

## PRESS RELEASE 02/2020

3 March 2020

### Crisis is far from over



K A M R A T A L - P E R I T I

*To support members of the profession in achieving excellence in their practice of architecture and engineering in the interest of the community*

The *Kamra tal-Periti* is deeply saddened by Monday's tragedy which prematurely claimed the life of Miriam Pace, forever shattering her family's serenity as a result of yet another serious construction incident. The *Kamra tal-Periti* expresses its heartfelt condolences to the victim's family.

It is painfully clear that the crisis that befell the building and construction industry last year has not been resolved through the hastily drafted regulations that were brought into force in July 2019.

The calls which the *Kamra* has been making since 2007 for a comprehensive reform of the construction industry have regrettably not been heeded. It took the three collapses that occurred in quick succession in 2019 for the *Kamra tal-Periti* to eventually secure a [written commitment from Government to implement its three main demands for reform in the interest of public safety](#).

The first reform consists in the setting up of the Building and Construction Authority, that will be tasked with implementing the proposed building and construction regulation framework "[A Modern Building and Construction Regulation Framework for Malta](#)" published by the *Kamra tal-Periti* in May 2019. This framework focussed on a number of principles including:

- 1) The consolidation under the new Authority of the regulatory functions currently dispersed in at least 24 government departments and authorities;
- 2) The issuance of a comprehensive set of building and construction regulations in line with those in force in other European countries;
- 3) The obligatory registration, licensing and classification of contractors and skilled labourers, coupled with rigorous training and education.

The second reform is the promulgation of a revised law to regulate *periti* to ensure that the profession can modernise itself, that the *Kamra's* role to hold warrant holders accountable is strengthened, and that mandatory professional indemnity insurance and continuous professional development are introduced.

The third demand consisted in the repeal of LN 136 of 2019 as part of the overhaul of the regulatory framework. The *Kamra* has consistently maintained that the regulations brought into force last year did not adequately address the crisis, but rather made the situation worse by adding further confusion on the roles and responsibilities on construction sites.

Despite [Government's commitment in writing to take on the necessary measures](#), the much-needed reforms have not as yet been implemented. Some initial progress has been registered through the setting up of the Building and Construction Agency, which remains however severely under-resourced and

incapable of tackling the complexities of the building industry. There has been little progress in all other areas.

Various sectors such as blockchain, artificial intelligence and gaming have received Government's deserved attention over recent years, yet the construction industry, which is one of the main contributors to the country's GDP, remains the most unregulated one, claiming the lives of innocent persons on an all too regular basis.

Government is called upon to demonstrate firm resolve to urgently but diligently bring about the necessary reforms.

The *Kamra* remains committed to ensure that the profession acts with utmost diligence and to assist Government in implementing the overdue reforms, and to offer its support and technical resources to Government to ensure that its reform proposals, which received strong support from all industry stakeholders, are brought into force as quickly as possible in the interest of public safety.