



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

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PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT BY

MRS. FIAMMA ARDITI MANZO,  
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TO THE

THIRD COMMITTEE

[ITEM 65] PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

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17 OCTOBER, 2014

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(CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY)

Madam Chair,

Thank you for allowing my delegation 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 UN Millennium Declaration stressed the importance of the protection of children, and for good reason: tens of millions of children across the globe are exposed to inadequate health care, education, and social services.

Madam Chair,

The promotion and protection of the rights of children is fundamental to the Order of Malta. Through the dedication of the Order's eighty-thousand-plus volunteers, we are helping to assure children are protected, educated and nurtured. Lack of adequate care and protection denies children the opportunities to develop and learn, depleting human resources and contributing to poverty.

Nearly seven million children under five die each year – that's twelve children every minute. 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 child mortality rate has declined by nearly half. And, whereas seventy percent of all deliveries in 2005 happened at home, today seventy percent of pregnant women deliver their babies in health facilities with the help of a professional midwife.

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 sixty percent of all babies in the district and it is important that this center continued 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,

The Syrian conflict has reached unprecedented levels – more than one million refugees and up to four million internationally displaced Syrians continue to need help. Currently, Malteser International is supporting not only struggling mothers and small children, but also a school in the border district of Kilis, where one thousand three hundred fifty Syrian children attend class. Additionally, this year the Order provided one thousand six hundred fifty refugee children in Turkey with schoolbags, notebooks and pencils and a warm school meal every day. It is essential that children affected by conflict continue to have access to education.

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. As the mandate of the Millennium Development Goals concludes in the next year, we must continue to work to protect the rights of children. More must be done to prevent under-five deaths, access to education must be made readily available to both male and female children, 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.