



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

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UFFICIO COMUNICAZIONI

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Libyan delegation in Rome to discuss immigration and mutual challenges**

*Meeting of senior representatives of Tobruk and Tripoli takes place at Order of Malta  
Magistral Villa*

*Rome 8 October 2015* – A meeting organised by British think tank 'Forward Thinking' and the Sovereign Order of Malta took place this morning in Rome, at the Magistral Villa of the Order of Malta. The meeting was held in the presence of two Libyan delegations respectively representing Tobruk and Tripoli.

The meeting was centred around the challenges posed by the escalating migration influx and the fight against human smuggling on Libyan soil. Shoko Shimosawa, Deputy-Director of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the MENA region (Middle East and North Africa) also participated in the meeting.

The meeting identified the most immediate challenges to be faced - from a humanitarian, healthcare and security perspective - and defined an agenda for a conference to be extended to other countries and held in the coming weeks. This objective was strongly shared by both delegations present.

“I hope that today’s meeting will form the foundation of a new constructive dialogue capable of identifying and implementing effective solutions, both in the short and long term, to allow Libya to move forward with a peace-building process”, declared the Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order of Malta Albrecht Boeselager as he opened the meeting. “The Order of Malta renews its commitment to supporting this process with the objective of alleviating the suffering of the Libyan population, creating secure conditions in the country and bringing to an end the tragic loss of life in the Mediterranean”, said Boeselager.

#### **Contatti:**

**Ufficio Comunicazioni Sovrano Ordine di Malta**

Marianna Balfour

Tel. +39.06.67581.341

Cell. +39.349.7738776

[m.balfour@orderofmalta.int](mailto:m.balfour@orderofmalta.int)

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

**The Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta**, founded in Jerusalem around the year 1048, is a primary subject of international law and a Catholic religious and lay order. The Order's mission is summed up in its motto *Tuitio Fidei et Obsequium Pauperum*: defence of the faith and assistance to the poor and sick. Today the Order of Malta is mainly active in health and social care and humanitarian aid, operating in over 120 countries. Its 13,500 members are supported by 80,000 volunteers, with another 25,000 doctors, nurses and paramedics. The Order manages hospitals, health centres, out-patient units, institutes for the elderly and disabled, terminal patient centres and volunteer corps. Malteser International, the Order of Malta's special relief agency, is always in the front line in natural disasters and to alleviate the consequences of armed conflicts. Over the past years, the Order's most significant interventions have taken place in Kosovo and Macedonia, India, South East Asia (after the tsunami), Afghanistan, Pakistan, Mexico, Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Georgia and Haiti. Currently the Order is committed to assisting the Syrian population fleeing the conflict in the neighbouring countries. The Italian Relief Corps participates in the rescue operations in the Mediterranean, supporting the authorities involved in the Mare Nostrum Operation. The head of the Order is the 79th Grand Master Fra' Matthew Festing, assisted by the members of the Sovereign Council. The Order of Malta is neutral, impartial and apolitical. It has bilateral diplomatic relations with 104 States, official relations with another 6 States, and relations at ambassadorial level with the European Union. It is a Permanent Observer to the United Nations and its specialised Agencies and has representatives to the main international organizations. Since 1834 the Order of Malta's Government has been located in Rome, where it is guaranteed extraterritoriality rights.

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