
*Speech delivered by H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta, at the
Malta's Best Entrepreneur of the Year Award, 20 September 2018*

Distinguished guests,

Dear friends.

I would like to thank the organisers, Martin Vella and his team, for inviting me to address this prestigious event, which is also the ninth edition of Malta's Best Entrepreneur of the Year Award.

I would also like to acknowledge this evening's awardees, the business leaders present, and our international guests.

I would like to thank the business community for creating prosperity in the Maltese Islands. Another thank you goes to all those businesses who have not only indulged in economic operations, but also took on board a commitment towards corporate social responsibility.

Therefore I would like to take this opportunity to encourage those businesses who have embraced initiatives for the social good, to continue with their CSR commitments, and at the same time, encourage those businesses who have as yet to decide to pursue such an agenda.

I believe that all enterprises, including middle and small sized businesses, have a vital role to play, in our country, not only to nurture innovative strategies to enhance our prosperity, but also to commit towards effective social justice.

Research is showing us that businesses that have taken on board an effective CSR strategy, by implementing policies and procedures which integrate social, environmental, and human rights issues into their business operations, are companies with a competitive edge.

A 2011 research study conducted by the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry, and Bank of Valletta indicated that 79% of those companies upholding Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives reported that they had experienced direct benefits.

Let me also mention, a recent study by a London-based institute, also found that businesses, which had a commitment to corporate social responsibility, have substantially outperformed those that do not.

This same study found, that these businesses showed an average return on assets which was 19 times higher, while also proving that CSR-oriented companies had a higher level of employee engagement and better standards of customer service.

I must also take this opportunity to thank you, for the contribution being made, through the Malta's Best Entrepreneur of the Year Award, in aid of the Malta Community Chest Fund Foundation.

The Malta Community Chest Fund Foundation works to ensure that the dignity of every citizen who needs its support is safeguarded.

The MCCFF provides much-needed care and support, to individuals and families who experience sickness, vulnerability, precarity, and other disadvantages.

The Malta Community Chest Fund Foundation offers assistance for on-going financial, material, and professional support, to people undergoing challenges resulting from chronic illness, disability, poverty, unemployment, or lack of access to adequate resources.

These funds provide life-changing, and in some cases, life-saving care.

These are the reasons why the Malta Community Chest Fund Foundation requires your invaluable support, to continue its work.

Let me take this opportunity to commend the countless individuals, organisations, and businesses, who are making such an important difference in the lives of others.

I truly thank you, and I wish all of you every success in your endeavours.