

## **KEY INFORMATION REGARDING OSMTH AS A CANDIDATE FOR ELECTION TO THE CoNGO BOARD**

### **For the CoNGO General Assembly on 1 - 3 March 2018**

OSMTH - the Supreme Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem - is an international association of associations, registered in Geneva, Switzerland.

OSMTH currently has 19 national member associations, stretching from Argentina to Russia and from Canada to Greece. The two largest by membership are the national associations in the United States of America and in Bulgaria. The number of individual members is approaching 4,500. This membership gives OSMTH a wide range of perspectives from different nations and cultures around the world. OSMTH draws on these perspectives to inform its international activities in advocacy, facilitation and bridge-building.

OSMTH takes its inspiration from the role of the medieval Knights Templar in the protection of pilgrims, but members of OSMTH are emphatically not "modern day crusaders". In keeping with the 1841 Declaration of Principles of the modern Templar organisation, OSMTH is an interdenominational and ecumenical Christian association. We admit individual members on personal merit for their proven capabilities in corporate, educational, government, military, community, religious, civil society and humanitarian organizations. OSMTH does not limit membership based on gender, and several of our national associations either are, or have been, led by women.

All the members of OSMTH serve in a voluntary capacity. The most senior international officeholders draw on a limited central budget just to cover a percentage of their costs of travel and accommodation in the service of the Order. As a past senior officeholder of OSMTH in the United Kingdom would regularly remind us: "A person does not join OSMTH to be somebody; a person joins OSMTH to do something". Individual members put their knowledge, skills and professional capabilities at the disposal of OSMTH, so that the Order can take its work forward.

Although, for historic reasons, the word "military" appears in its full title, OSMTH is not a military organisation. At the international level, OSMTH operates today as a civil society body and an active non-governmental organisation.

OSMTH's charitable activities are primarily undertaken by its national member associations. In the year 2016/17, the charitable giving of OSMTH's national

associations totalled over USD 1.41 million (EUR 1.15 million) in support of causes ranging from:

- nursing and education scholarships in Israel and the Palestinian Territories;
- clean water programs in Africa and the Philippines; and
- welfare programs for the victims of terrorism in Eastern Europe; to
- provision of micro-credit for developing countries in the Indian Sub-Continent.

As an international advocacy body and a "bridge-builder", OSMTH sees its current mission as assisting Christians and other communities and peoples at risk anywhere in the world, but with a particular focus on in the Middle East. At the international level, OSMTH maintains regular high-level contact with leaders in the various Christian Churches, and is also active in inter-faith dialogue with leaders in the other Abrahamic faiths of Judaism and Islam.

OSMTH regularly works with other civil society bodies and NGOs which have an interest and capacity in peace-building, human rights, religious freedom, conservation of cultural heritage and post-conflict reconstruction.

OSMTH has been an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the United Nations ECOSOC since 2002, and also maintains a delegation to the United Nations Department of Public Information.

OSMTH has considered it a great honour to be a Board Member of CoNGO over the past term. In addition to our CoNGO Board membership, OSMTH currently provides in New York:

- the chair and secretary of the NGO Committee on Education, Learning & Literacy;
- the treasurer of the NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values & Global Concerns;
- a member of the Committee of Religious NGOs at the United Nations;
- a member of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women;
- a member of the NGO Committee on the Family; and
- a member of the NGO Committee on Sustainable Development.

OSMTH has aimed to make, and - if elected for the coming term - pledges to continue to make a serious and meaningful contribution to the work of CoNGO.

***Simon Le Fevre BA (Hons) MBA***

***OSMTH Representative to the CoNGO General Assembly 2018***