



# Workers' Day 2023

## *SUBSIDIES, YES. BUT WAGES FIRST!*

A Statement by Żgħażaġħ Haddiema Nsara on Workers' Day 2023

In our country, some are under the impression that our economy is booming. We do not feel competent to make a holistic professional assessment of this impression.

However, it is evident that we are living in a system where the rich are getting richer and the poor are struggling to make ends meet. The mirage of trickle-down economics is now recognised to be the flooding-up of wealth among the rich. While some are given hefty salaries without merit, others are left to toil for meagre wages. This is why food banks and soup kitchens are mushrooming in twenty-first-century Malta.

The proverbial “invisible hand” of the economy is no longer invisible nor morally or socially responsible. Its actions are instead orchestrated by a clique of self-interested individuals who run a system made to satisfy the greed of the rich leaving inequality and injustice in its wake. In the face of this insatiable, unruly greed and the exploitation of the most vulnerable the government is trying to address the situation by paternalistically providing subsidies – to both the rich and the poor. Often, subsidies are only palliatives and can be a form of capitalist alienation.

Subsidies yes, but wages first. While the ŻĦN recognises that subsidies in the short term address immediate economic failures and challenges, we insist on decent work conditions and a fair wage for all as a permanent solution to the ever widening gap between rich and poor. We cannot accept a situation where a worker has to beg his master 'can I have some more' in order to make ends meet!

Otherwise for many the minimum wage will become the maximum wage!