



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

74th Session of the Executive Committee – General Debate

Statement by Mr. Jean-François Kammer, Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Geneva, 11 October 2023

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

My Delegation thanks the High Commissioner for his report that sadly highlights so many crises which are of great concern to the international community.

As the High Commissioner rightly stresses in his address the growing disrespect for International Humanitarian Law affects more and more refugees, innocent people and among them victims of human trafficking.

During the recent UN Security Council debate on *Maintenance of Peace and Security in Ukraine*, the Sovereign Order of Malta's Grand Chancellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs remarked "Within the framework of international humanitarian assistance, thousands of volunteers and aid workers from the bodies of the Order of Malta, have populated borders and checkpoints neighboring Ukraine since hostilities began, offering aid and comfort. Many millions of refugees have had a warm embrace from foreign neighbors who have set aside cultural difference to serve a common humanity in need." We are committed to pursuing our assistance to Ukrainian refugees and IDPs through our humanitarian aid.

In Africa, the Order of Malta's relief agency, Malteser International, continues its assistance to IDPs and refugees from **South Sudan**. The worsening situation in the North Kivu area of the **Democratic Republic of Congo** has seen an increase in violent crimes, assault and looting which has led to further internal displacement resulting in the closure of some health centers and delays in cash distribution for refugees and IDPs. Since February 2023 two new large projects are being implemented in the provinces of Ituri, Haut-Uélé and Kasai Central. They include long-term Health System Strengthening and nutrition programs.

Furthermore, refugees arriving in **Uganda** from the DRC are being supported at the border and in the Nakivale refugee settlement.

Particularly in the outlying agricultural regions in **Colombia** which are home to most of the internally displaced people, access to basic medical services is extremely poor. Malteser International's projects aim to improve access to Primary Health Care (including mother and child health services) and psychological care for survivors of sexual violence and displacement in marginalized, rural and semi-rural communities.

Our goal in **Syria** is to provide medical care as well as living conditions, especially for internally displaced people through enhancing access to primary and secondary health care, in particular for children and mothers, the rehabilitation of medical care infrastructure and improved access to water, hygiene and sanitation facilities in camps.

In addition to its longstanding extensive assistance in **Lebanon**, Malteser International, together with the Lebanese Association of the Order of Malta, has initiated a new program that operates four mobile medical units to ensure basic health care in the provinces of Akkar, Baalbek, Nabatieh and South Lebanon. Both Syrian refugees and Lebanese in need thus have access to free medical treatment and medication.

In **Myanmar** the escalation of armed conflict has led to increased displacement, thus creating new protection and assistance needs. The delivery of humanitarian assistance is hindered by limited access of international and national organizations. Despite these challenges, Malteser International is currently implementing some 15 programs in the areas of health, WASH and disaster risk reduction, as well as food security and nutrition in Rakhine, Shan and Kayin States.

Mr. Chairman,

The Order of Malta is presently preparing its participation at the second Global Refugee Forum. We welcome the efforts towards increased burden- and responsibility-sharing amongst a multiplicity of stakeholders from civil society, including faith-based actors.

Thank you.