

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations **FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME**

Building understanding and trust between
Europe, North America, the Arab and Muslim world:
ENGAGING EMERGING LEADERS



Federal Foreign Office



GUERRAND-HERMÈS FOUNDATION
FOR PEACE



BRITISH
COUNCIL



INSTITUTE OF
INTERNATIONAL
EDUCATION

10 YEARS AFTER 9/11...

- 30% of Westerners and 40% of people from the Middle East and North Africa believe that violent conflict is inevitable between the Western and the Muslim world.
- Those who say conflict is unavoidable are more likely to identify cultural and religious differences as reasons for tension.
- Many in the west see Muslims as fanatical, violent and lacking tolerance. Meanwhile, Muslims generally see Westerners as selfish, immoral and greedy.

* *Global Attitudes Project. (2011). Muslim-Western Tensions Persist [Report]. Washington: Pew Research Center. Abu Dhabi Gallup Center (201). Measuring the State of Muslim-West Relations: Assessing the "New Beginning" [Report]. Abu Dhabi: Gallup Inc.*



THE AIMS OF THE FELLOWSHIP :

- TO DECONSTRUCT STEREOTYPES ABOUT THE OTHER SOCIETY
- TO BUILD UNDERSTANDING AND TRUST AMONGST EMERGING LEADERS
- TO CREATE A CLIMATE FOR COLLABORATION AND JOINT ACTION

● **The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations fellowship program** is a cultural exchange program that offers an opportunity for emerging leaders from the Arab world to travel throughout three countries in Europe and three states in North America, and for a group of emerging leaders from North America and Europe to travel to **three countries throughout the Arab world**. They meet and exchange ideas with key decision makers, media, local communities, grassroots and religious groups for in-depth discussion and full immersion in each other's society.

● **By exposing emerging leaders to the reality of other cultures and societies**, this highlights the challenges, the gaps and the tensions but also common ground for mutual positive action.

● **By creating an active alumni network amongst future leaders in these countries**, the fellowship programme encourages people with different cultures and backgrounds to cooperate together.



The fellowship since 2010 has received more than 1000 applications from 40 western countries and 20 countries in the Arab world. By 2012, close to 100 fellows from 30 countries have been selected to take part in the programme.



- **Countries represented from Europe and North America:** *Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, France, Spain, Turkey, U.K., USA, Canada, Austria, Sweden, Italy, Hungary*
- **Countries represented from North Africa and the Middle East:** *Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain*
- **Locations visited:** *USA: New York, Philadelphia, Washington D.C., Europe: Berlin, Brussels, Paris, U.K. and MENA: Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates, UAE*
- **Fellows meet with representatives from organizations including:** *Earth Institute, Education for Employment Foundation, El Djazerra, European Union, France 24, Mayor of Fez, Mayor of Philadelphia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France, NATO, Parliament of Jordan, University of Cairo, US State Department, Vivendi Company, World Bank, World Congress of Muslim Philanthropists Bronx transformation projects, Columbia University, IDMAJ foundation, Muslim Brotherhood, El Djazeera to name just a few...*

ACHIEVEMENTS FOLLOWING THE FELLOWSHIP

After their experience, fellows have become involved in activities such as:

- Declaration of Alumni of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) fellowship programme to Heads of States and Governments at the occasion of the 67th General Assembly of the United Nations “(...) We believe in the extraordinary power of dialogue to change perceptions and avoid outdated radicalism and sensationalism. By taking part to the UNAOC fellowship programme, we accepted the challenge to apply lessons learned to both our personal and professional lives, in an effort to contribute as humble but committed agents of change(...).”
- Holding prominent and influential positions such as Adviser on the Middle East to a Minister of Foreign Affairs; Head of Middle East section in prominent daily newspaper
- Formalizing their involvement in decision making and taking actions for change through running for parliament, creating initiatives for women and creating partnerships with organizations concerned with interreligious dialogue and intercultural exchange
- Collaborating with organizations met during the program to launch new projects promoting sustainable development and peaceful relations by sharing knowledge and expertise such as the creation of a branch of the Employment for Education in Lebanon
- Reproducing the successful Bronx community model in parts of Cairo, Egypt
- Promoting diversity in their communities and therefore the program, by writing press articles, blogging, doing media interviews and extensively using of social media - articles by Fellows have appeared in The Huffington Post, El Mundo, El Pais, Le Devoir, Metropolis and Le Soir



Mena fellows in the Bronx, NYC

TESTIMONIALS

“As emerging leaders are agents of change, participants will be in a position to bring to bear in-depth understanding of diverse societies on current debates and allow others to benefit from their perspectives,” - **Jorge Sampaio, High Representative, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, former President of Portugal.**



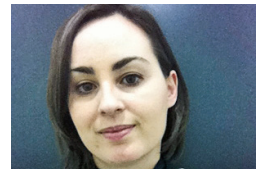
“The programme is a unique opportunity to acquire a broader and deeper understanding of intercultural issues as well as profound insights into the complexities of other countries and their societies. I believe this experience will also affect how fellows see the world and how they themselves can contribute to better intercultural awareness.” - **Dr. Heinrich Kreft, Ambassador, Director for Public Diplomacy and Dialogue among Civilizations, Federal Foreign office of Germany**



“I have a clearer picture of how I may continue to work towards fostering better relations between the West and Islamic societies. I am forever grateful to the UNAOC and inspired by the youth leaders and perspectives we were exposed to in the Arab Muslim world. - **Mohsin Mohi-Ud Din, UNAOC Fellow, Fulbright Scholar, Fulbright scholar, Blogger Huffington Post, USA**



“The program was absolutely inspiring. Now, more than ever, I feel that it is necessary to work to improve understanding between the Muslim and Western world.” - **Amanda Figueras, UNAOC Fellow, Journalist , El Mundo, Spain**



“The program helped develop personal friendships, and tackles many similarities in the different countries in our region, this opened a new opportunity window for cooperation. All in all, a very excellent program.” - **Muath AbuDal, UNAOC Fellow, Political leader, Jordan**



“The UNAOC is a very unique initiative and is much needed in our region, as it reconstructs the bridges that were once there to exchange knowledge, cultures and civilizations. Yet I believe that the implementation of such vision is truly represented by the fellowship programme.” - **Sofana Dahlan, UNAOC Fellow, CEO of Tashkeil, Saudi Arabia**



THE FELLOWSHIP IN THE NEWS...

- “That means any discussion of 9/11 must be a globalized discussion between people and not just governments. That’s why programs like the **United Nations Alliance of Civilizations** fellowship programme and other such people-to-people exchanges go further to promoting security than billions of dollars of military hardware. Rather than relying on the media, dozens of international fellows from around the world gain a more thorough understanding of attitudes, politics, business, culture, and society by meeting a variety of people, participating in their way of life, and applying the lessons learned in the their capacity of leadership in their home countries. In today’s networked world, it’s more about the power of ideas - but more importantly, how ideas could be communicated and made to work in people’s lives. Moral power.”

- **Huffington Post, 12 September 2011**

- “Arab News newspaper and Sayidaty magazine hosted a working lunch for the delegation where there was a lively discussion about media and women’s issues. (...) The debate touched on many controversial issues and topics of national and international concern and impacted the **UNAOC** delegation.”

- **Arab News, 14 April 2012**

- “Hace poco tuve la oportunidad de viajar a Arabia Saudí gracias a una beca de la **Alianza de Civilizaciones de las Naciones Unidas (UNAOC)**. Admito que antes de este viaje jamás había escuchado nada bueno sobre este país. Mujeres oprimidas, violaciones de los derechos humanos, policía religiosa, condenas de muerte. En fin, nada positivo (...) ¡Como cambió nuestra opinión al día siguiente!”

- **El Mundo, 24 June 2011**

- “Viajábamos dos hombres y dos mujeres, pero entre nosotros no había otra relación que la de compañeros como becarios **del programa de Alianza de Civilizaciones de la ONU**, y temíamos estar infringiendo alguna norma de las que restringen la libre circulación en el país. (...) Como estaba previsto, el grupo se reencontró con el taxista a la hora fijada, debajo de la Torre del Reloj. Ahí afuera todo seguía igual, pero en el grupo había quien se sentía renacido.”

- **El Pais, 19 April 2012**

- “In a time of political change, reforms and revolutions, especially in North Africa, the interaction between emerging leaders, global decision makers and each other could become a key to create new, stable societies. Some of the **UNAOC** fellows participated actively in the so- called Arab Spring, although they would not all call it that.”

- **Inter Press Service News Agency, 21 September 2011**

THE
HUFFINGTON
POST

arab news

The Middle East's Leading English Language Daily

EL  MUNDO

EL PAÍS



HOW TO APPLY?

Applicants have to meet these criteria:

- Citizens of countries located in North Africa and the Middle East or North America and Europe
- Accomplished and influential young professionals recognized by your communities with the potential to become key leaders in your field in the near future
- Active either in politics (local, national, or international), civil society organizations, media, the business sector, local communities, faith based movements, and other fields
- Willingness to use this experience in your leadership position
- Motivated and available to take part of an approximately 15 day-full program as scheduled by the organizer and to respect all rules and regulations on locations from the organizer and the host countries (a commitment letter will be given for you to sign)
- Be no younger than 28 and no older than 38 years of age
- Good knowledge of written and spoken English
- Possess a passport valid at least 6 months beyond the assigned Fellowship dates

Applications for the fellowship programme are accepted all year long.

PARTNERS

The fellowship programme has been designed and funded from the beginning with partners from the Arab and Muslim world, from Europe and North America, brought together on an equal footing under the auspices of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations. All partners are equally involved in the design of the programme and the selection of participants.

It is made possible thanks to a grant from the Federal Foreign office of Germany and the Guerrand-Hermes Foundation, and is developed in partnership with the League of Arab States, the British Council, ISESCO, OIC, Ministry of Political Development of Jordan, Qatar Committee for the Alliance of Civilizations and the Institute of International Education.

Financial and in-kind support are provided from Arab /Muslim, European and North Americans sources. The fellowship programme is unique in this regard. It is aimed at presenting the reality of the other society as it is, and not as a model. It is up to the fellows to come up with their own opinion based on their talks with a wide and diverse range of interlocutors.





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- www.unaoc.org/actions/trainings-and-exchanges/fellowship/
- Also find us on Facebook and Twitter.