

**COOPERATION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA
AND
THE SOVEREIGN MILITARY HOSPITALLER ORDER
OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM OF RHODES AND OF MALTA**

The Republic of Lithuania, for one Party; and

The Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta, for the other Party, hereinafter referred to as “the Contracting Parties”;

Whereas the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta (hereinafter referred to as “the Sovereign Order of Malta”) has been dedicated to the service of the sick and poor in the world ever since its foundation more than 900 years ago;

Considering the traditionally excellent relations between the Republic of Lithuania and the Sovereign Order of Malta since the establishment of diplomatic relations on 9 July 1992 and the recurrence of the 25th anniversary this year;

Recalling the establishment of the Order of Malta’s Relief Organisation in Lithuania (Maltos Ordino Pagalbos Tarnyba), in 1991, which today runs numerous social assistance projects for the poor, the elderly, the disabled and children from disadvantaged families with over 1,500 volunteers in 42 towns nationwide, based on the shared common values;

Desirous to further enhance the existing relationship and cooperation between the Republic of Lithuania and the Sovereign Order of Malta, as well as to achieve the common goals of the future;

Noting that the Sovereign Order of Malta entrusts the management of its humanitarian missions to appointed organizations;

hereby agree:

Article 1

Purpose of the Agreement

1.1. The purpose of this Agreement is to set the general framework and guidelines of the cooperation between the Republic of Lithuania and the Sovereign Order of Malta aimed at promoting the hospitaller work and the activities related to health care, social care and humanitarian aid of the latter in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania and in accordance with legislation in force therein.

1.2. According to their means, the Contracting Parties shall support and implement measures intended to facilitate, develop and diversify their cooperation related to health care, social care and humanitarian aid.

1.3. In case of emergency, necessity or unexpected events, and in lack of specific conventions as defined in paragraph 2.1 of this Agreement, this Agreement shall directly apply to activities, which will be taken on the initiative and under the supervision of the Contracting Parties.

Article 2

Project Implementation with Appointed Organisations and Partners of the Sovereign Order of Malta

2.1. To the purpose of accomplishing its mission, the Sovereign Order of Malta takes actions directly or through its Appointed Organisations. These Appointed Organisations act within the framework of their competences; therefore, they may establish specific conventions, which relate thereto. For the purpose of this Agreement, “Appointed Organizations” are subordinate organisations of the Sovereign Order of Malta, here intended as foundations, aid services, national associations or any other institutions connected to the Sovereign Order of Malta and established in the view of the accomplishment of its activities, such as the Order of Malta Relief Organization (OMRO) in Lithuania (Maltos ordino pagalbos tarnyba or MOPT) or Malteser International, its international relief agency. The Contracting Parties – in Additional Protocols supplementing the present Agreement – may agree upon further entities to be considered as appointed organizations for the purposes of the present Agreement.

2.2. For the effective implementation of the tasks arising from the present Agreement, the Sovereign Order of Malta and its Appointed Organizations shall cooperate with the Republic of Lithuania, and the local authorities and organizations involved in the execution of the mentioned tasks within the borders of the Republic of Lithuania.

2.3. The Sovereign Order of Malta has the power to act in collaboration with religious or lay institutions in order to accomplish all or part of any operation or activities within the scope of the present Agreement.

2.4. The Republic of Lithuania shall grant to the Sovereign Order of Malta and its Appointed Organisations the right to replace or hire any natural or legal person to ensure the proper execution of the programs and projects in accordance with legislation in force in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania.

Article 3
Objective of the Cooperation

3.1. The Contracting Parties will make the effort to promote mutual cooperation in accordance with the laws, rules and internal regulations in harmony with their respective policies on the basis of principles of equality and mutual respect of sovereignty.

3.2. The appointed organizations of the Sovereign Order of Malta will be granted all tax exemptions and donations benefits to the extent foreseen for foundations, aid services and associations in the legislation in force in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania.

Article 4
Fields of Cooperation

4.1. The cooperation foreseen in this agreement will be executed in the following fields:

4.1.1. Health services;

4.1.2. Volunteering;

4.1.3. Disaster Risk Reduction;

4.1.4. Humanitarian aid;

4.1.5. Reduction of social exclusion, especially of young disabled;

4.1.6. Social care (mainly elderly people and children);

4.1.7. Refugee integration programs.

4.2. This list is not all-inclusive.

Article 5

Assessment Committee

5.1. In order to ensure proper follow-up of the cooperation, an Assessment Committee shall be set up to examine and choose cooperation projects and plans to attain the objectives set out in this Agreement. To this effect, the Committee shall prepare reports and set out future projects and orientations.

5.2. The Assessment Committee shall be composed of not less than 2 (two) and not more than 5 (five) representatives of each Contracting Party. Each Contracting Party shall notify its members to the other through diplomatic channels.

5.3. This committee shall meet when the need arises at the initiative of either of the Contracting Parties.

Article 6

Protection of Identity

6.1. In accordance with international law the Contracting Parties commit themselves to mutually protect their names, emblems, coats of arms, flags and other symbols of sovereignty against abuse or violation, and ensure to defend them against any imitation.

Article 7

Entry into force, Duration and Renewal

7.1. This Agreement shall enter into force after each Contracting Party has notified to the other through diplomatic channels that required internal procedures of their legislation have been fulfilled. The Agreement is concluded for a period of 10 (ten) years, to be renewed automatically by tacit consent.

7.2. The provisions of this Agreement may be amended at any time by a mutual written agreement of both Contracting Parties. The amendments shall enter into force in accordance with the procedure stipulated in paragraph 7.1 of this Agreement.

7.3. This Agreement can be terminated by any of the Contracting Parties through diplomatic channels with a written notification to the other with an advance of at least six (6) months.

7.4. Even following its termination or expiry, the provisions of this Agreement will be applied to the programs and projects which are being executed until these will finish, unless the contrary is expressly agreed by the Contracting Parties.

Article 8

Settlement of Disputes

8.1. Any dispute in the interpretation or implementation of the present Agreement shall be settled by consultation or negotiation between the Contracting Parties.

Article 9
Language

9.1. This Agreement shall be written in two originals, each in Lithuanian and in English, both texts being equally authentic.

9.2. The Contracting Parties shall agree on the equal and indistinct use of Lithuanian and English as the language of expression and writing of any correspondence concerning, directly or indirectly, the cooperation under this Agreement.

Done at Vilnius on 4 September 2017.

For the Republic of Lithuania

A blue ink signature of Saulius Skvernelis, consisting of a stylized 'S' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Saulius Skvernelis
Prime Minister

**For the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of
St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta**

A blue ink signature of Albrecht Freiherr von Boeselager, featuring a large, stylized 'A' followed by several loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Albrecht Freiherr von Boeselager
Grand Chancellor