



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/61/38
Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violences against Children
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 Representative, Ms. Najat Maalla N'jid for her [report](#).

The Order of Malta would like to express its concern about the rise in violence against children, particularly online.

As emphasized by the Special Representative, the growing use of new technologies among children and young people tends to make them increasingly vulnerable to violence, sometimes committed among themselves, such as with cyberbullying, or by much more organized networks using new technologies for the purpose of child trafficking.

From a legal perspective, such acts constitute serious violations of international law. It is important to remember that there are already many international and regional instruments in place to combat violence against children, particularly online. These include the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Global Digital Compact adopted by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in 2024, and the International Telecommunication Union's (ITU) 2020 Guidelines on Child Online Protection.

From a spiritual perspective, such acts constitute a grave breach of the child's dignity. On several occasions, His Holiness Pope Leo XIV warns us about the dangers that new technologies and artificial intelligence may pose to human dignity.

Mr. President,

The Sovereign Order of Malta, rooted in a thousand-year tradition of humanitarian service to the most vulnerable, reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the protection and well-being of children worldwide. Present in over 120 countries, the Order remains steadfast in its mission to assist children in need, especially in conflict-affected regions such as Ukraine and the Holy Land, where our teams are actively engaged. We also extend our sincere gratitude to the Special Representative for mentioning her collaboration with faith-based organizations and religious leaders. Such partnerships are indispensable in promoting and disseminating best practices for the protection of children. Thank you.