SOVEREIGN MILITARY 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

74th World Health Assembly

General Debate

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Marie-Thérèse Pictet-Althann

Geneva, 25 May 2021

Mr. / Madam President,
Director-General,
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

The Sovereign Order of Malta's health units have been engaged in fighting Covid-19 since the pandemic began. We immediately joined the efforts of the international community by providing medical equipment, medicines and protective gear to hospitals and clinics and by launching new programs to support national health systems. In many regions we are also working to reduce the negative social and economic effects on vulnerable populations, while promoting a fair and fast distribution of vaccines worldwide with a view to ending this pandemic.

Moreover, the Order of Malta set up the "Doctor to Doctor" virtual platform with a cycle of webinars held throughout 2020 and 2021 connecting experts in the field of infectious diseases, epidemiology, emergency medicine and policy makers from all over the world. This initiative enables health professionals to share knowledge, help understanding of best practices, protocols and strategies to adopt, in order to contain the infection and provide therapies. Some 150 health experts from Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, Australia (Democratic Republic of the Congo, Germany, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sweden, Syria, Turkey, the United Kingdom and Yemen) and the World Health Organization have participated in this ongoing dialogue. A recently published report on its key findings examines how different countries experienced and responded to Covid-19, and provides an overview of possible future areas of research.

Through its presence in 120 countries, the Order of Malta cooperates in the humanitarian and medical fields with governments and other partners to whom we are most grateful such as Germany, Lebanon, Taiwan, Colombia, South Africa, to name only a few. During this ongoing pandemic in particular, multilateral cooperation proves to be an essential element in the global fight against Covid-19. It is therefore crucial that all relevant actors are part of this international effort.

Thank you.

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