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SOVEREIGN MILITARY ORDER OF MALTA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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INFORMATION NOTE ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-SIX

Pakistan

One year after the devastating earthquake in Pakistan, ten thousands of victims still rely on external help in order to survive the severe winter. The Sovereign Order of Malta, in cooperation with a local partner organization, distributes pre-fabricated shelters, gas ovens, blankets and household items to 2,600 people in need in Azad Jammu, Kashmir. Temperatures in this area regularly drop below -15° C at night. In addition, mobile medical teams ensure primary health care services are available in the remote Palas Valley, Kohistan, during the harsh winter.

Presently, the Order is one of only a few organizations providing any health care services or rehabilitation projects in the Palas Valley. Due in large part to the malnutrition suffered by many inhabitants—especially women and children—people in the Valley are extremely vulnerable and prone to illnesses. The Order distributed maize seeds to over 400 farmers in the valley earlier this year, to ensure a substantial harvest this October. The same project is set for next year's harvest.

Vietnam

In the beginning of October, typhoon Xangsane in Vietnam reduced over 18,000 houses to rubble, leaving hundreds of thousands of people with no shelter. In central Vietnam, the Order distributed foodstuffs, blankets and pre-fabricated shelters to the victims of the typhoon. The situation is urgent: especially for farmers in isolated areas, threatened by hunger, cold temperatures and illnesses. The Order is working to rebuild homes and provides rice, oil, mosquito nets and blankets for 1,360 families in the provinces of Danang and Quang Nam. Since 1966, the Order of Malta has been active with long-term projects in Vietnam, and since 1999, has provided emergency aid to the country following natural disasters.

New York , November 8, 2006