



## **Statement Grand Chancellor Albrecht Boeselager of the Sovereign Order of Malta Plenary WHS**

*Istanbul 24 May 2016*

The Sovereign Order of Malta welcomes this opportunity to reaffirm its over 900-year old commitment and its present global outreach to people in need. The Sovereign Order of Malta adheres through its daily action to the Secretary General's call to leave no one behind.

This service to humanity has and is being carried out without distinction of religion, origin and age in 120 countries.

In order to guarantee a productive outcome of the WHS, we need to ensure that our statements and the commitments we are adhering to translate into concrete action on behalf of all persons that are expecting protection and assistance from us. Their lives and dignity depend on our action or inaction.

In this spirit, one of the Sovereign Order of Malta's priorities is to strengthen the synergies between all humanitarian stakeholders, including faith-based organizations of all religions. Within this framework, the role of religious communities and faith-based actors has been widely recognized in the fields of prevention, assistance, resilience and reconciliation. It is therefore necessary to include them in the decision making process at all stages before, during and after crises, i.e. risk assessment, disaster preparedness and response, emergency aid, reconstruction and rehabilitation. To achieve this in a dignified and principled manner the Sovereign Order of Malta is committed to pursuing its engagement for the respect of international humanitarian law and fundamental humanitarian principles as recently strongly underlined by the Security Council Resolution 2286.

Furthermore, the Sovereign Order of Malta wishes to reinforce and expand its humanitarian diplomacy both on a bilateral and multilateral level with the following aims:

- Obtain access to victims
- Ensure the security of humanitarian workers
- Promote the codification and implementation of humanitarian law in the broadest sense
- Work towards ensuring the concrete respect of humanitarian law, by both governments and non-state actors. We are witness to an increase in the violation of these rules on behalf of all parties including states, not just armed forces and non-state actors. This implies the protection of hospitals, schools and health workers at all times.

We look forward to cooperating with governments and civil society in this field.

The Sovereign Order of Malta is also keen to share its long and worldwide experience by participating in the ongoing humanitarian dialogue, as well as contributing to the training and education of humanitarian staff. The lessons that we and others have learnt can be of valuable assistance in the

reform of to-day's humanitarian architecture which requires permanent adaptation and reassessment.

It is only by a constant effort and attention towards the evolution of the needs of assistance and protection that we can try to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.