

**PERSONAL STATEMENT TO BE MADE BY
DEPUTY J.M. MAÇON OF ST. SAVIOUR
ON TUESDAY 14th SEPTEMBER 2021**

The community will be aware that in March 2021 I was arrested by the States of Jersey Police. After a prolonged, protracted and thorough police investigation I remain innocent.

I believe that I have been the victim of an extremely malicious politically motivated attack. Designed to smear my character, damage my reputation and hurt me personally.

I have continued to work and serve my constituents throughout this ordeal.

I have been subject to all manner of vile speculation based on prejudice and bigotry. I have been put on trial by some sections of the media, together with many on social media, who have taken advantage of a time when I could not defend myself or comment publicly on the situation for legal reasons whilst the investigation was underway. In my opinion, this speculation abandoned the principle of Innocent until proven otherwise. This was together with a total disregard for any fair or due process that everyone should be afforded. After 13 years of loyal service to this Island I am appalled by how some have treated me.

Despite this awful behaviour by some there have been many shining lights who have supported me.

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank my family, friends, colleagues and those within the community who have stood by me during an extremely distressing period. I am happy to know that their support has now been vindicated. I am tremendously indebted for the support that I have received, some from unexpected people and these people will know who they are.

I would specifically like to thank the Constable of St. Saviour. She has unfairly suffered various attacks for supporting me publicly and I hope she will now receive apologies. It meant so much to my family and I to have the Head of our Parish visit personally and give her full support the day after my arrest whilst some of media were hounding and intimidating us at my family home. I was in shock, vulnerable and my family were also extremely distressed. It meant absolutely everything to not feel abandoned and I can't express my gratitude enough. Thank you for everything Sadie!

I would also like to thank Deputy Scott Wickenden. Firstly, in a personal capacity for his loyalty, compassion and complete concern for my welfare. He went out of his way to look after me throughout this period by providing much practical support which I will never forget. Secondly, in a professional capacity for Deputy Wickenden - he was new to the Education portfolio but he stood up to the challenge and carried out the function of Minister. He worked incredibly hard. Working early mornings and late nights in order to get up to speed with the issues facing the department. He threw himself into the work of a large and demanding remit and has done extremely well. I feel completely vindicated in choosing him as assistant Minister and I had no hesitation in supporting Deputy Wickenden to replace me as Minister. The public should also be aware of Deputy Wickenden's outstanding work ethic, dedication and love for this Island and its people.

Similarly I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Deputy of Grouville, Deputy Judy Martin and Deputy Russell Labey who also took a strong role regarding my wellbeing. Being

under the spotlight in a very small community, leaving your home and facing the world can be terrifying.

Thankfully I have not been alone and this is testament to the virtues and compassion of these States Members.

I would also like to thank the Chairman of the Privileges and Procedures Committee Deputy Carina Alves for her pastoral care and practical support.

Finally I am grateful for the care that has been shown to me by the Deputy Greffier of the States. She too was one of the first to contact me and has continued to provide me with practical support and concern for my wellbeing.

It was an extremely difficult decision to resign as Minister. However given the way that my situation was being used inside and outside of the Assembly, publicly and behind the scenes to attack my Government colleagues, which is completely reprehensible, I took what I believed to be the honorable decision to resign. I made it quite clear at the time that the decision to resign was in no way an acceptance of guilt nor that it should be interpreted as such and I stand by that decision.

Whilst I understand that the Police have a job to do when an accusation is made, it nevertheless has been a distressing situation for myself and those close to me.

Regarding the Police all I will say is that I found the custody officers very professional. I remain deeply concerned that members of the media appeared to be aware of my arrest in advance and question how they would have this knowledge? I feel there are several matters of process that could be greatly improved.

Whilst I will need to focus for the time being on my mental health and wellbeing, I will continue to serve Islanders. I will not be intimidated out of politics by individuals, institutions or the media. Should anyone wish to change their political representative then the correct way to do so is at the ballot box during an election. It is regrettably the trend in politics towards nastier and more malicious behaviour, and at a time when we are trying to encourage more people to stand, especially those from a more diverse backgrounds. I believe that we all need to be very careful not to follow this path.

Like every citizen in this Island I am innocent until proven otherwise; a fact that some members of this community have chosen to ignore in recent months. I know now on whom I can rely which gives me strength as I move on and as I put this matter behind me as a free and innocent man.