



SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER  
OF SAINT JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

THE HEAD OF MISSION

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### **Note for the file**

Statement by HE M. Yves Gazzo  
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Accredited to the European Union, Brussels

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The International Criminal Court  
Seventeenth Session of the Assembly of the State Parties  
December 5 2018

Mr. President :

I am honored to address the Assembly of State Parties on behalf of the Sovereign Order of Malta.

In 2013, the Order has celebrated its 900 years of existence.

In its recent history and after its establishment in Rome, in first two decades of the XXth century the Order, long time recognized as an International Sovereign State, has extended the network of its diplomatic relations to above 100 Sovereign States - more than half the Member States of the United Nations and the State Parties to the Rome Statute - with exchange of ambassadors.

In Europe the Order has established full diplomatic relations with 18 European Union's Member States including Germany, the most recent signatory in 2018.

This being said, the almost exclusive activities of the Order do concentrate on addressing the numerous humanitarian crises and challenges; while our humanitarian diplomacy does efficiently shoulder and accompany our humanitarian endeavours, the Order does highly appreciate the sheer existence of the International Criminal Court which was established by the Rome Statute. Consequently, the Order would take this opportunity to underline its strong support to the invaluable work of the International Criminal Court.

The Court represents, since its inception, a unique peaceful organization upholding International Law and thus signalling that impunity is not guaranteed at all to notorious crimes or criminal behaviours.

The Order has been providing for more than 9 centuries assistance to the sick and the poor existing in more than 120 countries.

Recently its assistance has focused on the Migration Crisis providing help and assistance be it in the Middle East, at sea, on the European shores at Lampedusa for example, or in migrants camps all along migrations routes ; at a certain point in time, one out of four migrants arriving in Germany has been catered by the Humanitarian Branch of the Order.

Because of its wide geographical intervention in closed regions or in armed conflicts, the Order's Humanitarian Teams have been exposed here and there to risky situation, sometimes being themselves the targets of fighting parties even if the Order's actions are non-political and neutral by nature.

These Humanitarians Teams may have witnessed, in certain cases, incorrect or unhuman treatment of persons or group of persons by some fighting parties, an attitude that goes along more easily in area where insecurity prevails opening the door to all kinds of illegal trafficking.

This is where the Court, acting as a deterrent to discourage these criminal activities is crucial not only to protect the legitimate rights of individuals but above all to make sure that International Humanitarian law is respected.

Trafficking of individuals remains a growing concern and it is the Order's opinion that the International Community must do its best to address these highly criminal practises, which by taking advantage of vulnerable and desperate human beings deny their sheer existence by treating them, women and children in particular, like slaves.

As it was mentioned at last year's Session in New York, the Order has appointed two ambassadors at large, one in Abuja, H.E . M.de Villeneuve and one in Geneva, H.E. M. Veutthey to monitor these worrisome trends related to Human Trafficking.

The Order would like to take this opportunity to stress again on the importance of this issue and to call upon the Assembly of the State Parties to prevent, combat and punish such crimes by all existing or additional legal means and measures.

Mr. President, the Order greatly appreciates the unabated efforts of the Court to promote International Law and in so doing so it's determination to bring actors of international crimes to justice, is quite probably, one the most respectable way to promote International Justice and thus guaranteeing to the most vulnerable, the deep feeling that they are not living in a world where impunity would prevail.

Thank you

Yves Gazzo