

## 2.10 Fl-iskandlu tal-visas mediċi lil Libjani, Muscat jitfixkel fil-gideb tiegħu stess – il-PN

Main Point: Opposition states that Prime Minister is caught lying with regards to Libyan Visa Scandal.

Allegations:

- a) "In a bid to defend those who are accused of corruption in the issuing of Libyan medical visas, Prime Minister Joseph Muscat ended confused in his own lies.
- b) " Yesterday itself, the Head of the Nationalist Party Simon Busuttil said that Muscat has known for at least one year about these allegations because last year, during a meeting of the Security Committee, the Leader of the Opposition had raised the case and said that there were rumours about tampering issue medical visas.
- c) "in one statement, Muscat lied twice: first said he did not know anything about this scandal free, but in the next sentence, said he states that as soon as he knew he passed things onto the police.... but the Health Minister Chris Fearnie said it was the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health who had passed the case at the Police, not the Prime Minister.
- d) The Nationalist Party said that this scandal is also a great one because, like many other scandals in this legislature, Castille it was carried out by a person who is very close of the Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister and Minister Keith Schembri Konrad Mizzi, who were caught opening secret companies in Panama.
- e) In light of these developments, involving now even the Prime Minister Muscat, the leader of the Nationalist Party Simon Busuttil called a meeting of the Parliamentary Group on Tuesday to discuss recent developments.

Published by Net News on 2016-08-29.

### Fl-iskandlu tal-visas mediċi lil Libjani, Muscat jitfixkel fil-gideb tiegħu stess – il-PN

It-Tnejn, 29 ta' Awwissu 2016



Fid-daghdigha biex jiddefendi lil min qed jiġi akkuzat b'korruzzjoni fil-hruġ tal-visas mediċi lil Libjani, il-Prim Ministru Joseph Muscat spiċċa jitfixkel fil-gideb tiegħu stess.

Dan qalu l-Partit Nazzjonalista fi stqarrija wara li lbierah, il-gazzetta The Malta Independent on Sunday zvelat kif Muscat kien jaf bl-allegazzjonijiet ta' korruzzjoni f'Kastilja b'rabta ma' dan l-iskandlu.

Ilbierah stess, il-Kap tal-Partit Nazzjonalista Simon Busuttil sostna li Muscat ilu mill-anqas sena jaf b'dawn l-allegazzjonijiet għax sena ilu, waqt laqgħa tal-Kumitat tas-Sigurtà, il-Kap tal-Oppożizzjoni qajjem il-każ u qal li kien hemm xnigħat dwar tbaġġis fil-hruġ tal-visas mediċi.

Il-Partit Nazzjonalista nnota kif madanakollu, fi stqarrija waħda, Muscat irnexxielu jgħiddeh lilu nnifso darbejn: l-ewwel qal li ma kien jaf b'xejn dwar dan l-iskandlu, iżda fis-sentenza ta' wara, qal li kien jaf u li għadda l-affarijiet għand il-Pulizija.

Dan meta, ma' The Malta Independent on Sunday, il-Ministru tas-Saħħa Chris Fearnie qal li kien is-Segretarju Permanenti tal-Ministeru tas-Saħħa li

għadda l-każ għand il-Pulizija – jiġifieri mhux il-Prim Ministru.

Il-Partit Nazzjonalista sostna li dan hu skandlu kbir għax, bħal hafna skandli oħrajn f'din il-legiżlatura, inhadem f'Kastilja minn persuna li hu qrib hafna ta' Chief of Staff tal-Prim Ministru Keith Schembri u tal-Ministru Konrad Mizzi, li nqabdu li fethu kumpaniji sigrieti fil-Panama.

Fid-dawl ta' dawn l-iżviluppi, bl-involvement issa anke tal-Prim Ministru Muscat, il-Kap tal-Partit Nazzjonalista Simon Busuttil sejjah laqgħa tal-Grupp Parlamentari għal għada t-Tlieta biex matulha jiġu diskussi dawn l-abhar żviluppi f'sensiela ta' skandli ta' korruzzjoni f'Kastilja, temmet tgħid l-istqarrija.

**Ikkummenta**

<http://netnews.com.mt/2016/08/29/fl-iskandlu-tal-visas-medi-ci-lil-libjani-muscat-jitfixkel-fil-gideb-tiegħu-stess-il-pn/>

Translated via Google translate<sup>23</sup>:

https://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=auto&tl=en&u=http%3A%2F%2Fnetnews.com.mt%2F2016%2F08%2F29%2Ff1-iskandlu-tal-visas-medici-lil-libjani-muscat-jitfixkel-fil-gideb-tieghe-stess-il-pn%2F

Charlemagne: A de... Democracy: Let the... European elections... 5 hours ago... By Member States... Europe of freedom... Karl Marx and Relig... Did Karl Marx actual... CruzSancta: Kiko A... Vedivi - Pricing Qu... The Oath of the Kn...

http://netnews.com.mt/2016/08/29/f1-iskandlu-tal-visas-medici-lil-libjani-muscat-jit

From: Detect language To: English

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LOCAL

**In scandal medical visas to Libyans, Muscat confused in his own lies - PN**

Monday, 29 August 2016

**NET**  
NET Newsroom

In daghdigha to defend those who are accused of corruption in the issuing of visas to Libyan medical, Prime Minister Joseph Muscat ended confused in his own lies.

This PN said in a statement after yesterday, the newspaper The Malta Independent on Sunday revealed as Muscat was aware of allegations of corruption Castille connection with this scandal.

Yesterday itself, the Head of the Nationalist Party Simon Busuttil said that Muscat has at least one year knows these allegations because years ago, during a meeting of the Security Committee, the Leader of the Opposition raised the case and said that there were rumors about tampering issue medical visas.

The Nationalist Party as noted however, in one statement, Muscat got belies himself twice: first said he knew about this scandal free, but in the next sentence, said he knew and last things at the police.

This is when, with The Malta Independent on Sunday, the Health Minister Chris Fearne said it was the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health passed the case at the Police - that is not the Prime Minister.

The Nationalist Party said that this scandal is great because, like many other scandals in the legislature, Castille constructed by a person who is very close of the Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister and Minister Keith Schembri Konrad Mizzi, apprehended that opened secret companies in Panama.

In light of these developments, involving now even the Prime Minister Muscat, the leader of the Nationalist Party Simon Busuttil called a meeting of the Parliamentary Group on Tuesday to discuss recent developments a series of scandals of corruption Castille, says the statement ended.

**MOST FOLLOWED**

**Simon Schembri resume smiling**

**PHOTOS: Owners of restaurants in the Waterfront irritated the way nehhehwom tables**

**Maltese sent eight years in prison after a fraud of € 100 million in the UK**

**TAGS**

adrian Delia , nationalist party , court , joseph muscat , Simon Busuttil , local football , incident , police , malta , Konrad Mizzi , gozo , Keith schembri , egrant , corruption , Dasbus Camana Galizia , Panama , netnews

<sup>23</sup><https://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=auto&tl=en&u=http%3A%2F%2Fnetnews.com.mt%2F2016%2F08%2F29%2Ff1-iskandlu-tal-visas-medici-lil-libjani-muscat-jitfixkel-fil-gideb-tieghe-stess-il-pn%2F>

## 2.11 Watch: PN parliamentary group discusses Libyan medical visas scandal<sup>24</sup>

Main point: Opposition parliamentary group meets to “discuss the prevailing situation with regard to the latest political storm that has hit the government.”

Allegations:

- a) unless the government takes action on the latest controversy, it would be a confirmation that Castille is a nest of corruption.
- b) the PN said Prime Minister Dr Joseph Muscat knew all about the scandal long before it was broken by the media as PN leader Simon Busuttil had told the PM about it last year.
- c) “the visa scandal was discussed as were the links there could be with the Office of the Prime Minister.”

Published by the Independent 2016-08-30 at 19:12

### Watch: PN parliamentary group discusses Libyan medical visas scandal



The medical visas scandal exposed by The Malta Independent on Sunday over the past weeks was the subject of a discussion within the Nationalist Party parliamentary group that took place this afternoon, with an MP saying afterwards that unless the government takes action on the latest controversy, it would be a confirmation that Castille is a nest of corruption.

Nationalist MPs who spoke to the media at the end of the meeting said the sole purpose of the meeting was for the party to discuss the prevailing situation with regard to the latest political storm that has hit the government.

Speaking to journalists, PN MP Claudio Grech said would not go into what was discussed, while Charlo Bonnici said that the visa scandal wasn't the only thing they spoke about. When asked by PL media of his thoughts about Dr Busuttil being “weak”, he said he has “no time for fairy tales.”

Antoine Borg and George Pullicino left the building together with Mr Borg saying that the visa scandal was discussed as were the links there could be with the Office of the Prime Minister. Mr Pullicino added that if the government doesn't take any

action over this case, it is a confirmation that Castille is a nest for corruption.

TMIS published receipts which purport to show that €35,000 in payments were made to Health Ministry employee Neville Gafa by a Libyan middleman supposedly in exchange for medical visas for Libyan citizens who were victims of conflict, visas which however were not issued.

In a statement yesterday, the PN said Prime Minister Dr Joseph Muscat knew all about the scandal long before it was broken by the media as PN leader Simon Busuttil had told the PM about it last year.

Mr Gafa is denying all allegations.

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2016-08-30/local-news/Watch-PN-parliamentary-committee-discusses-Libyan-visa-scandal-members-give-full-support-to-leader-6736163110>

## 2.12 Medical visas: Libyan middleman's family threatened for second time in a week<sup>25</sup>

Main point: Libyan middleman's family threatened for second time in a week.

Allegations:

- a) Ben Nasan received sms "Khaled I gave you a warning and this is your last chance if you send any information or present any files or any recordings about me or [name withheld] or [name withheld] or [name withheld] or anyone from the staff of visa unit you will never see your children again."
- b) At around 11pm on Thursday evening, he had noticed four missed calls on his phone from a number with which he was not familiar. The report goes on to explain how he found the phone belonging to the SMS number switched off when he tried to return the call.
- c) The phone number was supplied to the police and this newspaper also tried calling it several times, but our calls were always diverted to voicemail.
- d) says this was the second threat against Ben Nasan's family that week. In another report to the police, filed on the next Wednesday morning, Ben Nasan claimed his children had been threatened. In the earlier report, Mr Ben Nasan received a call on his mobile phone on the Tuesday night from a number appearing as 'unknown'. The caller, speaking in Maltese, told Mr Ben Nasan: "[If] you are going to say something and give documents and video, you can forget your children."
- e) According to his report filed with the police on Friday, which has been seen by this newspaper, Ben Nasan asked the anonymous caller: "What do you mean 'forget them'," to which the caller replied, "God forgive them [*Alla jahfrilhom*]."
- f) Ben Nasan then asked the unknown caller whether this was a threat and was given the reply: "Take it as you will. Before you get home [from the programme EXODUS, which was meant to be aired live] forget your children."

Published by the Independent on 2016-09-04 at 10:30 am

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<sup>25</sup> <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2016-09-04/local-news/Medical-visas-Libyan-middleman-s-family-threatened-for-second-time-in-a-week-6736163298>

## Medical visas: Libyan middleman's family threatened for second time in a week



The Libyan national who had served as a middleman in the medical visas racket claims that his children have been threatened for the second time this week.

A report to the police, filed by Khaled Ben Nasan at Swieqi police station on Friday morning, alleges that he received an SMS, in English, on Thursday night that read: "Khaled I gave you a warning and this is your last chance if you send any information or present any files or any recordings about me or [name withheld] or [name withheld] or [name withheld] or anyone from the staff of visa unit you will never see your children again."

In his report, Mr Ben Nasan explains how, at around 11pm on Thursday evening, he had noticed four missed calls on his phone from a number with which he was not familiar. The report goes on to explain how he found the phone belonging to the SMS number switched off when he tried to return the call.

The phone number was supplied to the police and this newspaper also tried calling it several times, but our calls were always diverted to voicemail.

Mr Ben Nasan says this was the second threat against his family he has received this week. In another report to the police, filed on Wednesday morning at St

Julian's police station, Mr Ben Nasan claimed to have had his children threatened. In the earlier report, Mr Ben Nasan said that he received a call on his mobile phone at 9.10pm on Tuesday night from a number appearing as 'unknown'.

The caller, speaking in Maltese, told Mr Ben Nasan: "[If] you are going to say something and give documents and video, you can forget your children."

According to his report filed with the police on Friday, which has been seen by this newspaper, Mr Ben Nasan asked the anonymous caller: "What do you mean 'forget them'," to which the caller replied "God forgive them [*Alla jahfrithom*]."

Mr Ben Nasan then asked the unknown caller whether this was a threat and was given the reply: "Take it as you will. Before you get home [from the programme, which was meant to be aired live] forget your children."

Mr Ben Nasan has been at the epicentre of the medical visas scandal since it was recently revealed how he had written to former Health Minister Konrad Mizzi – as well as his successor Chris Fearn – to allege how a member of the Ministry's staff, Neville Gafa, had skipped off with close to €38,000 in fees that Libyans allege they paid for the issuance of medical visas.

The visas from that batch of applicants had not been granted and, as alleged by Mr Ben Nasan, the passports had been returned without the visas or the visa 'fees'.

Mr Gafa has since denied any wrongdoing or having received any funds apart from his government salary, despite the fact that this newsroom has published transcripts of Viber message conversations and receipts for the payment of 'fees' made by Libyan would-be patients.

It had been known since last Saturday that more details were to emerge from a television programme hosted by Ivan Grech Mintoff, the leader of the *Alleanza Bida* political party and who has served as an interlocutor for the long and winding story, although it had never been publically stated that Mr Ben Nasan was to be interviewed.

This newspaper is informed that the programme was cancelled on account of other considerations, and that it will be broadcast shortly on one medium or another.

## 2.13 Medical visa scandal: Busuttil calls on authorities to provide protection to Libyan whistleblower<sup>26</sup>

Main Point: Opposition Leader calls on authorities to provide protection to Libyan whistle blower.

Allegations:

- a) "The whistle blower has allegedly received two threats against him and his family this week. Dr Busuttil said that should anything happen to this individual, he will be holding the authorities personally responsible."
- b) Opposition Leader Simon Busuttil has called on the relevant authorities, namely the Attorney General and the Police Commissioner to immediately provide protection to the Libyan medical visa whistle blower. " in view of the sensitive information he claims to have."
- c) Dr Busuttil said that instead of providing protection, the whistle blower is receiving more scrutiny while the police have not taken any action.
- d) "There is a clear link between corruption and Castille, the OPM," he said.
- e) These are not just issues of corruption, but an issue of national security, he continued.

Published by the Independent on 2016-09-04 at 10:57 am.

### Medical visa scandal: Busuttil calls on authorities to provide protection to Libyan whistleblower



Opposition Leader Simon Busuttil has called on the relevant authorities, namely the Attorney General and the Police Commissioner to immediately provide protection to the Libyan medical visa whistleblower.

The whistleblower has allegedly received two threats against him and his family this week. Dr Busuttil said that should anything happen to this individual, he will be holding the authorities personally responsible.

"There is a Libyan saying he has information about a scandal tied to the issuing of medical visas – for injured Libyans to come to Malta and receive health care. This information needs to be seriously scrutinised," he said in a radio interview this morning.

It has been alleged that Neville Gafa, who worked at the Office of the Prime Minister, received bribes for the issuing of medical visas. The allegation follows that the visas were actually issued to individuals bribing Mr Gafa rather than the injured Libyan's they were intended for. It has been alleged that Mr Gafa has

profited by at least €38,000 over the racket.

*The Malta Independent on Sunday* broke the story regarding the second threat in one week. A police report was filed by the Libyan national in an effort to gain protection.

In the report to the police, filed by Khaled Ben Nasan at Swieqi police station on Friday morning, it was alleged that he received an SMS, in English, on Thursday night that read: "Khaled I gave you a warning and this is your last chance if you send any information or present any files or any recordings about me or [name withheld] or [name withheld] or [name withheld] or anyone from the staff of visa unit you will never see your children again."

Dr Busuttil said that instead of providing protection, the whistleblower is receiving more scrutiny while the police have not taken any action.

"There is a clear link between corruption and Castille, the OPM," he said.

He called on the Attorney General and the Police Commissioner to immediately provide protection to this witness, in view of the sensitive information he claims to have.

"Do not let this situation deteriorate. If you do not provide protection and something happens to this man, I will hold you [authorities] personally responsible."

These are not just issues of corruption, but an issue of national security, he continued.

Turning to Air Malta, Dr Busuttil expressed solidarity with the national airline's workers because of the current state of uncertainty. Government is currently in talks with Alitalia, following a Memorandum of Understanding, over the possibility of bringing in the latter as a strategic partner.

Air Malta has been experiencing serious financial difficulty for a number of years. Under EU state aid rules, the government is unable to inject any cash into the airline in order to bring it back on solid ground.

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2016-09-04/local-news/Medical-visa-scandal-Busuttil-calls-on-authorities-to-provide-protection-to-Libyan-whistleblower-6736163327>

“The government’s assertion that the only way forward for Air Malta is to bring in a foreign partner is wrong. We have proposed an alternative, but nobody is listening. As a country, we will be losing control of a company that connects us with the rest of the world. We the PN feel that there is another way forward for Air Malta. I have ordered for this to be presented in detail over the coming days.

“Instead of losing control of Air Malta by selling it to foreigners, we propose opening up the airline to private local investment, keeping Air Malta truly Maltese.”

Addressing public sentiment that voting for either main stream party is a choice between “the lesser of two evils,” Dr Busuttil said he does not want this to be the case and is working for the PN to be a real and viable alternative.

He spoke of the raising of standards and extensive internal work in order to carry this out.

“The PN is not just there to criticise, but wants to carry out the most fundamental goal of pushing Malta forward in the right direction.”

He slammed the government for claiming to be a socialist government that belongs to the people – he said that it is a select few who are benefitting from decisions taken by the current administration.

#### **Government reacts**

In reaction to Dr Busuttil’s interview this morning, the Labour Party (PL) have slammed the Opposition Leader for claiming that the month of September belongs to the Nationalist Party (PN).

The PN will be hosting their annual Independence Day celebrations. In light of the statement made by Dr Busuttil, the PL said that this is proof of a tribal and elitist mentality, symptomatic of the establishment the PN forms part of.

“The Maltese and Gozitan population have long rejected this style of politics. The facts clearly show that every month on the calendar, September included, belong to all Malta and Gozo.

“This is so because:

“Moody’s, the credit ratings agency have confirmed the A3 rating for Malta, had have also confirmed the positive and stable economic outlook. Moody’s said that Malta’s economy is strong, especially in the light of high levels of competitiveness.

“The Planning Authority (PA) approved a restoration application for St Luke’s Hospital years after it was left to deteriorate by the previous government, all the while Mater Dei did not host enough beds. This is an important health investment project worth €200 million that also involved Karen Grech Hospital and the Gozo General Hospital.

“Investment worth €9 million for a newly built St. Thomas Hospital, generating 40 new jobs and will also enter a partnership with the government in order to reduce waiting lists for operations.

Malta broke another record in the battle against unemployment: for the second month running Malta has retained its position of lowest unemployment rates in the EU.

“For the first time, a decision was taken to regulate the fish farming sector, with the aim to protect the water quality of the sea.

“In light of this, September belongs to all Maltese and Gozitans, not just of the PN as was said by Opposition Leader Simon Busuttil,” a press release issued today by the PL said.

## 2.14 Solidarity with David Lindsay<sup>27</sup>

Main points/ Allegations:

The editor of the Malta Independent on Sunday is being sued for criminal libel for articles published about the Libya visa scam. Criminal libel that the current Police Commissioner has requested a prison term.

Neville Gafa's legal counsel making this request is former Police Commissioner, Peter Paul Zammit.

The current Police Commissioner appears to be in cahoots with the accused in their attempt to send a newspaper editor to prison.

The Police, in breach of professional secrecy, leaked that Grech Mintoff was going to give the police information about this case.

Grech Mintoff is alleging that a number of Libyans want to come to Malta to testify about the visa scams but that the government is hindering them by refusing to issue them a visa.

"This case will make history once it gets going."

The Manager of the Malta Independent, accuses the government of using the police to silence the press.

Mr Peter Paul Zammit, who is appearing in this case for Neville Gafa', has a direct conflict of interest, first because he is a legal consultant to the government and secondly, it is important to establish, whether, when he was Commissioner of Police, he investigated or not allegations of visa corruption that the Labour Media was publishing against Ms Marisa Farrugia. These stories were being published in the Labour press when Mr Zammit was Commissioner of Police. His position in this case constitutes what is clearly a direct conflict of interest.

Published by the Independent on 2016-10-17 at 07:58

### Solidarity with David Lindsay

The editor of the Malta Independent on Sunday, David Lindsay, is being sued for criminal libel in connection with the news item he published about the Libya visa scam. While I have no problem with editors being sued for publishing untruths, there are different types of libel. Even in Malta, we have both what is being termed as "standard libel" and "criminal libel". Normally, individuals sue only for pecuniary compensation. In this case, the editor is being sued for criminal libel, which means that the Police Commissioner has been asked to request the stiffest penalty, prison, should David Lindsay be found guilty. To add insult to injury, the person making this request on behalf of Mr Neville Gafa' is former Police Commissioner, Peter Paul Zammit.

This situation raises a number of legitimate questions. Why is Mr Neville Gafa' suing only David Lindsay and not also the person who broke the story who happens to be none other than *Alleanza Bidla's* leader, Ivan Grech Mintoff? Is it not the duty of the media, in any free European state, to report any serious allegations coming from a reliable source? In this case, the source of these reports is well known – Mr Ivan Grech Mintoff. But instead of investigating these allegations, the Police Commissioner is now appearing as being in cahoots with Gafa' and his legal representative, in an attempt to send a newspaper editor to prison. The fact is that Mr Neville Gafa' has cold feet and is not prepared to also sue Mr Grech Mintoff. This only goes to prove that what Mr Grech Mintoff says is true and that the editor published nothing but the truth.

It is a known fact that the Police, in clear breach of professional secrecy, leaked particulars concerning Mr Ivan Grech Mintoff to Malta Today. Malta Today broke the news that Mr Grech Mintoff was going to the depot to give the police information about this case. This piece of news was published well before the meeting had taken place and the only persons who knew about this meeting were only Mr Grech Mintoff and the Police. This is extremely serious as well as dangerous. I have seen documents and messages related to this case. Some of these documents have already appeared in the press.

But there is another important development, which Mr Lindsay could consider a

blessing in disguise. Mr Grech Mintoff is alleging that a number of Libyans want to come to Malta to testify about the visa scams but that the government is hindering them by refusing to issue them a visa. Since the Police started criminal proceedings, these individuals should be named as witnesses. In theory, the government cannot stop them from coming or depositing their testimonies, including sworn written affidavits in Court. This case will make history once it gets going, which brings me to two other important points.

The first is the message that Pierre Portelli, Managing Director of the Malta Independent, wrote on his Facebook page. He accuses the government that despite its stand in favour of civil liberties, it turns to the Police to silence the Press. In Europe, these tactics are today associated with totalitarian States.

I would remind the government that civil liberties are worthless when accompanied by oppressive policies. The first country to make transgender operations possible was Germany – to be precise, the Weimar Republic. But today it is not remembered for the introduction of such an advanced concept of civil liberty but for being the harbinger of the extreme right coming to power. When the Nazis took power, very few wept for the loss of democracy since the previous system in Germany was only democratic in name while the country suffered from a running inflation.

This government should be on its guard for the way those who are very close to it use the police to achieve their own political ends. The impression that is being conveyed is that behind these ends lie financial and oil interests.

There are other historical precedents that have experienced the danger in adopting such methods. When, for sinister motives, a democracy starts resorting to the Police to silence the opposition, democracy is in trouble. In the minds of many, democracy begins to appear as an alternative political system. Consequentially, the history of brutal regimes will start to be revised and they will once again appeal to society.

Then there is the issue of whether Mr Peter Paul Zammit, who is appearing in this case for Neville Gafa', has a direct conflict of interest, first because he is a legal consultant to the government and secondly, it is important to establish, whether,

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2016-10-17/blogs-opinions/Solidarity-with-David-Lindsay-6736165305>

when he was Commissioner of Police, he investigated or not allegations of visa corruption that the Labour Media was publishing against Ms Marisa Farrugia. These stories were being published in the Labour press when Mr Zammit was Commissioner of Police. His position in this case constitutes what is clearly a direct conflict of interest. I am interested to know what is the stand of the Chamber of Advocates about this point.

Hence, Mr Lindsay should not fear. I am certain that he will prove his story and I am sure that Mr Ivan Grech Mintoff will produce all the necessary evidence to support what The Malta Independent on Sunday has published, if he is asked to appear as witness. In fact, the whole case is revolving more around legal technicality rather than around the truth of the published facts. The pretext here is that the Malta Independent failed to publish a proper right of reply, because it included the right of reply as part of an article and was not published as a standalone piece. I find this argument by Mr Gafa' and his legal representative extremely shallow. For this reason, I agree wholeheartedly with those who are arguing that this is purely a pretext to bully the Malta Independent into silence.

The point that is being overlooked here is that the law of criminal libel is very tricky. Those who resort to it should be sure of their facts. They should not rush in, eager to claim their pound of flesh. In their eagerness to prosecute the free press, those resorting to these tactics do not realize that the inherent law of criminal libel is a double-edged sword, which is not to be found in standard libel cases.

If Mr. Lindsay proves his case and therefore what he stated is the truth, the matter should not end there. One expects that criminal charges will be instituted against Neville Gafa' for having lodged a false report and wasting precious court time. These charges too carry a prison sentence.

## 2.15 Alleged medical visas racket: Neville Gafà sues newspaper, Simon Busuttil for libel<sup>28</sup>

Main points / Allegations:

Legal counsel says story based on unfounded allegations and outright lies.

Neville Gafà will be suing The Malta Independent on Sunday, opposition leader Simon Busuttil and “other politicians” following allegations that he netted up to €150,000 a month in medical visas scam.

The Police this week said that it did not find any evidence pointing towards criminal action by Gafà.

In a letter to the editor of the Malta Independent Gafà’s lawyer Peter Paul Zammit reiterated that Gafà “never received any monies in any way or manner” aside from his government salary.

“The persons concerned were not requested to pay anything, not even the €66 visa fee which was waived by the Maltese government,” Gafà said.

“No fees or charges were levied”

“The article gives the impression that [Gafà] went to collect monies in Libya from injured persons, when if anything it is the alleged middleman, who had no legal or statutory rights to enter into these government to government negotiations, who results from the same article as having collected monies on the unfounded pretext of having Libyan or Maltese clearance.”

The Nationalist Party say that the police investigation was farcical. PN deputy leader Beppe Fenech Adami said the police investigation was intended to kill off the story and to discredit the source.

Grech Mintoff, who claimed to be aware of mobile chats and voice recordings, has not approached the Police. At the same time, he claimed that what is known so far is “just the tip of the iceberg”.

Published by Malta Today on 26 August 2016 at 1:58 pm

### **Alleged medical visas racket: Neville Gafa sues newspaper, Simon Busuttil for libel**

Lawyer says newspaper based its story ‘on unfounded allegations and outright lies and hiding behind alleged anonymous high ranking Libyan secret service officer’



Health Ministry employee Neville Gafa will be suing The Malta Independent on Sunday, Opposition leader Simon Busuttil and “other politicians” following allegations that he netted up to €150,000 a month in medical visas scam.

The Police this week said that it did not find any evidence pointing towards criminal action by Gafa.

In a letter to the editor of the Malta Independent, and copied to media outlets, Gafa’s lawyer Peter Paul Zammit reiterated that Gafa “never received any monies in any way or manner” aside from his government salary.

The Malta Independent claimed that Gafa “personally made between €2 million and €3 million from the racket since it began operating in 2014”. Gafa suspended himself from duties pending police investigations.

The allegations were raised by Libyan national Khaled Ben Nasan, a businessmen who last year set up an import-export company called Aurum Tribus. In a letter to the Ministry for Health last April, Ben Nasan alleged that Gafa had started a new medical visa application process through which Libyans would send over their passports in advance and Gafa would charge varying prices.

Gafa accused the author of the newspaper article “based his story on unfounded allegations and outright lies and hiding behind alleged anonymous high ranking Libyan secret service officer”.

Gafa argued in his letter that the Maltese government had signed a memorandum of understanding with the Libyan Authorities to help in providing medical assistance to persons injured in this conflict.

“The person who were to be provided this service were to be identified by the Libyan authorities and cleared from their end, and subsequently reviewed by the local Secret Service, Police, Immigration and medical departments and services. The persons concerned were not requested to pay anything, not even the €66 visa fee which was waived by the Maltese government,” Gafa said.

“All other expenses as regard the patient were entered into a government account as debt to be subsequently settled by the Libyan authorities. No fees or charges were levied by myself or the respective departments for the vetting of the persons concerned.”

Gafa said that all due diligence effected “included, and actually commenced from the Libyan secret service which therefore gives lie to the source quoted by the journalist concerned”.

“The article gives the impression that [Gafa] went to collect monies in Libya from injured persons, when if anything it is the alleged middleman, who had no legal or statutory rights to enter into these government to government negotiations, who results from the same article as having collected monies on the unfounded pretext

<sup>28</sup>[https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/68958/alleged\\_medical\\_visas\\_racket\\_neville\\_gafa\\_sues\\_newspaper\\_simon\\_busuttil\\_for\\_libel#.WyN4XmZ7HMJ](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/68958/alleged_medical_visas_racket_neville_gafa_sues_newspaper_simon_busuttil_for_libel#.WyN4XmZ7HMJ)

of having Libyan or Maltese clearance.”

The letter goes on to add that Malta has since provide 600 medical services, some of them major and life threatening cases, to those that have been filtered through the system.

Former MEP hopeful Ivan Grech Mintoff, who according to Gafa’s lawyer “acted as interlocutor to the anonymous secret service source”, this morning [held a press conference](#) to express concern over the alleged racket and how it impact Malta’s reputation.

Grech Mintoff, who claimed to be aware of mobile chats and voice recordings, has not approached the Police. At the same time, he claimed that what is known so far is “just the tip of the iceberg”.

The Nationalist Party yesterday lashed out at the police for what it claimed was “a farcical” investigation. PN deputy leader Beppe Fenech Adami said that the police investigation was clearly intended to kill off the story and to discredit the Libyan businessman.

## 2.16 Government official was netting up to €150,000 a month in medical visas scam<sup>29</sup>

### Main points / Allegations:

Government official was netting up to €150,000 a month in medical visas scam.

Neville Gafà, worked at the Office of the Prime Minister and later at the Health Ministry – personally made between €2 million and €3 million from the racket since it began operating in 2014.

Libyans who received medical visas were not always sick or injured. Persons getting visas have not been properly vetted, and criminals have been granted access to Europe through Malta issued Schengen visas. High ranking Libyan sources claim that many of the visas intended for Libyans genuinely injured in hostilities instead went to criminals and persons willing to pay for visas to Malta.

Injured persons did not get visas if they could not pay and children, and adults, have died because they couldn't get a visa to get treatment.

Gafà was employed initially at the Office of the Prime Minister and was later transferred to the Health Ministry. After that he was reportedly transferred to the Foundation for Medical Services. And now Gafà is back at OPM.

It was recently reported how Mr Gafà had pocketed €38,000 in visa 'fees' from Libyan nationals and refused to return the money after having purchased a new BMW with the funds.

The Libyans were allegedly being charged €2,500 per visa and an additional €100 per patient.

Published by the Malta Independent on 2016-08-21 at 11:40

### Government official was netting up to €150,000 a month in medical visas scam



The racket involving medical visas for injured Libyans saw a Maltese government official netting up to €150,000 a month, according to high-ranking Libyan sources that came forward this week to speak with this newspaper in the wake of recent media reports.

The official, Neville Gafà, worked at the Office of the Prime Minister and later at the Health Ministry – personally made between €2 million and €3 million from the racket since it began operating in 2014.



Neville Gafà

Worse still, the racket was such that it was not even injured Libyans who were always the recipients of the visas. So much so that those who received the visas to come to Malta under the guise of an agreement between Malta and Libya to treat Libyans injured in hostilities were people who had not been properly vetted and count among their ranks criminals who have been granted access to Europe through Malta's Schengen Zone membership.

Expressing no small amount of angst over the state of affairs, high ranking Libyan sources speaking with this newspaper also claim that many of the visas intended for Libyans genuinely injured in hostilities instead went to criminals and others who were willing to fork out thousands of euros for visas to Malta.

A senior Libyan security source told this newspaper on condition of anonymity considering the sensitivity of the situation in the country, "They [the perpetrators of the racket] stole money from injured children who never got their visas to be treated in Malta. Some of those children, and adults, have died in the meantime because they did not get the treatment.

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2016-08-21/local-news/Government-official-was-netting-up-to-150-000-a-month-in-medical-visas-scam-6736162687>

"In contrast, the Italians come for the injured themselves and take them to Italy for treatment with no money asked for. Malta asks us for money and then we never get the visas... and in this latest case they did not even get their money back, let alone the visas to come to Malta for life-saving treatment."

The source's reference to 'this latest case' refers to the €38,000 in 'fees' for some 40 visas that government official Neville Gafà allegedly made off with when the plug was finally pulled on the racket. And although recent media reports have implicated Gafà as the scam's main fixer, this was allegedly merely the very tip of the iceberg.

Gafà was employed at the Office of the Prime Minister and was later transferred to the Health Ministry. Gafà's Facebook profile, which is replete with rabid anti-Nationalist Party posts, lists both former positions. After that, and presumably when news of his machinations came to light, he was reportedly transferred to the Foundation for Medical Services.

Libyan security sources speaking with this newspaper, through interlocutor Ivan Grech Mintoff, who also leads the *Alleanza Bidla* political party, this week were incensed and claim that many, including children, actually died waiting for their visas, while others never got their visas at all – visas that instead went to those willing to fork out thousands of euros for them.

Libyan security services sources speaking with this newspaper have made several other accusations, which this newspaper will continue to follow up.

It was recently reported how Mr Gafà had pocketed €38,000 in visa 'fees' from Libyan nationals and refused to return the money after having purchased a new BMW with the funds. The Libyans were allegedly being charged €2,500 per visa and an additional €100 per patient.

The funds, according to sources well acquainted with the racket speaking with this newspaper, were tucked into passports awaiting their visa stamps and when efforts by a Syrian middleman, Khaled Ben Nasan, to recoup the funds and passports were made, the passports were eventually returned – minus the cash. The incident led Mr Ben Nasan to have his lawyer write to then health minister Konrad Mizzi

in a still unsuccessful attempt to recover the funds.

But sources speaking to this newspaper from Libya are outraged not only over the missing funds, but over the fact that the medical visas were not going to those truly in need but, rather, to those who were willing and able to pay for them.

## 2.17 Dalli reacts as former Commissioner Rizzo says he was to have been accused of knowing about trading in influence<sup>30</sup>

### Main points / Allegations:

Former Police Commissioner John Rizzo told the Privileges Committee of the House of Representatives that former EU Commissioner John Dalli was to have been tried in court for knowledge about trading in influence.

Rizzo said he had wanted to conduct a final interview with Mr Dalli before arraigning him before the criminal court but was unable to do so as Dalli was abroad and had a medical certificate.

It had been agreed with the Attorney General that criminal action should be taken against Zammit and Dalli on the basis of the evidence collected by the Malta police and Olaf.

Mr Rizzo revealed that after he was ordered by the Prime Minister to step down. Rizzo was told by the Prime Minister on April 8, that he was being transferred because he had served as police commissioner for 12 years and he was replaced as police commissioner on April 12. Rizzo did not know of other reasons why he was transferred.

Mr Dalli returned in late March or early April 2013.

Rizzo's successor as police commissioner, Peter Paul Zammit, never spoke to him about the case.

The new commissioner carried out his own investigations and decided not to proceed any further.

Published in Times of Malta on 2014-07-31 at 11:49

### **Dalli reacts as former Commissioner Rizzo says he was to have been accused of knowing about trading in influence**



Former Police Commissioner John Rizzo told the Privileges Committee of the House of Representatives this morning that former EU Commissioner John Dalli was to have been accused in court of having 'known about everything' - knowing about trading in influence.

He said he had wanted to conduct a final interview with Mr Dalli before arraigning him before the criminal court, but was unable to do so as he was abroad and had presented certificates to show he could not travel as he was sick.

Mr Rizzo also revealed that after he was ordered by the Prime Minister to step down from the post of police commissioner, his successor, Peter Paul Zammit, never spoke to him about the case.

The Privileges Committee is considering a breach of privilege raised by the Prime Minister against the Leader of the Opposition. Dr Muscat felt aggrieved by claims

by the Opposition leader that there had been political interference in the police investigation of allegations against Mr Dalli. Commissioner Peter Paul Zammit had decided not to arraign Mr Dalli, saying there was insufficient evidence to proceed against him.

Mr Dalli had stepped down from the European Commission after Olaf, the anti-fraud agency, reported that he had known of trading in influence by his assistant Silvio Zammit as the EU was preparing amendments to the Tobacco Directive.

Mr Rizzo told the committee today that he was contacted by the Attorney General in October 2012 and asked whether the allegations by the EU anti-fraud agency Olaf against Mr Dalli should be investigated.

Mr Rizzo said he had read the Olaf report and decided that the case should be investigated afresh.

"We re-lived the whole process," Mr Rizzo said, saying the police interviewed all the persons involved, including the Olaf investigators. He conducted some of the interviews himself.

This was a very difficult case, he said, and the investigations were almost concluded. It was agreed with the Attorney General that criminal action should be taken against Mr Zammit and Mr Dalli.

***"Commissioner Peter Paul Zammit never spoke to me about the Dalli case- Former Commissioner Rizzo"***

Mr Dalli returned in late March or early April 2013.

Mr Rizzo said he was replaced as police commissioner on April 12 and was never able to interview Mr Dalli again. The new commissioner carried out his own investigations and decided not to proceed any further.

Replying to questions, Mr Rizzo said that among the people he had spoken to was Olaf director general Giovanni Kessler, but added that local police did not rely on the Olaf findings but had investigated all over again.

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20140731/local/dalli-reacts-as-former-commissioner-rizzo-says-he-was-to-have-been.530035>

The decision to prosecute Mr Dalli and Mr Zammit was taken on the basis of the evidence collected by the Malta police and Olaf and after two detailed meetings with lawyers at the Attorney General's office.

Mr Rizzo said Inspector Angelo Gafa had been in regular contact with Mr Dalli's lawyer regarding Mr Dalli's physical and mental condition. Mr Dalli was not considered as having escaped from Malta and was expected back. Mr Rizzo said he did not consider it ethical to proceed in Mr Dalli's absence through arraignment by summons in the months before a general election on such a major case involving alleged bribery, more so as he wished to interview Mr Dalli once more.

No politician ever spoke to him on how to proceed in this investigation, Mr Rizzo said. The pressure on the case he had spoken about in the past came from the media and from remarks made in Parliament including, among others, Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi, Dr Franco Debono who repeatedly asked what stage the investigation had reached, and Dr Alfred Sant. It was to be expected that the media and the MPs wanted to know the outcome of the case, which had led to Mr Dalli's departure from the European Commission.

Mr Rizzo said he was not informed by Mr Dalli of his return to Malta. He had known that Mr Dalli would return, but not when.

Asked by Chris Said (PN) whether he had stepped down or resigned from the post of Police Commissioner, Mr Rizzo said he was still a member of the Police Force with the rank of Former Commissioner, but he was ordered by the Prime Minister to serve as head of the Civil Protection Department. The Prime Minister had told him, on April 8, that he was being transferred because he had served as police commissioner for 12 years, which was a long time. He however also told him the police force had progressed under his command. He did not know of other reasons why he was transferred. In his hour-long meeting with Prime Minister Muscat, no particular case was discussed.

He said his successor, Commissioner Paul Zammit, never spoke to him about the Dalli case.

No further questions were asked.

#### **JOHN DALLI REACTS**

In a reaction, Mr Dalli denied knowing of any trading in influence.

"I again reject this in the most assiduous way. I reiterate that I did not know of any attempt of trading in influence. The facts that even OLAF could not refute are that I was never swayed in my resolve to push through a tobacco directive which would have been effective."

Mr Dalli said Mr Rizzo had confirmed he had not completed his investigations and had wanted to interview him again.

The former commissioner had had all the time in the world to interview him again before he left Malta and after he returned, which was before he was replaced, Mr Dalli said.

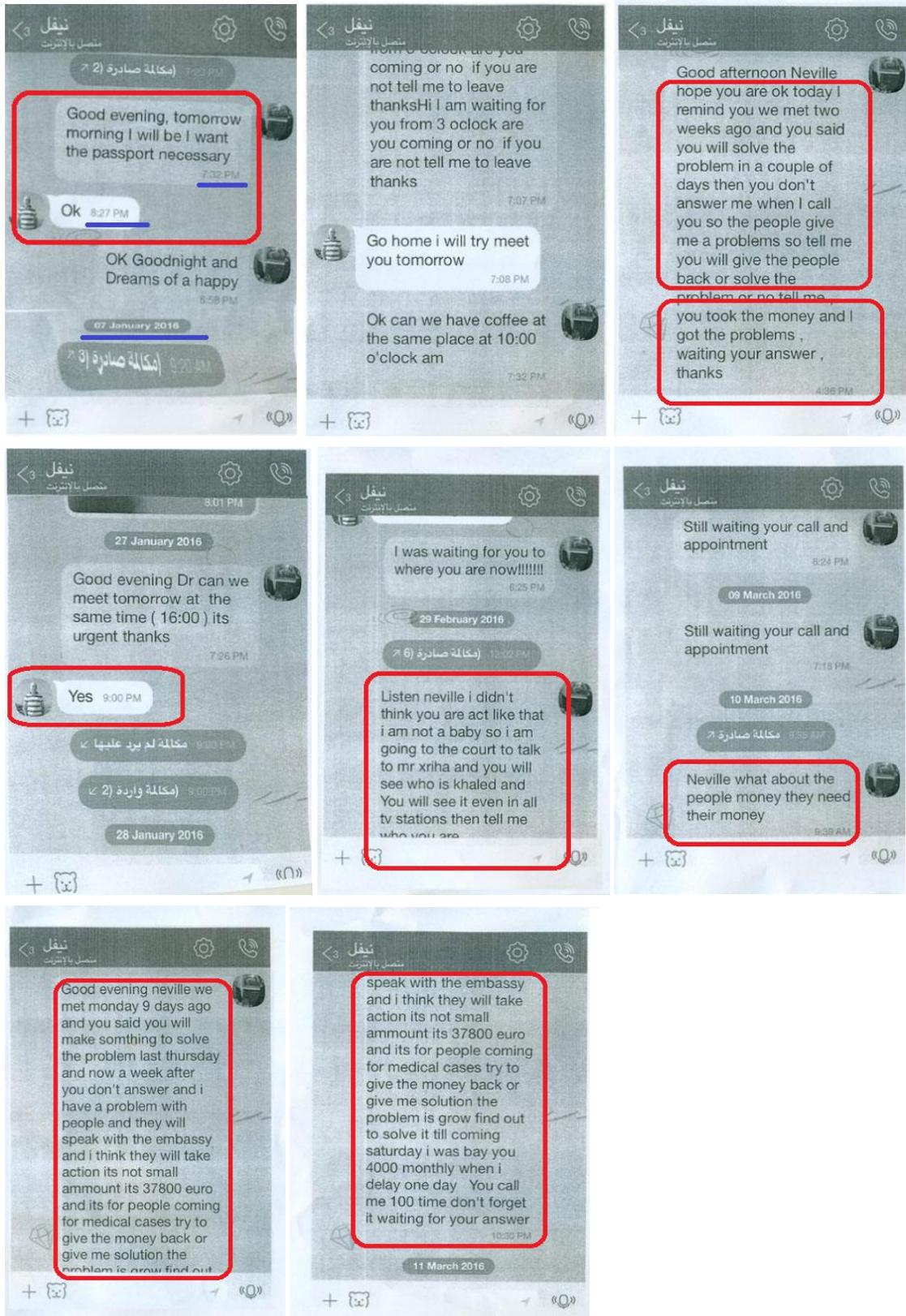
"How is Mr Rizzo making these assertions when he still had not concluded his investigation? Is this ethical behaviour on his part to publicise an opinion he held before having concluded his investigation?"

Mr Dalli said that had the police interrogated him after the leak of the OLAF report, it would have been him to ask Mr Rizzo many questions.

"I would have asked about his interview in Brussels with (Swedish Match representative) Johann Gabriellsson, when, as reported by Gabriellsson and corroborated by Cecilia Isaksson (of Swedish Match) Gabriellsson was advised by both OLAF and the Malta police to continue stating his version about the meeting of the 10 February 2012, and which, back then, they all knew was a falsity, not to disrupt 'investigations' in Malta. Mr Rizzo has not yet taken any action against Johan Gabriellsson for this serious statement," Mr Dalli said.

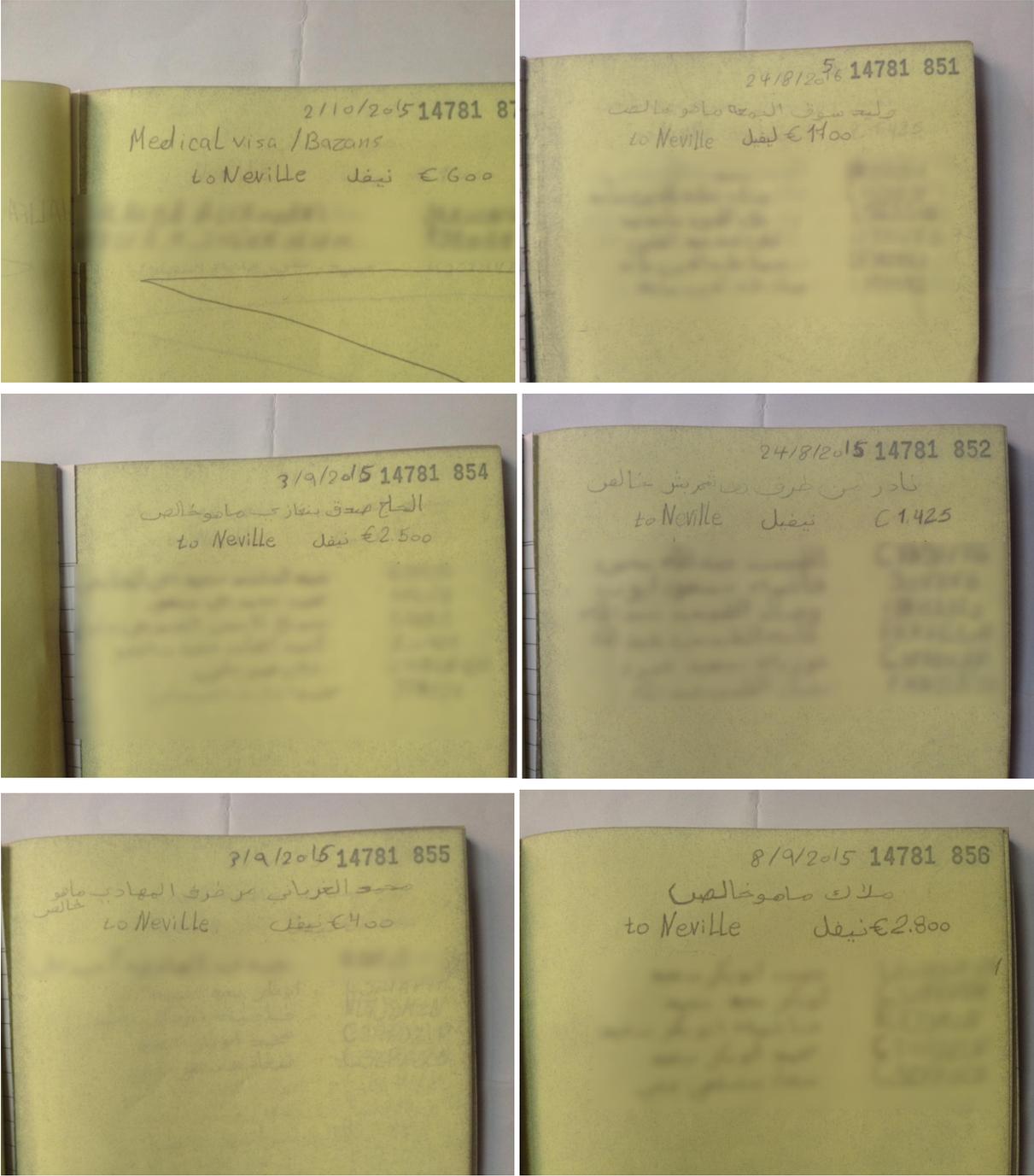
## Appendix 3 – Viber chats between Khalid Ibrahim Ben Nasan and Neville Gafà

Alleged Viber chats between Khalid Ibrahim Ben Nasan and Neville Gafà.



Appendix 4 – Receipts of alleged illicit payments for visas

Pictures of some of the receipts of allegedly illicit payments from Khalid Ibrahim Ben Nasan to Neville Gafà, including dates, names & passport numbers. Redacted to protect the individuals concerned.



18/9/2015 14781 857  
to Neville نفق €3.700

18/9/2015 14781 858  
علاء خالص أحمد  
to Neville نفق €4.600

18/9/2015 14781 860  
سمعين الرماي ماهو خالص عداد 3  
to Neville نفق €1.200

21/9/2015 14781 861  
طارق جبال الله ماهو خالص  
to Neville نفق €1.200

21/9/2015 14781 863  
أحمد إسماعيل خالص عداد 1  
to Neville نفق €450

23/9/2015 14781 864  
علي الزوي خالص عداد 2  
to Neville نفق €1.000

25/9/2015 14781 867  
محمد المقرحي مو خالص  
to Neville نفق €2.600

25/9/2015 14781 868  
فناح سيفره خالص  
to Neville نفق + €1.500

26/9/2015 14781 869  
نسيب أحمد عقيل  
to Neville نفيل €700

26/9/2015 14781 870  
نسيب أحمد عقيل  
to Neville نفيل

29/9/2015 14781 871  
نسيب أحمد عقيل  
to Neville نفيل €500

29/9/2015 14781 872  
نسيب أحمد عقيل  
to Neville Le نفيل €2,400

2/10/2015 14781 873  
نسيب أحمد عقيل  
to Neville نفيل €3,200

2/10/2015 14781 875  
حماد صديق سي  
to Neville نفيل €400

5/10/2015 14781 877  
من شعبان  
Neville نفيل €1,000

5/10/2015 14781 878  
to Neville نفيل €700



## Appendix 6 – Transcript of the Interview with the Witness Serraj Essa

Transcript of Ivan Grech Mintoff (IGM) interview with the witness Mr Serraj Adden Sasi Essa (SE) who is a general working in the international co-operation department in the office of the United Nation recognised Libyan Prime Minister. A copy of Mr Serraj Essa's ID-card can be found in appendix 5. The persons mentioned in the interview are Mr Khalid M. Ibrahim Ben Nasan(KI) and Mr Neville Gafà (NG). For clarity some additional explanations are given in brackets. The transcript also gives line numbers to ease reference.

### **Transcript of Interview with the Serraj Essa**

1. SE: Hello?
2. IGM: Hi is this Serraj please?
3. SE: Hi Mr Mintoff how are you?
4. IGM: how are you? I'm very good, very good. Yourself?
5. SE: Ya, I'm very good too.
6. IGM: OK. Can I have, Can I have two minutes of your time please? Can I... I need to ask you some questions about the Libyan visa thing... the scandal that we are talking about.
7. SE: Yes
8. IGM: Is it OK for me to ... OK can I record this conversation? Is it OK?
9. SE: OK.
10. ....
11. IGM: Can I ask you what your job is with the Libyan government, so that I can then ask you some more questions?
12. SE: Yes, I'm working in the international corporation department, in the, with the Prime Minister.
13. IGM: So, you are working in the Prime Minister's office – Prime Minister of Libya, yes?
14. SE: Prime Ministry of Libya, head quarter and I am working in the international corporation department.
15. IGM: Perfect, perfect. Can I ask you if you have had any contact at all with Maltese government or the embassy or whatever with regards to the Libyan visas to Malta?
16. SE: In the beginning we starting in... after 2011, I think 2012, we starting here with the ambassador Maltese, Maltese...
17. IGM: OK
18. SE: He is Maltese ambassador in Libya, in Tripoli...
19. IGM: OK
20. SE: ...and in that time, that time we agree with him and he is, he is help us for the treatment of people and we get the visa from Tripoli. After, when the, the, the embassy it's closed, the urgent people we, we start to get the visa from Malta, by, the, from the health ministry, in the health ministry, yes. It give us the agreement and people he get the visa in the airport.
21. IGM: Who were you contacting in the health ministry, please?
22. SE: (unintelligible) In the beginning Mr Khaled [Khaled Ibrahim], he, he is, he, he have this relation between here and there. After that, with Mr.... then the Health Minister Of Libyan, She is Fatima Al Hamrush at that time... 2012. [S]He is contact the Maltese Minister for the health and it is agreed with him to send these people to Malta and they get the visa in the airport.

23. IGM: OK
24. SE: And also ... yes.
25. IGM: Yes, go ahead... And also?
26. SE: And also, she, she its agreed in that time with him to work directly, no?
27. IGM: OK, but there was a contact. There was a contact. In, who, who would the contact from the Maltese side be for the visas to be issued?
28. SE: This in 2012. After, I think in the...I think in the 2014, or the end of 2013, it's starting to, to, who is give us the agreement for to get the visa and we send to him the list, the name of the people who is need the visa...Mr Neville, Neville, I think. He is, this man, his is work in the Maltese health ministry.
29. IGM: OK, so you are talking about Neville Gafà, is this correct?
30. SE: Yes, Neville Gafà, yes.
31. IGM: So.
32. SE: ...and, and this man I meet him twice, twice time, and after that one time I am in Malta, in that time I am in the Malta and I go to him office with Mr Khaled in that time we have twenty-two person urgent we need to, to send him in Malta to get the treatment...and we talk about, with him, and he say he is need one seven five...he is need one ...
33. IGM: ...*bil Gharbi...bil Gharbi...* [translated:"In Arabic... In Arabic"]
34. SE: ...one million seven hundred fifty, yes, Euro, and he send a plane to bring them and he give him the visa in the, in airport.
35. IGM: Wait, wait...
36. SE: At that time we were not...
37. IGM: Let me ask you again. Let me, let me, just make sure...Neville Gafà asked you for one million...
38. SE: ...yes...
39. IGM: ... seven hundred thousand...what...Euro, or...?
40. SE: One, one, one, one million seven hundred fifty thousand Euro.
41. IGM: Euro? To send a plane?
42. SE: Yeah. This is, this is, it's the [unintelligible] fee for twenty-two person.
43. IGM: For twenty-two persons he asked you for 1.7 million Euro? Do you, do you...
44. SE: One million. One million seven hundred fifty thousand...
45. IGM: OK, OK...and do you know...
46. SE: ...Euro...
47. IGM: ...what was this money for? Do you know what it was for?
48. SE: No, because that time he, he need to send him from Tripoli and after that he, he send a plane to get these people to Malta.
49. IGM: For twenty-two people?
50. SE: So...for twenty-two people, yes. And uh...we are...I talk...we're talking about...because...we... we have agreement with the...the Malta government to send the people free – that it's free.
51. IGM: So, let me, let me...
52. SE: ...and that time he said...

53. IGM: ...let me, let me confirm what you are saying. I know that there was an...there was an agreement between the Libyan government and the Maltese government under Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi that the people...
54. SE: yeah, yeah
55. IGM: ...would be sent for treatment from Libya to Malta for free. I...I know this...this agreement is in place. But Gafà in 2013-2014...is this correct(?)...was asking you for one million seven hundred and fifty thousand Euro for the treatment...
56. SE: Not, not...not 2013-2014. 2014-2015.
57. IGM: OK. 2014-2015 Neville Gafà was asking for one million seven hundred and fifty thousand Euro for the treatment of twenty-two people, yes?
58. SE: Yes. And the plane it's including.
59. IGM: ...and including the plane. Do you know what this money was for? Was it for treatment, or was it for visas, or what?
60. SE: This is for all. He need with visa and with treatment and with the plane.
61. IGM: OK. Then what happened? Did, did uh...
62. SE: I ask him the treatment...uh...the Maltese government we agree with them that it's free. It's free. In that case we...we...we leave him and we go back to him second day (or after two days or three days), ask with Mr Khaled and, uh, Mr Khaled he talk with the secretary - we need the, the, to give us the copy of the passport what we given to him.
63. IGM: Of the people?
64. SE: ...and we don't sa-...yes. I get this back – the document for the people...and...uh...we leave...we left him, you know?
65. IGM: OK. And...
66. SE: Yes, that's, that's what. Yes. After that, after that we came back to Tripoli, OK?
67. IGM: OK.
68. SE: And we talk with uh... the first of primer ministry [Deputy Prime Minister], because that...in that time he is also the ministry of the health....
69. IGM: OK.
70. SE: ...and we talking, we talking about his visit to Malta with the delegates (small delegation) and we going there to meet the health minister in Malta and we see what about – what happened, what...
71. IGM: ...why they are asking for 1.7 - one million seven hundred and fifty thousand...(?)
72. SE: For all. For the money and for the visa and for air. Everything. Because in that, in that time Mr Neville he stop it the visa. He don't give for the people, visa.
73. IGM: So, Mr Neville stopped...
74. SE: [unintelligible]
75. IGM:... stopped the visas totally for medical reasons?
76. SE: Yes, in that time he stopped it, yes.
77. IGM: OK.
78. SE: So...and I talk with the minister and we contact him by phone and I ask him our minister for health ministry he is need to visit Malta, and we write a letter – we write to him the letter from minister to minister.
79. IGM: OK... So, let me –

80. SE: In that case –
81. IGM: Yes. Go ahead.
82. SE: In that case he talk with Khaled and Khaled he asked me ...Khaled called me...and he asked me that 'Mr Neville – he need to change the letter from our ministry to him directly because the health ministry of Malta – the health ministry...maybe he's not in, he's abroad, or I don't know or he's busy or something like that.
83. IGM: OK. Let me, let me -
84. SE: We change it –
85. IGM: Let me stop a second. I want to confirm a few things. When you talk about Khaled, you mean Khaled Ibrahim , yes?
86. SE: Khaled Ibrahim, yes, because –
87. IGM: OK, just to confirm –
88. SE: Khaled Ibrahim – his cooperation between us and him.
89. IGM: So, you, the Libyan authority appointed Khaled Ibrahim is the person to talk on their behalf, yes?
90. SE: No... Yes! Because we need some... when we need some things we talk to Khaled and Khaled he contact the Maltese side...
91. IGM: OK.
92. SE: inside, and also when...
93. IGM: So, the –
94. SE: ...Maltese side is needs something it informs him and he call us and uh...
95. IGM: Clear. Clear. And, so, the minister – the Libyan minister of health - wrote to the Maltese minister of health requiring a meeting to discuss this issue and...
96. SE: Yes.
97. IGM: ...Gafà told Khaled Ibrahim that you must write to him, instead. Is this correct?
98. SE: Yes. And also we write to him, really....
99. IGM: So you write to him?
100. SE: We change the letter. We change the letter. We write to him because we need to go to sort this thing.
101. IGM: Of course, of course, of course. And then what happened?
102. SE: And...yes...and whenever he say "OK"... and also we sent to him the copy of the...the copy of the...ticket (plane), and we informed him, "the delegation - where he get the visa – in Tunisia or in the airport?". He said "No, you get it from Tunisia."
103. IGM: OK, I have seen this letter.
104. SE: And...
105. IGM: I, I confirm. I confirm this letter exists. I have seen it.
106. SE: You see it?
107. IGM: Yes, yes, I have seen it – with the names of the people including the... all the delegation with passport numbers, written to Neville Gafà have seen your tickets that you bough, as well. So, I confirm their existence. And then what happened?

108. SE: After that, I talk with the minister and he's go with the four-person delegation. I'm not with him. I'm not going with him – the other people – because true, it's technical, health technical and 2) it's finance...uh...
109. IGM: Yes.
110. SE: ...finance...department.
111. IGM: OK.
112. SE: Because it's need to go there...to go there...to talking about the medical and about the treatment and about everything and also we need to see the [unintelligible], because we sent the money there and we don't know what happened, you know? Because we sent the money. We sent two million, or something like that, and we sent in that time. Because we haven't any way to solve this because we have people there and we need to see, again, the money.
113. IGM: OK. Clear.
114. SE: And the delegation – its go to Malta and Mr Neville, it's close him mobile, no answering. Mobile, two mobiles, it's closed.
115. IGM: So, so -
116. SE: And -
117. IGM: Wait, wait, wait, wait. To clarify... So, the delegation went to Tunisia, waiting for the...
118. SE: Yes.
119. IGM: ...for the visas, and Neville Gafà – his mobiles, his two mobiles – are closed. Is this what you are saying?
120. SE: Yes, because in that time he say to give the visa in the airport.
121. IGM: OK. OK.
122. SE: In the Tunisian airport. It's mean, it's mean he sent it to...in the airport and we get it in the airport. Before we leave, maybe it's a letter or something, I don't know. And the delegation –it's go to Tunisia and it will be there and [they] call... me two times and, you know, Mr Neville, him mobile it's closed, and I contact him from Tripoli twice and he don't...it's closed. [unintelligible] closed.
123. IGM: OK. So –
124. SE: [unintelligible]
125. IGM: So, in spite, in spite Neville Gafà knows that there is a delegation from the minister of heath in Tunisia...
126. SE: Yes [unintelligible]
127. IGM: ...waiting for their, their...and he didn't even answer.
128. SE: Yes, he's know it because we talking with him in that time an also the people who was working with the ministry and who...some...one of them he's go with him, he sent to him email, yeah? He called me, I asked him sent to him email, and he sent it to him email.
129. IGM: Even emails? So, emails and mobiles – there was no response?
130. SE: Yes.
131. IGM: OK.
132. SE: After that the delegation...the delegation stayed in Tunis two days and it came back.
133. IGM: To Libya?
134. SE: Minister he came back.

135. IGM: OK.
136. SE: To Libya, yes.
137. IGM: Did you have any other contact with, with Gafà, Neville Gafà?
138. SE: No. One time I think, uh, we go with Khaled and he's need to get from him the... He gave it to him the passport for the people and he's need the visa that time, his visa, yes. And, uh, when we went to him office we meet the secretary and, it's, she say 'OK, wait for five minutes or ten minutes' and it's go to him to bring the envelope. Here envelope, all the passport inside and he don't give the people visa, and also when Khaled he talk with her he ask her "where the money?", She asked him "OK. He'll tell you 'OK'. He'll contact you after that"....
139. IGM: So he -
140. SE: ...and we leave [unintelligible]
141. IGM: So, so, so, so, just to confirm... In the envelope, Neville Gafà was given the passports, was given money, you say, uh, and...when...
142. SE: Without money.
143. IGM: Without money.
144. SE: No, uh, he give it to him the money, yeah? But when he take back he don't give him the money back.
145. IGM: OK, so, you gave Neville Gafà, or Khaled gave Neville Gafà envelopes with passports and money and whatever paperwork was required, but he only returned... he only returned the passports in the envelope but no money. Is this correct? And no visa...
146. SE: Yes, yes, yes.
147. IGM: Is this correct?
148. SE: Yeah
149. IGM: Do you know why the money was needed? What was the money for? Would you know? I'm asking. I don't know.
150. SE: No. Uh, what kind of money or, what, uh, how many, or how much, like that?
151. IGM: Well, I'm asking, what was the money for, do you think? What, why was money being asked for something if it was meant to be free?
152. SE: I don't know because, I, uh, I think he get the visa by money.
153. IGM: So, you think he was asking for money for the visas, yes?
154. SE: Yes, he get the money for the visas, yes.
155. IGM: And...
156. SE: Because he don't give the visa free; he take the money for visa, yeah.
157. IGM: So let us... give me...in the...can you remember, just for an example, in the envelope how many passports were there? One, two, three, five...? Roughly.
158. SE: More, more, no, no, more. Maybe ten or fifteen passports or something like that because I see...
159. IGM: Ten or fifteen passport. And do you know how much money...
160. SE: [unintelligible] perhaps some more...
161. IGM: ...how much money should have been given back?
162. SE: No, no, exactly, no, I, I don't know how much exactly.
163. IGM: OK, OK, you don't know if it was, uh, hundred euro or...nothing.

164. SE: No, I don't know... Ah no, for the each one?
165. IGM: Roughly...
166. SE: For the one passport?
167. IGM: For the one passport how much was being asked, do you know?
168. SE: I, talk in that time with Khaled and I asked him 'how much did you give it to him?'. He said, 'uh, from five, uh, some of them from five hundred, six hundred', like this, between, between five hundred, six hundred.
169. IGM: Per passport?
170. SE: Some of them by five...four hundred, some four hundred some of them by six hundred.
171. IGM: OK, OK. And if you are asked...you know there is a court case going on, yes, about this? If you are asked to come as a witness to what you have just told me, you are happy to come to say what you have just told me, to the judge?
172. SE: Why not? Yes
173. IGM: Excellent. OK.
174. SE: Also, also in that time, I give to Khaled my...because in that time I opened a company there and we get the residence one year, in 2015.
175. IGM: OK...
176. SE: You know? And when we renew my residence, I been in the immigration and I finish everything and we give it to Khaled I ask him, maybe, his help us give it to him. After that, we get the answer back – 'refused' from immigration.
177. IGM: Do you know why it was refused? So, so, so, let me understand... you had permission, before, to come to Malta and you wanted renewal of this permission, yes?
178. SE: No, in that time I been in Malta and I get the residence one year in Malta by my company.
179. IGM: OK...
180. SE: Because I do the company there.
181. IGM: OK.
182. SE: After, when we, when the residence is finish, I been in the immigration and we need to renew one year...
183. IGM: Renew. OK.
184. SE: ...and we...yes. We bring all of the document – what it's need for the immigration. And we pay. And we wait. After that we give it my blue paper to Mr Khaled. He ask me he give it to him, maybe he's...quick, because he know many people in the immigration.
185. IGM: Yes.
186. SE: After that I don't know. We refused. Give me the answer back after it's sent to me the letter that say 'refused'.
187. IGM: And you don't know why it was refused?
188. SE: I don't know. I -
189. IGM: Because –
190. SE: Khaled... ask him. Maybe he asked me. Maybe he's do it or something. I don't know, really. I don't know. I don't know what happened.
191. IGM: Can I ask a final question? How much, how much did you pay for renewal?

192. SE: The visa?
193. IGM: Yes.
194. SE: 250. For the...there, in the immigration I pay the [unintelligible] fee, you know?
195. IGM: Not to come in, for the, to the, uh...renewal of your residency permit?
196. SE: Yes, yes, I do everything in the immigration department.
197. IGM: In the immigration department OK OK
198. SE: Yes, but we give it to him
199. IGM: Yes, tell me
200. SE: But, we give it to him that the blue the blue paper to help us, To give us as soon as possible as soon as quick you know?
201. IGM: And it was refused. so first you are given one you ok so all your paperwork was correct to get one ...
202. SE: Yes, correct.
203. IGM: ...No problems to get one year
204. SE: They don't give us one month. He refused
205. IGM: OK
206. SE: And in the beginning they give us one year
207. IGM: So one year... you open a company here, you have residency here... and then renewal was refused. *Renewal* was refused.
208. SE: Yes. And, at that time... please... so excuse At that time we do a contract with Germany with a German company. And we start to work. And when they refused to me we lose his contract ... Maybe when we worked at contract maybe we make 2 or 3 million Euro
209. IGM: OK and you don't know why you are refused...
210. SE: Till now I do not know why, refused.

## Appendix 7 – Transcript of the Interview with the witness Ali Gamati

Transcript of Ivan Grech Mintoff (IGM) interview with the witness Mr Ali S Gamati (AJ) who is a senior police officer working on security issues. The interview was conducted via a translator (AJT). A copy of Mr Ali Gamati's ID-card can be found in appendix 5. The persons mentioned in the interview are Mr Khalid M. Ibrahim Ben Nasan(KI) and Mr Neville Gafà (NG). For clarity some additional explanations are given in brackets. The transcript also gives line numbers for ease of reference.

### **Transcript of Interview with Mr Ali Gamati**

1. AJT: Hello
2. IGM: Hi how are you?
3. AJT: I am fine Mr Ivan
4. IGM: Very clear
5. AJT: I am ready now. I will translate
6. IGM: Very good. Very good.
7. AJT: Nice place for connection
8. IGM: Excellent. Is Mr Ali Gamati with you?
9. AJT: Behind me Mr Ali
10. IGM: OK ...Hi Ali how are you? Hi Mr Ali how are you?
11. AJ: Afwan....Fine, fine thank you
12. IGM: Very good, very good. I am recording you OK? So that we have it recorded the whole conversation. Is this OK with you?
13. AJT: OK we are ready.
14. IGM: OK can Mr Ali tell us who he is and what his job is please?
15. AJT: Yes OK. Mystery Ivan... I translate now Ali for his job OK?
16. IGM: Yes
17. AJT: Ali now job in police station but now. But in manager.
18. IGM: OK
19. AJT: Hello?
20. IGM: Yes, I can hear you
21. AJT: OK. But Ali he have another job. For organisation (??)
22. IGM: Organisation of...?
23. AJT: (??)... Organisation for culture
24. IGM: For culture OK
25. AJT: Yeah
26. IGM: Tell me his connection with the Maltese government or the Maltese embassy or any connection with the Libyan visas.

27. AJT: Mister Ivan.... Ali now he tell me he have good relationship and connection with the government And we have good connect with the consulate for embassy Malta. He needs them by Mr Khaled .... Khaled Ibrahim
28. IGM: Khaled Ibrahim OK so Khaled Ibrahim was your contact here to connect
29. AJT: Yes. Yes we have good connect with Khaled Ibrahim
30. IGM: And Khaled Ibrahim was to contact with the Maltese government yes?
31. AJT: Khaled Ibrahim yeah yeah he have a contact with the Maltese government and make contact with him about people from Libya coming in Malta for health thing
32. IGM: Hello?
33. AJT: ... going in the hospital. Because we... like a same, free contract...relationship with our country.
34. IGM: OK so Khaled Ibrahim was...
35. AJT: Between Malta and Libya, yeah
36. IGM: OK so let me understand let me be, to make sure we are understanding. Khaled Ibrahim was your contact in Malta to bring people here for medical reasons. Is this correct?
37. AJT: Yeah, exactly.
38. IGM: OK. So, what would Khaled Ibrahim do on your behalf?
39. AJT:OK... Mister Ivan, Khalid Ibrahim like a small business OK? He make a small business But he have a good contact with the Libyan government and relationship for heads of Libya OK? He made a deal with the Maltese government he bring people from Libya from Tripoli from Misrata, from Ghirjani, from Benghazi to get free health thing in Maltese hospitals, OK? Khaled Ibrahim he make deal like being citizens for getting (??) from Malta to Libya
40. IGM: OK. Alright. So, he would be, so he would be contacted by yourselves or by people free hospitals in Malta, free hospital treatment in Malta. Did Mr Ali ever talk to anyone in Malta or in consulate or in Libya about these visas
41. AJT: OK I translate.... Mr Ivan in the last time (at first) Mr Ali opening with the consul in the Maltese embassy OK ...for six months...negotiation, negotiation but don't get anything now and close negotiation close everything.
42. IGM: So, let me see, let me understand. Ali for 6 months, for 6 months tried to get medical visa from the Libyan consulate, from the Maltese Consulate in Libya in Tripoli ...And he bought nothing for 6 months yes?
43. AJT: No nothing. Yes.
44. IGM: Then what happened? I need to know... I need to know in the past not now not the last 6 months ... In 2012/2013/2014... What was happening then? Did you go to the consulate for the medical visa or did you go to someone in Malta or how did it work?
45. AJT: Mr Ivan, in the last government Mr Ali Zidan President of government ...he have a deal with a president of Malta make deal like this but this deal will be stopped. Not active this deal. Khaled Ibrahim like a messenger from the government, they renew this deal. But, he no succeed on deal. He tried just tried.
46. IGM: But why did he not succeed? Do you know? What happened for it not to succeed?  
[Ali speaks in Arabic uses the words Ixahham u Neville]
47. IGM: Ali now tell you something wrong happened in medical visa. Medical visa not yet for people, for right people. He make black business.
48. IGM: OK, who?

49. AJT: Ali angry for this.
50. IGM: OK, who who? Who makes the black, the black business?
51. AJT: Ali don't know a lot this person. He is searching about this person. OK?
52. IGM: OK So, so... you said someone was making black money or black market... but who is this someone? Who is this someone? OK but I heard you or I heard him mention the name Neville. What was he meaning by the word Neville?
53. AJT: Neville he... like messenger like post from Maltese government about this deal but Ali not correctly think about Neville who make another deal. It's not him personal talk about him.
54. IGM: So, you think it's someone else not Neville is that it or do you think Neville did a bad deal?
55. AJT: Neville have a right deal but another one make another deal.  
(conversation between AJ & AJT in Arabic)
56. AJT: Ali talk about Neville, Neville he get a letter from the Libyan government to connect this deal. In the first Ali connect with Mr Neville.
57. IGM: So, Ali knows Mr Neville, he has connected with him.
58. AJT: Yeah, connected to ... Mr Neville, he have a letter from our government for this project.
59. IGM: OK and...?
60. AJT: And after some time cut connect Neville with Ali, I don't know why. He stopped the deal.
61. IGM: So, let me see if I am understanding you... Let me understand you properly. Ali was in contact with Mr Neville, about the Libyan visas yes?
62. AJT: Not signed a contract just connect
63. IGM: And Neville stop talking to Ali?
64. AJT: Neville stopped contact to Ali
65. IGM: Do you know why?
66. AJT: He don't know.
67. [AJ gets angry in Arabic and mentions flus - money in Arabic]
68. AJT: Neville... OK, OK, OK, OK, OK. Neville asked Ali... money
69. IGM: Wait let me understand. Let me understand. You are telling me if I am understanding correctly... Ally contacted Gafà directly to make a contract about the visas. Directly yes?
70. AJT: Yeah
71. IGM: And Neville asked Ali for money?
72. AJT: yeah
73. IGM: And then he stopped talking....
74. AJT: He tell me now...
75. IGM: And Ali told him no?
76. AJT: No, he tell me now
77. IGM: And then Gafà stopped talking to Ali, yes?
78. AJT: yes
79. IGM: When was this? When was this?
80. AJT: in 2015

81. IGM: 2015. OK, OK. Kemm saqsa flus? [Arabic for how much did he ask for?]
82. AJT: In the first he asked 3,015 per person another negotiation 3,000 Euro.
83. IGM: 3 elef jew 3 mijja ? [Arabic for 3000 or 300?]
84. AJT: 3 elef u 5 mijja [Arabic for 3500]
85. IGM: 3 elef u 5 mijja ghal kull visa... [Arabic for 3500 per visa]
86. AJT: Yes, but then... 3 elef [Arabic for 3000]
87. IGM: Imbghad nizel ghal 3 elef [Arabic for and then he went down to 3000]
88. U Ali qallu le... u taf ghalxix kienu dawn il flus? [Arabic for So Ali said no. And, do you know what this money was for?]
89. Ghalxiex dawn il flus? Taf? [Arabic for what was this money for do you know?]
90. AJT: Exactly!!  
[Arabic talk between Ali and translator]
91. AJT: hello...? Ali now told me he send someone, for a Ivan in Malta from Zawia his name Ahmed Bahar
92. IGM: Wait, wait.... to Ivan or Neville?
93. AJT: To Neville. He send someone Ahmed Bahar to Khaled Ibrahim and Neville, make meeting in Malta, negotiation about this money. And Mr Neville he says to Ahmed Bahar, in account, bank account he put three MILLION Euro in this account afterwards will be the start.

## Appendix 8 – Transcript of the Interview with witnesses Ali Alzintani, Osama Mohammed Zaidi, and Ali Mohammed Algool

Transcript of Ivan Grech Mintoff (IGM) interview with the witnesses Mr Ali Alintani (AZ) who use to be an official in charge of an airport VIP lounge and now works with the logistics for injured patients that need treatment in Europe for the Libyan Ministry of Health; Mr Osama Mohammed Zaidi, a patient who underwent medical intervention treatment in Malta; and, Mr Ali Mohammed Algool who is in charge of logistics for people injury from his region and works in Tobruk Parliament for Office of the Prime Minister. The interview was conducted via a translator (AZT) who speaks on their behalf. A copy of the witnesses ID-cards can be found in appendix 5.

The persons mentioned in the interview are Mr Khalid M. Ibrahim Ben Nasan(KI), Mr Neville Gafà (NG) and Al Mabrouk Garsala (MG). For clarity some additional explanations are given in brackets. The transcript also gives line numbers for ease of reference.

### **Transcript of the Interview with Ali Alzintani, Osama Mohammed Zaidi, and Ali Mohammed Algool**

1. AZT: Hello
2. IGM: Hi, Ali, how are you?
3. AZT: How are you doing?
4. IGM: Very good. I'm sorry it took so long to connect with you.
5. AZT: Yes, it is because the internet connection is very bad...
6. IGM: Yes...
7. AZT: You know the [unintelligible] here is very low
8. IGM: Yes, yes, listen...
9. AZT: Yes. By the way, I'm Ahmed, friend of Ali...
10. IGM: Ahh.
11. AZT: I'll try to translate what's the issues has been happen.
12. IGM: OK.
13. AZT: ...and I will do my best just put these bullet points for understanding.
14. IGM: And I need to record...OK? Is it of for you for me to record?
15. AZT: Yes, it is. Go ahead mate.
16. IGM: It is recording now at the moment.
17. AZT: And...uh...are you ready, mate?
18. IGM: Yes, we are.
19. AZT: OK, OK... Behind me there is Mr Ali and Mr Osama who has the issues. They been, you know injured were in Malta for treatment. Their problem...their problem to be very short, you know, their problem one guy, his name is Neville. You might hear from him.
20. IGM: Neville Gafà, yes?
21. AZT: Yes, it is. And there is another guy. There is another guy, his name is Al Mabrouk Garsala, you might know him.
22. IGM: OK. Al Mabrouk Garsala, uh huh...?

23. AZT: Uh, yes...they been, you know, asking for money from the guys, they been there for, you know, treatment. They been asking them just like the bribe for been staying there just like the visa.
24. IGM: So who-
25. AZT: ...but they didn't, uh, they didn't have the right to do so.
26. IGM: OK, let me tell you. Let me ask. Let me stop-
27. AZT:(unintelligible)
28. IGM: Let me stop you, please, it's important. Who asked money? Who asked money from who? Give me the names of who asked and from who.
29. AZT: OK. Mabrouk Garsala and Neville. They been asking Mr Osama...Mr Osama he can't talk, you know, English... [speaking in a foreign language in background].
30. IGM: Yes. I can hear him.
31. AZT: They've been asking...
32. IGM: I can hear...
33. AZT: been asking Ali as well...
34. IGM: OK. Ali who? Ali...?
35. AZT: Ali Algoal. Ali Algoal.
36. IGM: OK. I'm asking, to be precise, to be precise. This is why I'm asking.
37. IGM: So...
38. AZT: Yes...
39. IGM: ...Neville Gafà asked them personally? Or through somebody else?
40. AZT: One minute (talking in foreign language in background).
41. AZT: All right. They been though Al Mabrouk Garsala, you know? They...they couldn't speak English, these guys, they were there, in Malta.
42. IGM: OK. But I-
43. AZT: But Al Mabrouk Garsala, he just, you know, like translator between them, you know?
44. IGM: And they were present-
45. AZT: And so, so-
46. AZT: Let me ask. I'm sorry to interrupt because of the delay in the-
47. AZT: Go ahead, mate.
48. IGM: So, when the translator was asking on behalf of Gafà, they were also present. Is this correct? So, all three people were present in one room, if you wish. Is this correct? Not - I tell you, then you go away and you ask them somewhere else? This is what I want to establish.
49. AZT: Yes, it is. That's what's happened, I believe so.
50. IGM: Can you confirm please, it's important.
51. AZT: It is indeed.
52. IGM: OK.
53. AZT: I conform that.
54. IGM: So Gafà was in the same room as the people he was asking money from...? Is this correct?
55. AZT: It is, indeed.

56. IGM: How much did he ask them for?
57. AZT: [talking in a foreign language in background] From two thousand till two thousand five hundred.
58. IGM: OK, and what did he-
59. AZT: ...Euros
60. IGM: ...what did he ask this money for, please? It's important.
61. AZT: Is been asking that amount of money because they, you know, try to put these guys and give them the stay there, you know, just like, you know, work like home office, to give these guys a visa for stay there, you know?
62. IGM: So, was the money, was the money for the visa or was it or accommodation or something else? This is important.
63. AZT: OK, just a minute [talking in a foreign language in the background] Yes, not for accommodation, mate.
64. IGM: Not-
65. AZT: ...just for the visa.
66. IGM: Just-
67. AZT: [unintelligible] Yes.
68. IGM: This is very important, OK? Please, so, so,
69. AZT: Mmm Hmm.
70. IGM: ...you are confirming that he asked two thousand...Sorry, Neville Gafà asks for two thousand or two thousand five hundred just for the visa.
71. AZT: Yes, it is.
72. IGM: OK. Did he give you the visa? I'm asking.
73. AZT: [speaking in a foreign language in the background] Yes, mate.
74. IGM: OK. Are they willing to stay, to, to... I'm asking, there is a court case going on now, alright?
75. AZT: Mmm Hmm.
76. IGM: And...
77. AZT: Yeah...
78. IGM: Gafà is being challenged with these kind of statements. Not just from these two but from others as well, OK?
79. AZT: OK, alright.
80. IGM: Are they willing...
81. AZT: Yes.
82. IGM: ...are they willing to come to court to say 'this happened, this happened, this happened', or, are they willing to say it in front of a notary, or, a solicitor, and then it is sent here for the court case?
83. AZT: Alright, let me ask them. [speaking in a foreign language on the background] They willing to go to Malta and be in a court face-to-face.
84. IGM: Very good.
85. AZT: That's what they... yes
86. IGM: Very, very, very, good. There are others who will do the same as well by the way, OK?
87. AZT: OK. So that's... there would be one group in a court that would be...

88. IGM: Yes.
89. AZT: ...same the solution for this issue mate.
90. IGM: Yes, it is, because we have to solve this solution. We, we can't...I have
91. AZT: Yes, yes.
92. IGM: I have confirmation from the previous prime minister of Malta, Dr. Law-
93. AZT: OK
94. IGM: Lawrence Gonzi, who insists...
95. AZT: Mmm hmm.
96. IGM: ...insists that all treatment should have been free and nothing
97. AZT: It is.
98. IGM: ...should have been paid to visas or anything else, OK? So, we want to show-
99. AZT: Yes.
100. IGM: ...we want to show that what we have been saying is correct. Money was being asked by these people, that you are saying, for them to issue visas.
101. AZT: Mmm hmm. Yes, it is. That's what I know as far as I know, they, the treatment is free, you know, Europe.
102. IGM: OK.
103. AZT: So, there is another guy, his name is, with group, his name is Ahmed Fenir
104. IGM: Yes, OK.
105. AZT: Yes, they been talking from him around twenty thousand – twenty-five thousand Euro, just to give them a part from his hand, because his hand is being amputated. He is the group from Zintan.
106. IGM: OK. So, for him to have his hand back – his amputated hand they want money as well? Is this what you are saying?
107. AZT: Yes it is. They already took from him twenty-five thousand Euro.
108. IGM: No - explain this again for me please, for me to understand. Is he with you now?
109. AZT: They – No, no, he's not with me...
110. IGM: OK -
111. AZT: ... to be honest
112. IGM: Tell me again, then, please, again.
113. AZT: Yes, um...
114. IGM: [Ring tone in background] Tell me. Sorry, I apologize.
115. AZT: Yes. Another guy, his name is Ahmed Finneer.
116. IGM: Uh huh...?
117. AZT: ...who has his hand amputated, alright?
118. IGM: OK.
119. AZT: So, they, they put, you know, another, you know, hands, you know?
120. IGM: Yes.
121. AZT: Plastic hands

122. IGM: Artificial, yes.
123. AZT: Yes. It is indeed. So, Neville and Mabrouk Garsalla they been asking from him twenty-five thousand Euro and, you know, his family, they send these amount of money to, to Malta... I would say Mabrouk Garsala received this amount of money, you know?
124. IGM: OK. And, uh...do you know of anyone who asked for a visa and because they did not have the money they were not given a visa?
125. AZT: OK. That's...let me ask these guys. [talking in a foreign language in background]. Yeah, Mr Ali says we will ask some guys, you know, the other group...
126. IGM: Yes.
127. AZT: ...so, to see if there is somebody's been...
128. IGM: Yes please.
129. AZT: ...taking his money, or asking his money. [talking in a foreign language in background]. And uh, Mr Osama, Mr Osama he's been, you know, refused – his injury guy, he's been refused and kicked out from the airport...you know?
130. IGM: No. Tell me again please, this is important. So that I understand fully, I'm - I'm asking again so I hear it very clearly, that's all.
131. AZT: OK. Another group, he's with me, his name Osama –
132. IGM: He's with you there?
133. AZT: He's been, you know...
134. IGM: He's with you there?
135. AZT: Yes, it is.
136. IGM: Can I say hello to him please?
137. AZT: Yes...Yes?
138. IGM: Hi.
139. OSAMA: Hello. Hi
140. IGM: Hi. Can I, can I hear you?
141. OSAMA: Hi.
142. [unintelligible]
143. OSAMA: Yes.
144. IGM: OK, I'm hearing him. Tell me his story please.
145. AZT: Yeah, he's been, you know, injured. So he's been in the airport of Malta...
146. IGM: OK.
147. AZT: So, they kept him there about, you know...
148. [AZ speaking to OSAMA] – “how many days Osama...?”
149. [OSAMA speaking to AZ in a foreign language]
150. AZT: Yes, they didn't get him allowed to enter inside Malta and then they kicked him out because they been asking, you know, money...
151. IGM: So...
152. AZT: ...from him, if he don't have money you will not entered inside, you know...
153. IGM: Did he arrive...

154. AZT: In Malta
155. IGM: Did he arrive in Malta or was he still in Libya?
156. AZT: [Speaking in a foreign language in the background]
157. AZT: Yes, he, he, he arrived in Malta...
158. IGM: Alright...
159. AZT: ...and he stayed there...
160. IGM: Where?
161. AZT: ...one week till Mr -
162. IGM: In Malta? In Malta?
163. AZT: Yes. Till Mr Neville and Mabrouk came to him and asked him 'if you don't have money you should leave now'.
164. IGM: OK –
165. AZT: ...and then they give them – and kicked them out from Malta and he's... [speaking in a foreign language in background] ... and, and, he was, you know, already injured, you know?
166. IGM: Mela...
167. AZT: Not very well at that time
168. IGM: Mela, let me ask again. Let me clarify this point. He came to Malta. He went -
169. AZT: Yes.
170. IGM: ...he went to hospital. Is this correct? He was getting treatment. Is this correct?
171. AZT: Yes.
172. IGM: And after -
173. AZT: For just one week.
174. IGM: ... after a week they asked him for money...?
175. AZT: [speaking in a foreign language in background] Yes.
176. IGM: ...and because he did not pay the money, he was told to leave, yes?
177. AZT: Yes, indeed.
178. IGM: Two questions, please. Two questions. What was his –
179. AZT: Go ahead.
180. IGM: ...what was his injury, please?
181. AZT: He had, he has fragment in his legs and his arm, probably in his side of his stomach.
182. IGM: OK. And when he was injured, when he was in hospital, and they asked him to leave, was he cured or was he still ill?
183. AZT: No, he's still ill. He not recovered.
184. IGM: So, he was told to leave despite that he was ill. Even if he was ill, because he did not pay, he was asked to leave by...? By who was he asked to leave?
185. AZT: By Mr Mabrouk and Neville.
186. IGM: ...and Neville Gafà? Is this -
187. AZT: It is.

188. IGM: Is this correct?

189. AZT: Yes, it is.

190. IGM: OK. So, he had to leave Malta even though he was still injured? And he was in Malta already uh.... getting treatment.

191. AZT: Exactly.

192. IGM: Is he willing to come to court to say this?

193. AZT: Yeah – yes, he says he will come to face some in a good court.

194. IGM: Very good. Can I have this full name again, please, if possible?

195. AZT: Yes. [speaking in a foreign language in background] He will say his name.

196. IGM: Yes, please.

197. OSAMA: Osama Mohammed Zaidi

198. IGM: Grazzi Mohammed. Shukran – Shukran Mohammed.

199. AZT: (unintelligible)

200. IGM: Osama – Osama Mohammed.

201. AZT: Mohammed [unintelligible].

202. IGM: I have your passport, Osama, I know what you look like, I have seen your passport, so I know that you exist -

203. AZT: Yes.

204. IGM: ...and it will be a very good thing if you come to Malta and say these things in court.

205. AZT: Yes, he's willing to do that.

206. IGM: OK. Excellent.

207. AZT: and he's Mr Ali Al Algoool as well, he's here with me.

208. IGM: Very good.

209. AZT: ...and he, he doing to him the same things.

210. IGM: If –

211. AZT: He's not, he's not injured. He was, you know, the leader of the group...

212. IGM: I know.

213. AZT: ...because he's well...

214. IGM: I know. I know.

215. AZT: ...so he can, you know...

216. IGM: He would –

217. AZT: Do things for...

218. IGM: He would, he would co-ord –

219. AZT: [unintelligible]

220. IGM: He would coordinate the whole thing, yes? He would make things happen for–

221. AZT: Yes.

222. IGM: ...the injured.

223. AZT: Yes.

224. IGM: OK. And –
225. AZT: Yes.
226. IGM: ...money was being asked from all of these people by Neville Gafà for the visas? This is important, just for – not for anything else?
227. AZT: Yes. Some of- but, but some of these guys, most of them, they've been asking for money for the visa.
228. IGM: OK.
229. AZT: And some of the other guys they've been asked them to leave because didn't have, you know, didn't pay their "accommodation", or pay their "statement"....
230. IGM: OK.
231. AZT: Even, even Mr Ali Al Algoool he was there, you know, with these guys, you know, like co-ordination and, you know, he's bringing stuff for the people who's been treated there and uh, so, they, they, you know, they, they, they're not letting him, you know, go back to, you know, Europe because he has, you know a cross because his visa's been running out and Mabrouk Garsala, he's, you know, uh, try, you know, he...he...just one minute... [speaking in a foreign language in the background]. Yes, when his visa's been running out for about, you know, ten days, Mabrouk Garsala came to the - with him to the airport and force him to, to sign some papers – they been written from the home office in English but he's English is not that good, so he signed that thing so... that the outcome was he can't enter Europe for five years.
232. IGM: Do – do you know what was on these papers?
233. AZT: Well I don't know. I didn't have a look for them.
234. IGM: Does he have a copy...
235. AZT: [unintelligible]
236. IGM: of these papers?
237. AZT: He says some guy, he's from [unintelligible], his name is Khaled Ibrahim, he has if all copies.
238. IGM: Khaled Ibrahim?
239. AZT: [asks another person in the background: 'unintelligible Ibrahim?'. [More speaking in the background in a foreign language]
240. AZT: Yes, Khaled Ibrahim...
241. IGM: Very good.
242. AZT: ...who, who, who saw these guys in the airport and everything. He knows too much for these problems.
243. IGM: OK, OK. I know him, I know him. Alright. So Khaled Ibrahim,
244. AZT: [unintelligible]
245. IGM: ...Khaled Ibrahim has the papers, in English, that...
246. AZT: Mmm hmm.
247. IGM: ...these people signed so they can't come to Europe for five years?
248. AZT: [speaking in a foreign language in the background] Mmm hmm. Mmm hmm.
249. AZT: He says, some of the papers, but the, uh, [unintelligible], he will send it to you, direct to you Viber, alright?
250. IGM: Yes please. Yes please.

251. AZT: Yes. [speaking in a foreign language in the background]. He says, he send it, uh, by Viber to Mr Khaled, but he, but he will send it to you as well-
252. IGM: Yes, please. Yes -
253. AZT: ...if you wish to receive it.
254. IGM: Yes, I do. I do. Any paperwork...
255. AZT: [unintelligible]
256. IGM: ...that you think I should have, I need to have. On-
257. AZT: OK.
258. IGM: ...on Viber, or Whatsapp, as you wish.
259. AZT: OK, OK, he will do so. He will do so.
260. IGM: Is there anything else that you, you can think of that we need to discuss and record, now? We have enough here.
261. AZT: Uh, let me ask.
262. IGM: But if there is anything else –
263. AZT: Let me ask-
264. IGM: ...they want to tell me...
265. AZT: OK, let me ask these guys, alright? [speaking in a foreign language in the background]
266. AZT: OK. That's, that's, that's all my, my friend.
267. IGM: Let me ask a final question. All these people-
268. AZT: OK.
269. IGM: ...all these people have met Neville Gafà? They know him? They have met him, yes?
270. AZT: Uh, let me ask them. [speaking in the background – 'Do you know Gafà, Mr Gafà?'. Continued speaking in a foreign language in the background].
271. IGM: They met-
272. AZT: They said...yes, that can recognize his face because he's been visiting them in the hospital.
273. IGM: And he asked them for money for visas?
274. AZT: It is indeed.
275. IGM: OK.
276. [speaking in a foreign language in the background]
277. IGM: OK.
278. AZT: By, by the translation of Mabrouk Garsala, you know?
279. IGM: But he tells, he tells Mabrouk Garsala and Mabrouk Garsala tells you, yes? Mhux Masu-
280. AZT: [unintelligible]
281. IGM: ...mhux Mabrouk, mhux Mabrouk Garsala tells you only. Is it-
282. AZT: No, no, no, that's-.
283. IGM: This is- this is important, OK? Because Gafà can say, Gafà can say 'I never said anything. It was, uh, Garsala who said this'.
284. AZT: Yeah, but Neville was talking and Garsala...

285. IGM: Translated.

286. AZT: ...was translating.

287. IGM: All right. OK.

288. AZT: To help these guys

289. IGM: Clear. Clear. Very good. That's what I want to hear.

290. AZT: Is it crystal clear?

291. IGM: It is very clear. And I thank you for this conversation...and

292. AZT: Any time, my friend Ivan. Any time.

293. IGM: Yes, yes. I'm trying to help these people because...and I, I think these things are very, very wrong things to happen to them. I apologize for them to happen, but we will fix these things, OK?

294. AZT: Yeah, thank you very much, indeed. That's kind of you, mate.

295. IGM: Please send them my best regards.

296. AZT: OK. Will do.

297. IGM: Thank you, eh? Thank you for now. Thank you very much. Good night to all.

298. AZT: [unintelligible]

299. IGM: Good night to all of you.

300. AZT: Bye bye for now. Bye bye.

301. IGM: Bye.

AZT: Bye. Bye.

## Appendix 9 – Letter from Neville Gafà’s Legal adviser

Letter sent to The Malta Independent by Neville Gafà’s legal adviser after the Independent reported on the story of the Libyan visa scam.



### **PETER PAUL ZAMMIT L.P.**

70, Triq ic-Cervjola,  
Marsaskala MSK 3422  
e-mail : peterpaul.zammit@gmail.com  
Mob. No. 79 000 331

Today the 25<sup>th</sup> August 2016

Attention : The Editor

Malta Independent

Dear Sir

I write in the name and on behalf of Mr. Neville Gafa, and this in reference to the article titled 'Government official was netting up to €150,000 a month in medical visas scam' which appeared on your newspaper on Sunday the 21<sup>st</sup> August 2016, who wishes to avail himself of the Right of Reply afforded him at Law and therefore request that you publish, in line with the legal requirements the following.

*"With reference to the article titled 'Government official was netting up to €150,000 a month in medical visas scam' which appeared on your newspaper on Sunday the 21<sup>st</sup> August 2016, the person purportedly responsible for this article, David Lindsay is basing his story on unfounded allegations and outright lies and hiding behind alleged anonymous high ranking Libyan secret service officer.*

*From the outset I Neville Gafa deny any and all allegations of misconduct and or bribery this article alleges and deny that I have ever received any monies in any way or manner aside from my due government salary.*

*The Public has a right to know that the Maltese Government signed an MOU with the Libyan Authorities to help in providing medical assistance to persons injured in this conflict. The persons who were to be provided this service were to be identified by the Libyan authorities and cleared from their end, and subsequently reviewed by the local Secret Service, Police, Immigration and medical departments and services. The persons concerned were not requested to pay anything, not even the 66 euro visa fee which was waived by the Maltese Government. Only the accompanying family members were requested the visa fee. All other expenses as regard the patient were entered into a Government account as debt to be subsequently settled by the Libyan Authorities. No*

**PETER PAUL ZAMMIT L.P.**

70, Triq ic-Cervjola,  
Marsaskala MSK 3422

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*fees or charges were levied by myself or the respective departments for the vetting of the persons concerned.*

*The due diligence effected, included, and actually commenced from the Libyan secret service which therefore gives the lie to the source quoted by the journalist concerned.*

*The article gives the impression that Mr. Neville Gafa went to collect monies in Libya from injured persons, when if anything it is the alleged middleman, who had no legal or statutory rights to enter into these government to government negotiations, who results from the same article as having collected monies on the unfounded pretext of having Libyan or Maltese clearance.*

*As to the allegations that patients were not brought to Malta, let it be known that Malta has since provided some 600 medical services, some of them major and life threatening cases to those that have been filtered through the system. Some cases have been refused, in the usual tragic triage system, for the benefit of other cases and/or where the medical services requested could not be given.*

*What Mr. Gafa posts in his Facebook has been described as rabid by the said journalist indicating a clear political bias enhanced by the alleged comments included by Mr. Ivan Grech Mintoff who acted as interlocutor to the anonymous secret service source.*

*The lack of contact on the part of the journalist with Mr. Gafa for his comments give the article a one sided biased unfounded and downright libelous view so acute that it is regrettable for Mr. Gafa to have to reply and inform all that libel proceedings will be initiated in the coming days against the said David Lindsay, Simon Busuttil and all other persons, political or otherwise who participate in the spreading of such libelous unfounded allegations."*

**Best Regards**



Peter Paul Zammit LP

## Appendix 10 – Threats directed against Khalid M. Ibrahim Ben Nasan

Threat received via a SMS message on Khalid M. Ibrahim Ben Nasan’s mobile to stop him coming on Exodus programme and talking. The police should have no problem verifying the authenticity of these messages and perhaps even track sender. I have been informed that each message contains the technical data needed for the police to trace it.

First threat sent to Khalid M. Ibrahim Ben Nasan



Second threat sent to Khalid M. Ibrahim Ben Nasan

A report made to police after Khalid M. Ibrahim Ben Nasan received two threats after it was revealed that he would appear on Exodus TV programme and will be talking about the Libyan Visa scandal:

**CURRENT INCIDENT REPORT**

District: REGION B  
 Division: SAN GILJAN, SWEQI, SAN GWANN  
 Ref No: NPS 6A/N/6263/2016  
 Printed By: [REDACTED] Date Printed: 31/08/2016 at 09:33

**INCIDENT RECORDING DETAILS**

File No: [REDACTED] File No:  
 Report Date: 30/08/2016 Report Time: 20:45  
 Incident Date from: 29/08/2016 Incident Time from: 21:10  
 Incident Date to: 29/08/2016 Incident Time to: 21:15  
 Incident Status: USLV - UNSOLVED Report Status: INP - IN PREPARATION

Officer entering report: [REDACTED] on: 30/08/2016 at: 20:53

**INCIDENT CLASSIFICATION**

MISCELLANEOUS - INSULTS AND THREATS

**INCIDENT ADDRESS**

Address: [REDACTED]  
 Landmark: QUDDIEM RESIDENZA [REDACTED]

**OFFICERS INVOLVED WITH INCIDENT**

Rank	Number	Name	Role	On Case	District	Division
INSP	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	DISTRICT OFFICER	YES	6A	N
WPS	304	[REDACTED]	DISTRICT OFFICER	YES	6A	N

**PERSON FILING REPORT 1**

ID Card No.: [REDACTED]  
 Passport No(s): LIBYA - [REDACTED] (DELETED)  
 LIBYA - [REDACTED] (ACTIVE)  
 Name: KHALED M. IBRAHIM  
 Surname: BEN NASAN  
 Gender: MALE  
 Nationality: LIBYAN ARAB  
 JAMAHIRIYA - 434.01  
 Date of Birth: [REDACTED]  
 Place of Birth: [REDACTED]

Name of Father:  
 Surname of Father:  
 Name of Mother:  
 Mother's Maiden:  
 Name of Spouse: [REDACTED]  
 Surname of [REDACTED]

[https://nps.forceii.local/popup.aspx?page=report&rptName=g\\_fullIncident](https://nps.forceii.local/popup.aspx?page=report&rptName=g_fullIncident)

31/08/2016

UNKNOWN  
OFFICIAL RESIDENCE

WITNESS 1

ID Card No. LIBYA - (DELETED)  
Passport No(s): LIBYA - (ACTIVE)  
Name: KHALED M. IBRAHIM  
Surname: BEN NASAN  
Gender: MALE  
Nationality: LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA - 434.01  
Date of Birth: [REDACTED]  
Place of Birth: [REDACTED]  
Phone: [REDACTED]  
Address 1: UNKNOWN  
Residence Type: OFFICIAL RESIDENCE  
Address 2: [REDACTED]  
Witness comments  
N/A

Name of Father:  
Surname of Father:  
Name of Mother:  
Mother's Maiden:  
Name of Spouse:  
Surname of Spouse:  
Mobile: [REDACTED]

**ACTION TAKEN**

Nhar 30/08/2016 ghal habta ta' 20:45hrs, Mr Ben Nasan, li didentifika ruhu b'dokument; bin-numru tar-referenz [REDACTED] u l-karta ta' l-identita [REDACTED] rrapurta gewwa l-ghassa San Giljan. Huwa stqarr biex jaghmel rapport ta' theddid.

Huwa stqarr li danna l-incident gara nhar 29/08/2016 ghal habta ta' 21:10hrs, meta kien diegheed quddiem il-bieb tar-residenza tieghu, [REDACTED]. Stqarr li rloieva telefonata fuq il-linja tal-mowbajl tieghu [REDACTED] minn numru 'unknown', u l-persuna l-ohra tal-linja beda jkelimu bil-Malti u qallu dan id-diskors.

"Ha titia lum titkalem xi haga u ggib il-karti u l-video, il-tfal tieghek insijhom".

Il-kwerialant wiegbu; "X'jgiffen ninsijhom?", u l-persuna l-ohra wiegbu; "Alla Jahrihom". Il-kwerialant rega saqsieh jekk dan il-kliem huwiex theddid, u l-persuna l-ohra wegbitu; "Ahsibha kif talsibha, qabel tasal id-dar, insa t-fal tieghek".

Il-kwerialant stqarr li tkellem ma' l-avukat tieghu, u gie mghoddi l-parti biex jaghmel rapport ufficjali mail-pulizija. Kompla jistqarr li l-programm fuq il-televixin kellu jsir nhar 30/08/2016 fi 15hrs, u spicca l-programm kancellat u ma sarx.

Report was collected today 31st August 2016 by complaint.

Update by WPC331 02/09/2016 09:30HRS.

Mr BEN NASAN, KHALED M. IBRAHIM - ID Card [REDACTED] reported at Swieqi Police Station that yesterday the 01/09/2016 at around 23:00hrs, he noticed that he had four(4) missed calls on his mobile phone number [REDACTED] which calls were made from mobile number [REDACTED]. Complainant tried to call this number but found the mobile to be switched off. He then realised he had also an SMS from mobile number [REDACTED] which was sent on the 01/09/2016 at 21:41hrs and which read:  
"Khaled I gave you a warning and this is your last chance if you send any information or present any files or any recordings about me or marisa faruga or natalie or ray or anyone from the staff of visa unit you will never see your children again".

[https://nps.forceii.local/popup.aspx?page=report&rptName=g\\_fullIncident](https://nps.forceii.local/popup.aspx?page=report&rptName=g_fullIncident) 02/09/2016

Extracts from the police report:

**"ACTION TAKEN**

On 30/08/2016 at around 20:45, Mr Ben Nasan who identified himself with document reference [number redacted] and ID card number [number redacted] presented himself to San Giljan police station. He stated that he wanted to report threats that he had received.

He stated that this incident happened on 29/08/2016 at around 21:10 when he was outside his residency door, [address redacted]. He stated that he received a telephone call on his mobile number [number redacted] from an unknown number and the person on the other side started talking to him in Maltese and said the following:

"If you go today and say anything and you present papers or the video and you can forget your children"

The complainant replied, "What do you mean by forget them?" and the other person answered: "May God forgive them". The complainant asked again whether these words were a form of a threat and the other person replied "Think about it as you wish, before you arrive home, forget your children"

The complainant stated that he spoke to his lawyer and was advised to make an official report with the police. He added the TV programme had to take place on 30/08/2016 at 15:00 and ended up cancelled and did not take place,

The report was collected today 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016 by complainant.

*Update my WPC331 02/09/2016 9:30HRS*

Mr Ben Nasan, Khalid M. Ibrahim- ID card [number redacted] reported Swieqi Police Station that yesterday the 01/09/2016 at around 23:00hrs, he noticed he had four (4) missed calls on his mobile number [number redacted] which calls were made from mobile number XX. Complainant tried to call this number but found the mobile to be switched off. He then realised he had also an SMS from mobile number [number redacted] which was sent on the 01/09/2016 at 21:41 hrs and which read:

"Khaled I gave you a warning and this is your last chance if you send any information or present any files or any recordings about me or Marisa Farrugia or Natalie or Ray or anyone from the staff of visa unit you will never see your children again"

## Appendix 11 – Transcript of Exodus TV programme

Transcript of Exodus TV programme “The Libyan Visa Scandal” released on 10<sup>th</sup> of September 2016. This Exodus programme was air on TV because of threats received and was released on YouTube instead ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l\\_yriUgcw\\_M&t=2781s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_yriUgcw_M&t=2781s)).

Name labels used in transcript:

Ivan = Ivan Grech Mintoff, the presenter of Exodus and the author of this report.

Khaled = Khalid M. Ibrahim Ben Nasan, the guest on the programme and whistle-blower.

### **Transcript of Exodus “The Libyan Visa Scandal” released on 10<sup>th</sup> of September 2016.**

1. Ivan: The Libyan visa scandal sage... continues. Tonight, we have with us Mr Khaled Ibrahim Ben Nassan
2. ....
3. Ivan: Where are you from?
4. Khaled: I am Libyan
5. Ivan: You are saying that you are Libyan
6. Khaled: Libyan yes
7. Ivan: I have to ask you so the those watching can understand clearly. You have your passport with you.
8. Khaled: Yes
9. Ivan: Can you show it to people following us here. This is a Libyan passport. It is not a Syrian passport. If you see, it says that he is a Libyan national, his father is Libyan. So it is not true that he is Syrian or that he is pretending to be something else. Are you in Malta in legal or illegal way because they are accusing you that you do not have a residency permit.
10. Khaled: No, I have everything in order just like any Maltese European person.
11. Ivan: You have the papers to show that you allowed to live live in Malta like others do.
12. Khaled: Yes
13. Ivan: how long have you been living in Malta?
14. Khaled: 16 years
15. Ivan: You've been in Malta for the last 16 years. I think that in these 16 years you have met several ministers, several prime ministers, several heads of state and several leaders of this country. No one had a problem to acknowledge you, for the work you've done, and we will speak later about this. But then suddenly, they are saying in the papers, in I-Orrizont or the web portal of I-Orizzont, that the Libyan secret service is after you because you stole a million Euro. I checked with them and and they told me that it's not true. They are ready to come to Malta and state so themselves and say that this is another myth. Tell me what you think about this.
16. Khaled: Not true
17. Ivan: That you did not steal this million?
18. Khaled: The same people who stated so are willing to come to Malta and say thank you Malta and the Government of Malta for they help you gave to Libya.
19. Ivan: So, when you enter in this country, you entered legally or illegally?
20. Khaled: I enter and leave through the airport
21. Ivan: You enter just like others do in a legal manner. Everything is in order.

22. Khaled: Yes
23. Ivan: Is it true, as reported that you are running from home to another and trying to hide because someone is being looking for you as is being reported in newspapers like L-Orizzont and the Malta Today and other such things? Are these reports true?
24. Khaled: Not True. I have been living in the same house for 4 years and I never changed my house in these years.
25. Ivan: So, you have you been living in your current home for these past 4 years. Everyone knows who you are in your street. You are therefore not in hiding or running away. They also reported said that the threats you have received on the lives of your children.... They reported that this is untrue - you did not receive the calls. They reported that the police are stating you did not received SMS either. What can you tell us?
26. Khaled: The message is still on my phone...
27. Ivan: You are saying that these messages are on your phone.
28. Khaled: The messages and when they called me with the threats. The exact time....
29. Ivan: On the one hand we have the newspapers controlled by 'tghana Ikkoll' stating that you are Syrian, who has people follow you, that you invented all threats on your reputation and you are showing proof after proof: here is the my passport, See what nationality I have, here is the mobile, see what is written and that it is not true that I invented any of these things.
30. In politics who does not have anything to attack the actual message often attacks the credibility of the person instead. They make him out to be a liar, they throw mud at him and denigrate the person, with an ugly past, so that everything he says will therefore not be credible.
31. We have seen already what they are saying about you is not true because those things are truth, they lied, and it does not do honor to those who are to write these things. Let us see if what you are stating it is true or not. I ask the media, the press to not use people in this way as is happening in MaltaToday, such as is happening in l-Orizzont portal to throw mud at someone who is coming out with big scandals and instead of protecting him, he is being threatened with his children's lives and is not receiving the protection he deserves. We are inventing stories to assassinate his character instead. These things are very dark and ugly. Let us now come to the subject itself. From the information, which is largely derived from Libyan secret service and further backed up by all these ministers that we mentioned earlier. They told me that, as far as I know, you came into the scene when Maltese consulate [in Libya].... When you have a presence in a country there is also a consulate, another office where visas are issued where one issues other documents relating to your country. So, there is the Maltese embassy in Libya and there is the consulate. There was a time a few years ago where a revolt arose, people gathered to enter our consulate... no doubt, nobody heard anything about those things here, to smash things up, they entered with Kalashnikovs and entered with other weapons to rampage and we will hear why.
32. I heard that our Ambassador Mannie Galea is the person who contacted our guest this evening, he did not contact the Maltese government. Nor the Libyan government to see why these people wanted to go on a rampage in the Maltese consulate in Libya but they contacted you. This is true? The ambassador Mannie Galea contacted you when the Libyan people wanted smash up the Maltese consulate?
33. Khaled: He spoke and told me that I have a message from Government of Malta.
34. Ivan: The government of Malta got the Maltese ambassador to contact you regarding what was happening in the Maltese consulate. What was happening? There were 3,000 Libyan passports detained for more than 9 months. You mentioned a particular name.
35. Khaled: Marisa Farrugia.
36. Ivan: During Marisa Farrugia's time when she was working there, and these people after 9 months waiting for their visa so that the children of these people may come to Malta for health treatment

and after 9 months of waiting, these people erupted against the Maltese consulate and so they - the Maltese government - called you to see how you can help the Maltese people in this regard.

37. Khaled: Mannie Galea the ambassador then spoke to me, I spoke to good people and we entered the Consulate and we calmed things down and fixed matters. We took out the passport and we stayed almost a month and a half, taking the Consulate workers, from their homes and to the Consulate and back again in the morning.
38. Ivan: In the Consulate case then, of the Maltese offices, people entered to rampage because they had been waiting for 9 months for the visa on their (withheld) passports as they had sick children to be brought to Malta and for 9 months, 3000 passports were not issued a visa. Our friend who is with us in the program today is stating that it is the Maltese Government that asked him to go and stop these people from thrashing the consulate. They did not contact the Libyan government. They asked person who was living with us for 16 years ago, he was working here and all of them knew him. This person went there and not only stopped the uprising but also helped the Maltese staff so that they can go work out for many months after. On the consulate sags then and what exactly happened we are preparing a whole program because there is so much to say and go into. I am promising you from here to do so as this is a very important story. So, this person who is right next to me here, is not a frightening person as is being portrayed but someone who helped the Malta when asked to do so and who helped Maltese staff to carry on working in those premises. Khaled Ibrahim helped them and they know who help them then whether it was the Maltese government, the Libyan government or Khaled Ibrahim who helped to these people and I promise you that we will dedicate a full program and open up and we will see why those 3,000 passport were held back without a visa and why the sick were not tended to.
39. Let us change the subject. We know that several Maltese been abducted in Libya, in circumstances which are not very clear. The first of these was Martin Galea had been kidnapped. When was abducted, as happened in Maltese consulate story, instead of contacting the governments/authorities (of Libya), again they contacted Khaled Ibrahim and asked for your help. Is this, which was reported to me by the secret service, in fact true? Did they (Maltese Govt) contact you?
40. Khaled: Yes, Ambassador Mannie Galea called me so that I would help.
41. Ivan: Mannie Galea called you to help and save a Maltese life. You seemed to have a very important role with this government that whenever something happens they call you for your help and you called certain people....
42. Khaled: Yes, they phoned me around 9.30pm, Ambassador Mannie Galea and he told me that that my help was needed because of a person being held and I told him to give me a call so that I may help him whenever it was needed.
43. Ivan: You have offered to help the Maltese government.
44. Khaled: Yes. HE sent me the telephone number and at midnight we were checking for his whereabouts.
45. Ivan: With your help, how long did your contacts in Libya take to get Martin Galea released.
46. Khaled: He called me at 9:30 pm and at noon he was in my hands.
- 47.
48. Ivan: less than a day, the Maltese government called you and in less than a day you were able to save the life of a Maltese person through your contacts. People who were involved on the other side (Libya), the secret service provided me with their contacts. I have spoken to very people in the military who helped in rescue of Martin Galea. And they are very angry Maltese government, seriously angry that they asked me themselves to also come on this program and explain many things to the Maltese people who know nothing about what really happened.... if there was any monies paid and which disappeared. We need to explore this subject so that the Maltese people will understand what happened. I have already applied for these person, who wanted to come

here and explain to all Maltese people, a person who is a High-Ranking Officer. I have applied for them to issue him with a visa to be able to come here and speak to you so that you may see that things are not as explained Minister of Foreign affairs who praised certain people instead of other people instead. It's very complicated subject but in the future, we will dedicate a program on the real rescuers of various Maltese and share what really happened from the people who were directly involved.

49. In this program then we have so far mentioned the medical visas, but the story is much more complicated. The medical visas is only part of whole story. We prepared this program, so that we can talk together with whistle-blower to give you an idea of how much bigger the real story is, such that we will have to slit into many programmes in order to talk about each subject and to present the evidence, witnesses, videos, tape recordings and all other things relating to each subject.
50. When we talked on such a person, this person is the person they tried to portray, we spoke about the Maltese consulate where Libyans wanted to smash it up, where there were Maltese personnel and Khaled Ibrahim helped rescue these people from harm. We spoke about rescuers of kidnapped Maltese.
51. There are many other subjects for example of how Libyans are applying for work permits, to come to Malta and do work just like they have done for many, long years. Here, some even have homes, businesses set up. Suddenly, these people are facing "resistance" to obtain that which they have to for years and which is now being refused. For some of them they had no option: if they cannot obtain a visa from the normal door/channel then they were forced to get it through the window. Do you agree with me about which I have just described? Is this presently true or not? Can you explain some cases to us?
52. Khaled: On the work visas. For example, a visa would be issued for the wife and husband But not for the children.
53. Ivan So whereas before people would enter and work and have homes and business, coming and going normally, for example, a person coming to Malta monthly and buying purchases of € 50,000 per month so that he may sell the fragrance back in Libya. Coming and going for years and suddenly he can no longer enter Malta without any valid reason given. You mentioned that families applying for a visa, a man and a woman are given it but not the children. What would children have the right for a visa if the parents have been given permission to enter? In this area, there were many businessmen showing us paperwork and telling us that they applied normally and regularly, just as they always did before and whereas I could enter before, now I cannot for some unknown reason. It appears that there is now a new culture where instead of coming through the door, you go round the corner, pay something and you obtain your visa. We will also do a full programme on the issue of business permits.
54. Many names are being mentioned and especially one that rotates around a specific person, a person of the Prime Minister's trust. One from the tghana lkoll (gang). We shall see if it is true that there is a new system in Malta if you are a businessman want to apply for a visa, you are obliged to go through the window and not through the door. In this case that we are talking about, even Maltese lawyers spoke to me about this problem that they are facing. This is another issue that we must also talk about in depth: the work permit.
55. I can't not ask you, in this program, about the very story that started up this whole this whole issue. The story between you and Neville Gafà. We know that according to the media, all of this started when you tried to recover the money that people paid to obtain visas, according to you. In these passports and all things (paperwork), there was money which was asked for so that the visas may be issued. After months of running after him, the passports were returned with no visas and there was no money given back which these people had paid to get their visas. Is the story how I am describing or there is a different version?
56. Khaled: Anything on Neville Gafà, there is no problem between me and himself.

57. Ivan: You do not have a problem with Neville Gafà?
58. Khaled: No, neither with him, nor with either Maltese government or anyone else. I have been almost 3-years' working well between me and himself. But when stopped the airport visas, he told them that it is now necessary to present the passport, photos and physicians report and money. He put them in an envelope with around € 38,000 and almost a month and a half passed and there were people who in the meantime died (without treatment). He told me "sorry but the medical visas have stopped" and I told him at least give them back the money.
59. Ivan: The money passed (to him) and he just told "sorry but the medical visas have been stopped". Is that what we are saying?
60. Khaled: Yes
61. Ivan: Then?
62. Khaled: I told me to give me everything back and he sent me an envelope via the people at his office. When I opened it, I found everything OK but the money was not there. I spoke to him about the money. He would tell me "today"... "tomorrow". This is the problem that I had between myself and between this man.
63. Ivan: So the problem is that the money that people paid to take the medical visas... and then they were not issued with the medical visas have not been returned and there is around € 38,000 that is being mentioned.
64. Another problem, that once the door was opened, everyone seemed to come forward. The problem of visas for education. The Maltese government had created a system in collaboration with Libyan government where students wishing to study in Malta, in University, for English or whatever, could further their studies in Malta. I know, for example that there are students who were issued a visa for the first year, for the second year, for third and fourth but then for the fifth (final) year the visa for these students was not issued. We know other students and we have their paperwork at hand that if they need to be in Malta for a year, their visa is issued only for 9 months. One would return home for a holiday, come back in Malta to continue studying here, but is then prevented from entering Malta. There are reports that the Mukahija has been reported to Maltese government and that this problem exists. There are many students who are suffering because of this and so these students have an option to stop their studied or they have to pass through side-door by force to be able to continue. Do you agree with me that there is this problem? What is the problem as you see it?
65. Khaled: There were people who came knocking at my door asking for help. I have over 150-200 person who have faced such problems. They provide them with a one-year visa, they then have go back to Libya and then lose all that they has studied/learnt. They might be studying to become a doctor or to a lawyer.
66. Ivan: If you are studying for a doctor or to a lawyer. 150-200 would start such courses....
67. Khaled: They came to me at my the house when this problem arose.
68. Ivan: We have a problem in Malta where you have a right, via a Maltese government agreement. You may come to Malta to study and suddenly serious obstacles are being placed in front of hundreds. We shall be opening and showing particular cases so that you may understand what is happening.
69. We are always seeing the same thing: if you cannot enter through the door the you have no option but to pass through the window.
70. These things bring no honor to Malta's reputation.
71. Another subject is the visa unit. Many businessmen want to be here Malta and open Businesses, you are instrumental to businessmen with Maltese ministers who know you well – and not just one or two of them but several ministers. They know that you brought over big businessmen to Malta and for some reason these businessmen were not given (visas). Whereas they could have

invested in our country, could have opened up factories, open businesses where Maltese could have been given work, yet for some reason, these businessmen who have met up with ministers and where ministers were very excited with all these projects, suddenly they go to visa unit and find a problem there as well. Do you with what I am saying about this?

72. Khaled: I agree with you and we encountered several problems regarding businessmen at visa unit too.
73. Ivan: Libyan Businessmen who have entered Malta for many years and who spend hundreds of thousand per month. Is not it so?
74. Khaled: Yes
75. Ivan: Their passports are full of repeat visas with no problem to come in. Suddenly, these people are being stopped. They have always entered through ‘the door’ because they have always come through the door and suddenly have one option: to enter through the window (instead) or not to enter. I think we are agreeing on this.
76. Khaled: Yes.
77. Ivan: I am going to mention a name that in the near future people with evidence will come from abroad to show and there are also Maltese lawyers who also wish to speak up. People like Nathalie Muscat. There is tremendous evidence against these people. Spagnol is another name mentioned, I never met him this person. It seems like many people who applied to visa unit were treated in a most inappropriate way by this person. We will also have another programme on this person and we will invite him to be able to defend himself just as we will invite Nathalie Muscat so that she can face these people who are willing to talk about these things. I think that there is sufficient evidence because I saw it myself, that many very big businessmen that if they were to come to Malta, even this new university that people keep mentioning will be nothing in comparison. But for some reason these people are not being allowed to enter. Do you have anything to add on this subject?
78. Khaled: Ryan Spagnol not from the visa unit. He works on ID Cards. This is a big problem and you can ask Libyans right here in Malta. They are supposed to be issued with a visa that lasts years but you are then given it after 10 months. You will only have two months remaining. They send you the husband's visa but not the wife's. And when you go to ask, they tell him to wait for the white paper. After two months, three months, four months is still does not arrive.
79. Ivan: The problems that we will discuss regarding Nathalie Muscat have to do with visa unit and Ryan Spagnol. There are other problems regarding the ID card and would I come here before the cameras and speak in this way without having enough evidence to know that is what we are saying here would be true or not.
80. The medical visas. we have already mentioned something about them. Apart from those several children who needed to be taken care of, but because their parents did not collect enough money enough. I have seen photos and visa applications. Children who, today, are blind because they were not afforded simple treatment. Other people who have died. I have people who want to come to Malta to tell their stories, high up in the army. They have evidence at hand and will show that when they applied, because these paid they were issued a visa. All this will come out in the coming programs. Apart from the visas that these people needed for treatment, to live and there are those of them who died as they waited 7-8 days for someone just a visa and these were very urgent cases, there are even cases where people who were cared for Malta. The consultants told them to see them in a years times as they needed follow up, even these faced problems continue taking the required treatment. They entered Malta, had permission to enter Malta, then started taking treatment ergo the Maltese government found nothing wrong for them to enter Malta but not after a year when a consultancy follow-up was needed. Can you mention some cases?
81. Khaled: We sent a helicopter for 3 of them from Tunisia. We placed them in St. James (hospital) of Zabbar. They were asked for almost € 85,000.

82. Ivan: € 85,000 to take treatment when there in (PM) Gonzi's time, there was an agreement between the Libyan government and the Maltese government that these people would not be asked for money. Now one is suddenly hear about € 85,000 being asked for.
83. Khaled: Money is not the problem. As long as they leave hospital on their feet. But when they went back and need to come after 4 months for more tests, but they were then not issued with visas....
84. Ivan: they were not given a visa for the follow-up care to further their treatment and Neville Gafà is that the only person in Malta who may issue these visas. No one else in Malta can issue these visas. Nobody is above this person. This is the only person in Malta who can issue the visas for all of Libya if it has to do with medical treatment. Nobody is above who can check whether good, diligent work is being carried out and the amount of people angry that I heard on the telephone wish to come to Malta and challenge this person on this program, but yet they are not issued with visas to come to Malta.... You have no idea how many of them there are.
85. With my own eyes I saw for myself an official letter showing that (Libyan) ministers wanted to come to Malta enquire about highly inflated bills. They asked for a meeting with the because appropriate visas were not issued. Let me actually be more precise with what I was told:
86. When the Libyan minister of health wrote to the Maltese minister of health at that time, and Neville Gafà found out about this letter, according to my source, Neville Gafà asked them to write to him instead of to the minister, because it was he who took care of the medical visa system in Malta. Five ministers wrote to him, from two different regions. Those five ministers. Neville Gafà had to issue their visas for them to come here to Malta so that they may see if the accounts are good in which case they will pay and if not, why are they so very exaggerated and they may see what can be arranged. Neville Gafà chose not to issue these ministers with the required visas to check what was happening in Malta and as a result, they are very angry. I know this because they spoke to me about it and wish to come on the program. Do you have something to add on this point?
87. Khaled: On a plot of minister. They wanted to come to talk with Maltese Health minister to thank him as well as the Maltese for all the help and to praise ambassador Mannie Galea for all the help he gave to Libya and when I spoke to Neville Gafà about this letter we wanted to send to the (Maltese) minister, he told me to tell them to remove the name of the minister and replace it with his name instead. I asked him what for? He told me "because I take care of the Libya file".
88. Ivan: You are confirming what I said from another angle.
89. Khaled: I talked to Libyan ministers and told them to write to Neville Gafà but they told me that normally a minister talks to another minister. I told them that this is the system in Malta and they told me that it is not a problem and they sent it. I have a copy and they sent it to Neville.
90. Ivan: You are confirming that these ministers wanted to come to Malta to see bills that they deemed exaggerated, they wanted to come to speak with the minister and to question why the figure on the bills are so much when they should approximately be so much... and Neville Gafà, instead of minister talking directly to another minister, took over and they had to speak to him instead is that what we are saying?
91. Khaled: When they wrote that letter
92. Ivan: I have seen that letter.
93. Khaled: Because of money, he told me so. He let them go go down Tunisia, Tunisia and I have a copy of the airline tickets. They went down to Tunisia and waited for a week. (Neville Gafà) then told me "Sorry Khaled because I cannot issue them with a visa".
94. Ivan: See whether I am understanding what you are saying clearly. Ministers wished to come to Malta to speak directly with our minister of health. A Minister of health, throughout the whole world speaks (to another minister of health).

Neville Gafà took over, told them no, you have to speak to me instead and not the minister. He asked them to go to Tunisia and they would be pick up his visas from Tunisia to come to Malta. The ministers spent a week waiting for Neville Gafà to issue these visas so that they may - As is their right since they are being asked to pay the medical bills- come to Malta and yet these now infamous visas never materialised. They need to know why they are paying these bills and yet the visas not issued. I do not think the government of Malta way not aware especially as their was this first letter to the minister. I am sure it was aware of these ministers wish to come to Malta to check these things. But if the government did not know, then it means that something not good at all in the system. These ministers want to come here and to personally confirm these things and that means that we are not inventing any of this and if these things really happened then these are truly shameful things that someone actually stops ministers coming to our country in this way.

95. We are covering many subjects and we don't have much time left. The subject is very big and so it is impossible to bring out all the evidence all at once. There is so much evidence that it is impossible to bring it all out in a single program. So, I am promising you right here. On the consulate, we talk in more depth and will have a special program where we will bring out all the matters relating it. We will then give it to the press so that the press may ask the questions themselves.
96. Regarding the kidnapped Maltese, these stories need serious investigation too.
97. And we also mentioned education racket. Hundreds of students are not allowed to study. Instead of helping them study so that more students may choose to study in Malta instead, we are instead stopping them studying after 4-years in order to become a doctor or a lawyer or whatever.
98. There are the business visas. People wishing to come to Malta to invest are being Stopped from doing so. Businessmen coming and going or has a home in Malta or should spending thousands Malta. Putting thousands or millions into our economy today being stopped from passing through the regular gate.
99. You have the Neville Gafà case that surely will keep growing. You have the case of injured people needing to come in but instead are dying because we do not help them if they do not pay.
100. There are many stories greater than these. The biggest one for me is the one of Schengen visas. The abuse carried out in the issued of the Schengen visas... 80,000 visas issues in a year and four months from the Maltese embassy in Libya, surely the proper checks that had to be carried out. Surely one program is not enough on Schengen visas. In fact, this weekend we were in Europe we were told in very clear terms that that which happened regarding the Schengen visas was truly, very ugly.
101. We have arrived at the end of a program before we close I like to make an appeal. Firstly, I wish to thank the nationalist party side are now finally really helping so that this story is told to the full. I also thank those members of Labour even from within Castille (OPM) and the leadership of the Labour Party itself who have met with me and tell me clearly that they were just nor aware that such things were happening. I encourage them even more not only to come forward and complain but for them to come and join us, because we all believe that in truth neither the Labor Party nor the labour members do not do such things and so I ask them to have more courage and to therefore help us clean these things away which a dirtying Malta's name.
102. I also appeal to the newspapers. You know full well that it is not true (what is being said about) this person. He has the right to be Malta and how he has a right to be in Malta as he even has Refugee status in Malta - something which you can easily check. You cannot therefore throw him out of the country and I believe that there is a real threat on this person, there might be an attempt to throw him out as (you say) he is blacklisted, so he might be removed from Malta to be investigated abroad on the "millions that he stole". You have spoken much against this person. His family was threatened and you including his wife by stating that she was also involved in sinister things. His wife is in hospital abroad. Please stop embarrassing yourselves. If you have genuine evidence or facts do bring them out instead of attacking just this person or me. Attack

the facts that we have put forward to the Maltese people. Over coming weeks, we will start producing all the evidence for each of these topics that we have touched upon today. I know that there are many people who are asking me to bring out all the evidence immediately. You can't just present the evidence in one lump sum as there is so much of it that you produce one and forget the other. So we will do everything calmly, and in the right order and the evidence will all come out in sequence. After all this happens I have no doubt that we will be justified: either you will say that Ivan is totally crazy, is relying on empty words and not stating the truth. I think that in the coming weeks we will see who is telling the truth and who is not.

103. Before I conclude this program, I wish to thank you for patiently hearing us out. I promise you that there will be more there would be more. I wish now, to give the last word to Khaled Ibrahim who has my full respect that although he is human like us all and is therefore not perfect, but in this case what you are saying seems to be totally true. I believe it because it is backed by other sources. I give him the last word to close the program.
104. Khaled: The very first thing thank you, thank you very much to Malta, thank you to all the Maltese aid given to Libya and all casualties. From the beginning of the war till today.
105. I do not have any personal problem with any person not even Neville Gafà when he gave me the file back with the is missing money, I did not speak badly about him. Neither about him nor about his family and thank you very much to Ambassador Mannie Galea and his family because when war broke out, he took care of the wounded at the airport even until midnight. We will never forget that. Everyone in and out of Libya says thank you very much to him. Everyone knows my house people may come and knock any time for help.
106. Ivan: Let me just ask you one more thing before we close. Did you want to bring this government down? The exactly is your purpose behind all of this?
107. Khaled: We have much respect to the minister and even Prime Minister Muscat. I never spoke badly about them. I brought over businessmen and always praised Malta and the Malta government. And we don't have problems with all of them. Today I talk with businessmen in Libya and outside Libya and I would still bring them. Because we love Malta as if we are one family. Malta and Libya were always close.
108. Ivan: On behalf of Alleanza Bidla (Alliance for Change) I promise you to work so that the friendship between Malta and Libya will not keep being broken and abused but we will work hard to improve it. I ask our followers to keep following this program because more facts will be coming out and I also invite government and opposition to meet with us around a table so that rather than making things worse, we can work together to fix things on equal terms and we can also stop any more present damage to Malta.
109. Thank you for being with us.