

EXPLANATION OF THE ARMS OF THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF HERALD OF ARMS OF MALTA



The arms used by the *Office of the Chief Herald of Arms of Malta* were approved by the Malta Cabinet Office on 3rd June 2019.

- The motto, 'VIRTUTE ET CONSTANTIA' is incorporated in the Arms of the Office of the Chief Herald in deference to Malta's most senior order, the National Order of Merit.
- The blue disc (in heraldry called a *hurt*), represents the Mediterranean Sea in the centre of which lie the Maltese islands. The golden edge of the Hurt represents Malta's "imperial and royal history" as part of the Kingdom of Aragon and subsequently of Spain, the Principality of Malta at the time of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, the British Empire and lastly the time when Malta was an independent monarchy from 1964 until 1974.
- Malta derives its heraldic heritage from the three main royal authorities which once ruled the Maltese islands and the finials on the Maces represent two of those sources;

The finial of one mace (the *dexter* or left, as you look at the Arms) represents Aragon. It bears the undifferenced Arms of that kingdom. The shield of Aragon is surmounted by the Cross of Aragon.

The finial of the other mace (the *sinister* or right as you look at the Arms) represents the Principality and Fortress of Malta, the seat of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem which defended Malta. The mural crown represents Fortress Malta.

- The Arms bear a *Crest Coronet*. This is a "simple" crest and not a Coronet of rank. The crest coronet of the Chief Herald of Arms of Malta is composed simply of 14 oak leaves, devoid of any royal trappings.
- Naturally the eight-pointed cross – often commonly called the "*Maltese Cross*"- is very closely associated with Malta's history. It also appears on the insignia of the Maltese National Order of Merit and is used in these Arms for its historical legacy and because the Order of Merit is Malta's highest institution of honour.