

On Reaching Twenty

Professor Juanito Camilleri

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Twenty-one years ago the Hon. Anton Tabone, then Minister for Gozo, consulted with the Minister of Education at the time, Dr Ugo Mifsud Bonnici and with the former University Rector, Professor Peter Serracino Inglott about the possibility of offering University courses in Gozo. He found the support of both the Minister and the Rector. Soon after, Professor Peter Serracino Inglott asked Lino Briguglio to act as Director of the University Gozo Centre, as this campus was originally known. The latter accepted, and without much delay started the ball rolling. Several attempts were made before that year to open a University branch in Gozo, but it was only in 1992 that this became a reality. In February 1992, the statute of the Centre was approved by the University Council, and the first fully-fledged degree course to be offered in Gozo commenced in February 1993.

I am very glad to be writing this piece on the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the University Gozo Campus (UGC). The University is fully aware of the important educational and cultural contribution that this Campus is making to Gozo. The presence of the University in Gozo has made it possible for many Gozitans to follow tertiary educational courses in Gozo, enabling them to enrich their knowledge and improve their career possibilities. The impact of the Centre on Gozitan society, however, extended beyond teaching. It has undertaken research in various subjects associated with Gozo, its economy, physical environment, history and social



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structure. The UGC's presence in Gozo has also enhanced Gozo's intellectual and cultural life, partly as a result of the input made by scholars who regularly visit Gozo to lecture at the Campus.

I am also pleased that the University of Malta has supported and will continue to support the development of the UGC. I am delighted to announce that next year the Campus will offer a new diploma course in Gozo Studies. The course will not only enable students to acquire knowledge about

important aspects of Gozo's culture and history, but will also lead to further research on this small island.

To further strengthen the University of Malta's commitment to Gozo, this year I have decided to appoint Professor Joe Friggieri to take on the role of Pro-Rector for Gozo, not only to oversee the day-to-day management of the UGC, but also to extend the University's participation in the social, cultural and economic life of the Island. While thanking Professor Lino Briguglio for his sterling service, I have not doubt that Professor Friggieri will build on past successes to extend the University's vision for Gozo.

Professor Lino Briguglio with the Hon. Giovanna Debono and Professor Juanito Camilleri at a photo exhibition organised to commemorate the opening of two new lecture halls at the Gozo Campus, March 2011.

