

Hon. Mrs. Giovanna Debono
Minister for Gozo

Speech on the inauguration of the exhibition
“Landscape Architecture Proposals for Gozo”
Thursday, 19 February 2004



Hon. Mrs. Giovanna Debono, Minister for Gozo at the inauguration

It is indeed my pleasure to inaugurate this exhibition of works by students of the „Master of Landscape Architecture Program“ at Anhalt University of Applied Sciences (Germany). First of all, I would like to thank and congratulate the professors and students for the initiative, especially for choosing the island of Gozo in which, and for which to conduct this very interesting project.

The proposals for landscape architecture on our island are indeed proposals worth noting. They give due consideration to the problems the island faces in its route of progress while, at the same time, provide alternatives for sustainable development. Your proposals maintain the rural and Mediterranean feel the island is so proud of.

For centuries, the island based its economic activity around agriculture, which although is still existing healthily, is not so popular with the younger generation any more. Agriculture made it possible for a more aesthetic and rural feel which the island still maintains. However, in the last thirty years, with the advent of the services industry, particularly tourism, the necessity for increased infrastructural development has been felt.

Gozo therefore realized it cannot remain at a standstill. Tourism, coupled with globalization, pushed Gozo to move ahead with times. Our island could not remain the idyllic holiday destination where progress is inexistent. Gozo realized it has to balance out its needs for increased development, as well as the inhabitants' and tourists' necessity of a high quality of life.

This is our constant approach. My government gives particular attention on Gozo's individual identity and culture in our plans to improve the quality of the life on the island. The Ministry for Gozo in particular gives due importance to the island's aesthetic landscape. To mention one example, the Ministry has embarked on a programme to restore the traditional rubble walls in fields scattered across the island – a particular characteristic which has an aesthetic and an environmental impact, which was not given its due importance for a number of years.

The Ministry has other plans. Together with the other stake holders, the Ministry for Gozo is launching the Dwejra Management Committee in a few weeks. This Management Committee will assess this area of archaeological, ecological and biological importance and come up with short-, medium- and long-term proposals for its sustainable management.

And the list goes on. However, the occasion for which we are here gathered today is to better appreciate how we could all help in transforming Gozo into a better place. Government, with its limited resources, is striving to achieve the most it can. However, not all rest with government. Each and every one of us can improve the spaces around us by giving them their due attention.

May this exhibition result in an awareness of the importance landscape, architecture, planning and development place on the environs around us. May we realise and understand better the benefits attained from managing





Inauguration of exhibition at Ministry of Gozo on 19. Febuary 2004



Exhibition, Ministry of Gozo in Febuary 2004

sustainable development.

I, once again, congratulate the students and their professors on their remarkable work, and officially declare this exhibition open to the public.

Victoria, Gozo, February 2004
Honourable Giovanna Debono
Minister for Gozo