



**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**

**Human Rights Council – 48th Session – Item 3
Inter-active Dialogue the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons
Statement by Jean-François Kammer, Deputy Permanent Observer**

Madam President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

The report before us convincingly describes the various forms of discrimination and inequalities that affect older persons, based in particular on disability and health status, ethnic origin, indigenous identity or migrant status, gender identity or socioeconomic status.

Ageism is unfortunately too often associated with the difficulty for the concerned people to participate actively with equal rights in society. State actors and civil society have a common responsibility in associating older persons towards a fight against all kinds of discrimination.

In view of the fundamental importance of the family, central element in the constitution of any society, older people represent an essential part of that construction. They must hence benefit from a culture of tolerance, non-discrimination and intergenerational solidarity.

One has to consider the global dignity of older persons. Next to respecting their basic human rights Society must also ensure that they can continue to live in accordance with their own culture and traditions.

The Order of Malta, as a lay religious institution, wishes to propose that the Special Rapporteur explicitly highlights the importance for older people to be respected in their own faith and be allowed in any possible way to practice their religion.

This would just be one aspect of the global respect due to them.

Thank you

