



*ORDRE SOUVERAIN MILITAIRE HOSPITALIER
DE SAINT-JEAN DE JERUSALEM DE RHODES ET DE MALTE*

Sovereign Military Order of Malta

International Organization for Migration

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General Debate

Statement by
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Permanent Observer

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Madam Chairperson,
Director-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

Allow me first of all to congratulate you, Madam Chairperson, and the other members of the Bureau, on your election. I would also like to thank the Director-General, Mr. Brunson McKinley, for highlighting the challenges IOM is facing and the task ahead. During the Interactive Discussion on Tuesday with members of the Global Migration Group (GMG), we were able to witness once again your broad vision on migration related issues and your deep dedication and perseverance to finding solutions to the extensive challenges faced by both states and migrants.

The Report of the Global Commission on International Migration followed by the High-Level Dialogue at the General Assembly in September have increased our awareness of the breadth of the issue of international migration and underlined its scale and intensity, thus promoting a comprehensive debate among states and other stakeholders. The Sovereign Order of Malta welcomes this contribution to the international dialogue on migration and we share with others the sincere hope that it be followed by concrete results, including a comprehensive response to this global issue.

Within the framework of its worldwide humanitarian action and its commitment to help the most vulnerable fight poverty, defend human rights, combat diseases, provide health and sanitation services as well as alleviate suffering in man made and natural disaster situations, the Order of Malta cares for refugees, displaced persons and other uprooted people in many crises areas. Sadly, migrants are often amongst the most vulnerable, particularly when they fall into the category of 'irregular migration'. Social and economic development is no doubt vital to achieving a reduction in flows of migrants, as it enables people to become self-reliant and health is an important element in this strategy. My Delegation finds the Migration Health Annual Report very helpful in this context, particularly the chapter covering Emergency Migration Health Assistance.

Madam Chairperson,

This brings me to IOM's role as a major **disaster relief** agency which has grown substantially. Similarly, emergency humanitarian assistance is one of the Order of Malta's main areas of activity. Health, full respect for fundamental human rights as well as community stabilization and livelihood programmes are further features we have in common. We are often working in the same trouble spots with the same objective: rebuilding victim's lives through emergency relief followed by rehabilitation measures, thereby ensuring the link between relief, rehabilitation and development. Allow me to name just a few examples. In the Tsunami hit countries **Thailand, Sri Lanka** and **Indonesia**, the Order's worldwide relief service, **Malteser International**, is supplementing such aid by programmes for medical and psycho-social care, plus income-generating measures. In **Pakistan**, one year after the devastating earthquake, tens of thousands of victims once again have to rely on external help in order to survive the severe winter. Malteser International, in cooperation with a local partner organisation, is distributing shelters and items to people in need in mountain villages. Moreover, mobile medical teams ensuring primary health care services will work in the remote Palas valley during the forthcoming winter. Health care provision, school construction and income-generating measures for those returning home are also focal points of Malteser International's work in **Afghanistan**. However, the deterioration in the security situation in the southern and eastern provinces is making it increasingly difficult to carry out humanitarian work. Due to armed conflict, thousands of people have been driven from their homes in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** and in the Sudanese war-torn province of **Darfur**. Here again, Malteser International's goal is to improve the health situation of the internally displaced and resident population in a sustainable way by implementing basic health care programmes in remote areas.

Madam Chairperson,

The Global Migration Group's motto "Acting together in a world on the move" is very relevant indeed, particularly in light of the importance IOM attaches to **partnerships**. As the Order of Malta carries out its humanitarian tasks in partnership with governmental and non-governmental organizations in a field-focused manner and in view of the previously mentioned similarities, the Order of Malta and IOM are presently exploring ways for a future cooperation. We look forward to a successful outcome of our discussions.