



6th October, 2007

Illegal work can no longer be tolerated - MEP

- “*With this law, we are sending a clear message that Europe is no longer a place to work illegally*” – MEP Simon Busuttil.

MEP Simon Busuttil held a consultation meeting on the proposed directive providing for sanctions against employers of illegally staying third-country nationals at ‘*Dar il-Qawsalla*’ in Birkirkara which operates as an open centre accommodating immigrants.

Dr Busuttil is the EPP’s spokesperson on this law and will be responsible for tabling amendments on behalf of the group in the European Parliament.

Dr Busuttil was greeted by Alex Tortell on behalf of the Organisation for the Integration and Welfare of Asylum Seekers who welcomed Dr Busuttil’s initiative to listen to immigrants and NGOs on the new EU draft law.

Introducing the draft legislation, Simon Busuttil said that this law is not intended to propose all solutions to the challenge of immigration but is just one of a set of measures in the area of immigration that are currently up for debate at EU level.

Immigrants present at the consultation meeting intervened and suggested improvements to the draft legislation which Dr Busuttil said that he would carefully consider.

Reacting to an intervention made by an immigrant from Somalia, Dr Busuttil welcomed a suggestion to call on Member States to establish a specific national contact point where people could report cases of exploitative working conditions and non-payment of wages.

Referring to the proposed ‘EU Blue Card’ announced recently by Commission Vice-President Franco Frattini, Dr Busuttil said that this will provide a legal route for highly skilled immigrants to enter Europe legally rather than illegally, although he admitted that this could exacerbate problems of brain drain in the African continent.

This was the second consultative meeting that Dr Busuttil conducted on this draft law after having met the Maltese Ministers responsible for immigration and employment. The third consultation meeting will be taking place this Friday with employers and trade unions.

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