



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 –56th session
**Item 2– Interactive Dialogue on the Presentation of High Commissioner’s Annual
Statement by H.E. Ambassador Marie-Thérèse Pictet-Althann, Permanent Observer**
19 June 2024

Mr President,
Mr. High Commissioner,
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

My Delegation thanks the High Commissioner for his global update and shares his concerns with regard to the widespread disregard for international humanitarian and human rights law that we are witnessing daily. In its worldwide humanitarian activities, the Order of Malta is increasingly confronted with the deterioration of access and the denial of aid which severely undermines its mission to assist the poor and the marginalized.

Improving the respect for human rights in conflict situations, particularly regarding access and delivery of humanitarian aid, involves a multifaceted approach that includes legal, diplomatic, and operational strategies. Measures should include obtaining safe passage for humanitarian and medical staff and the establishment of safe zones where civilians and aid workers can operate without the threat of violence. In highly insecure areas, innovate approaches with digital tools such as remote assistance programs (e.g., cash transfers via mobile phones) can ensure aid reaches those in need without physical delivery.

The High Commissioner’s comments on the situation in Gaza clearly reflects these challenges. There is therefore an urgent need for this Council to strengthen international legal frameworks by ensuring that all parties in conflict adhere to IHL principles, by enhancing the capacity of local organizations and volunteers to deliver aid and protect human rights and by mobilizing international and local civil society organizations to put pressure on conflicting parties to respect human rights.

By implementing these strategies, the respect for human rights in conflict situations can be significantly improved, ensuring that humanitarian aid reaches those in need and that their rights are protected.

Thank you.