



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

**Human Rights Council - A/HRC/56/48**  
**Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Girls,**  
**Its Causes and Consequences, Ms. Reem Alsalem**

**Statement by Professor Michel Veuthey**  
**Ambassador to monitor and combat trafficking in persons, Deputy Permanent Observer**  
**Geneva, 21 June 2024**

Madam President, Excellencies,

The Order of Malta would like to thank the Special Rapporteur for her excellent report ([A/HRC/56/48](#)) on “Prostitution and violence against women and girls.” The Sovereign Order of Malta wishes to continue collaborating with the Special Rapporteur and other stakeholders, including faith-based organizations and the business and academic communities, to share and optimize its best practices.

The Order of Malta supports the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Representative calling upon all parties to conflict to

- **Strictly adopt legislation based on relevant international instruments mentioned by the Special Rapporteur** (articles 1 and 2 of the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, article 6 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and article 3 of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime to fight against the exploitation of the <https://portchaplains.org/>prostitution of others and trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation; and note that the criminalization of the exploitation of the prostitution of another person is effective even with the consent of that person, thus validating the irrelevance of the concept of consent in the context of prostitution);
- **Together with international institutions, address cross-border cyber trafficking, allowing evidence-sharing across borders in any upcoming United Nations digital compact or international treaties and address online sexual exploitation explicitly;** in the absence of an international treaty on cybercrime, adopt the Convention on Cybercrime to address responsibilities in the area of cybercrimes, including the prevention of technology-facilitated child sexual exploitation;
- **Refrain from adding conditions to the criminalization of pimping,** such as the burden of proof required to validate the situation of trafficking or subordination by the exploiter of the prostituted person; the criminalization of the purchase of sexual acts must not be related to the need to prove a potential situation of trafficking;
- **Work with offenders while they are still in time to stop or prevent them from offending; and address the systemic and structural issues that continue to create vulnerability to exploitation from prostitution and trafficking in persons**

To conclude, the Order of Malta would like to highlight the issue of the consequences for children of prostituted women, who are often stolen, sold in trafficking networks, and regularly used for sexual abuse or rape.

Thank you.