



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

PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT BY

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TO THE

THIRD COMMITTEE

[ITEM 28] SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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Madam Chair,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to address the floor on behalf of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta on the issue of youth, the elderly, and the disabled. The Order of Malta is one of the world's oldest institutions; we have been active as a sovereign in the humanitarian sphere for over nine hundred years. We run world-class hospitals, emergency relief programmes, first-aid and ambulance services, leprosy support, education programmes, prison ministries, homeless facilities, outreach healthcare for the disabled, award-winning care homes for the elderly and vast numbers of niche projects for the poor and the sick, no matter the location or circumstance and regardless of their background.

The Order of Malta has been following the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development's pledge of "leaving no one behind" since the very beginning. We focus on the forgotten people, who are often the most vulnerable among our society: the children, the elderly, and the disabled. The Global Fund for Forgotten People was officially established by the Government of the Sovereign Order of Malta in 2011 and makes approximately 40 grants a year in support of the forgotten people around the world. Our work focuses on bringing the forgotten back to the light, helping them live a healthy life with dignity.

Every year for the past 32 years the Order has organized an international summer camp in Europe for the young disabled, as well as running at national level annual camps in Albania, Austria, Belgium, Italy, Macedonia, Hungary, Romania, Switzerland and Lebanon. Since 1984, over 5,000 young disabled adults and children from all over the world have taken part. This year, the Order of Malta's annual international summer camp for young disabled people was hosted by the French Association, and the camp provided a week of carefully designed and coordinated holiday activities for disabled people and their families, engaging young members and volunteers throughout the Order. The camp, based in Brittany, welcomed over 500 participants, including 200 disabled guests, with young members and volunteers travelling from 24 different organizations of the Order worldwide. The 2016 International Camp will be hosted by the Polish Association/

Equally significant are the activities of relief and care for the elderly. The Order of Malta directs numerous specialized centers for the elderly in England, Germany, Spain, Austria, the United States, Chile and Mexico. In various countries there is a variety of services to make life at home

easier for the elderly, such as providing meals on wheels, transport services, visiting services, soup kitchens, care homes, hospices, hospitals, medical care, and shopping help and the operation of emergency call systems. The Order has volunteer corps in 23 countries in Europe alone.

The day care centre for the elderly in Kefraya, Lebanon works to integrate the elderly, from different cultures and religions, as active members of society. It provides them with an opportunity to break out of their isolation, and enables them to be active, independent, and continue to live at home as long as possible. This project creates a gathering place, a warm home, for the elderly, where they can meet several times a week. In an area where there are many different Christian, Muslim and Druze communities, the project is unique in its inclusion of all, regardless of their backgrounds, personal beliefs or affiliations. The target beneficiaries are around 300 elderly people from 16 villages, who do not benefit from any other financial, social, medical, or healthcare support.

A further important component of our strategy in all of our activities is strengthening our networks and partnerships to better care for those in need. We as an international community should endeavor together to care for the young, the elderly, and the disabled by including them and addressing their needs in our policies, and include them as equals in our society. The Order will continue to work towards helping those in need in partnership with the UN community.

Thank you.