

***Sixty years on: Borrowing the need to march on a nation. Do we have a dream? – Mario Mallia***

This year marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the March on Washington, instrumental, together with the blood, toil and tears of entire generations of black people, in bringing about the Civil Rights Act a year later. Despite that watershed moment, 'Black Lives Matter' activism today is testament to wounds which remain glaringly open 60 years on.

Malta's Constitution is a guarantor of rights for all. Yet, the influx of mostly black irregular migrants by boat over the last 20 years, coupled with a deep rooted contempt of 'the other' fuelled by populist political narratives, has made the lot of immigrants dire. The situation has become even more complex through an economic model based on the importation of cheap labour. This has resulted in an economy 'on heat', with inadequate or ineffective human rights protection. Marginalisation is the order of the day. 'First wave' rights, including the right to vote, are not even guaranteed to foreign nationals with Maltese citizenship.

Education is on the receiving end, trying to bridge the gaps and patch the gulfs brought about by cultural norms and economic 'imperatives'. This presentation reflects on the issues at hand within education and society and attempts to propose possibilities for an equitable way forward. It will make the point that a systemic overhaul is essential in accompanying efforts made on the ground by education and civil society.