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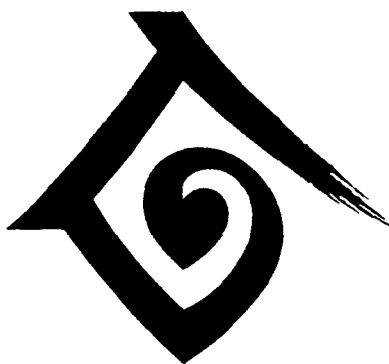
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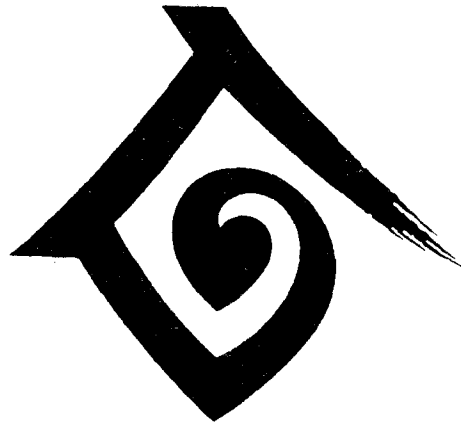
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**PRESENTATION
OF THE
MALTA
NATIONAL COMMITTEE
FOR THE
INTERNATIONAL YEAR
OF THE FAMILY 1994**



**MINISTRY FOR HOME AFFAIRS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
ST VENERA - MALTA
NOVEMBER 1993**



A heart sheltered by a roof, linked by another heart, to symbolise life and love in a home where one finds warmth, caring, security, togetherness, tolerance and acceptance - that is the symbolism conveyed by the emblem of the International Year of the Family (IYF), 1994. The open design is meant to indicate continuity with a hint of uncertainty. The brush stroke, with its open line roof, completes an abstract symbol representing the complexity of the family.

The "wind of change" has arrived and is having its repercussions at the very core of the family. The Maltese family, with its support systems, is resourceful enough to cope with the new needs and problems emerging from social change and development.

The Government is aware of the importance of the role of the family, as a basic unit of society. Its policy legislation, social, economic and educational services considering families as "partners" in social policy integrated in the family.

REPORT IN THE MALTA NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE FAMILY 1994

INTRODUCTION

The family is deeply rooted in Maltese society. The family is indeed "the heart of society" and as such it has traditionally occupied a pivotal role. Family kinship and solidarity in a small-scale society are very evident. The Maltese family is closely knit and cares for any relative in need. Though families have become smaller, the love, care and education of children is a very important value.

With its human and religious values, it is resourceful enough to tackle new needs and changes.

PROMOTION ON NEW LEGISLATION

The Malta Government's commitment of the welfare of the family is evidenced by its involvement in the I.Y.F.

When on the 8th December 1989, resolution 44/82 was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly proclaiming 1994 as the International Year of the Family, the Maltese Government set out to make this effective.

On the 23 August 1990, through the senior advisor of the Ministry for Social Policy, Rev Charles G Vella, contact was made with the coordinator for the International Year of the Family, Mr Henryk J Sokalski.

On the 16th November 1991, the Minister for Social Policy, Dr Louis Galea, appointed the National IYF Committee. The Committee groups together governmental and non-governmental agencies involved in family social affairs. The Minister acts as President, whilst Rev Charles G Vella as Chairman of the National Committee.

The aim of the Committee is within the objectives and proposals made by the Secretariat for the IYF, with whom close contact was established.

The National Committee is focusing very much on a policy of ongoing actions, which will strengthen the rights and duties of the family.

THE IYF COMMISSIONS

The Committee is focusing on "families" in a pluralistic society which it considers to be the principal actors of the IYF. It intends to organize its activities not for, but with families. The involvement of families is indispensable for an effective program.

The aim of these Commissions is to decentralize its work to involve various experts and families in the implementation of the IYF program. The Commissions are coordinated by the IYF Secretariat. On the 20th August 1992 the National Committee constituted the following Commissions, in which families and specialists in family work collaborate.

1. Family Study and Research Commission

Research is the tool for "listening" to the needs, expectations and anxieties of the changing Maltese family. This Commission, composed of researchers, family social workers and families, has undertaken a research program on the Maltese family involving about 500 families. The overall objective of this project is to carry out a comprehensive evaluation of the resources of the Maltese family in the contemporary socio-economic scenario, identifying how it acts and is acted upon by external and internal factors.

The Commission is in contact with the United Nations Development and Humanitarian Affairs Vienna, hoping to establish a permanent Institute for Research and Study for the Mediterranean.

This Commission is also collaborating with the University of Malta.

2. Family and Education Commission

This Commission has as its objective the review of existing social services and their integration with families. It is studying how to find ways and means to disseminate information on services, the study of existing legislation, the provision of a database on existing services and the involvement of social workers, counsellors and families in IYF.

The Family Law and new Children's Law will also be closely monitored by this Commission. This Commission will give priority to families with special needs (broken families, one parent families, handicapped, poor, emarginated.)

Through the U.N. Institute for Aging, Valletta, and the Parliamentary Secretariat for Aging, the Committee will also consider the needs and the involvement of the elderly during the years.

3. Family and Education Commission

The Ministry and the Department of Education are very involved in this Commission. Its objectives include both the formal and informal education and focus mainly on the roles of parent as educators.

The Commission is preparing an overall educational program for families and all grades of schools. The objective will be the promotion of the IYF theme, and its dissemination amongst parents, educators and students.

4. Family and Media Commission

Families are the focus of this Commission through media education. The aim is to employ the use of the media to promote human values.

Through information and education this Commission will use all the media to promote IYF. This will be done with the cooperation of journalists and broadcasters.

The various activities include: a tele-serial of a story based on the Maltese family, documentaries, videocassettes, publications, posters and tele-spots.

An Educational Seminar will be held for media people with the participation of families.

5. Family and Art Commission

Art is a form of communication for the families and young people. The involvement of artists, musicians, etc., will be very much sought by this Commission.

The activities will include: art exhibitions, schools competitions, concerts, floral exhibitions, youth celebrations and other activities.

The issue of a set of special IYF Postage Stamps will also be one of the main activities. Families will be always participating in these activities.

6. Family and Future Generations Commission

The involvement of young people, through the local youth organisations, is a priority for the National Committee.

Information about the U.N.'s objectives for IYF have to flow to young people. The education of young people in family values and relationships will be the Athenian of this commission.

Young people will be involved through music, art, sports, voluntary work etc., to promote programs to celebrate the IYF.

Special attention will be given to young people with special needs (physically disabled, drugs, juvenile problems, AIDS)

Malta and United Nations

Right from the outset the Malta Government responded in a very positive manner to the United Nations plans for the IYF. Evidence of this is the special testimonial given by the United Nations IYF Office to the Maltese National Committee " for its dynamism and initiative in promoting the International Year of the Family, including organisation of international events on behalf of the Year." (03/12/92)

This collaboration has been in connection with the organisation of the Preparatory Conference for the U.N. European/North American Region at the Mediterranean Conference Center, Valletta. The local Committee on behalf of the government has organised the meeting.

The Maltese delegation at the meeting of the U.N. Commission for Social Development, meeting in Vienna (8-17 February 1993), gave its support together with other 21 countries to the resolution (Agenda item 4) for the "Monitoring of International Plans and Programs for Action" for the Year. The Malta Government commits itself to this resolution and hopes to involve itself in the " two plenary meetings of the General Assembly" (No 17) and in

particular with recommendation 20 (a) as regards the "desirability to work out a declaration on the role, responsibilities and rights of families on the occasion of the IYF."

The Malta Government has also accepted to host the NGO World Forum, organised by the Vienna "NGO Committee for the Family", which will be held in Malta from the 28th November to the 2nd December 1993. This has been described in the Committee for Social Development resolution as "a major global initiative" to convene a world non-governmental forum entitled "Launching the IYF 1994. - Strengthening Families for the well-being of Individuals and Societies."

National Seminars

The Committee started its promotional work with a National Seminar for all government and non-governmental agencies to introduce the objectives of the Year. This was held at the New Dolmen Hotel, Qawra; about 200 people participated.

The second National Seminar in preparation for the World NGO Forum was held at Monoel Island, Gzira, on Sunday, 24 October 1993. The theme in the light of the local situation and needs was presented to about 150 participants.

The Seminar was addressed by Dr Louis Galea, Minister for Home Affairs and Social Development, who described how the government intended to promote the IYF, through the principles of family participation, legislation and services. Special focus was made on families in needs regarding access to services, employment, housing, social benefits and assistance.

Father Charles G Vella, Chairman, gave an overview of the needs of grass-root families in the light of the present social and economic conditions. Special attention was given to the challenges awaiting families in the coming millennium.

Ten Work Groups discussed various topics, namely, the Rights and Duties of Families, the participation of Families, NGO's, Schools, Universities, Trade Unions, Media and Church in the IYF. The reports proved to be a listening process on what the Committee should focus on to formulate a concrete "Plan of Action" for IYF.

Various other Seminars will be held for Parents, Teachers, Social Workers, Media, Young people and also children. This will be a pedagogic process to bring about an awareness of family values in the light of the United Nations objectives for the IYF.

The UN, booklet on the IYF published by the Vienna Secretariat has been translated into Maltese. This booklet will serve as a guide for the IYF. An additional section covers the local activities and proposals for the IYF.

Action for 1994

The UN and the NGO World Forum in preparation for the IYF have thrust on the local Committee and Secretariat considerable work. The organisation of these two important meetings required planning, organisation, financial means and involvement to ensure the success of these meetings.

The experience achieved from the presence of the foreign participants will be a fruitful exercise in the Plan of Action for 1994.

The Committee has received many interesting proposals and must now establish its priorities, according to the Committee's limitations.

The phasing of the work of the Committee has been divided as follows:

Phase one: 1992 Preliminary action to set up and mobilise the organisational structure: Committee, Commissions, Contacts with U.N., Council of Europe, Family NGO Committee (Vienna), etc.

Phase Two: 1993 Preparation for the Plan of Action, the European/North American U.N. Meeting, the World NGO Forum, etc.

Phase Three: 1994 The celebration of the IYF.

Phase Four: 1995 Follow-up of the IYF and on-going process of activities in support of the family.

The following are some of the proposed actions for the IYF (in addition to those already mentioned):

- Opening of the IYF: 1 January.
- Observance of the annual Family Feast (celebrated since 1956) in January.
- Issue of a set of Postage Stamps.
- Presentation of the findings of the Research Project.
- Legislation in Parliament: (new Family Law, Children's Law).

- Family of the Year Award.
- The formation of a National Council for the Family: To advise on family policy and promote national strategies for family support.
- Focus on Family issues: harmonising of family life, social environment of families, family-oriented housing, women's role, employment, etc. Information and educational campaign on these issues.
- Educational Seminars on the family for parents, teachers, social workers, counsellors, youths and children.
- A program for all schools on information and education.
- Sports, Tourism, Arts and Environment in the service of families.
- A Family Day in all the local Patron Saints' Feasts held in the parishes of Malta.
- The establishment of a School for Parents to support parents in the education of children.
- Various actions to strengthen the Parent-Teacher Associations.
- A campaign for the prevention and education of Families on Health.
- An intentional Conference on family research, in view of establishing a Mediterranean Center for the Study and Research on Families.
- Publication of a Newsletter on IYF, information leaflets on family services, special editions of newspapers and magazines on the family.
- An illustrated Calendar for Families (1994).
- Special promotion on the IYF in pre-marriage courses (obligatory by the Church in Malta).
- Coordination with the UN Institute for Aging (Valletta), the "Committee for Social Policy" of the Council of Europe, U.N.E.S.C.O., and other international governmental and non-governmental organisations.

Conclusion

We believe that the IYF has had a good start in Malta. The encouragement and inspiration of the UN Vienna Secretariat, particularly Mr Henryk J. Sokalski, has been a major contribution.

The Committee wishes to thank the government and all the voluntary organisations, which have already committed themselves in support of the IYF.

All this has been possible and will be only possible through the involvement of all grass-root families, who are the chief actors of the Year.

The International Year of the Family comes at a very important stage in the social development of the Islands of Malta and Gozo.

Our hope is that through the International Year of the Family we can renew the Maltese family to build ... A MORE FAMILY-FRIENDLY SOCIETY.

(Sgd)LOUIS GALEA
President of the
National Committee
International Year of the Family

(Sgd) Charles G Vella
Chairman of the National Committee

Malta: 16 November 1993

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE FAMILY FLOW CHART

MINISTRY FOR HOME AFFAIRS AND SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT

NATIONAL COMMITTEE
INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE FAMILY

Commission
for Family &
Media

Commission
for Family &
Art

Commission
for Family &
Youth

Commission
for Family &
Education

Commission
for Family &
Social Work

COMMISSION FOR FAMILY & RESEARCH

FINANCIAL COMMISSION

SECRETARIAT - PRESS OFFICE

