



## Commissioner for Standards in Public Life

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30<sup>th</sup> October 2019

H.E. George Vella  
President of Malta  
The Palace  
Valletta

Excellency,

### **Proposals on constitutional reform**

Please find attached six copies of a report entitled *Towards Higher Standards in Public Life: Proposals to Modernise the Provisions of the Constitution on Parliament, the Judiciary and Public Administration*. This report is my office's contribution to the process of constitutional reform under your chairmanship.

The report sets out detailed proposals for constitutional change that take two parallel approaches to the attainment of higher standards in public life. The proposals aim to strengthen the independence of the external checks and balances applying to the executive – namely Parliament and the judiciary. They also aim to strengthen the internal checks and balances within government by better regulating the appointment of persons of trust, reinforcing the principle of merit, and extending it to senior positions.

The report includes an annex setting out detailed amendments to the text of the Constitution. The aim is to give those responsible for vetting submissions on your behalf a fuller understanding of what is being proposed in this report and, in the event that any of the proposals are accepted, to give the drafters of a revised Constitution a ready starting-point when preparing legal amendments based on them.



The report addresses constitutional issues that I have encountered as Commissioner for Standards. However, it also goes beyond the remit of my office as defined by the Standards in Public Life Act. Efforts to bring about higher standards should address issues and institutions that fall outside the scope of the Act, and the process of constitutional reform under your chairmanship presents the ideal opportunity for this.

The report also draws on my own past experience as member of Parliament, as Parliamentary Secretary, as president of the Chamber of Advocates and as member of the Judicial Appointments Committee. The report also draws on the experience of the Director General in my office as Director and later Director General in the Office of the Prime Minister and as Executive Secretary to the Public Service Commission. Both of us have been keen to contribute to the process of constitutional reform, and we look forward to future developments in this field.

We would be happy to discuss the report or provide any clarifications concerning it should you or the Constitutional Reform Committee so wish.

Yours sincerely,

George Marius Hyzler  
Commissioner for Standards in Public Life