



SOVRANO MILITARE ORDINE OSPEDALIERO  
DI SAN GIOVANNI DI GERUSALEMME DI RODI E DI MALTA

WHO 77<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly  
29 May 2024

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Fra' Alessandro de Franciscis  
Grand Hospitaller of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller  
Order of St John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta  
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Distinguished Chair:

The Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem, known as the Order of Malta, is a catholic religious Order chartered by the Pope in 1113. We believe that Jesus Christ calls us to take care of the poor and of the sick. We are neutral by mission, serving without distinction.

We have been “*hospitallers*” for more than 900 years and it is an honor to address this assembly on a matter that touches the very core of our humanity: the universal right to health. We feel very sad of what the theme of this year’s Health Assembly: *All for Health, Health for All* sounds to us!

*Health for All?* Thursday May 16<sup>th</sup> I entered the Gaza Strip accompanying the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, H.B. Cardinal Pizzaballa, reaching his people in Gaza City for the first time since the beginning of the war. What I saw contravenes the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which affirms health as a fundamental human right. What *Health* can be there for those Palestinians trapped in such a tragic situation? And likewise in so many other parts of the world?

In Gaza, and not only, Humanity is lost!

**Our efforts** in building Safeguarding Measures for children and vulnerable people, **our assuring** clean water, good food and medical care for millions in the Americas, Europe, Middle East, Asia, Africa and all of the Pacific, **our believing** that “*Health for all*” is essential for the future of society .... **all are in contrast** with the tolerance that the powerful have towards bombing and shooting civilian innocent people.

We remark the importance of a Global Treaty for the inevitable next infectious pandemics that will arrive because of the rise of the globe temperature and because of the urbanisation of rural areas that will increase zoonotic spillovers. We are in favour of continued negotiations on this crucial treaty that appropriately addresses urgent, emerging pandemic threats. Multilateralism and international cooperation can achieve this goal, certainly not a bilateral or unilateral way!

But of all diseases existing and foreseeable **War** remains the most terrible and absolutely preventable. The name of the remedy is **Peace**. And only Peace can bring *Health for All!!!*