

**NOMINA TA' PROF MARK PAUL BRINCAT GHALL-HATRA TA'  
AMBAXXATUR TA' MALTA MHUX RESIDENTI GHALL-KIRGIŽISTAN**

*Mistoqsijiet sottomessi mill-Membri tal-Gvern*

1. X'taħseb li huma l-isfidi li qed tara fil-pajjiż rispettiv fejn se tinħatar bħala Ambaxxatur? U kif qieghed tara dawn l-isfidi jiġu indirizzati f'dan il-pajjiż?

My name has been put forward for the post of a non-resident Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan.

This Central Asian Republic has been a relatively closed area for many years and is only now emerging and opening up. It is the least known of the five 'stans', namely Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan. All these are former Soviet (USSR) republics who have a shared common history. My biggest challenge is to put Malta's name on their radar and persuade them that we are an important player in the EU, which routinely punches above our weight.

2. X'inhuma l-binarij, b'mod ġenerali, li beħsiebek taħdem fuqhom f'każ li tinħatar Ambaxxatur?

Kyrgyzstan borders with China. It has long formed part of the last but very important lap of the ancient Silk Road, the Track Road that linked Rome to China. This road, has often been disrupted in history for various reasons but trade keeps going. Marco Polo describing it in his famous book *Il Milione* describes it in its entirety. At the time the Mongol Empire secured its entire length from the Middle East through Central Asia and China. China's policy in its Belt and Road initiative which has made huge progress makes it possible, should I be made Ambassador, to enable me to help persuade Kyrgyzstan, a valuable close player in the Belt and Road initiative to use Malta and its facilities and as an important link. Given our valuable close links with China, and China's resources in Malta, Kyrgyzstan goods, both from the Republic itself or in transit could be routed, also in transit to the Maltese port facilities.

3. Bħala Ambaxxatur, kif tara li x-xogħol tiegħek jista' jwassal sabiex jiżdiedu u jitjiebu r-rabtiet politiċi u soċjali ma' pajjiżna?

I would advise to improve the political and social relations with our country very much in line with what has been achieved in China, whilst bearing in mind that Kyrgyzstan with its 73% Turkik population has different views and perspectives.

4. Liema taħseb li huma l-isfidi prinċipali li għandna negħlbu sabiex insaħħu r-relazzjoni bejn iż-żewġ pajjiżi?

The lack of knowledge that both our countries have of each other is the major problem that needs to be overcome. I see this as a pioneering mission where we as Maltese are starting from scratch. Fortunately, we also have a common language in trade, education, Health and tourism. We need to start by getting to know each other better. We also need to determine our common strengths and goals.

5. X'taħseb li huma n-niċeċ li nistgħu insibu sinerġiji fuqhom bejn Malta u l-pajjiż rispettiv li int se tkun se tirrapreżenta lil pajjiżna?

I see us developing the following areas together. Trade obviously is important. Kyrgyzstan has valuable rare earth mineral resources used in electronics, energy and defence systems. We can help develop a number of areas e.g. pharma industry, a tourism industry, a tertiary education resource as well as help develop a health, and a financial services industry.

Kyrgyzstan has been described as the Switzerland of Central Asia and boasts little known ski slopes as well as fantastic treks and areas of natural beauty, that can be admired and made more accessible and known to the general public.

Kyrgyzstan trades a variety of natural products. It has abundant mineral resources like gold, rare earth minerals and coal, oil and natural gas. Many of these resources are still untapped.

There are additionally agricultural products and these high quality products are exportable. These include dried fruits, nuts, kidney beans and honey. Meat, dairy and leather products as well as are exported. Kyrgyzstan exports textiles and has a massive manufacturing industry.

Kyrgyzstan is strategically located along the key overland routes from China to Europe and West Asia. It functions as a major transit and export hub. It would be in Malta's interest for us to be connected to this hub becoming their secure entry to Europe. This of course would necessitate a connection with a sea route or continue, with the long overland route.

6. Kif tara li għandna nsaħħu r-relazzjonijiet kummerċjali u ekonomiċi bejn iż-żewġ pajjiżi rispettivi?

I have already referred to this above. I see us playing a part in the Belt and Road Initiative. This also includes sea routes. Kyrgyzstan is land bound, so through finding a suitable port for them to use, we can then be part of sea route trading in foods from Kyrgyzstan or using Kyrgyzstan as a transit hub.

I feel we should cooperate with Shipping lines so as to be part of this initiative, passing through the Suez, to Malta. From Malta these goods can go to Europe.

The most important problem I repeat is the relative lack of knowledge of each other. Rather than seminars, I would prefer direct negotiations, with prominent Government delegations.

7. F'dan ir-rigward, tara li hemm trattati li jistgħu jithaddmu aħjar bejn iż-żewġ pajjiżi? Jew trattati oħra li għandhom jiġu esplorati għaž-żmien li ġej?

The current Prime Minister known as the Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic is **Adylbec Kasymaliev**' Direct negotiations with concerned

Ministries are important Kyrgyzstan however has a presidential system where the **President Sadyr Japrov** has been the elected President since 2020. A number of treaties can be explored, in so far as EU regulations allows us. Areas such as Trade, Education, Health, Financial matters, Taxation, Travel are strong possibilities to begin with.

8. Taħseb li hemm lok għal iżjed koperazzjoni fil-qasam tat-turiżmu bejn iż-żewġ pajjiżi rispettivi?

There is huge potential for the development of tourism with Kyrgyzstan tourism. Our knowhow will be invaluable there. There is otherwise limited tourism potential from their side to ours.

However, if we open up to their Tertiary Education students coming to Malta, this can be increased. Certainly, I can see increasing numbers of Maltese travelling to see the beautiful countryside and cities of Kyrgyzstan. Two particular Bishkek, the capital city is a post Russian city, and Osh the old capital of the ancient Khanate of Khotan. There is also a local cuisine that extends to neighbouring Uzbekistan.

9. Fuq livell ta' Politika Ewropea u Internazzjonali, tara bejn iż-żewġ pajjiżi rispettivi li jistgħu jsaħħu l-koperazzjoni bejniethom b'mod partikolari fuq livell ta' Unjoni Ewropea?

I can see us acting as a proxy for Kyrgyzstan with the EU. I would like to be part of an EU initiative that recognises even more fully the value and resources of this Central Asian Republic and opens new fora for trade and cooperation whilst building strong bilateral relations between the two countries.

10. Tista' tispjega lill-Kumitat dwar jekk kontx involut matul il-karriera tiegħek fi ħdan il-Korp Diplomatiku u/jew il-Ministeru tal-Affarijiet Barranin?

I have served as a senior Civil Servant for 30 years since retiring from the UK, after a 14 year period during which I completed my medical school training, my specialisation and my PhD Research degree at King's College, London. I came back as a Consultant in 1990. In 1991 I was appointed as the Director of the Maternity Services within the Maltese Islands within the Department of Health and Head of the Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology at the University of Malta. The post was a 'Grade 3' within the Civil Service. At this post I was involved, right up to my retirement with overlapping interests with the Foreign Office and also had involvement in negotiations especially those related to Health and Education. Furthermore, I had regular contact with Diplomats accredited to Malta, notably the British High Commissioner, the USA, the Italian and Egyptian Ambassadors and Diplomats amongst others. The French awarded me the highest honour to a non-Frenchman, the Chevalier of the Legion D'Honneur in Recognition of the work that I had done to promote French Research and industry in Malta. I was Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery for two consecutive terms, so this brought me with constant contact with diplomats.

11. Tista' tindika x'karigi għandek fil-preżent u jekk kemm-il darba tinħatar bhala Ambaxxatur hux se tkun qed iżżomm xi kariga minnhom?

I retired from the Civil Service through the normal retirement age. I am currently Visiting Professor In O&G at the University of Malta and an Honorary Professor of Medical Education at the Barts Campus in Malta and QMUL in London. I also have a private practice that allows me flexibility. Since my name is being put forward for a non-resident Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan, I believe I can cope with keeping all my current posts.

12. Tista' tindika jekk għandek xi attivitajiet kummerċjali? Jekk iva, tista' tindika jekk dawn l-attivitajiet kummerċjali jikkostitwixxu xi konflitt ta' interest ma' din il-kariga prospettiva?

I have no business or commercial activity that could lead to a conflict of interest.

13. Tista' tinforma lill-kumitat jekk diġà kellekx jew għandekx xi rabtiet jew investimenti kummerċjali mal-pajjiż rispettiv?

I neither have or ever had any ties or commercial interests with Kyrgyzstan.

#### *Mistoqsijiet sottomessi mill-Membri tal-Oppożizzjoni*

1. Kif tiddekrivi r-rwol ta' Ambaxxatur ta' Malta mhux residenti għall-Kirgizistan?

I would describe the role of a non-resident Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan, as one that takes a very active interest in that Republic through reading and getting to know as much about the country and where necessary virtual meetings will need to be held in all our interest areas. This will be implemented by the required visits of the Republic as well as to helping host any Kyrgyzstan delegation that visits Malta.

2. Tista' tindika, fl-opinjoni tiegħek, liema huma l-isfidi prinċipali fir-relazzjonijiet bejn Malta u l-Kirgizistan?

Since I have dealt with this question above and in order not to sound repetitive, I would like to reiterate that the major challenges that we face is the fact that we have to start this Embassy from scratch. Furthermore, we need to ensure that we get to know each other better and explore the nature, culture, historical and potential context of our respective countries.

3. Tista' tispejga x'inhuma l-pożizzjonijiet u interessi komuni li aħna nħaddnu mal-Kirgizistan?

I feel that Malta as a nation and as part of the EU, indeed the EU itself needs to strengthen its ties with Central Asia and become a key player in the area. Kyrgyzstan offers a perfect opportunity in that it is an emerging nation and one of the five 'Stans', with a large potential. I see Malta and Kyrgyzstan as being important players in the

Chinese Belt and Road Initiative thus playing a crucial role in the development of links and cultural ties between the two republics.

4. X'preparazzjoni u formazzjoni għandek fi hdan il-korp diplomatiku?

Although I had no direct training in the Diplomatic Corps, I have been a senior civil servant (Grade 3) for 22 years. I have been a Head of a University Department for over 20 years and Dean for two consecutive terms. I have extensive overseas experience. I have travelled widely and have travelled extensively giving lectures, due to my academic and professional roles. I have lectured extensively in my field of expertise and research interest.

5. Qatt ġejt assenjat ġewwa ambaxxata jew irċevejt xi forma ta' taħriġ fid-diplomazija?

I have never been officially assigned to an Embassy I have however played an extensive role in various negotiations with diplomats over the years. The French Embassy even awarded me, the Chevalier de la Legion D'Honneur by the French President M. Jacques Chirac. I have served in countries like Tasmania and St Petersburg, apart from the UK and have lectured in many other places around the world.

6. Qatt kont involut f'negozjati, trattati jew f'dikjarazzjonijiet fl-interess ta' pajjiżna ma' pajjiżi oħra?

I have been involved in several negotiations. The hardest were the Barts Medical School negotiations which I had been asked to initiate. I was also involved in the design of Mater Deo and in the migration process from St Lukes to Mater Dei. There were other negotiations with other countries where I played a role.

7. Tista' tindika jekk kontx impjegat mal-Istat Malti u, jekk iva, f'liema dipartiment/awtorità/entità?

As indicated above, I was a civil servant within the Department of Health from 1990 to 2017 and had a further one year extension so as to set up and finalise the IVF Unit.

From 1991 to 2017, I was the Director of the Maternity Services with the Maltese Islands employed with the Department of Health.

From 1991 onwards I was employed by the University of Malta serving as Professor till present. I was Head of Obstetrics and Gynaecology for 20 years and Dean of Faculty for two consecutive terms which also means that I was a member of Senate at the UOM.

8. Tista' tindika jekk qatt kontx parti minn Segretarjat ta' Ministru jew Segretarju Parlamentari jew jekk hdimtx fil-qrib tagħhom f'dawn l-aħħar snin?

I was never part of any Secretariat or Parliamentary Secretary team. During the Barts negotiations I assisted the Malta Enterprise team but had no official position with Malta Enterprise.

9. Tista' tindika x'karigi tokkupa fil-preżent u liema minnhom beħsiebek iżomm f'każ li tiġi maħtur bhala Ambaxxatur ta' Malta mhux residenti għall-Kirgizistan?

I indicated these above. I retired through the age regulation in 2017.

Since then I am a visiting professor in O&G at UOM. I am an Hon. Associate Dean and Hon Professor Medical Education at QMUL. I also have a private practice and my speciality is Obstetrics & Gynaecology. My workload had diminished since I retired and although I still lecture and travel as necessary, I will not need to give up any of these posts in order to accommodate my prospective post as non-resident ambassador to Kyrgyzstan, should I be appointed.

10. Tista' tindika jekk fil-preżent għandekx attivitajiet kummerċjali? Tista' tindika jekk dawn humiex ser ikunu f'xi kunflitt f'każ li tiġi maħtur Ambaxxatur ta' Malta mhux residenti għall-Kirgizistan?

I have no commercial interests. There is no conflict of interest with my post as non-resident ambassador to Kyrgyzstan.

11. Tista' tiddikjara jekk għandekx xi kunflitt ta' interess f'din il-ħatra tiegħek?

I see no conflict of interest in occupying the post.

12. Tista' tiddikjara jekk għandekx passaport jew ċittadinanza ta' pajjiż ieħor?

I am a dual citizen bearing both a Maltese and British passport.