



United Nations Alliance of Civilizations



**Message by the UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations,
President Jorge Sampaio, on the occasion of the 2012 International Migrants Day**

“The UN International Migrants Day that takes place on December 18th is a welcome opportunity for all of us to reflect on the important role individuals and societies can play in fully recognizing migration as a force for good, when supported by the right policies and guided by the principles of universal human rights.

As a complex process of globalization, human migration is a phenomenon that directly increases diversity around the world. As such, individuals in countries of both origin and destination are increasingly faced with an urgent need for greater understanding and dialogue.

In an era of unprecedented mobility, migration is often perceived as a threat to stability, prosperity and identity; however, inspired and encouraged by innovative and promising practices, we, in the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, firmly believe that with vision and responsible leadership in diversity and dialogue we can build inclusive and tolerant societies.

If we want to make cultural diversity a true asset rather than a liability and turn intercultural exchange into an engine for innovation that advances competitiveness in business, for instance, and which also produces prosperity and quality of life for societies, we cannot leave it to chance.

Valuing diversity, inclusiveness and tolerance is not straightforward. It requires cultural learning, intercultural skills, competence and training. It requires public policies – notably in education, youth, media and migration issues - which shape an intercultural society and foment a culture of dialogue, tolerance and peace.

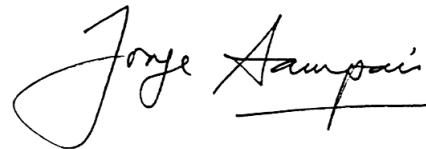
All in all, we really need true intercultural strategies built upon a broad vision, where economic and social inclusion policies and policies for cultural diversity are integrated and push each other forward.

The need of migration policies and practices as well as of added protection of migrants in order to respond to the challenges and realities of living in global and democratic societies is crystal clear. Equally important is empowering migrants to participate and engage in the cultural, economic, and public life of their respective societies.

This is why the Alliance of Civilizations aims at influencing policy-making and providing a platform to share experiences, best practices and guidance to practitioners. This is why it aims at raising awareness about the major dilemmas of our age of diversity and the need to take bold action.

Living together is an increasing challenge for the 21st century. However, with the vision and the appropriate skills to embrace diversity, to promote social and structural inclusion, to ensure the respect of everyone's rights, there is an untapped potential for a better and more prosperous and integrated future".

18 December 2012

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jorge Amparo". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

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<https://www.facebook.com/pages/How-to-build-inclusive-societies/163258693691576>