

PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION OF THE
SOVEREIGN MILITARY ORDER OF MALTA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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Hurricane Katrina.

“We will stay for as long as our assistance is needed in the rehabilitation and reconstruction phases following Hurricane Katrina’s deadly effects,” says Secretary-General of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta worldwide relief service, Mr. Ingo Radtke. His team of experts arrived on the Gulf Coast of the United States on September 6th, and immediately began working with the three Order of Malta Associations in the US and with humanitarian assistance experts of the Catholic Church in the archdiocese of New Orleans. Together they are developing programs for assisting the most vulnerable and socially disadvantaged to regain a basis of existence.

Led by project manager Mr. Osvaldo Marcenaro, the Order of Malta is working out of Baton Rouge, Louisiana to coordinate relief measurements. Two-thirds of those people affected by Hurricane Katrina are minorities and among them roughly 40 percent may not be literate. For this reason, the support of the Order will not only include reconstruction measures, but education services and job training as well.

For many of the displaced persons without insurance who have lost their home and property, the Order of Malta will be providing for their basic needs. Mr. Radtke stresses that the relief effort will be aimed at supporting the poorest of the poor: “In cooperation with the US Order of Malta Associations, the Catholic Charities New Orleans (CCFNO) and the Catholic Community Services Baton Rouge (CCSBR), we are initially focusing to supply food and toiletries to the displaced people in the shelters.” Equally important is psycho-social support, says Mr. Radtke, as the magnitude of the catastrophe can be deeply traumatizing.

The Order of Malta will establish an office in the battered city as the infrastructure improves.

New York, October 3, 2005