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POLICY INITIATIVES AND ADVOCACY

AT THE 7TH UNAOC GLOBAL FORUM IN BAKU: THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY RENEW THEIR COMMITMENT TO CREATING AND PROMOTING JUST, PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES



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THE UNAOC HIGH REPRESENTATIVE INAUGURATED AN INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK EVENT

On 3 February 2016, the UNAOC High Representative, in collaboration with the United Nations Committee of Religious NGOs, inaugurated the 5th Interfaith Harmony Week at the United Nations headquarters, New York. The Interfaith Harmony Week celebration was first commemorated at the initiative of His Majesty King Abdullah II of the Kingdom of Jordan in February 2011. (...)



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FEATURE STORY

AT THE 7TH UNAOC GLOBAL FORUM IN BAKU: THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY RENEW THEIR COMMITMENT TO CREATING AND PROMOTING JUST, PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES



The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) convened its 7th Global Forum in Baku, Azerbaijan April 25-27, 2016 themed “Living Together in Inclusive Societies : A Challenge and A Goal”. Delegations, who gathered in the Azerbaijani capital, made a renewed commitment to creating just, peaceful and inclusive societies.

The Forum was inaugurated on April 26 by the President of Azerbaijan, H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev and the High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser with a video message from the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon as well as addresses by the President of



Turkey, H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyep Erdogan and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Spain, H.E. Mr. Jose Manuel Garcia-Margallo y Marfil. Spain and Turkey are the co-sponsors of UNAOC.

The Forum brought together more than 4,300 participants, including Heads of State and Government, political figures, civil society representatives, religious and youth leaders, who exchanged their perspectives on ways and means of living together in inclusive societies, prevention of violent extremism

(PVE), the role of youth and women in peacebuilding, global migration and the role of education in PVE. The successful forum provided an excellent platform for sharing good practices of preventing and countering hate speech, as well as generating useful discussions on the role of religious leaders and the civil society in PVE.

Among the major outcomes of the 7th UNAOC Global Forum was the adoption by consensus of the Baku Declaration, a political document that will guide future



“Through the Baku Declaration, the Group of Friends reaffirmed its support to UNAOC and expressed its conviction that UNAOC plays an important role as a global platform for sharing good practices for living together in inclusive societies,” UNAOC High Representative Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser said at the closing session.

efforts towards achieving the goals of UNAOC - a United Nations body mandated to promote harmony, understanding and peaceful dialogue among nations. It was also an opportunity for engaging with existing and potential partners and re-affirming the commitment of various stakeholders representing governments, civil society, religious leaders and academia to promote intercultural dialogue and understanding.

The Baku Declaration calls for the implementation of the commitments made there so that Governments, with the support of the civil society, can overcome challenges and move forward towards the goals of living together in inclusive societies for sustainable development.

“Through the Baku Declaration, the Group of Friends reaffirmed its support to UNAOC and expressed its conviction that UNAOC plays an important role as a global platform for sharing good practices for living together in inclusive societies,” UNAOC High Representative Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser said at the closing session.



The outcome document rejects any advocacy of religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, whether it involves the use of print, audiovisual or electronic media or any other means.

It also stresses the importance of implementing UNAOC’s goals at the national level and supports the High Representative in his efforts, including the advancement of UNAOC programming as an instrument to address conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism.

The High Representative announced several new initiatives, including the launch of the advisory council composed of leaders from politics, religion, civil society and academia, which will provide guidance and recommendations to him and the Alliance.

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Mr. Al-Nasser told the press that the dimensions and causes of violent extremism and measures to prevent such a scourge in the future were examined in plenary and breakout sessions, stressing that this Forum was of “great importance” to the Alliance, particularly because of UNAOC’s engaging efforts to contribute to the implementation of the Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. Preventing violent extremism had been widely discussed in the forum’s various sessions.

He also noted the ‘breakout sessions’ held during the Forum addressing the issue of women

in peacebuilding in conflict zones and creative storytelling about migrants, and paid tribute to the youth participants who gathered in Baku to create their narratives of tomorrow. On the other hand, the Minister of Culture and Tourism of Azerbaijan and Chair of the National Organizing Committee reiterated his Government’s commitment to promoting intercultural and interreligious dialogue as a national and regional goal.

The forum was widely covered by local and international media including UNTV and UN News and media division. More than 120 local and international journalists were accredited to the forum generating

over 700 news stories in print, on-line, radio and TV.

Through UNAOC team a vigorous social media campaign was developed in the few months leading to the forum.

The various debates and discussions that took place at the forum went beyond the walls of the Baku Convention Center and reached many people on line with over 8,600 tweets from all around the world delivered to nearly 50 million timelines and totaling 15 million impressions.

The theme of 2016 celebration was “Interfaith Harmony: Implementing the Transformative Agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals”. The meeting aimed at reaffirming the essential role of religious communities in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

It was also an opportunity to reiterate the need to evaluate, understand and tackle contemporary challenges

through the prism of interfaith dialogue.

In his remarks, the UNAOC High Representative recalled the role of religious leaders, who act as catalysts for mediation, humanitarian action, community-building and prevention of violent extremism. In view of the current religious conflicts worldwide, he reaffirmed the UNAOC commitment to promote dialogue among cultures

and religions and to engage with religious leaders of all faiths. This commitment is in line with the United Nations Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism and complements the UNAOC core pillars in promoting inclusive societies. A number of religious leaders, academics and representatives of civil society organizations participated in the event, celebrating inter-religious understanding.

UNAOC Participated in the Event on “UN: 70 Years of Successes and Challenges”

On 3 March 2016, the UNAOC High Representative joined forces with the Italian Diplomatic Academy at the United Nations headquarters in New York to welcome young men and women and celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the United Nations organization.

The Italian Diplomatic Academy is an example of collaborative relationships between United Nations and academic institutions. It seeks to empower youth in the area of international relations.

In his remarks, the High Representative underscored the importance of youth in leading the way forward to foster peaceful and inclusive societies. He also reaffirmed the commitment of UNAOC to bolster young people’s visions and activities, while recalling the existence of several initiatives



supporting youth within the United Nations system, including the “World Programme of Action for Youth” and the appointment of the Youth Envoy by the Secretary-General in 2012.

Furthermore, in conclusion, he highlighted the UNAOC youth strategy, which aims at providing

meaningful alternatives to young people by offering them a platform, where their voices can be heard through workshops, trainings and small financial grants to fund local projects. The UNAOC emphasis remains on education, engagement and empowerment of youth at all levels.

World Culture Festival 2016 in New Delhi and Mumbai, India

On 11-13 March 2016, the UNAOC High Representative joined over 3 million participants to celebrate the “World Culture Festival”, organized by the Art of Living Foundation in New Delhi, India. The Festival is a thirty-year old annual event, which is led by spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankarand. It operates in 152 countries and aims to foster a violence-free society and world peace.



In his remarks to the Festival participants, the UNAOC High Representative evoked the need to build bridges among people of different cultures and religions in order to promote inclusive societies. He noted that recognizing the ideals of togetherness, partnership and respective dependency represented an essential component of the transforming world we live in.

Following the Festival, on 16 March, the UNAOC High Representative delegated his Senior Adviser, Ms. Hanifa Mezoui, to take part in the launch of the “Unity in Diversity: World Civil Society India Chapter” (hosted at Thadomal Shahani Centre for Management) and the opening of the “Unity in Diversity

Peace Garden” (Muktanand Peace Garden) in Mumbai, India, organized by Shahani Group and Global Dialogue Forum. In both events, representatives of NGOs, private sector, government, religious and spiritual organizations came together to align efforts towards building inclusive societies and strengthen communities.

UNAOC Participated in IGCF 2016 in Sharjah, UAE

On 20-21 March 2016, UNAOC participated as a strategic partner in the 5th International Government Communication Forum (IGCF 2016) held in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohamed Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah. Themed “Citizens for Prosperity”, IGCF 2016 focused on the relationship between

governments and their people, and explored how government communication impacts vital socio-economic sectors such as education, health care, unemployment, poverty eradication and more.

The High Representative participated in the high-level session on “Confronting Extremism: Government Communication and the Creation of a Humanist Culture”.

Mr. Mohannad Al Khatib, media personality from Sky News Arabia, moderated the panel discussion, which also featured Mr. Dominique de Villepin, former Prime Minister of France, and Mr. Husain Haqqani, former Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States. The High Representative noted that “... violent extremism, in all its forms, has reached unprecedented levels and this requires us to create

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transformative strategies beyond the existing legal, military or security measures already in place. Together we need to address the causes of extremism”. Referring to the use of social media by extremist groups to radicalize and recruit young people, the UNAOC High Representative added: “In the online world, real-time connections allow easy access to information.

In the context of IGCF 2016, UNAOC held two workshops. The first one focused on the impact of UNAOC Programmes involving youth in the promotion of tolerance and diversity across the world. The workshop was developed by UNAOC’s Alessandro Girola (Programming Coordinator) and Mrs. Paloma Haschke-Joseph (Project Management Specialist - Intercultural Engagement). The workshop was attended by a large group of local youth eager to learn how to get involved in UNAOC initiatives.

The second workshop was entitled “Prevention of Violent Extremism and Hate Speech: Sharing Good Practices in the Use of Social Media”. This workshop was developed by Ms. Nihal Saad (Chief of Cabinet) and Mr. Thibault Charton (Project Management Specialist – Media and Migration).

It outlined UNAOC initiatives that aim to tackle xenophobia,



Nihal Saad and Thibault Chareton during the UNAOC workshop on “Prevention of Violent Extremism and Hate Speech: Sharing Good Practices in the Use of Social Media,” in Sharjah, UAE.

stigmatization, polarization and discrimination, which occur as a result of hate speech. During the event, Ms. Saad explained that the world is facing the same cultural divide experienced after 9/11, and that this divide is exacerbated by the prevalence of unconventional media channels that aid the dissemination of wrong information and a rhetoric of hatred.

The UNAOC Hate Speech initiative has been built around three main pillars of global symposia, a strategic media campaign to disseminate and share key media messages, and the drafting of a complete report on how to counter hate speech, which is to be published at the end of 2016 or in early 2017. The initiative’s hashtag #SpreadNoHate has

reached millions around the world and was able to reach over seven million people just at the UNAOC symposium held in New York in 2015.

The IGCF 2016 was the opportunity for promising discussions about future collaboration between the Sharjah Media Center and UNAOC on a number of areas of common interests, including youth, media and intercultural exchanges. It was attended by His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohamed Al Qasimi, as well as key political figures, thought leaders, academicians, media representatives, and professionals from government communication departments in the UAE and the wider region.

PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES

UNAOC and BMW Group Announced Finalists for the Intercultural Innovation Award



Ten initiatives have been named finalists for the Intercultural Innovation Award. The selection process was highly competitive, with close to 1,000 applications received from 120 countries. The selected projects come from all over the world, representing countries across five continents and underlining the importance of the Intercultural Innovation Award and its commitment to the worldwide promotion of intercultural diversity and understanding.

2016 selected organizations and their social impact focus (in alphabetical order) are:

[The Blessing Basket Project – Artisan&You \(USA\)](#)

Patent pending technology that enables impoverished artisans to exchange letters with their customers around the world, creating powerful intercultural connections.

[The Coexist Initiative - Girls Education Equity Project \(Kenya\)](#)

Promotion of girls' primary school enrollment and retention in Daadab and Kakuma refugee camps by engaging men, boys and communities to address the complex socio-cultural barriers that continue to impede girls' education.

[Give Something Back to Berlin e.V. – Give Something Back to Berlin \(Germany\)](#)

Urban integration platform that strengthens cohesion by connecting new Berliners with social engagement and community service.

[International Council for Cultural Centers – Bread Houses Network \(Bulgaria\)](#)

Collective bread-making that unites people around the world to cooperate across cultures, ages, and special needs thereby building stronger communities.

[On Our Radar – From the Margins to the Front Page \(UK\)](#)

Use of SMS by marginalized young Sierra Leoneans to share their stories via international media outlets, boosting empathy, dialogue, understanding and support.

[Red Dot Foundation – Safecity \(India\)](#)

Platform that crowdsources personal stories of sexual harassment and maps these trends at a local level, in order to make public spaces safer for all.

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[Routes 2 Roots – Exchange for Change \(India\)](#)

Open dialogue program for students to build trust and discover cultural similarities between India and Pakistan, with the aim of sustaining peace and resolving conflict.

[Shine a Light – CanalCanoa \(Brazil/USA\)](#)

Children from remote Amazonian villages make movies, cartoons, and music to teach other Brazilian children about their lives.

[SINGA – SINGA Kiwanda \(France\)](#)

Community of engaged people who support refugees to begin their own business or social project, through providing local knowledge, networks and resources.

[Unistream – Educating Tomorrow’s Leaders Today \(Israel\)](#)

Three-year program that encourages and promotes intercultural dialogue and understanding by utilizing educational and entrepreneurial platforms.



By supporting sustainable, innovative, intercultural grassroots initiatives with the potential for expansion and replication, the Intercultural Innovation Award aims to contribute to peace, cultural diversity and more inclusive societies.

Launched in 2011, the Intercultural Innovation Award is the result of a unique public-private partnership between UNAOC and the BMW Group. This model of collaboration between the United Nations and the private sector creates a deeper impact, as both partners provide their respective expertise to ensure the sustainable growth of each project.

“We are very proud of our partnership with UNAOC and take great pleasure in seeing these grassroots initiatives thrive. In the past five years we have enjoyed outstanding results with our approach – the initiatives, UNAOC and the BMW Group alike have all reaped the fruits of our shared commitment,” noted Mr. Bill McAndrews, Vice President BMW Group Communications Strategy, Corporate and Market Communications.



“We trick ourselves into believing a solution is too far out of our reach”: UNAOC Launched an Online Engagement Platform for 150 Youth Leaders to Further Intercultural Dialogue

Welcome to the online engagement platform of the
Youth Event at the 7th UNAOC Global Forum!

A space to engage with ideas and with each other, to learn,
share and create together!

Module 1 – Intercultural Encounters: The
Power of Stereotypes and the
Danger of a Single Story

Module 2 – We Can Change the World: 2030
Agenda for Sustainable
Development

Module 3 – Narratives of Tomorrow for
Inclusive Societies

Ilesha Moustafa, Ireland, is convinced: “If we have the right intentions and are serious and genuine in our attempts to communicate with people, the possibilities are endless and the outcomes are beyond rewarding”. She and 149 other selected participants from around the world engaged in a two-month process to develop a series of Narratives of Tomorrow for Inclusive Societies, in the lead up to the Youth Event at the 7th UNAOC Global Forum in Baku, Azerbaijan, April 2016.



Young leaders presenting “Narratives of Tomorrow” at the Youth Event in the 7th UNAOC Global Forum in Baku, Azerbaijan

These narratives articulate the young leaders’ vision and solutions for a world, in which people “live together in inclusive societies” and are meant to inspire and feed Forum discussions in Baku and beyond.

To facilitate this process, UNAOC created an online collaboration platform for the selected youth leaders to learn from each other, share their

work and values, and discuss current opportunities and challenges for social inclusion and intercultural dialogue. Through a series of modules participants were engaged in a creative process to develop new narratives to shape the world.

Their enthusiasm and commitment has been overwhelming - over 1,000 posts made, countless ideas debated, resources shared and common actions proposed.

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One of the participants, Najeeb Ahmad Fokeerbux from Mauritius, summarized the process: “I think that this is a wonderful platform to see how we are all connected, and how we can act together for a better world”. The main outcome of this process was a series of 10 narratives on social inclusion-related topics, which 150 youth leaders presented at the Youth Event on 25 April 2016.

UNAOC Participated in a Panel on Media Literacy as a Tool for PVE

On 11 March 2016, UNAOC made a presentation at a panel discussion “Media Literacy and Radicalization – European and Global Actions to Support Media Literacy and Fight Radicalization”.

The panel was part of the annual conference “Media & Learning”, organized in Brussels, Belgium by the European Commission. In his presentation, Mr. Jordi Torrent, Project Manager of UNAOC Media and Information Literacy initiatives, echoed the United Nations Secretary-General’s assessment that “the biggest threat to terrorists is not the power of missiles – it is the politics of inclusion”, as the Secretary-General stressed during the September 2014 Security Council discussion on violent extremism.



Mr. Torrent also underscored that digital campaigns aiming at disseminating counter-narratives and preventing violent extremism propaganda on the Internet will be of a minor effect if such efforts are not paired with the support and commitment for education programmes along with civic engagement initiatives and meaningful governance reforms.

The conversation on these topics continued at the 7th UNAOC Global Forum in Baku, during the breakout session on “Media and Information Literacy: Tools for Building Resilience to Violent Extremist Propaganda”.

Please visit the UNAOC Media and Information Literacy webpage for additional information: <http://milunesco.unaoc.org>.

UNAOC and Fordham University Organized a Conference on Youth-Produced Media as Platform for Social Inclusion

On 2 March 2016, UNAOC and the Communications and Media Studies Department of Fordham University, New York, convened a meeting of youth media organizations inviting participants to jointly examine in what ways and how youth-produced media enrich social inclusion of young people. Twelve organizations, including the Tribeca Film Institute, Scenarios USA, Global Nomads Group and Education Video Center, had the opportunity to showcase their work and discuss it with the audience. The conference featured a presentation of two Felsman Fellows from Duke University, whose work has developed around media production initiatives with young Syrian refugees in Jordan and with indigenous youth in Peru. The conference was supported by the National Association of Media Lit-



eracy Education and the Children's Media Association, which moderated the sessions. Of a particular relevance was the presentation of BYkids, a project that has produced youth media projects in Mozambique, Tibet, India, Colombia and the USA, and has been recently broadcasted on the USA Public

Broadcasting System. For more information on UNAOC youth media projects, please visit PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival on Migration, Diversity and Social Inclusion, an initiative developed in partnership with IOM:

<http://pluralplus.unaoc.org>

Project Implementation Begins for 5 Youth Solidarity Fund Winners in Africa and MENA

The Youth Solidarity Fund 2015-16 edition continues to extend its support to youth-led organizations, as five selected youth-led organizations started their projects implementation in March 2016 in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East North Africa.

Each organization received a grant of up to USD 25,000 and benefits from a technical support to implement projects that

advance the UNAOC's mandate of promoting long-term constructive relationships among people from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds to promote more peaceful and inclusive societies. The selected projects are implemented in Cameroon, Nigeria and the State of Palestine, focusing on improving intercultural relationships through online citizen journalism, social media and radio; engaging internally displaced persons and faith-

based organizations; and training for tolerance and collaboration between groups of different faiths, languages and cultures.

As part of its technical support, UNAOC brainstormed with the project coordinators on strengthening each project's intercultural perspective. Abiodun Rufus Unegbu, Executive Director of Leadership Initiative for Youth Empowerment (LIFE) in Nigeria,

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commented on the process: “We found it very useful in focusing our thoughts on the specifics of the project. Some of the issues identified, we had not thought about thoroughly prior to this time”.

Abiodun and her team implements a project to strengthen the capacity of youth participants to increase

inter-cultural learning among internally displaced persons and community residents in Local Government Areas in Lagos State. The project includes partnering with faith-based organizations to organize interfaith internships for the participating youth as part of developing knowledge and understanding of other faiths. All

project coordinators of the Youth Solidarity Fund projects are aged 18-35.

The current edition of the YSF is generously supported by the Government of Finland.

UNAOC Participated in UNDESA's Coordination Meeting on International Migration

On 25-26 February 2016, UNAOC participated in the 14th Annual Co-ordination Meeting on International Migration. The event was held in response to the General Assembly Resolution 58/208 of 13 February 2004, which requested the United Nations Secretary-General to coordinate international migration activities.

This year's meeting focused on three main issues. First, it considered the progress in monitoring and implementing migration-related commitments contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2013 High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. Second, the meeting discussed the contribution of relevant intergovernmental bodies and forums to the follow-up and review of the migration-related goals and targets of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Finally, the meeting allowed participants to present and coordinate their activities and initiatives on



migration, including those being undertaken in preparation for the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants, scheduled on 19 September 2016.

UNAOC Director Mr. Matthew Hodes participated in the panel discussion on “Migrants in the Media: Improving Public Perceptions”, moderated by Mr. François Crépeau, United Nations Special

Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants. Mr. Hodes insisted on the importance of countering hate speech against migrants as a central way of fostering more tolerant and inclusive societies. Outcomes of the coordination meeting will contribute to the report of the United Nations Secretary-General on international migration and development for the 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Annual Meeting of the Focal Points Held at the United Nations Headquarters

On 15 January 2016, the UNAOC High Representative convened an annual Focal Points meeting focusing on “Building Trust: The Nexus to Preventing Violent Extremism”. The event aimed at briefing officials from capitals of member states and international organizations on the latest priorities of and progress made by UNAOC in 2015. In addition, Focal Points and delegates were informed by the UNAOC staff on the various programmes progress and impact, cost plan for financial year 2016 and fundraising plans, as well as preparations for the 7th UNAOC Global Forum in Baku, Azerbaijan.

During the event, the UNAOC High Representative emphasized a consistent pursuit of UNAOC of its purpose and *raison d’être* - building bridges between societies, promoting dialogue and understanding, and forging the collective political will to address the challenges we face. He recalled the importance of a genuine partnership between UNAOC and the member states - members of the Group of Friends, whose reflections and guidance are detrimental to the UNAOC’s success.

While Focal Points and other delegates exchanged views and generated a wide range of useful proposals and recommendations, the noteworthy points included, but were not limited to, the following:



a) delegations welcomed proactive interaction of UNAOC with the Group of Friends and organization of regular UNAOC Focal Points meetings; b) they supported the UNAOC approach in involving civil society stakeholders, youth and media to produce effective narratives that counter and prevent violent extremism; c) several delegations encouraged UNAOC to contribute to mediation efforts and engage religious leaders in finding avenues for

conflict resolution; d) they noted the relevance of the UNAOC mission with regard to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; e) delegates welcomed UNAOC programmes in the fields of media, migration, education, youth and intercultural exchanges, and suggested that UNAOC continues to implement as focused and concrete project activities, as possible.

UNAOC Engagement with CTITF

Since the end of 2015, UNAOC continued to engage with CTITF to identify programming that could be referenced to show efforts to address the drivers of violent extremism, especially those forms that are conducive to terrorism.

The UNAOC approach of using project activities to help build bridges of tolerance and understanding between groups with defined identi-

ties is a well-accepted element of international community efforts in this regard.

The United Nations Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism has been released and is being considered by the General Assembly.

In the section relating to the work of the United Nations system on the

topic, several references link the Secretary-General's approach to the pillars of activity of UNAOC as originally identified in the High-level Group Report on AOC.

These include a focus on youth, media literacy, peace education and intercultural exchanges, areas covered by UNAOC project activities.

UNAOC Cooperation with BMW Group

The UNAOC High Representative met with officials of the BMW Group during a visit to Germany in March 2016 to commemorate the centennial of BMW.

During this visit, the Chairman of the Board of the BMW Group singled out the company's relationship with UNAOC as a key symbol of the BMW commitment to corporate social responsibility. In advance of this visit, UNAOC reached an agreement with the BMW Group to extend the existing public-private partnership for 2016-2017.

The BMW Group officials have also expressed their interest in exploring other possible avenues for cooperation with UNAOC in the future.



Baku, Azerbaijan (26 April 2016) -- UNAOC and BMW Group announced this year's ten recipients of the Intercultural Innovation Award at the 7th UNAOC Global Forum. (Full story in pages 8-9)



OPPORTUNITIES AND FORTHCOMING EVENTS

May 2016

UNAOC and IOM once again invite youth people from around the world to submit their short videos exploring the themes of migration, diversity and social inclusion. Three award winners will be invited (all travel expenses paid) to PLURAL+ Awards Ceremony in New York. PLURAL+ partners will also select videos for awards and professional opportunities. Deadline to apply: 29 May 2016. For more details, please visit: pluralplus.unaoc.org.

UNAOC launched a call for applications for the 2016 edition of its Fellowship Programme. It is open to participants between 25 to 38 years old, from the Middle East, North Africa, Europe and North America, with a strong interest in intercultural exchanges and professionally involved in the field of Education – one of UNAOC main pillars of action. 12 young leaders and professionals from Europe, North-America (EUNA), and 12 young leaders and professionals from the Middle East and North-Africa (MENA) will be selected. Deadline to apply: 26 June 2016, for more details, please visit: <http://fellowship.unaoc.org/apply/>.

June 2016

The UNAOC Group of Friends Meeting will take place on 29 June at the United Nations headquarters in New York, focusing on the outcomes and announcements of the 7th UNAOC Global Forum, held in Baku in April 2016.

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and the BMW Group will host a capacity-building workshop for recipients of the 2016 Intercultural Innovation Award at the BMW Group Headquarters in Munich, Germany, from 27 June to 1 July 2016. The event will focus on strategic communication, planning and implementation.

July 2016

Save the date for The Mediterranean Concert on 9 July 2016 at the Human Rights and Alliance of Civilisations Room at the United Nations Headquarters in Geneva. The concert will feature artists from different cultures sharing a stage, artists with diverse tongues, different religions, varied styles and traditions yet all of them with one common purpose: to reclaim the Mediterranean as a meeting point of cultures.

September 2016

During the high level week of the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly, UNAOC will organize a Ministerial level meeting of its Group of Friends.

UNAOC plans an event in the margins of the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly, which will be part of the UNAOC #SpreadNoHate initiative that focuses on Hate Speech in the media and on strategies to counter and prevent violent extremism.

October 2016

PLURAL+ Youth Film Festival on Migration and Social Inclusion Awards Ceremony will take place on 27 October 2016 in New York.

November 2016

After two successful events at the United Nations headquarters in December 2015, and in Baku, Azerbaijan, in April 2016, UNAOC continues its work on Hate Speech in the media with its #SpreadNoHate initiative. UNAOC is developing a plan for a new symposium for constructive dialogue on Hate Speech and the sharing of best practices, which will take place November 2016 in Europe.