



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

AMBASSADOR TO MONITOR AND COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

Human Rights Council – A/HRC/61/45
Report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children,
Ms. Mama Fatima Singhateh
Statement by Prof. Michel Veuthey, Ambassador to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons,
Deputy Permanent Observer in Geneva

Excellencies,

The Sovereign Order of Malta thanks the Special Rapporteur, Ms. Mama Fatima Singhateh, for her report (A/HRC/61/45), which refers to the [Rome Conference](#) co-organised on 10 December 2025¹ by the Order of Malta, Praeveni Global, and the Pontifical Gregorian University, and for her six years of service as mandate holder.

The Order of Malta expresses grave concern over the widespread and persistent sexual exploitation and abuse of children highlighted in the report. Escalating conflicts, climate-related crises, humanitarian emergencies, and the unchecked spread of new technologies are creating an environment in which children are increasingly exposed to grave violations of their rights. The international community must act with urgency and resolve effective protection.

The private sector must also be held accountable. As clearly stated in the report, existing measures remain inadequate across several sectors, including finance, new technologies, and mining. Both harmful practices and the lack of robust safeguards continue to enable sexual exploitation and abuse of children.

At the same time, the Order of Malta welcomes the progress achieved, particularly in supporting legislative reforms and strengthening inter-agency cooperation at the United Nations level.

Mr. President,

The Sovereign Order of Malta remains firmly committed to the protection of children worldwide. Guided by its centuries-old humanitarian mission, our national associations and Malteser International provide life-saving assistance and psychosocial support to children in vulnerable contexts, including in conflict zones such as [Ukraine](#) since 2022. Our national associations also uphold strict safeguarding standards, including regularly updated child protection policies.

Our national associations are also fully aware of the issue, and many have taken proactive measures. Order of Malta Ireland, for example, has adopted a [child safeguarding statement and policy](#) that is reviewed and updated annually in line with best practices in child protection.

Thank you.

¹ [Report of the Rome Conference Against Human Trafficking: 25 Years After the Palermo Protocol, A Call to Action](#) The Conference concluded that urgent action is required to effectively prevent and combat human trafficking, in particular through the mobilisation of additional resources and the broadening of engagement from governments, civil society, including faith-based organizations, academia, businesses, media, local communities, NGOs, and victims and survivors.