



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

**High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly
on the appraisal of the United Nations Global Plan of Action
to Combat Trafficking in Persons**

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Statement by the Sovereign Order of Malta

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to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons

Mr. Secretary-General, Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Sovereign Order of Malta would like to **thank you for giving us the opportunity to address this High-Level Meeting on a very special and important issue.**

The vocation of the Order of Malta, a religious and a sovereign entity of public international law, has always been, since its establishment 900 years ago, the care for the vulnerable people. Today we support over two thousand projects in more than 120 countries for those in need through medical, social and humanitarian work, irrespective of religion, ethnicity or nationality. We reaffirm the Order's commitment to **contribute to reduce vulnerabilities of migrants and refugees and to protect them**, especially victims of contemporary forms of slavery.

The Order of Malta is **increasing its efforts to address migrant vulnerability and to assist and protect victims** through its international diplomatic network, on the multilateral level, as well as through its bilateral Ambassadors in 106 countries. In addition, we have **social services and humanitarian actions** conducted by our National Associations and our worldwide relief agency "Malteser International".

The Sovereign Order of Malta would like to continue to listen to other stakeholders to learn from their **best practices**. We invite **cooperation** with Governments and civil society actors, including Faith-based organizations, in order to contribute to **better protect and rehabilitate victims** of contemporary slavery.

Mr. President, allow me to conclude with three considerations:

- first how could **universal religious values of solidarity and respect for human life** and dignity better support existing instruments of domestic and international law to stop contemporary forms of slavery?
- second how could we highlight and share the contribution of **Faith-based organizations to protect and rehabilitate victims** of contemporary forms of slavery?
- third how, could, next year, the **70th anniversary of the adoption of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*** be used to highlight the plight of victims of modern slavery and the pressing need for States and other stakeholders to assist and protect them in accordance to the Global Plan of Action?