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HSBC Malta Foundation supports project to bring legendary World War II aircraft back to life

During the spring of 1940, with the eventuality of war quickly becoming more of a reality for Malta, a fighter flight was set up at RAF Hal-Far. This flight was initially equipped with a handful of Gloster Sea Gladiator bi-planes. These aircraft bore the brunt of the initial onslaught from the Italian air force and despite being outclassed by the enemy fighters, they defiantly defended Malta at the opening stage of the Second World War. The Sea Gladiators, for the most part consisted of a flight of three machines, which became immortalised in the history books by the names 'Faith', 'Hope' and 'Charity'. To commemorate these planes and their crews, the Malta Aviation Museum Foundation has launched a prestigious project to rebuild Sea Gladiator N5519 'Charity' and make it airworthy again. The HSBC Malta Foundation is supporting this undertaking under the name of 'The Malta Sea Gladiator Project'.

Simon Vaughan Johnson, CEO at HSBC Malta and Chair of the HSBC Malta Foundation, who presented the Foundation's donation to this project during a visit to the Malta Aviation Museum, said: "The Gloster Sea Gladiator is a symbol of Malta's resistance at the start of the second Siege of Malta in 1940. To have such an aircraft back in our skies would be a fitting tribute to all those who courageously defended Malta during this period in Malta's history. The HSBC Malta Foundation remains committed to preserving Malta's historical and cultural heritage and we look forward to seeing The Malta Sea Gladiator Project come to fruition, with "Charity" airworthy once again."

Director General of the Malta Aviation Museum Foundation, Ray Polidano stated: "The Museum exists to preserve Malta's aviation heritage and there is no aircraft more iconic to Malta than the Gloster Sea Gladiator. Apart from helping us to commemorate important historical events, rebuilding an airworthy aircraft of this calibre at our workshop, will most certainly attract more visitors to our museum. We would like to thank the HSBC Malta Foundation for their donation towards this exciting project."



PHOTOCAPTION: (from left) HSBC Malta CEO Simon Vaughan Johnson presenting donation to David Polidano and Ray Polidano representatives of the Malta Aviation Museum



PHOTOCAPTION: Gloster Sea Gladiator N5519 'Charity' waiting in readiness for combat at Hal Far June 1940

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