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Statement from the Malta Basketball Association

The Malta Basketball Association is disappointed with the latest COVID19 measures which were put forth earlier today by the Government and Public Health Authorities.

Just a few days ago, together with the Malta Football Association and the Aquatic Sports Association, the MBA, whilst reiterating the limited impact sport has in the transmission of COVID-1 as per the figures presented by the same health authorities which displayed that the infection rate from sporting events has been of a bare minimum, issued an appeal to the Government and the local health authorities to allow the return of competitive sport, albeit in a gradual way.

In the past months, the MBA, together with its registered clubs, had also made significant efforts and incurred costs to do the very best to ensure a safe environment and adopt an approved COVID19 protocol which was stringent and very responsible including compulsory swab tests for all senior players ahead of any match thereby safeguarding all those involved.

We are happy that players, coaches and officials abided to the protocol imposed as well as the general recommendations and instructions given by the health authorities

All these efforts have been seemingly disregarded with today's decision to prolong further the ban on contact sport. While we generally do appreciate the Government in his handling of the situation, we feel that a blanket approach is being adopted thereby seemingly reflecting that sport is still perceived as an amateur venture.

Our basketball athletes and coaches will still not be allowed access to the training and game facilities as well as the ability to train properly thereby continuing to have an adverse effect at a technical level, both at a local competition level but also detrimental for any forthcoming international commitments as competitive sport is not a matter of switching on or off but of a gradual process of preparation.

In this regard, the MBA is putting forth a heartfelt appeal to the Government and the Health Authorities to urgently give the go ahead for the recommencement of sport, with the necessary health guidelines in place as before,

Whilst hoping and trusting that Government will listen to the various appeals by many sporting actors, apart from basketball, to resume sports, the MBA Council will be meeting in an urgent meeting on Thursday 8th April to discuss these latest matters and the way forward.