

Bastions restoration works start



Photo: Saviour Cassar, DOI

Works on the restoration of six kilometres of bastions has started with a €36 million restoration fund.

The works on the Valletta bastions – from St Andrew's Bastion to just beneath Castille, will start soon and scaffolding is being installed. The funds will also be used to restore sections of the bastions at the Cittadella and in Vittoriosa, Mdina and Valletta.

The project is co-funded by the EU.

Resources Minister George Pullicino pointed out that Malta had 60 kilometres of fortifications and a tenth of them would be restored through this fund. This restoration project would create around 120 new jobs.

He said that together with Minister Austin Gatt, he was looking for ways to restore Fort St Elmo.

The government also had plans to convert Biaggio steps into a visitor's centre.

Lands Parliamentary Secretary Jason Azzopardi said that Malta was on the verge of witnessing the birth of a new Valletta.

He pointed out that the lower bastions were recently cleared from squatters and said that abuse of public land would not be tolerated, especially when this land was vital to the country's cultural heritage.

The bastions' restoration project, he said, was one of the largest and most ambitious in the past century.

The tender for the Vittoriosa and Valletta works was awarded to a joint venture composed of a Maltese and two Italian firms. That for Mdina was awarded to the same Italian firms with another Maltese company. The tender for the Cittadella has not yet been issued.