



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

**International Organization for Migration - 109th Session of the Council
General Debate
Statement by H.E. Ambassador Marie-Thérèse Pictet-Althann
Geneva, 27 - 30 November 2018**

Mr. Chairman,
Director General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of the Sovereign Order of Malta, I would like to congratulate the Director General on his election to this high office. We wish you full success in carrying out your important mandate and look forward to pursuing under your directorship the excellent cooperation that is based on the agreement signed in 2007 between our two institutions.

Mr. Chairman,
Allow me to refer to some issues brought to our attention by the Director General in his wide-ranging report.

The Order of Malta agrees with all the objectives and corresponding commitments of the **Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration**. We have followed and participated actively in the process since the beginning by contributing to the discussions and the elaboration of the document. We welcome in particular paragraph 44 which calls for cooperation with faith-based organizations and other stakeholders in the implementation of the Global Compact. The Order of Malta will be represented in Marrakesh for the adoption of the Compact by a high-level delegation led by our Grand Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs, H.E. Albrecht Freiherr von Boeselager.

With regard to IOM's range of **migrant support mechanisms** I would like to report on some recent experiences the Order of Malta has gained in this field. For example, our German association has set up a number of innovative models such as the creation of **integration services** that help migrants to become familiar with German society and culture. Specially trained **integration guides** support migrants in overcoming challenges of daily life through language training, legal advice, medical and social care, as well as facilitating integration into the job market. These units

also generate a platform for the local population to meet individual migrants, thereby allowing us at the same time to change the image of migration as opposed to fearing the influx of hundreds of thousands of foreigners.

In the field of **emergency response**, the Order of Malta is engaged in many of the same crisis situations as IOM. In *Latin America*, especially in Colombia, the Order's worldwide relief agency, Malteser International, assists Venezuelans by providing medical care, material basic needs, as well as psychological and social care for those who have fled their country.

Since the beginning of the crisis in Myanmar, we are present on the ground in *Myanmar's Rakhine State and Cox's Bazar camp in Bangladesh*. Malteser International is working mainly in the areas of mother and infant health, hygiene, nutrition and psychosocial support by providing basic medical care in health centers that serve around 20,000 people inside the camp.

In the *Mediterranean Sea*, the Order of Malta's Italian Relief Corps has been at the forefront of the rescue efforts since the beginning of the migration and refugee crisis. Embarked on the vessels of the Italian Coast Guards, medical teams have saved more than 200,000 lives in the last 10 years; almost 1,400 were rescued in the first three months of this year. This cooperation with the Italian navy was expanded by a medical training mission for future Libyan instructors as part of the European naval force operation EUNAVFOR MED Sophia. Besides the Order of Malta, Frontex, UNHCR and IOM are participating in the training which is being carried out in various stages with the aim of preventing migrant deaths and countering criminal networks.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, the Order of Malta calls on all stakeholders to reaffirm the principles of international humanitarian law, sadly too often ignored in migration crises. We must ensure that all migrants, regardless of their immigration status, can exercise their human rights through safe access to basic services. In this context, we believe that international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly, regular migration must be strengthened. The Order of Malta will continue to support IOM's work through its worldwide humanitarian activities and assistance to those in need.

Thank you.