



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 75
High-Level Ministerial Event

“Human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian Territory, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and International Humanitarian Law (IHL)”

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Marie-Thérèse PICTET-ALTHANN, Permanent Observer

Tuesday 12 December 2023, Geneva

Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues,

The Sovereign Order of Malta thanks the Permanent Mission of Palestine for its invitation to attend this important and timely High-Level Ministerial Event.

We have a long-standing humanitarian engagement in Palestine and are therefore particularly alarmed by the devastating human rights and humanitarian situation in Gaza, by the collapsing healthcare system and massive displacement.

We are deeply shocked by the huge number of civilian victims and the destruction of civilian infrastructures. We are also extremely concerned by the vast number of orphans, who's future is totally uncertain and must be addressed.

In the West Bank, our medical and humanitarian mission is severely impaired. Access to our maternity and critical care facility, the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem, has been severely impeded by added roadblocks and checkpoints. These blockades prevent the movement of ambulances, medical personnel, and the delivery of much needed medicines and equipment.

Our Mobile Medical Clinic, a lifeline in the region, is no longer able to make its daily rounds and therefore the populations we serve in isolated villages and Bedouin communities are without care.

The Order of Malta's worldwide Relief Agency, Malteser International, in partnership with German aid organizations, is providing emergency assistance to support families in Gaza.

The Order of Malta remains committed to serve the Palestinian people, to alleviate their suffering and save lives, and to pursue our close cooperation with the Authorities on the spot.



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We join previous speakers in calling for an immediate humanitarian cease-fire, to prevent further loss of life, facilitate the entry and distribution of aid.

In concluding, we urge all parties to respect the fundamental principles of international human rights and humanitarian law.