

The 39th. Edition of the Ball of Malta

The Standing Ovation for Ardeshir Zahedi Honoured the Name of Iran

“It is more blessed to give than to receive”



(background) Prof. Ken White - Mr. Brandon Monson - (foreground) AZ - LL.EE. Le Comte Martin de Walterskirchen



The first week of every February, the romantic and historical city of Bern, the capital of Switzerland, is the host of a glamorous ball organised by of the Service Hospitaller of the Swiss Order of Malta (SHOMS). Other cities also have their charity balls on different dates.



(background) Prof. Ken White - (foreground) AZ - LL.EE. La Comtesse Ursula de Walterskirchen - LL.EE. Le Comte Martin de Walterskirchen - LL.AA.SS. Le Prince Alexandre Lubomirski

The 39th. Edition of this traditional ball was held on Saturday, February the first 2020 in the prestigious Hôtel Bellevue Palace that has been hosting great national events for decades. Some five hundred personalities from different walks of life: ambassadors, diplomats, statesmen, managers of banks and directors of major companies, writers, artists, lawyers, physicians and distinguished members of the community were present



AZ -LL.AA.SS. Le Prince Alexandre Lubomirski



(background) Prof. Ken White - LL.EE. Le Comte & La Comtesse Martin de Walterskirchen - LL.AA.SS. Le Prince et la Princesse Alexandre Lubomirski -(foreground) AZ - Commandant Alexandre Sacerdoti

with their wives. They all wore their impressive costumes for the occasion: tuxedos or smoking with colourful decorations for men and long robes for the ladies.

This year's Ball of beneficence was particularly marked by the warm reception that was reserved for Ambassador Zahedi and his distinguished guests.

His Excellency Martin von Walterskirchen, President of the Swiss Association of the Order of Malta opened the ball by welcoming the participants and particularly Ambassador Zahedi as the guest of Honour. He added that the "Success of this year's ball as well as those of the recent years has been largely due to the support and generous contributions of

Ardeshir Zahedi. Tonight, we have several diplomats and distinguished ambassadors amongst us who are here because of Mr. Zahedi and at

his personal invitation."

At the central table Ambassador Zahedi, with his elegant frack bedecked with decorations from 86 different countries that he had received during his years of diplomatic services including the highest decoration of the Order of Malta, THE GRAND CROSS Pro Merito Melitensi that was added to the collection in 2016 in recognition of a life-long devotion to charity and humanitarian causes.

Ambassador Zahedi was flanked by Her Royal Highness, Princess Lea Wolman of Belgium, ambassadors of Turkey, Tunisia and the United States at the high table. When The audience rose in a standing ovation to honour him, Ambassador Zahedi was visibly moved and stood up and bowed in gratitude.

The commander of the Service Hospitaller of the Swiss Order of Malta, Mr Alexandre Sacerdoti also

warmly welcomed the participants and praised Ambassador Ardeshir Zahedi for his unswerving loyalty and legendary generosity. He said:

"I welcome our guest of honour. We are particularly grateful to our sponsors. Without their generosity, we could not have survived or achieved what we have done.

Though our president has already expressed our gratitude to His Excellency Ardeshir Zahedi, it is my personal duty and pleasure to say how much we appreciate our dear friend's loyalty and unfailing support for the Service Hospitaller de the Ordre of Malte Switzerland and our charity Ball.

I should add that thanks to Ambassador Zahedi, we have many well-known diplomats in Switzerland amongst us tonight.

Facing the fragile conditions of people who suffer, SHOMS and



**Mrs. Claudia von Arx - AZ - Mr. David von Arx -
Mr. Konrad von Arx**

its 800 active members, rather than simply lamenting or witnessing the situation, have chosen to actively provide services and supports to those in poverty, suffering from illness and in need of help. 7

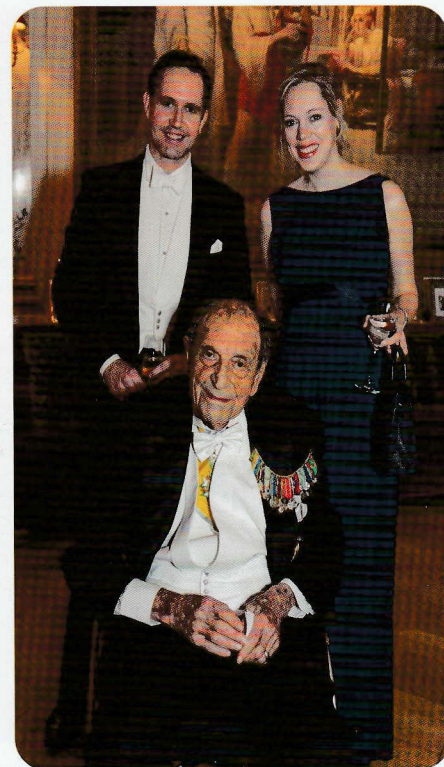
Thank you for being by our side, helping us and sharing our philosophy:

« It is more blessed to give than to receive...»

The whole night and throughout the ceremony, Ambassador Zahedi was the at the centre of all attention. At the end, as he was leaving the reception hall and seeing off his guests, one could notice that youth had crept back into his heart. He told his friends “I was deeply touched and shall cherish the memories of this great night, not because I was personally acclaimed but because every moment and every word spoken led to glorification of the

name of Iran and respect for my great and beloved country.”

The idea of foundation of the knights of the Order of Malta goes back to particular moments in the European history. It starts with the first Crusades and the efforts of Pope Urban II to establish the supremacy of the Christian power. Originally it was to look after the Christian soldiers wounded in the holy expeditions. It also lodged and nourished pilgrims of the holy land. Later, the Order of Saint John was created in the early 12th. Century primarily to care for the sick, hence the institution of Hospital and Hopitalier hosting the poor and the sick. The motto of the order from the start and some 900 years ago has remained « Tuitio Fidei et Obsequium Pauperum », that is defence of faith and caring of the



**Mr. Sébastien Brack - AZ -
Mrs Annika Brack**



**H.E. Ilhan Saygili - AZ - Mrs
Bengü Saygili**





Mr. Martin Garbani - Mrs. Anne-Marie Garbani - AZ - Mrs. Beatrice Baumann - Mr Marc Baumann



Prof. Ken White - Mrs. Cyndi White - AZ - Mr. Brandon Monson - Mrs Amanda Monson

poor. In recent centuries it has offered the humanitarian services to people of every faith and denomination and is no more restricted to Catholic or Christian community. In fact, in the past decade the foundation has become more and more involved in charity work in the war-stricken countries of the Middle East.

The Order has also devoted particular attention to the sufferings of women and their conditions in the crisis areas.

To-day, the Order of Malta is active in 120 different countries; it is basically implicated in medical, social and humanitarian assistance.

In Switzerland, this service was created forty-six years ago, in 1974, to help the poor and the deprived. The annual Charity Ball, now an established tradition, started in 1982. Several volunteers, members of the Order of Malta and the Community of Saint John laid the foundation of the association which continues to grow in size and importance.

Throughout the four decades of existence, SHOMS has diversified its activities and the range of its humanitarian engagements; it has saved hundreds from misery, poverty, disease and distress.

Apart from traditional medical services to the people in need, the volunteers accompany the patients, their families and especially those with physical handicaps. Today the association has some 800 active



Dr. Ali Reza Garachemani - AZ - Prof- Abbas Milani



*Mrs. Laetitia Roch - Mr. Jean-Claude Roch - AZ
- Dr. Yves de Kalbermatten - Dr. Fiona de Kalbermatten - Mrs Thérèse Roch*



Mrs & Dr Ali Reza Garachemani



Dr. John Cockett - AZ - Ms. Chantelle Cockette

volunteers aged between 12 and 80. Some 500 loyal associates contribute to the activities and regularly attend the annual charity Ball. They are the ones whose generous contributions finance the humanitarian services of the order. The twelve regional sections of the Order in Switzerland have come to support the deprived, the homeless and provided them with shelter, medicine and even financial aid. Last year 64 sickly people were accompanied and taken to the pilgrimage of Lourdes, the small market town lying in the foothills of the Pyrenees to visit the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes which has become one of the world's most important sites of pilgrimage and religious tourism.

A group of young handicaps were accompanied to participate in the 36th. International Camp of the Ordre of Malte in Germany. In 2019, the Order also organised the fifth Swiss Camp for the handicappers in Lebanon. ■

Upholding Human Dignity And Caring For People In Need



The Sovereign Order of Malta is one of the oldest institutions of Western and Christian civilisation. A lay religious order of the Catholic Church since 1113 and a subject of international law, the Sovereign Order of Malta has diplomatic relations with over 100 states and the European Union, and permanent observer status at the United Nations. It is neutral, impartial and apolitical.

Today, the Order of Malta is active in 120 countries caring for people in need through its medical, social and humanitarian works. Day-to-day, its broad spectrum of social projects provides a constant support for forgotten or excluded members of society.

Since its foundation 960 years ago, many names have been used to identify the Order and its members.

This can be explained by its nine centuries of eventful life and in particular because the Knights have often been forced to move from countries where they once played a leading role.

The official name of the Order of Malta is the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta.

Abbreviations of the name – Sovereign Military Order of Malta, Sovereign Order of Malta, or Order of Malta – are often used for legal, diplomatic or communication purposes.

The knights were initially called the Knights Hospitaller (or Hospitallers) to describe their mission. But they were also called the Knights of St John

because of the Order's patron saint, St. John the Baptist, and also of Jerusalem because of their presence in the Holy Land.

Also used in the past was the term The Religion to emphasise the characteristic of religious confraternity.

After conquering the island of Rhodes in 1310, they became the Knights of Rhodes. In 1530, the Emperor Charles V ceded the island of Malta to the Knights. Since then the Order's members are commonly referred to as the Knights of Malta.

To protect this heritage, the Order of Malta has legally registered 16 versions of its names and emblems in some 100 countries.

The flag and coat of arms of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta display a white cross on a red field (blazon gules a cross argent), ultimately derived from the design worn by the Knights Hospitaller during the Crusades.

The flag represents the Sovereign Military Order of Malta as a sovereign institution, and it bears a Latin cross that extends to the edges of the flag. The Flag of the Order's Works represents its humanitarian and medical activities, and it bears a white Maltese cross on a red field. Both flags together represent the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.

Its constitution states: "The flag of the Order bears either the white latin cross on a red field or the white eight-pointed

cross (cross of Malta) on a red field."

The banner of the Knights Hospitaller was introduced in 1130, on the order of Pope Innocent III, for disambiguation from the Templars who used the reversed colours. The "eight-pointed cross" is also said to originate in the 12th century, under Raymond du Puy (this was at first a cross fourchée or cross ancree, and developed into the fully articulated Maltese cross only around or after 1500).

A papal bull of Alexander IV in 1259 made the white cross the design to be put on the mantling of the knights. After that, the emblem was adopted as a general symbol for the Order. In the time after the Hospitallers moved to Cyprus in 1291, the banner of a white cross in a red field was flown from ships in their navy.

Today it flies from the SMOM's headquarters at Palazzo Malta in Rome and from other official residences and embassies. Together with the flag of Malta, it is also flown from Fort St Angelo in Birgu, Malta. It goes with the Grand Master and members of the Sovereign Council when they make official visits.

The Flag of the Order's Works, featuring a Maltese cross, is flown by the SMOM's Grand Pories, Subpories, and National Associations. As a symbol of its humanitarian works, the Order flies it at its hospitals and medical facilities. It is sometimes described as the "Grand Master's flag," but it is not used as a personal standard.

The Grand Master's personal flag is red with a white Maltese cross surrounded by the collar of the order and surmounted by a crown. It flies over the SMOM's magistral seats when the Grand Master is present. ■



H.E. & Mrs Jean-Philippe Tissière - H.E. & Mrs Luis Maria Kreckler - AZ - H.E. Edward T. Mc Mullen - H.E. & Mrs. Julio Simon Castaños - Mr. Maxime Mitterrand - Dr. Violette Parzin Gribinski



H.E. Edward T. Mc Mullen - AZ



S.A.R. la Princesse Léa de Belgique - AZ - Mr. Mehdi Zahedi - H.E. Edward T. Mc Mullen



AZ - H.E. Mrs Rola Noureddine



(Background) - H.E. Jean-Pierre Vettovaglia - Prof. Abbas Milani - Mr. Mehdi Zahedi (foreground) AZ - Baron Mariofilippo Brambilla di Carpiano - Ms Petra Jarach



AZ - LL.EE. Le Comte Martin de Walterskirchen



(1) Mrs Marie-France Smith ; (2) Mrs J.S. Castaños; (3) Mrs L.M. Kreckler ; (4)H.E. Mrs Rola Noureddine ; (5)Mrs Bengü Saygili; (6) H.E. Ardeshir Zahedi; (7) Mrs. Kerttu Mirjami Okkonen ; (8) Prof Mrs Früh Epstein; (9) Mrs A.R. Garachemani; (10)Dr Mrs Yves (Fiona) de Kalbermatten; (11) S.A.R. Princesse Léa de Belgique ; (12) Mrs J-P. Tissière; (13) Mrs Amanda Monson; (14) Mrs Linda Gabrielian ; (15) Commandant Alexandre Sacerdoti ; (16) H.E. JeanPhilippe Tissières; (17)H.E. Luis Maria Kreckler ; (18) H.E. Jean-Pierre Vettovaglia ; (19) H.E. Edward T. Mc Mullen ; (20) H.E. Julio Simon Castaños ; (21) Mrs Anne-Marie Garbani ; (22) Mr Martin Garbani; (23) Mrs M. Baumann; (24) Mrs Claudia von Arx; (25) Prof. Abbas Milani ; (26) Mr Konrad von Arx; (27) Prof. Daniel Epstein; (28) Mrs Cyndi White; (29) Dr Ali Reza Garachemani; (30) Mrs Christine Zahedi; (31) Mr Mehdi Zahedi; (32) Dr Bijan Ghavami; (33) Mr Hector Smith; (34) Hon J.S. Robine; (35) Mme Yolanda Navas Puig; (36) Mrs Sébastien (Annika) Brack; (37) Mr Sébastien Brack; (38) Mme Isabelle Sacerdoti ; (39) ???; (40) Mr Reza Pourchani; (41) Mr. Brandon P. Monson; (42) Ms Chantelle Cockett; (43) Dr John Cockett; (44) H.E. Ilhan Saygili ; (45)Mr Marc Baumann; (46) Dr Yves de Kalbermatten; (47) Mrs Claudia Schlup; (48) Mr David von Arx; (49) Mr Jean-Claude Roch; (50) Dr Violette Parzin Gribinski; (51) Mr Maxime Mitterrand; (52) Mrs Thérèse Roch; (53) Mrs Laetitia Roch; (54) Prof. Kenneth White; (55) Mrs Rahel Zahedi (56) Dr Kourosh Zahedi



Hon J.S Robine -
Mrs. Yolanda Nava Puig
- AZ - Dr Bijan Ghavami -
Mrs. Christine Zahedi - Mr.
Mehdi Zahedi



Dr. Ali Reza Garachemani - AZ -
Maitre Laurence Turner - Mr. Turner



Mrs. de Buys Roessingh - AZ - LL.EE. Le
Comte Martin de Walterskirchen - LL.EE.
La Comtesse Ursula de Walterskirchen



Professor Gaetana-AZ-Roberto Vargas



Mr. Mehdi Zahedi - AZ - Fra' Guy-Michel Lamy



Devoted team of young girls and boys



Maitre & Mr. Turner - AZ - Mrs. Marie-France Smith - AZ - Mr. Hector Smith



(Background) - H.E. Jean-Pierre Vettovaglia - Prof. Abbas Milani - Mr. Mehdi Zahedi (foreground) H.E. Julio Simon Castaños - AZ



Baronne Gennaro di Giacomo di Giampaolo - AZ



Mrs. Laetitia Roch - AZ - Mrs. Claudia Schlup



*Mrs. Maha Tabet Bourehla -
Commandant Alexandre Sacerdoti*



*AZ - Comtesse Gerardo Farini de Orléans
Borbõn - Mrs. Isabella Pedrazzini*



*Mr. Sébastien Brack - Maitre Kourosh Zahedi
- AZ - Mrs Linda Gabrielian - Mr. Mehdi Zahedi -
H.E. Julio Simon Castañõs - Mr. Reza Pourchani*



*Fra' Guy-
Michel Lamy
addressing the
Guests*



*Mr Mehdi Zahedi - AZ -
Comte Manfredo Radicati di Primeglio*



Dr Kourosh zahedi - AZ - Mrs. Linda Gabrielian



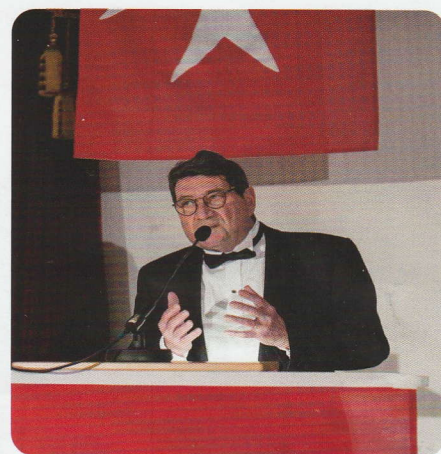
AZ - LL.EE. La Comtesse Ursula de Walterskirchen



LL.EE. Le Comte Martin de Walterskirchen



*Mr. Mehdi Zahedi - AZ - LL.EE. La Comtesse Ursula de Walters-
skirchen - LL.AA.SS. Le Prince Alexandre Lubomirski*



*Commandant Alexandre
Sacerdoti*



Mrs Claudia Schlup - AZ



Mrs. Linda Gabrielian - AZ - S.A.R. la Princesse Léa de Belgique



Mrs. Maha Tabet Bourehla - Mrs Laetitia Roch - AZ



Mrs. Maha Tabet Bourehla - AZ - H.E. Mourad Bourehla



(First row) Mrs Bengü Saygili - Mrs. Maha Tabet Bourehla - AZ - S.A.R. la Princesse Léa de Belgique - Prof. Abbas Milani (second row) Mrs Laetitia Roch - H.E. Edward T. Mc Mullen - Dr. John Cockett - Mr Renaud Bichara - H.E. Ilhan Saygili - Mrs. Claudia Schlup