



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

**ICRC – 5th Consultation with States on International Humanitarian Law
Working Group on National IHL Committees
Statement by Ambassador Michel Veuthey,
Ambassador to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons
Deputy Permanent Observer
Geneva, 24 June 2026**

Excellencies, Dear Colleagues,

The Sovereign Order of Malta thanks the co-chairs for convening this meeting

The Order of Malta would like to emphasize that all humanitarian organizations, and faith-based ones in particular, bring a distinct and irreplaceable value. Many are present before, during, and after conflicts. They maintain access to vulnerable populations in areas where the States and international organizations can no longer operate. The Order of Malta, active in 130 countries, often in partnership with local religious congregations, across most of conflict zones, stands as a concrete example of this sustained, trusted presence.

Faith-based organizations' credibility within local communities makes them particularly effective vectors for IHL dissemination, especially where trust in State institutions is low. They can foster a culture of respect for IHL among civilian populations, and in some contexts, as referenced in Annex 1, even among non-State armed groups.

We would therefore encourage consider explicitly recognizing the role of these organizations as partners of national IHL committees.

The legitimacy and effectiveness of these committees rest not only on legal expertise, but on their ability to anchor international humanitarian law in public conscience and field reality. That is precisely what humanitarian and faith-based organizations do, every day, on the ground.

Thank you.