



Press Release

NGOs CALL POLITICAL PARTIES TO UNITE AGAINST SPRING HUNTING

15 May 2007, Malta - In a joint statement Gaia, Din l-Art Helwa, Nature Trust (Malta), Friends of the Earth (Malta), Ramblers Association and BirdLife Malta today urged the Malta Labour Party to take a clear stand against spring hunting in the Maltese Islands. The Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) stated that the issue was a matter of nature conservation and Malta's international image and not a political one. It is the duty of all political parties in Malta to unite on such environmental issues for our common heritage, the NGOs stated.

Spring hunting is not allowed within the European Union in order to protect wild birds before they are about to reproduce in their breeding grounds in Europe. In spite of the ongoing infringement procedure opened by the European Commission the government had opened another spring hunting season in 2007, a fourth consecutive breach of the EU Birds Directive since Malta joined the EU. However following illegal killing of many protected birds the Government decided to abruptly end the spring hunting season 10 days before it was originally planned to.

The NGOs welcomed this positive decision and stated that this should be the end of spring hunting and trapping in Malta for ever. "We appeal to all political parties to respect the EU bird protection law, show their commitment to protect birds before they are about to reproduce and not risk allowing our country's international image to deteriorate any further" the NGOs concluded.

ENDS