

Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order

of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta

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Permanent observer Mission to the United Nations office

and other International Organizations in Geneva

**Human Rights Council – 53rd session**

**Item 2-Presentation of High Commissioner Annual Report**

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Marie-Thérèse Pictet-Althann**

20 June 2023

Mr. President,

Mr. High Commissioner,

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

My Delegation thanks the High Commissioner for his comprehensive annual report and tireless efforts to protect and promote human rights worldwide.

Many of the concerns expressed therein are of specific relevance to the Sovereign Order of Malta’s worldwide humanitarian activities, with assistance to the victims of the war in Ukraine being one of our main priorities. In this context we support the High Commissioner’s appeal for unrestricted access to all areas to provide assistance to the victims of the war.

The OHCHR’s steps towards the better protection of the elderly and their inclusion in the development of international standards are welcomed by the Order, and we are looking forward to seeing new approaches to close the human rights protection gap of older persons.

The Order of Malta commends the OHCHR’s progress that has been made in the areas of legal and policy reform and its support to nations around the world to develop their laws in a way that respect international humanitarian law. Moreover, the advancement of accountability mechanisms is a much-needed tool for current and future occurrences.

Being a lay religious institution, we further commend the workshops on implementing the Rabat Plan of Action and the Faith for Rights framework, as well as the course organized in collaboration with Religions for Peace. Promoting the intersection between religion, faith and human rights through the inclusion of civil society and faith-based actors facilitates sustainable peace towards a more inclusive global community.

I thank you.

3, PLACE CLAPARÈDE – CH-1205 GENEVA – TELEPHONE: 0041 (0)22 346 86 87

E.MAIL: UNMISSIONGENEVA@ORDEROFMAlTA.INT- HTTPS[://UNMISSIONGE.ORDEROFMALTA.INT/EN/](https://unmissionge.orderofmalta.int/en/)