



**SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER  
OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA**

**PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE  
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA**

## **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees**

**73<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Executive Committee – General Debate  
Statement by Mr. Jean-François Kammer, Deputy Permanent Observer  
Geneva, 12 October 2022**

Mr. Chairman,  
High Commissioner,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,

My Delegation thanks the High Commissioner for his wide-ranging opening statement. Engaged in many of the countries referred to, the Sovereign Order of Malta shares his concerns on the crises situations he describes.

We are witnessing the worst refugee crisis seen since 1945. Further economic and political instability, accelerated by climate change, and the knock-on effects of the Covid and Ukraine crises, have the potential to see matters worsen dramatically.

The Order of Malta's national associations and its international relief agency, Malteser International, have been operating in Ukraine and its neighboring countries since the beginning of the conflict. Several hundred volunteers are involved in Malteser Aid Service Ukraine and are providing humanitarian aid, shelter, food and safety in about 65 cities and towns to the internally displaced. Programs for psycho-social and therapeutic care of persons affected by war are being scaled up, as well as medical-rehabilitative care for war wounded. Preparation of winterization is in process.

In Poland some 3'000 people trained in first aid and medical equipment have been serving Ukrainians since the first day of the war. In Hungary temporary accommodation is being provided to refugees and assistance to continue their journey. First aid and food are distributed at border crossing points in Romania while relief supplies are transported from there into Ukraine. Integration and other services are being offered in Lithuania and Slovakia. The Order of Malta is also supporting Ukrainian refugees in a number of other European countries.

Malteser International's work in the Middle East is mainly focused on providing aid to refugees and displaced people, as well as supporting overburdened local medical and social structures

in their host countries. The Lebanese Association of the Order of Malta, has been providing emergency relief and medical support for Syrian and now also Iraqi refugees and vulnerable Lebanese people since 2013.

Furthermore, part of the refugee crises in Lebanon has become generational. Palestinians have been relegated for decades to communities at the margins of society because of political considerations. Burmese minorities in Thailand are in a similar situation. We do our best to ensure that these groups receive medical and social care and skills training.

With the aim of promoting social cohesion and peaceful coexistence among the various ethno-religious groups In Iraq, Malteser International continues to help displaced minorities return to their homes, restart businesses, create training and job possibilities and improve access to healthcare. The goal of our activities in Syria is to improve healthcare and living conditions for internally displaced persons.

The situation in some African countries has led to nations that were traditionally sources of refugees to become destination countries. This is for example the case for refugees from South Sudan being absorbed by the DRC where the Order is present on both sides of the border. In the face of growing needs in the DRC, humanitarian activities for IDPs are being implemented in the health, food and nutrition security sectors. Furthermore, refugees fleeing from rebels in North Kivu province, DRC, to Uganda are being supported.

In Colombia Malteser International continues its emergency aid and integration activities for refugees and migrants from Venezuela in host communities in the department of La Guajira. As in other crises, the Order is present on both sides of the border. We welcome our cooperation with UNHCR in this context.

Mr. Chairman,

In preparation for the second Global Refugee Forum in 2023, we fully support the High Commissioner's "whole of society approach" which acknowledges the role of religious actors within the civil society framework. We look forward to preparing for and participating in this event