



SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER
OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA

PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT BY

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TO THE

THIRD COMMITTEE

[ITEM 68] PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

16 OCTOBER, 2015

(CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY)

Madam Chair,

Thank you for this opportunity to take the floor on the issue of the protection of the rights of children; it is a subject of extreme importance to The Sovereign Military Order of Malta, as well as a key component of the work of the Third Committee.

The Millennium Development Goals, whose mandate just ended, aimed to reduce child mortality through its fourth initiative. Between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate was halved. The Order of Malta commends the nations and other stakeholders represented in this room today for the efforts put forth to achieve this goal.

Unfortunately, today, too many children continue to die needlessly, and progress has stalled.

In 2013, 6.3 million children died under the age of five. This year, 5.9 million children under the age of five have died. This is approximately 16,000 children every minute according to the World Health Organization. Most notably, this presents no discernible improvement in the past two years.

75% of all under-five deaths occurred within the first year of life, and more than half of these deaths occurred during the first month of life. Most of these deaths could have been prevented with better prenatal, maternal and neonatal care. For years, the Order of Malta has worked to provide this care to those most in need.

Many of these children die due to maternal and child malnutrition – conditions that can be prevented with access to food and clean water. To fight malnutrition, the Order has developed a project in Uganda, the Maracha hospital. This hospital's nutrition unit has an average of thirty new admissions of malnourished children each month. As a measurement of success, almost ninety-five percent of all malnourished children admitted to the Program are sent home well.

In Cambodia, Malteser International, the worldwide relief arm of the Order, has been working in one hundred seventy five villages for better infant and maternal nutrition. In Oddar Meanchey province, where the project started, Malteser joins efforts with local health authorities and partner organizations for incredible results. In 2005, the province lagged behind the national average in the area of maternal and child health; today, it has the best indicators in the entire country.

The Order understands the importance of access to neonatal care and safe birthing centers. The Order of Malta's Holy Family Hospital provides the population of Bethlehem and its surrounding area with a place for women to give birth under safe and modern medical conditions. The hospital delivers seventy percent of all babies in the district and it is important that this center continues to protect the rights and health of newborns. The hospital is open to all regardless of nationality, religion or income; and it is the only one of its kind in the occupied Palestinian territories. This hospital is a clear example of how, even in one of the most conflicted areas in the world, the Order of Malta is working to preserve the rights of the most vulnerable.

Madam Chair,

In conclusion, The Sovereign Military Order of Malta would like to affirm that children represent the future. Ensuring their healthy growth and development ought to be a prime concern of all societies. More must be done to prevent under-five deaths and we must do our best to support the children growing up in areas of the globe that are most affected by conflict. The Order promises to continue to work towards these goals in partnership with the UN community.

Thank you.