

## **NATIONAL PLAN FOR THE ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS**

### **1. Background**

On 14 July 2005, the UN Secretary-General formally launched the Alliance of Civilizations. This project, presented by the President of the Spanish Government to the Organization's General Assembly on 21 September 2004, became, as of that date, a United Nations initiative. Around it, a Group of Friends has taken shape, which supports it politically and is made up today of over eighty countries and international organizations. Thus, its universal nature has become firmly established.

The President of the Government's original proposal was based on the evidence of the urgent need to bridge the gap that is opening up between the Western world and the Arab and Muslim world. It also responded to the principles of international ethics underpinning the Government's foreign policy: the commitment to international legality, full respect for human rights without any gender discrimination and resolute support for the multilateralism that is represented by the United Nations.

In 2005, Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General, set up a High-Level Group with the mandate to analyse the causes of the current polarization between societies and cultures. In its Report, the Group made a series of political recommendations aimed at addressing a threat that might endanger international peace and stability, and proposed a body of practical measures – in the fields of youth, education, the media and migration – to contribute to that purpose. These measures should be materialized in the implementation phase that is beginning now. The High-Level Group also recommended that the Secretary-General appoint a High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, and that an Alliance Forum be held, bringing together governments, international organizations and civil society.

The Spanish Government has offered to host the Forum. It will be held for the first time in Madrid on 15 and 16 January 2008. Last 26 April, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed as High Representative Dr. Jorge Sampaio, who, in June, presented the Alliance Action Plan for 2007-2009, and in September, proposed to the members of the Group of Friends the drawing up of National Strategies and Partnership Charters in relation with the Alliance.

### **2. The National Plan**

Due to historical, geographic and cultural reasons, and due to inescapable reasons of security, political coherence, and because Spain is the country where this initiative was born and whose President of the Government is co-sponsoring it, together with the Prime Minister of Turkey, the Government has considered it appropriate to provide a positive response to the High Representative's invitation and, in this vein, proceeded to draw up a National Plan for the Alliance of Civilizations.

Aware of its responsibility in taking on this commitment, the Government intends to translate, on a national scale, the specific goals of the Alliance, including them both in its foreign and cooperation policy and in the whole of its domestic policies. The intention is to frame these policies within a strategic vision, to promote existing policies, design new ones and fill any possible gaps, providing all of them with greater visibility and making them, if possible, a source of inspiration and a stimulus for what is already being done or can be done in future by Public Administration as a whole and by civil society. With this Plan, the Government also expects Spain to play its rightful role as an example, in line with the ethical principles inspiring its discourse.

To achieve these goals, the Government has valuable instruments at its disposal. *Casa África, Casa América, Casa Árabe, Casa Asia* and *Casa Sefarad-Israel* are called upon to contribute resolutely to this collective purpose, together with the *Real Instituto Elcano*, the *Instituto Cervantes*, the *Instituto Europeo del Mediterráneo*, the *Fundación Carolina*, the *Fundación Pluralismo y Convivencia* and the *Fundación Tres Culturas*.

### **3. Spheres of activity**

The Spanish Action Plan is balanced and will be implemented, within the framework of full respect for human rights and full equality between men and women, in the four aforementioned priority spheres of action: youth, education, the media and migration. The principles and goals it is based on are the very ones that are paramount in the High-Level Group Report and in the Action Plan proposed by the High Representative.

1. The globalization of youth movements offers new possibilities for action, in order to promote their exchanges, foster better mutual understanding and contacts between different cultures and traditions, and enhance their participation in the economy through a consensus-based youth employment strategy.

2. Education systems must prepare youth as regards the respect for human rights, the appreciation of diversity and full gender equality, as well as to address the challenge of an interdependent world. It is necessary to instil values related to solidarity and respect for others; to provide a world-encompassing, civic-minded, peace-oriented, global and transcultural education; an education for employment. Exchange programmes should be developed and promoted, and the role of the media, of new technologies and of young people's access to the Internet should be reassessed

3. It is essential to coordinate strategies, on a national, regional and international levels, in order to address the causes and the consequences of the possible responses to the phenomenon of current migratory movements. We need concerted actions in recipient countries that underline the benefits of immigration, the implementation of projects against discrimination and the support of immigrants' associations, the schooling for their children and the promotion of civic education programmes.

4. It is necessary to promote the responsible use of the media and to combat programmes that fuel hostile, violent or discriminatory perceptions and stereotypes. The Internet and other media play a decisive role in this task. Schools of journalism should foster a better understanding of international reality, especially in the spheres where

religion and politics overlap. Contents that contribute to improving intercultural understanding should be promoted.

#### **4. Financing, coordination and follow-up mechanism**

The National Plan should be understood as one conceived for the medium and long term, and, therefore, it must be sustainable in time. It will be reviewed two years after its implementation. It will have the necessary financial resources to provide incentives for concrete projects promoted by civil society. A Coordinator will take on the task of providing unity of criteria to government action, and will be the contact point both in Spain and with regard to the Secretariat of the Alliance of Civilizations and those responsible for the National Plans that may be set up abroad. To carry out these duties, the Coordinator will be provided with the corresponding infrastructure.

#### **5. List of actions**

##### **1. Aimed at promoting mutual understanding and appreciation for diversity**

- 1. Fostering the teaching of the principles and values of the Alliance of Civilizations, within the framework of the basic competences to be attained by students by the end of their obligatory schooling, and of a globalizing and transcultural vision of human relations; restoring the values of humanistic training.
- 2. Strengthening cooperation projects whose development objectives coincide with the principles and objectives of the Alliance of Civilizations, and planning a series of specific grants for young people from priority cooperation countries, aimed at activities of this nature.
- 3. Promoting exchanges with students of both genders, particularly with those from the Arab world, continuing current programmes with those from Ibero-America, and defining a grant programme for university students, especially aimed at those from the Maghreb.
- 4. A training plan for Spanish Arabists. Signing an agreement with the Mohammed V University in Rabat to support Moroccan Hispanists.
- 5. The teaching of minority religions in schools will continue, in line with the Cooperation Agreements with the Federation of Evangelical Religious Organizations, the Federation of Jewish Communities and the Islamic Commission, and, if appropriate, with those that may be signed in future with other religious denominations. More intensive teaching, in the sphere of pre-university and university education, of issues concerning religious and cultural plurality; implementation of teacher-training programmes for teachers of religion and for teachers in general, on issues concerning religious and cultural plurality.
- 6. Promoting an academic training plan for the religious staff of minority denominations that have a Cooperation Agreement with the State, as well as a grant programme for such training.
- 7. Creating an Annual Intercultural Capital Award for the outstanding Spanish city in this field.

- 8. The Resource Centre for Cultural Diversity will proceed to disseminate the values of the Alliance by publishing educational material, and it will cooperate to this purpose with the other Public Administrations.
- 9. Actions aimed at including the Alliance in the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and in the celebration of European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008.
- 10. Greater collaboration with the EuroMed Permanent University Forum with the aim of consolidating cooperation in this area of research and higher education.
- 11. Creating new thematic routes, in line with the Quetzal Route model.
- 12. Preparing a programme of subsidies for research projects and complementary actions, based on the principles and goals of the Alliance of Civilizations. This framework will include joint projects carried out by specialists from Spain and the Maghreb countries, particularly concerning the history of their bilateral relations.
- 13. Making use of the Youth and Development University as a global forum for young student leaders.
- 14. Extending the Intercultural Encounters Programme to secondary schools in countries of the southern rim of the Mediterranean.
- 15. Creating a Volunteer Corps of the Alliance of Civilizations.
- 16. Contributing to the World Youth Solidarity Fund.
- 17. Restoring the façade of the Sarajevo Library.
- 18. Action Plan as set out in the Ibero-American Cultural Charter.

## **2. Aimed at promoting civic values and a culture of peace**

- 1. Fostering actions in favour of Education for Peace, by increasing the subsidies granted to projects that best fit the aims of the Alliance. Implementing a campaign to translate works by classical Christian, Jewish and Muslim authors that advocated behaviours based on principles similar to those promoted by the Alliance, as well as fostering translations into Arabic of works of a similar orientation by Spanish authors.
- 2. Promoting activities related to conflict prevention, peace building and supporting non-violence; reinforcing the activities carried out within the framework of the goal of expanding freedom and cultural capacities.
- 3. A set of actions aimed at improving peaceful coexistence and security within schools.
- 4. Organizing and promoting seminars and meetings on issues related to democracy, human rights and the role of religion in modern society. Strengthening bibliographic and documentary archives concerning cultures and religions.
- 5. Using sport as an instrument for the development of solidarity and for the construction of peace and security in conflict zones where the Armed Forces are taking part in Peacekeeping Operations; actions with respect to Spanish sports bodies, aimed at obtaining their disinterested support for the principles and goals of the Alliance of Civilizations.
- 6. Developing the National Action Plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution No. 1325 (2000), on Women, Peace and Security.

- 7. Through the Menéndez Pelayo International University, and within the framework of the UN network of university centres, setting up a University Institute focused on training and research in areas related to the Alliance of Civilizations.
- 8. Together with the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco, promoting the project for the University of the Two Kings, to be located in Tetuan, intended to consolidate a space for dialogue and for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.
- 9. Intensifying the activities of the Euro-Arab Foundation of Higher Studies, based in Granada, to strengthen the bridges of understanding and intercultural cooperation among different cultures and civilizations.
- 10. Focusing the *Intolerantesanonimos.com* (Intolerants anonymous.com) campaign on the precepts of the Alliance of Civilizations.
- 11. Creating, through the Foundation for Pluralism and Coexistence, an Observatory of Cultural and Religious Pluralism in Spain.

### **3. Aimed at improving the integration and capacities of immigrants, with particular regard to youth.**

- 1. Implementing the 2008-2011 Strategic Plan for Equal Opportunities between Men and Women.
- 2. Drawing up agreements for assistance and cooperation with countries of origin and transit of migratory flows.
- 3. Drawing up a coordinated programme of grants for immigrants to obtain training in professional skills and in scientific disciplines, together with grants for postgraduate studies.
- 4. Designing and implementing a set of measures aimed at preventing the exploitation of immigrants, in any sector of public and social life, and at eliminating practices that may demean their dignity and thus be considered prejudicial to public order.
- 5. Favouring the incorporation of immigrants into trade union structures and supporting the associational endeavours of immigrants with respect to promoting civic education programmes.
- 6. Capacity building for immigrant women, in order to encourage their participation and leadership within their respective communities and within Spanish society in general.
- 7. Adopting specific measures, especially within the sphere of education, aimed at favouring the integration of the children of immigrants, by developing inclusive policies to enable the equality of opportunities in a diversified society.
- 8. Creating training plans in collaboration with the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces, aimed at mayors and city councillors, in accordance with “Religious pluralism and society” courses.
- 9. Reinforcing mediation, within Autonomous Communities and Local Entities, as a procedure for crisis and conflict resolution, and drawing up guidelines on good practices.
- 10. Constituting permanent working groups with countries of origin of immigration, with the aim of centralizing the implementation of the measures set out in the National Plan.
- 11. Promoting the Ibero-American Convention on the Rights of Youth and its extension to other areas, with a view to the signing of a World Convention on

the Rights of Youth; incorporating the values of the Alliance of Civilizations into the Ibero-American Plan for Youth Cooperation and Integration.

- 12. Including an “Alliance of Civilizations” line in the Interministerial Plan for Youth, and drawing up (by the Institute for Youth and the Institute for Women) of action plans in accordance with the principles and goals of this initiative.
- 13. Designing an employment plan aimed at young immigrants, enhancing and prioritizing the Emancipation Programme for Young People and extending it to other immigrant sectors.
- 14. Providing funding for a project to internationalize the network of Youth Spaces for Creation.
- 15. Programme for teaching and applying Communication and Information Technologies, using the Internet and promoting Media Literacy.
- 16. Integration of young immigrants in the Programme for Young Aid Workers and extension of this programme to areas in which action is taken within the framework of the Alliance of Civilizations.
- 17. Intensification and possibly extension of the Comprehensive Strategic Plan for the protection of vulnerable young people, especially those belonging to transnational families.

#### **4. Aimed at the promotion and dissemination of the Alliance of Civilizations initiative**

- 1. Establishing a permanent mechanism for the interministerial coordination of awareness-raising campaigns of a general nature, and creating surveys on the social perception of the principles that inspire the Alliance of Civilizations and on the impact of the measures implemented to achieve it. With the aim of optimizing this objective, educational materials will be created and distributed, and specific publishing initiatives taken so that the Alliance of Civilizations may be better known.
- 2. Promoting research and study projects related to the values of the Alliance, together with education and awareness-raising initiatives concerning the Millennium Development Goals, aimed at primary and secondary schoolchildren.
- 3. With the aim of boosting cooperation and the coordination of action taken by civil society in this sphere, and in particular in the fields of awareness-raising, civic participation and intercultural dialogue, action will be taken to set up a Network of Organizations for the Promotion of the values and principles that inspire the Alliance of Civilizations.
- 4. Incorporation in the UNESCO/Spain Trust Fund for Development Cooperation of a multidisciplinary line of credit in the context of the goals of the Alliance. Promotion and financial support of the UNESCO-approved International Network on Religions and Mediation.
- 5. Introducing into training courses for national police forces matters related to questions concerning cultural diversity, interculturality, tolerance and respect for human rights. To this purpose, preparing Guidelines on Best Practices and Recommendations. With the same aim, preparing Codes of Best Practices for healthcare personnel, for prison workers and for business managers.

- 6. The promotion and dissemination by Spanish educational institutions abroad (the *Instituto Cervantes*, and culture and education sections) of the nature and goals of the Alliance of Civilizations.
- 7. The active presence of the Alliance in the activities to be developed both in Spain and in international fora.
- 8. Organizing the 2009 Alliance of Civilizations International Conference: challenges and opportunities.
- 9. Inclusion of materials in the study programmes of Information Science schools to enable greater knowledge of international reality; promotion of Media Literacy.
- 10. Preparing a Guide for Treatment in the Media of questions related to the issues addressed by the Alliance of Civilizations and, jointly with RTVE (the Spanish public broadcasting corporation), of a plan to disseminate the values of cultural diversity, tolerance and of peaceful conflict resolution. Extension of the right of access to RTVE in order to expand the cultural content of programmes related to diversity.
- 11. Supporting the production or joint production of films and TV series that promote the values espoused by the Alliance of Civilizations.