



SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALIER ORDER
OF ST JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA

PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT
BY
MS. SARAH DUNAWAY
ADVISER

TO THE

THIRD COMMITTEE

[ITEM 28] ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

16 OCTOBER, 2012

(CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY)

MR CHAIRMAN,
MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU,
ESTEEMED DELEGATES,

I am honored to address the Third Committee on behalf of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. As this is my delegation's first time addressing the Third Committee this session, allow me to congratulate you and the other members of the bureau for your election to head and wisely guide our committee. The issue of the advancement of women is one of utmost importance to the Sovereign Order of Malta, as well as an integral component of the work of the Third Committee, and we are pleased to have the opportunity to take the floor.

MR CHAIRMAN,

We agree whole-heartedly with the Special Rapporteur on **the need to ensure the social, cultural, and economic participation and empowerment of rural women**. It is a longstanding practice of the Sovereign Order of Malta to concentrate much of its work towards these under-served rural populations.

In Pakistan, after the monsoon floods of 2010, Malteser International, the worldwide relief organization of the Sovereign Order of Malta for humanitarian aid, rebuilt 15 Basic Health Units (BHUs). The employees of the BHU are primarily women known as Lady Health Workers (LHWs). Every month, they discuss the health issues affecting their communities: new disease outbreaks, how many women have become pregnant or delivered a baby, they plan the monthly health campaigns in their villages, and they come up with ideas to deal with issues ranging from the immunization of children to gender-based violence.

Unnati, in Northeastern India It allows women from the Dalits, who belong to the lowest ranks of India's traditionally caste-based society, to petition their government and assert their claims by giving them the knowledge and the tools they need in order to gain access to vital social services

The Sovereign Order of Malta's work has enabled village women's collective groups to successfully demand local authorities to provide temporary work for women Furthermore, Malteser International and Unnati are helping women break out of the vicious cycle of poverty and exclusion by enabling them to become property owners For instance, in the village of Kolu Pabuji, none of the women in the village had ever owned any property until recently Now, with the support of the project facilitators and the local communities, the husbands of four of the women agreed to transfer two plots of land to their name The project has already reached 500 families in 50 villages, and a total of 152 women have been trained to serve as voluntary leaders in their villages

MR CHAIRMAN,

Allow me to conclude by stating that the Sovereign Order of Malta is continually dedicated to helping the advancement of women Although much progress has been made, I will take this opportunity to recognize that there is still much work to be done The Sovereign Military Order of Malta is grateful for this opportunity for exchange and looks ahead to further collaboration with the United Nations, Member States, NGOs, and other groups to strengthen the global position of women and girls

THANK YOU