



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

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PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE  
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN NEW YORK

**High-Level Conference on “The Peaceful Settlement of the  
Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution”**

**Mon-Wed, 28-30 July, 2025**

**Trusteeship Council Chamber**

Thank you Co-Chair,

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,

At the outset, our delegation wishes to thank the French Republic and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for convening this timely conference, alongside all other participants and stakeholders, at a time when collective dialogue is essential to uphold international humanitarian law, and to alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable.

At this critical moment, the humanitarian dimension of efforts to achieve a peaceful and sustainable solution is a shared imperative for the international community. Beyond political deliberations, civilians across the affected territories face growing challenges: displacement, trauma, and barriers to essential aid. All stakeholders must reaffirm their obligations under international humanitarian law to ensure protection, unhindered access, and dignity for those most at risk.

In cooperation with the Latin Patriarchate in Jerusalem and the Holy Family Parish, our humanitarian relief agency, Malteser International, has worked alongside international partners to deliver over 200 tons of food assistance to the population in Gaza City.



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We unreservedly condemn the terrorist acts of October 7, 2023, the perpetrators, and call for the release of all hostages. Our prayers are constantly with the families who are suffering, left in the limbo of the unknown.

We join others in calling for a cessation of all acts of violence that breach international law and humanitarian principles. Such acts only deepen human suffering and erode the trust needed for any sustainable peace. Ensuring humanity must remain central to all collective efforts.

Recent events have once again underscored the gravity of the situation. The Sovereign Order of Malta reiterates its view of the attack carried out on 17 July 2025 against the Catholic parish of the Holy Family in Gaza as wholly unacceptable. This assault on a place of worship, a shelter, and a humanitarian hub, which resulted in the deaths of three civilians, injuries to ten others, including the parish priest, and the displacement of over 600 people, many of them children and patients dependent on life-support, stands as a stark reminder of the urgent need to uphold the protection of humanitarian facilities and corridors. Any attack on religious minorities singled out for their faith is unjustified. In this context, the Order of Malta echoes the appeal of His Holiness Pope Leo for ‘an immediate halt to the barbarity of the war.’

Beyond this tragedy, humanitarian actors continue to face wider systemic challenges. Financial strain, delivery delays, and complex administrative barriers affect territories under the Paris Protocol. These obstacles threaten life-saving operations, from medical care to trauma recovery and psychosocial support for uprooted communities and vulnerable children.



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We urgently call for an immediate cessation of hostilities and for the unimpeded and sustained delivery of desperately needed humanitarian aid into Gaza. Humanitarian organisations must be granted access to provide assistance without obstruction, under clear guarantees of safety and security, both for the affected civilian population and for the personnel delivering life-saving aid, in accordance with international law. The scale of human suffering has become unimaginable. The images we continue to witness daily, of infants and children so severely malnourished they appear skeletal, unable even to cry, are a stark indicator of desperate urgency. This must not be allowed to continue.

Through our neutral mandate and long-standing presence in relief and medical assistance, the Sovereign Order of Malta will continue to stand with all partners to protect lifelines. Our duty is clear: to ensure that the most vulnerable are not forgotten as the world works toward a peaceful and sustainable solution.

Neutral aid and solidarity must not only guide each step, they must anchor the path ahead. We cannot continue to allow those at greatest risk to be left behind.

Looking ahead to long-term and sustainable responses, the Sovereign Order of Malta stands ready to offer its full support to reconstruction and development efforts across the Palestinian territories. We recognise that the challenges ahead will be immense. That is why we underscore the importance of coordinated and well-structured responses that give civilians throughout the wider region the best possible prospects for a peaceful, sustainable, and prosperous future. Drawing on more than 900 years of continuous presence in the Holy Land, the Order is prepared to contribute its expertise through its extensive network in the region, including the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem and other projects across the West Bank. We remain committed to working with partners to help shape effective solutions to the most pressing challenges, including care for the growing number of orphans, assistance for the displaced, and the restoration of essential services such as water, hygiene, education, and healthcare. It is vital that all stakeholders work collectively to bring



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together the necessary expertise and resources, not only to improve lives but also to help preserve the cultural and religious diversity that defines the Holy Land. As Pope Leo reminded us only days ago, ‘every human being has an intrinsic dignity bestowed by God Himself.’

In this shared commitment, we once again thank the Co-Chairs and all participants for ensuring that these priorities remain at the heart of our collective efforts.

Thank you.76