



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 –55th session
Item7– Interactive Dialogue with the Special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Marie-Thérèse Pictet-Althann, Permanent Observer
26 March 2024

Mr President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

My Delegation has given its full attention to this extremely distressing report. We thank the Special Rapporteur for up-dating the Council and providing further details on the present human rights situation on the ground, in particular with regard to the destruction of Gaza.

The Sovereign Order of Malta is appalled by the grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights law and the resulting disastrous humanitarian situation in Palestine. As stated in the report, civilian healthcare and medical units are “*specially protected under international law*”, and civilians in the hospitals as well. The attacks on life-sustaining infrastructures and the impeded entry and distribution of aid to civilian populations is obstructing our longstanding medical and humanitarian mission. Our worldwide Relief Agency, Malteser International, in partnership with German aid organizations, has sent emergency assistance through Egypt to support families in Gaza. In cooperation with the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, we are evaluating further medical support in Northern Gaza, provided access and security permit. The effects of the war are also deepening on the West Bank with incursions, arrests and home and building demolitions adding to an atmosphere of despair.

The Order of Malta strongly supports the Special Rapporteur’s recommendation for an “*independent and transparent investigation of all violations of international law committed by all actors*” and his call on the High Commissioner’s Office “*to enhance its efforts to end the current atrocities in Gaza*”.

Thank you.