



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

Permanent Observer Mission to the United Nations Office
and other International Organizations in Geneva

**Quadrennial Panel Discussion on Promoting Human Rights
through Sport and the Olympic Ideal (HRC Res. 37/18)**

**Statement by Professor Michel Veuthey
Ambassador to monitor and combat trafficking in persons, Deputy Permanent Observer
Geneva, 1 July 2024**

Mr. President, Excellencies, Dear Colleagues,

As the world eagerly anticipates the Paris Olympic Games, it is imperative to address a pressing and often overlooked issue: human trafficking in sports. Athletes, particularly those from vulnerable backgrounds, are at significant risk of exploitation. They can fall victim to deceitful recruitment practices, forced labor, and abuse, often under the guise of legitimate opportunities.

Major sporting events can inadvertently become hotbeds for trafficking activities due to the influx of visitors and the high demand for labor, both skilled and unskilled.

To address this urgent issue, the Sovereign Order of Malta organized a [side event for the United Nations Human Rights Council](#) on June 20, 2024. You can watch it on Vimeo and YouTube. It brought together experts, such as representatives of FIFA and WSBC, as well as policymakers.

The Sovereign Order of Malta calls for the implementation of stringent background checks for recruiters, the establishment of safe reporting channels for victims, and the development of educational programs to raise awareness about the dangers of trafficking.

Thank you.