**UNAOC Asia South Pacific Regional Consultation**

**Harmony through dialogue and diversity**

**Rooting the Alliance of Civilization in Asia Pacific Region**

**Shanghai International Convention Centre**

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**Workshop 1 : Combining cultural traditions and modern social life**

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Key points:

Although the workshop acknowledged the need to define the key concepts, the limitations of such a task were also recognised. Cultural traditions are a concept. Modern social life is another concept. There are no universal definitions of these two concepts. Combining cultural traditions and modern social life is a very broad and general topic. With these complexities and constraints in mind, the participants helped enrich each other’s understanding on the key concepts and relevant issues. Below is a summary of five major conclusions from the workshop.

Cultural traditions are embodied in modern social life in four main aspects:

* Ancients traditions are combined in our modern social life through art, literature, philosophies, etc;
* Some ancient traditions are immersed or assimilated in our modern social life. For instance Confucianism is strongly embodied in several contemporary Asian societies;
* Criticizes of our modern societies are often rooted in our perception and assimilation of ancients traditions;
* In several Asian societies religious and spiritual leaders are highly respected and benefits better trust ratings than politicians and business people
* Some ancient traditions based on Confucianism or Taoism for instance had been experimented for decades or centuries. The study and knowledge of these long experiments can be useful for other societies. More recently some countries and societies in Southeast Asia had been partly successful to manage and resolve some of their ethnical and religious conflicts.

Recommendations:

* Religions can divide or unite. UNAOC is working on Education, Youth, Media and Migration. Involving religious leaders and officials from religious school such as Madrasah in the UNAOC initiatives for pluralism and dialogue of civilizations would facilitate the circulation and the acceptation of the information among the members of different societies. Through religious school some values and awareness promoting dialogue of civilizations and tolerance could be disseminated;
* The UNAOC could benefit from the monitoring and studies of the experiences of Southeast Asian Muslims countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia in the way they manage to solve some of their conflicts (Aceh, East-Timor, Mindanao in the Philippines) and how they worked toward democratization and pluralism.