



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 –55<sup>th</sup> session**  
**Item 3 – Panel on Countering Religious Hatred**

**Statement by Jean-François Kammer, Deputy Permanent Observer**  
8 March 2024

Mr President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,

The Sovereign Order of Malta commends the Report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on Combating intolerance and shares his conclusions.

Freedom of religion or belief in combination with the freedom of expression are two fundamental human rights for everyone. Intolerance, stigmatization and violence against persons based on religion and belief is intolerable. Combating hatred is a global obligation and responsibility.

Ensuring the right to freedom of religion or belief implies also protecting places of worship not only as physical structures but also their role to uphold fundamental human rights, foster community cohesion and promote social harmony and tolerance. This, in turn, contributes to the overall protection and well-being of believers and society as a whole.

We must welcome all efforts being undertaken by States and by Faith based Organizations for fostering interfaith dialogue and action. Education that includes faith literacy remains a key instrument in combating religious hatred and facilitates understanding. Such best practices are being implemented by UPEACE (University For Peace).

During the past year concrete and positive actions have been taken, also by the Inter-Parliamentary Union that organized a “Parliamentary Conference” in Marrakesh on Interfaith Dialogue on the theme "Working together for our common future".

Combating hate speech and violence in relation with freedom of religion or belief means very clearly promoting inclusion and equal rights for all, and ensuring hence the basic dignity of every human being.