

THIRD UN ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS FORUM



27-29 MAY, 2010
RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL



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THIRD  UN ALLIANCE
OF CIVILIZATIONS FORUM



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My initial words are indeed to express my profound gratitude to the Brazilian authorities, in particular to President Lula da Silva and Minister of Foreign Affairs Celso Amorim, for hosting the 3rd Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations from 27 to 29 May 2010, in the fabulous setting of Rio de Janeiro, built on a rich fabric of cultural exchanges and cross-fertilization.

Secondly, I would like to thank the ever enlarging number of members of the Group of Friends of the Alliance, its many partners and constituencies for their support and help in the preparation of our first annual gathering convened outside Europe.

Most of all, I am grateful for all those individuals, mainly from Brazil and the wider region, who joined our debates during the three-day Forum and contributed to deepen its local and regional footing.

Last but not least, I want to express my debt to Ambassador José Augusto Lindgren Alves who led the Brazilian team with unusual mastery and tact as well as the members of my secretariat for their outstanding and tireless work to prepare so successful an event. I am grateful, finally, for the exceptional support given by Professor Cândido Mendes in getting the Dialogue Café station operational at his University in close to record speed in order to have it connected with the Lisbon station during the Forum. What a pleasure to work with them all!

President Jorge Sampaio,
High Representative for the UN Alliance of Civilizations

Lisbon/ New York
August 2010

PREFACE

By **President Jorge Sampaio**, High Representative for the UN Alliance of Civilizations

It is with great pleasure that I look back on the 3rd Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, held in Rio de Janeiro from 27 to 29 May 2010, and recall its main achievements as well as the various new initiatives announced on that unique occasion.

With several thousand registered participants including political and business leaders, mayors, civil society, youth, journalists, foundations, international organizations, and religious leaders from all around the world, the Rio Forum clearly showed that the UN Alliance of Civilizations has been firmly consolidated as the United Nations' main platform for global dialogue, aimed at improving understanding and cooperative relations among nations and peoples across cultures and religions.



The global scope of the Alliance was also fully demonstrated by the Rio Forum. As the first gathering of its kind organized outside Europe, this event was a test for both the convening capacity of the Alliance and its worldwide dimension.

Focused on 'Bridging Cultures, Building Peace,' the 3rd Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilizations was an exceptional place for relationship building, for gaining insights into the world's most pressing cross-cultural challenges and for turning ideas into action.

Rio made it crystal clear: more than ever, we live in one world shaped by intense interaction among diverse cultural, religious and linguistic communities. But — to quote one of the participants — "acknowledging and living at ease with the landscape of diversities is very different from focusing on differences. That is why our challenge is really to create a coherent narrative for diversity and how it can answer the problems of our age instead of adding to them".

In Rio, all of us tried to work together to identify at least some of the building blocks of this narrative, and move towards a more pluralistic and inclusive vision — fit for the challenges and the opportunities of our time.

In Rio, key questions were addressed:

- How can we create inclusive societies, founded on the respect for human rights and diversity?
- What kind of actions do we need to combat intolerance and prejudice?
- What is the impact of globalization on people's sense of belonging and identity?
- How is globalization contributing to bridging divides?
- How do economic and social inequalities impact relations among diverse communities?
- What is the role of cities in preventing conflicts among communities?
- How can we empower people with intercultural skills and competences?
- What tools do children and young people need to navigate in an increasingly complex and multicultural world?

These issues lie at the heart of the work of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, and are relevant to each and every one of us, as recognized by the participants in the Rio Forum. They generated lively and wholehearted debates amid occasional controversy. But most of all, the Rio Forum was recognized as an inclusive platform, bringing together the knowledge, experience and energy of a wide range of partners, all engaged in developing new thinking on making diversity an asset rather than a liability and committed to take action to build mutual trust across cultural divides and foster peace around the world.

Furthermore, the Rio Forum was a unique occasion to launch or announce several major new initiatives that have marked the consolidation of the Alliance as an action-oriented initiative, building on a double approach that combines top-down and bottom-up processes.

In this respect, let me underline that further to the high-level debates held with official delegations, particularly the Focal Points meeting and indeed the Ministerial meeting, a very positive feature of the Rio Forum is related to the growing role played by partners in shaping the content and the activities of the Alliance.

In addition to a plenary session and various working meetings organized in partnership with members of the Alliance (as in the case of UNESCO which kindly prepared a plenary on education), a pre-Forum day was included in the official program in order to allow greater participation in and ownership of the annual gathering by the members and the various constituencies of the Alliance. During this event, a wide array of sessions took place. These included the first ever meeting of parliamentarians from around the world on the subject of intercultural dialogue organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union; a roundtable on 'Addressing Islamophobia — Unused Opportunities for Mutual Respect and Inclusion,' co-organized by the OIC, the Council of Europe, the British Council and the Alliance; a debate focused on setting thematic platforms for cooperation, led by the Swiss delegation; the inauguration of the first two Dialogue Cafés through a joint program connecting Lisbon and Rio de Janeiro, possible thanks to a complex network of partnerships involving public and private actors such as the multinational CISCO, the Cândido Mendes University in Rio, the Municipality of Lisbon, the European Commission through the European network GÉANT, the Gulbenkian Foundation and others.

Another point that is worth underscoring is the key importance of innovative partnerships with international organizations, civil society and the corporate sector to achieve real breakthroughs on the ground. In this regard the set of outcomes of this Forum is so long and rich that it is not possible to go through it comprehensively in this introduction.

However, I would like to point out three of the most important:

- 1 new or renewed MoU or Action Plans were signed with partners of the Alliance (such as UNESCO, OIC, ILO, UNHCR and IRCICA), thus enriching the network of partnerships that will allow new common actions and joint projects to develop in the near future.
- 2 inauguration of the two first stations in Rio de Janeiro and Lisbon of the Dialogue Cafés Global Network (www.dialoguecafe.org), a world première based on a public-private partnership that opens up new avenues for intercultural dialogue and cooperation
- 3 the announcement of an Online Community on Migration and Integration, a promising new project developed jointly with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), (www.unaoc.org/communities/migrationintegration) which aims to convene a worldwide community of policy makers, practitioners and civil society activists who work together to improve relations among migrants and host communities.

A Forum is not only a moment for announcements and achievements. Nor is it only a platform to showcase breakthroughs or evidence of progress. It is also a unique chance to identify new challenges, needs and trends, and to assess any possible shortcomings.

As I noted in the annotated agenda prepared for the Ministerial meeting, over the past year some of the challenges that the Alliance has been faced with since its very inception became increasingly acute, at a time when global crises and the expanding diversity of our societies is generating growing anxiety among populations, driving communities apart and putting democracies under added pressure.

The 3rd Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations was built upon the need to address the most pressing of these challenges. It brought to the table a number of controversial issues and dilemmas on intercultural dialogue and cooperation which were not always free from sparking controversy. But articulated dissent is a goal to be achieved as the only way to bridge divides and overcome suspicions. Dialogue is most needed precisely where there is mistrust and disagreement. Dialogue does not aim necessarily to reach consensus but to find solutions that would be acceptable to all.

As a result of the debates held, it is quite clear that when promoting intercultural dialogue we need to be clear as to the aims to be achieved because efforts to foster cooperation across cultures can easily fall into at least two traps. On the one hand, efforts may foster such innocuous, basic and apolitical agreements and cooperation that they are deemed pleasing but irrelevant to the real problems that divide us. This is a real risk for the Alliance, should it develop only as a promoter of programs and projects with no agenda or policy framework underpinning action within its scope and objectives.

On the other hand, efforts may attempt to address the deeper divisions that exist, but without sufficient clout or political will, they are unlikely to achieve breakthroughs and therefore can be dismissed as hopelessly relegated to kind words leading to no action. This is also a risk we need to overcome. Addressing cultural diversity is essential for sustainable development and peace and it is therefore a central issue of global and domestic agendas notwithstanding the need to avoid 'culturalization' of political problems.

So the challenge for the Alliance is to attempt to steer a course between these twin dangers, fostering cooperation and partnerships that touch on some of our deepest divisions — over competing

conceptions of rights and responsibilities; over divergent perceptions of double standards as to how the actions of different states are judged and either condemned or condoned; over religion.

Still, achieving this goal remains a huge challenge for the Alliance particularly as its members include a plurality of views that have to be accommodated, as well as different — and probably contradictory — interests at stake. This is a first difficulty that must not be overlooked.

There is a second and somewhat disturbing challenge related with the very *raison d'être* of the Alliance. According to its founding Report, the Alliance has a global scope and aims at improving understanding and cooperative relations among nations and peoples across cultures and religions. In the process, it helps to counter the forces that fuel polarization and extremism. But its urgent task is also clearly identified in the Report: building bridges and promoting dialogue and understanding, in particular between Western and Muslim societies. This should be a top priority for action because all findings unanimously show increasing polarization in the way Westerners and Muslims view each other.

To achieve this task in times of intercultural tensions such as ours, it is crucial that the Alliance keeps its unique role as a catalyst to forge collective political will to address racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including discrimination based on religious affiliation.

However, it remains a challenge for the Alliance to act as a convener of informed debates, as a broker and as a facilitator of common actions that address and reduce fears and concerns on all sides. Breaking the cycle of denial and mutual victimization that puts action on hold remains, in my view, another critical challenge for the Alliance.

Last but not least, the UN Alliance of Civilizations, as a relatively new, young United Nations initiative, also faces an organizational challenge. It has grown quite a lot in a short period of time. To live up to high expectations it is continuously generating, it needs to be reinforced in its capacity to deliver. Not, indeed, by turning into a new bureaucratic organization but rather as a new driving force of the existing capabilities available at different levels in the world. Pushing the UN agenda on intercultural dialogue and cooperation worldwide remains its main challenge.

I sense that in Rio we reached a turning point — in terms of substance, outreach, commitment, engagement and participation. I am sure that together we will live up to our best expectations and that the Alliance will achieve its main goal — to bring people together, make people value difference and the desire for distinctiveness, and help people live at ease with the landscape of diversities. Let us hope that in one year's time, in Doha, the fourth Forum will confirm that Rio was a step in the right direction.



OUTCOMES

New Agreements and Key Commitments

The Rio Forum saw the launch of new agreements and key commitments from governments and global partners of the UNAOC.

RIO DECLARATION

Expectations and achievements of the Rio Forum were for the very first time summarized in a Rio Declaration prepared by the host country and endorsed by the members of the Group of Friends of the Alliance.



Rio de Janeiro Declaration on the UN Alliance of Civilizations

We, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of States belonging to the Group of Friends of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations;

Together with the General Directors and other Heads of Delegation of international organizations also belonging to the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations;

On the occasion of the Third Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 27-29 May 2010;

Reaffirming our commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as other relevant international instruments, such as the Constitution of UNESCO and the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity;

Recognizing that all cultures, civilizations and religions contribute to the enrichment of humankind;

Convinced that the world's cultural diversity is a wealth to be cherished by all as a factor of peace;

Stressing the importance of respect and understanding for cultural and religious diversity, and encouraging tolerance, respect, dialogue and cooperation among different cultures, civilizations and peoples;

Recognizing the importance of intercultural and interreligious dialogue in order to promote tolerance, mutual respect and peace, and expressing its support for the diverse initiatives taken by many countries and regions towards such dialogue;

Emphasizing the important role of UNESCO and other international organizations on the matter;

Welcoming and stimulating the continuing efforts made by the United Nations Secretary-General and his High Representative for the UN Alliance of Civilizations to promote greater understanding and respect among civilizations, cultures, and religions, by means "inter alia" of concrete projects in the priority areas of youth, education, media and migration, in collaboration with Governments, international and regional organizations, the private sector, foundations and civil society in general;

Taking into consideration United Nations General Assembly Resolution 64/14, of 10 November 2009, adopted by consensus,

1. Welcome the new members of the Group of Friends of the UN Alliance of Civilizations;
2. Reiterate our commitment to the advancement of the goals and principles of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations;

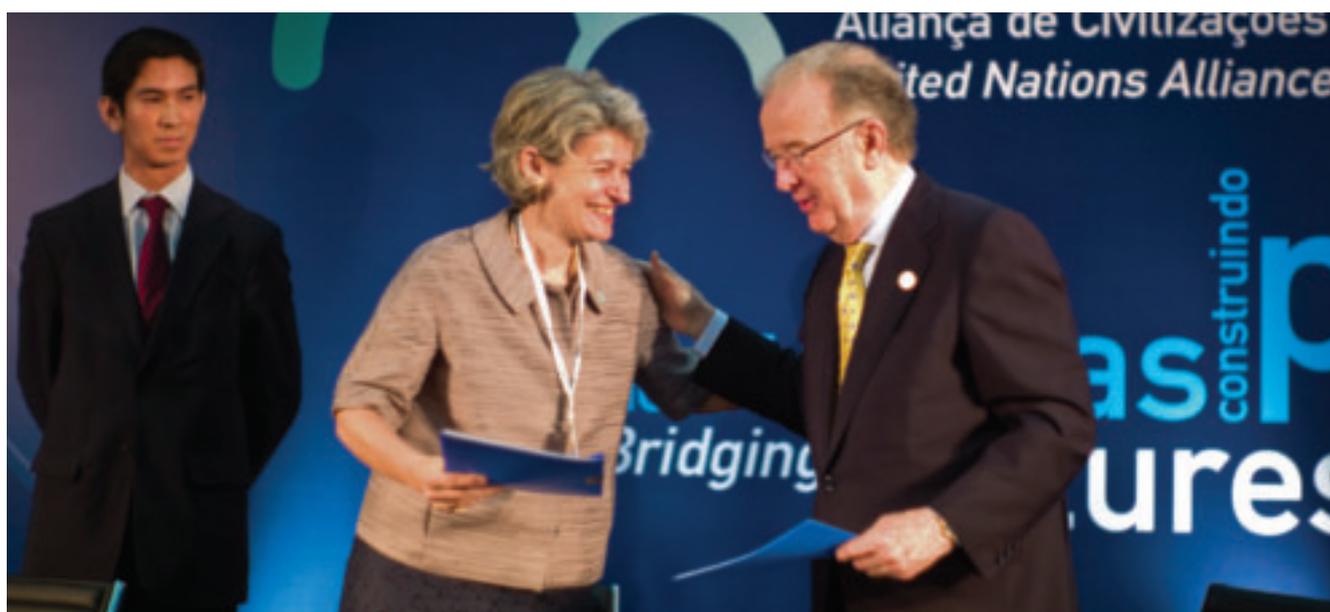
3. Express our support for the priorities identified in the second implementation plan of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, submitted in June 2009 to the UN Secretary-General and the Group of Friends;
4. Stress the importance of implementing the Alliance's goals at national level, in collaboration with governments and civil society, namely through the implementation of National Plans for Intercultural Dialogue;
5. Support the development of regional processes to increase cooperation among countries on intercultural dialogue, praising, in that regard, the Regional Conference for South-Eastern Europe, held in Sarajevo, in December 2009;
6. Acknowledge the importance of the annual Global Forums, involving the Group of Friends and partners, together with leading personalities of various areas, as a means to discuss, approve and promote the UN Alliance of Civilizations as well as its programs and projects;
7. Call for increased coordination and consultation between the Alliance and the members of the Group of Friends through the network of the National Focal Points;
8. Reiterate our appreciation to Spain for the first Forum of the UNAOC, held in Madrid in January 2008, and to Turkey, for the second UNAOC Forum, held in Istanbul, in April 2009;
9. Welcome the offers already made by Qatar and Austria to host the next two UNAOC Forums in Doha, in 2011, and in Vienna, in 2012;
10. Extend our gratitude to the Government and people of Brazil, in particular to the City and State of Rio de Janeiro, for convening the present Forum on 27-29 May, 2010;
11. Call upon the full implementation of the announcements made in the Rio Forum;
12. Express our conviction that the Rio Forum has achieved its main objective of making the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations a really global undertaking, with universal aims.

YOUTH RECOMMENDATIONS

The Third Annual United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Forum held in Rio de Janeiro brought together over 140 youth representatives between the ages of 18 to 35 and representing over 60 countries. These young leaders took part in a Cultural Youth Walk and Youth Event (see "Youth at the Rio Forum" for further details) and prepared the following recommendations which were presented at the Forum Closing Ceremony:

1. As ambassadors of our own cultures, we have been hard at work constructing bridges of intercultural dialogue to alleviate common misunderstandings and stereotypes, which have often been exploited by the media. In order to overcome these problems, we must go beyond this Forum and use this educational experience in our own communities.
2. We, students of the world, believe education is a powerful means of reform. Education must be accessible to each individual and must include media literacy education. We recommend that each of you take the time to consider that our physical space is increasingly diverse and more interconnected. Education must reflect this new reality.

3. We, frequent victims of media exploitation, must be given a platform to voice our real concerns. When youth play an integral role in decision-making, they can reverse the stereotypes that can be generated by media.
4. We, ambassadors of our own cultures, demand the stamp of Human Rights Declaration in our passports so that they are respected wherever we may travel.
5. We, migrants and seekers of mobility, strongly encourage governments to base their policies on an inclusive model of coexistence.
6. We, as those most deeply affected by the current economic and social conditions, strongly recommend that social and economic protection of youth be ensured. More particularly, youth unemployment needs to be urgently addressed by the public and private sectors. Also, investments in the youth sector need to be substantially increased to allow youth to realize their full potential.
7. Following the outcomes of the Youth Event of the Istanbul Forum, and taking into consideration our commitment expressed in the Youth Event of the Rio Forum, anticipate convening in Baku during the fall of 2010 for the First Convention of the Global Youth Movement for the Alliance of Civilizations. Your partnership in strengthening involvement of youth from all corners of the world in the UN Alliance of Civilizations is clearly needed.
8. It is easy for us to give our recommendations, but we, the youth representatives at the Rio Forum, want to assure each of you that we are also taking responsibility for these recommendations. We should each lead by example and bridge our cultures.



AGREEMENTS & ACTION PLANS

The Rio Forum saw the presentation of the following agreements and action plans:

- Renewed Memorandum of Understanding with UNESCO
- Memorandum of Understanding with the Research Center for Islamic Art, History and Culture (IRCICA)
- Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- Action Plan implementing Memoranda of Understanding with the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)
- Letter of Intent with the International Labor Organization (ILO)

The finalization of the preparation of the Memoranda of Understanding with the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and the World Bank will also take place in the near future.

New Initiatives and Announcements

DIALOGUE CAFÉ — SHOWCASE AT UN ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS FORUM AND INAUGURATION

On May 28, Dialogue Cafe was showcased at the Opening of the Forum at the Museum of Modern Art (MAM). A Dialogue Cafe 'pod' was placed onstage and a live session took place, moderated by Riz Khan of Al Jazeera and Simon Willis, CISCO Global Vice-President connecting to the Dialogue Cafe at the Candido Mendes University (UCAM) in Rio. At UCAM, we were joined by J.D. Stanley, Luisa Sena, manager of the Dialogue Cafe in Rio de Janeiro, and Aleh Ferreira who performed one of his singles for the Forum.

Dialogue Café (www.dialoguecafe.org) is a non-profit initiative which uses state of the art video technology to enable face-to-face conversations between diverse groups of people from around the world so that they can share experiences, learn from each other and work together to make the world a better place. They will be linked by life-size, high-definition video and sound allowing people from different cities and cultures to talk and meet despite being located on different sides of the world. This project was announced in the Istanbul Forum in 2009 and has since been developed with the aim

“Dialogue Café is at the nexus of the encounter of cultures in our times: relaxed conversation that leads to the discovery of the other.”

Professor Cândido Mendes

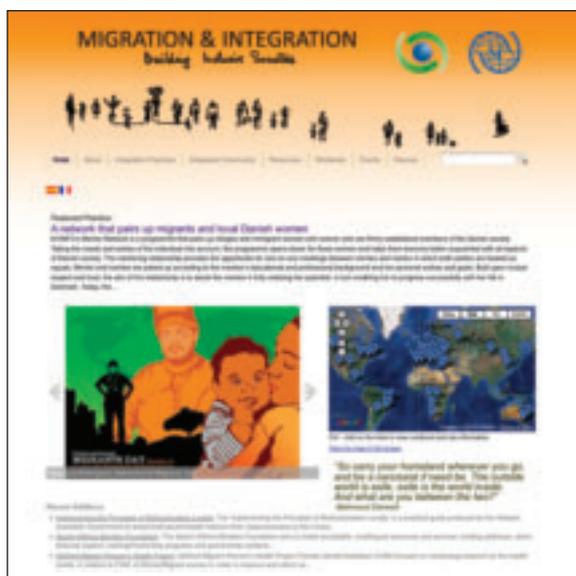
of creating a global network of Dialogue Cafés. This project is supported by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, CISCO, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, the Anna Lindh Foundation and others. New Dialogue Cafés are planned to open in the coming months in Amsterdam, Florence, London and Mexico. Istanbul, Ramallah, Tel Aviv, New York and Cairo are also locations under consideration. Furthermore a Mediterranean network of Dialogue Cafés is being explored.





ONLINE COMMUNITY ON MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION

Developed jointly with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), this website (www.unaoc.org/communities/migrationintegration) convenes a worldwide community of policy makers, practitioners and civil society activists who work together to improve relations among migrants and host communities. This online community features ideas and innovative projects from around the world, highlighting successful models and inspiring new initiatives. It also illustrates the positive impact of migration and the benefits it can bring to host societies, as migrants contribute to the economic, cultural and social life of their new country.



ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTING THE UNAOC REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR SOUTH EAST EUROPE

The Action Plan implementing the UNAOC Regional Strategy for South East Europe, adopted at the ministerial level in Sarajevo in December 2009, was discussed and finalized during a meeting with Focal Points of the countries and organizations involved that took place on May 27. Combining a bottom up and top down approach, the Action Plan is based on the priorities identified in the Regional Strategy and on a call for proposals to civil society. It comprises around 40 projects mainly focused on education, youth, and media.

FIRST UNAOC SUMMER SCHOOL

“Bridging Hearts, Opening Minds and Doing Things Together” (University of Aveiro, Portugal, 15-22 August 2010) to celebrate the International Year of Youth.

This Summer School, a multi-stakeholders initiative, brought together young people (up to the age of thirty) from various regions and different cultural and religious backgrounds, offering them opportunities to acquire knowledge and hone their skills in communicating across cultures. Through their interactions, participants learned to understand diversity as an asset for cross-fertilization and intercultural exchange and develop new perspectives from which mutual trust, better understanding and an innovative mindset can emerge.

SECOND GLOBAL MODEL UN (WWW.UN.ORG/GMUN)

Following the inaugural conference in Geneva, Switzerland on 5-7 August 2009, the second annual Global Model United Nations Conference organized by the United Nations Department of Public Information was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 14 - 18 August, 2010. The conference simulated a General Assembly Summit on intercultural dialogue. The theme of the 2010 conference was 'Towards an Alliance of Civilizations: Bridging Cultures to achieve Peace and Development.' More than 500 university students, ages 18 to 24, were invited from Member States where Model United Nations programs are currently organized. The students were selected through a fair and competitive selection process.



CREATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE UN ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

This institute is a joint project of the United Nations University and the Government of Spain. To be based in Barcelona, this Institute will conduct research, provide training, and disseminate knowledge relevant to issues relevant to the UN Alliance of Civilizations.

CROSS-CULTURAL REPORTING AWARD

The First Cross-Cultural Reporting Award was officially presented at the UN Alliance of Civilizations Forum in Rio de Janeiro. Top honors went to Ruth Eglash of The Jerusalem Post and Hani Hazaimah of The Jordan Times. Their columns on the state of relations between Israel and Jordan fifteen years

after normalization received a great deal of coverage and generated a lively debate.

MEASURING IMPACT OF INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE PROJECT

The "Measuring Impact of Intercultural Dialogue Project" was launched, in partnership with Vivendi. This project will assess existing data on the impact of intercultural dialogue, and develop and define standards and indicators that will assist with evaluation of impact in this area. Work will include a mapping exercise of existing data; solicit guidance from organizations that have developed measurement tools; and create a credible tool and advocate for its recognition in the sustainable development agenda at national and international forums.



Update on Current Initiatives

The Rio Forum offered a platform to showcase and review a range of ongoing UNAOC initiatives and gain insights on ways to strengthen these projects through partnerships and collaborative ventures.

INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The International Fellowship Program is a joint effort, launched by the UNAOC in collaboration with the British Council, the League of Arab States, the Islamic Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), the Government of Qatar and the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF). The objective is to facilitate mutual exposure for emerging leaders from North America, Europe, Middle Eastern and North African countries to learn about other societies, institutions, beliefs and people and hence contribute to better understanding and mutual respect among them. It aims to create an extensive network of emerging and influential leaders who will bring fresh perspectives to relations between the different countries and regions. In the initial phase, six Europeans and six North Americans, aged 25 to 40 years visited Egypt, Morocco and Qatar, and a group of twelve young leaders from 7 countries in the Middle East and North Africa visited three countries on a two week fellowship program spanning seven cities on two continents (Brussels, London, Paris in Europe; Raleigh, NC or Roanoke, VA, Washington DC and New York City in the US).

YOUTH SOLIDARITY FUND

The Youth Solidarity Fund is an international program that provides small grants of up to US\$30,000 to youth organizations advancing intercultural and interfaith dialogue at the local, national, regional or international levels. Projects funded under this program are developed and implemented in their entirety by youth organizations and primarily for the benefit of youth. Projects last an average of 6 months and present a strong potential for growth and sustainability. The first wave of grants was distributed last year. At the Rio Forum, the 18 winners of grants under the second year of this program were introduced and had an opportunity to present their projects to Forum participants.

MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION CLEARINGHOUSE

The UNAOC developed a Media Literacy Education clearinghouse run in collaboration with a wide network of partner organizations from around the world. This resource encourages the user's active participation through a multi-lingual global repository of information on resources and good practices relevant to Media Literacy Education, Media Education Policy and Youth Media (www.aocmedialiteracy.org).

UNAOC UNESCO UNITWIN CHAIR ON MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY FOR INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE ("UAC-MILID")

Six partner universities will collaborate to create an international network focusing on building capacity to support media education initiatives that promote global understanding while having an impact at the local level. UAC-MILID will serve as a mechanism for the exchange of information, resources, programs, students and faculty. UAC-MILID's initial six universities are: Autonomous University of Barcelona (Spain), Cairo University (Egypt), Sao Paulo University (Brazil), Tsinghua University (China), Temple University (USA), and West Indies University (Jamaica).

EDUCATION ABOUT RELIGIONS AND BELIEFS CLEARINGHOUSE

Launched in April 2009, the Education about Religions and Beliefs Clearinghouse (www.aocerb.org) features learning about the world's diverse religions and beliefs as well as ethics, tolerance, and civic education. It includes guidelines, learning and teaching resources, links to relevant organizations, a journal, related events, an online forum and news. The ERB Clearinghouse currently focuses on education at the primary and secondary level.

EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGES

Advocacy of educational and youth exchanges are a key element of the Alliance's efforts to bridge cultures and enhance knowledge and understanding of other cultures education. During the Rio Forum, representatives of participating countries provided information on good practices in exchange programs, and along with civil society, provided input on a planned report for the Doha Forum on policy recommendations to enhancing educational exchanges.

MEDIA PROGRAM

The UNAOC's media program is based on two pillars:

1. Globalexpertfinder.org, an online resource which connects journalists with a wide range of opinion leaders who provide quick reactions and analysis on complex political, social and religious issues;
2. A broad array of training programs designed to support journalists and opinion makers in their effort to report across cultural divides in a fast-changing global media environment.

In addition, a new resource for journalists in the Mediterranean, developed in collaboration with the Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) and the European Commission, is currently being planned.

PLURAL + (WWW.UNAOC.ORG/PLURALPLUS)

Plural + is a Youth Video Festival on migration, social inclusion and diversity. This initiative, created in partnership with the International Organization for Migration and in collaboration with organizations worldwide, recognizes youth as powerful agents of social change in a world often characterized by intolerance and cultural polarization. Young media makers up to 25 years of age are invited to submit their work and the winning videos are presented during an awards ceremony every year.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF FOUNDATIONS

The UNAOC International Network of Foundations brings together foundations working to build trust and cooperation among cultures and peoples. The Network aims to facilitate information exchange and increase collaboration in areas of relevance to the Alliance. The Rio Forum led to an agreement to organize a meeting of foundations supporting the development of the UNAOC in early 2011, in Marrakech, Morocco.

Forthcoming Events

- 1st Regional Conference of the UNAOC for the Mediterranean to be hosted by Malta on 8-9 November 2010 with a view to adopting the UNAOC Regional Strategy for the Mediterranean
- Fifth global meeting of the Focal Points of the UNAOC — to be held in Germany on 25-27 October 2010
- First Conference of the Global Youth Movement for the UNAOC in Baku, Azerbaijan, in October 2010 at the invitation of the Government of Azerbaijan
- Organization of the October 2010 Forum "Unity in Diversity : Bridging Cultures, Building Peace" in Melbourne in partnership with the Global Dialogue Foundation

GROUP OF FRIENDS — MINISTERIAL MEETING

The UNAOC is an inclusive platform for dialogue that consists of representatives of UN member states, agencies, and other international organizations that have demonstrated active interest in advancing the aims of the Alliance. Together they comprise the Group of Friends that includes 122 members (102 member states and 20 international organizations), reaching every continent and including countries with very different sensitivities and cultures reflecting the universality of the United Nations.



The Group of Friends is the driving force of the UNAOC and plays a vital role in its implementation process. The High Representative President Jorge Sampaio seeks the input, advice and support of its members on all key aspects of the Alliance's activities.

Through a broad dialogue-based and consensus-building approach, the Alliance has managed to maintain its momentum, attract new members, build consensus among its constituency and deliver on its objectives.

Strengthening the community of the Group of Friends as one of the main pillars of the Alliance has been a priority of the High Representative. Until now, this has been achieved by convening regular meetings, as occurred in Rio at the ministerial and focal points level. Through these meetings, the

Group of Friends community has been increasingly active in engaging with the work of the Alliance, enriching its initiatives by providing ideas, insights, and the necessary support.

As in previous occasions — in Madrid in 2008 and in Istanbul in 2009 — the Rio Forum provided the Group of Friends' members with a unique opportunity to participate in a global conversation and to develop joint or related initiatives. This year a full day was offered to them as well as to civil society partners of the Alliance to interact and organize activities, working sessions and deliver presentations of their projects.

The High Level Meeting brought together Ministers and Heads of International Organizations or their representatives, on an agenda proposed by the High Representative, and focusing on the main challenges confronting the Alliance. In his introductory remarks, he recalled three of the most compelling challenges ahead: 1) the need to develop closer cooperation with all the constituencies of the Alliance in order to increasingly embed the Alliance at local level; 2) the need to be clear about the aims of cross-cultural cooperation to avoid the trap both of culturalization of problems and of irrelevancy of the efforts made; and 3) the need to ensure sustainability of the Alliance, as the thus far insignificant annual budget of the Alliance of around 3 million USD simply does not reflect the now well-established political importance of the Alliance, and does not allow it to live up to the high expectations it raises.



The ministerial gathering gave the delegations an opportunity to share updates on ongoing national initiatives related to the national implementation of the Alliance's goals. Most of the participants mentioned new initiatives taken at the national level or in a bilateral or regional framework, or indeed in a multilateral context, consonant with the Alliance's priorities.

Participants also noted that the Alliance has become a point of reference for other multilateral undertakings. It has developed a 21st century forum for intercultural dialogue and cooperation, based on mutual interest and mutual respect. It promotes a sense of indivisibility and mutual belonging. It is not a luxury, but a necessity. While the increasingly global scope of the process was broadly welcome, it was noted by some that negative sentiments towards Islam seemed to be on the rise, and required sustained specific attention. A similar attention may be needed for expressions of West-phobia. Several delegations insisted on common efforts to further promote universal human rights, with gender equality as one of the priority areas for concrete action.

Regarding the issue of the sustainability of the Alliance, a limited number of participants announced some financial support and other forms of contribution, in particular the readiness to host meetings, to provide website translation or to disseminate Alliance initiatives at the national level.

The meeting of focal points was mostly devoted to the finalization of the draft Rio Declaration, which the Brazilian host had proposed. Two regional focal points meetings were also held: one convened the focal points involved in the finalization of the Action Plan implementing the UNAOC Regional Strategy for South East Europe. The other meeting — for focal points participating in the preparation of the UNAOC Regional Strategy for the Mediterranean — was mainly aimed at preparing the agenda for the third and final preparatory meeting held in Alexandria mid July in order to finalize at senior officials level the draft Strategy for the Mediterranean. Focal points from South American countries, most of them recent members of the Group of Friends also held an informal gathering to discuss the prospects of a future Regional Strategy for their region.

MARKETPLACE OF IDEAS: CHAMPIONS IN INNOVATION

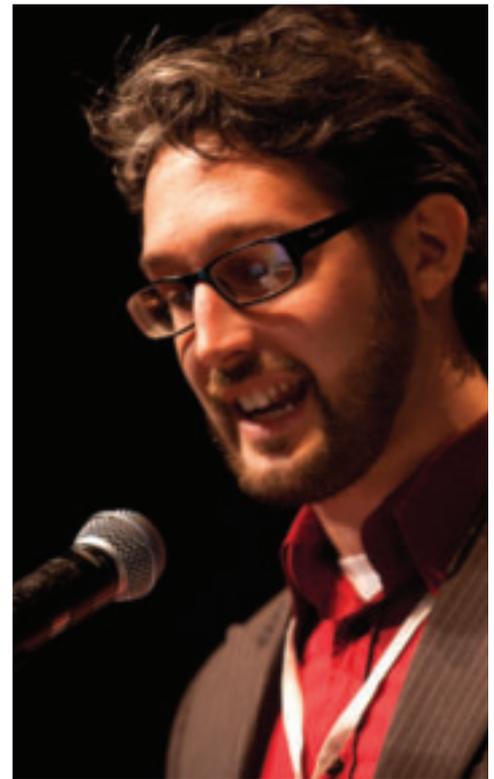
The Marketplace of Ideas showcases the most innovative and successful grassroots initiatives aimed at promoting mutual understanding among people and cultures around the world. By connecting these initiatives to policy makers, potential donors and the media, the UNAOC helps them to scale up and replicate, therefore helping to significantly increase their impact.

Prior to the Rio Forum, hundreds of organizations from around the world have applied to present their project. A rigorous selection process identified the ten most successful and innovative projects and their leaders were invited to present their project in an exciting ceremony. The projects selected were the following: Chapters World Faith; Euro Mediterranean Academy for Young Journalists; Forgotten Diaries; Melantjong Petjinan Soerabaia; Africa's Women Leaders Akili Dada; Universal Forum of Religions; Peaceworks; RandomKid; United Religions Initiative; Undergraduate ParliaMentors; Three Faiths Forum; and Bridge the Gap TV.

Private sector partners Vivendi, Deloitte Touche and Tohmatsu, the Global Dialogue Foundation, the British Council and Euronews supported the winners by offering them a financial contribution. The award ceremony, held right before the closing session of the Forum was one of the highlights of the entire event, giving a visual demonstration of the action-oriented nature of the Alliance.

The next step might be the creation of the World Intercultural Funds for Innovation (WIFI) to support these initiatives throughout the year and connect them with opportunities for networking, fundraising and expansion.







Brief description of the Marketplace of Ideas Selected Projects

Akili Dada, Nurturing the Next Generation of African Women Leaders, Kenya, Women/Education

Akili Dada seeks to empower smart, young women from impoverished families in Kenya through education, mentoring and leadership training.

CONTACT: Ms. Wanjiru Kamau-Rutenberg, wanjiru@akilidada.org

Chapters of World Faith, Various Locations, Youth

A World Faith Chapter is a self-governed group of religiously-diverse young people tackling local community service needs. World Faith supports them financially and by developing leadership and partnerships with organizations.

CONTACT: Mr. Frank Fredericks, frank@worldfaith.org

EMAJ (Euro-Mediterranean Academy for Young Journalists): Making News not Stereotypes, Middle East, Youth/Media

EMAJ is a network of young enthusiasts for responsible journalism gathered around an annual professional training program, while trying to ease intercultural tensions.

CONTACT: Mr. Pawel Krzysztos Krzysiek, pawel.krzysiek@gmail.com

Forgotten Diaries, Various locations, Youth/Online Media

Forgotten Diaries empowers youth in conflict zones, through training and small grants, to develop peace-building and community service projects.

CONTACT: Ms. Anush Hayrapetyan, an.hayrapetyan@yahoo.com or info@youthactionforchange.org

Melantjong Petjinan Soerabaia, Surabaya (Indonesia), Education/Migration

Melantjong Petjinan Soerabaia is a cultural tour tracing the Chinese heritage trails in the multi-ethnic city of Surabaya, promoting diversity and co-existence.

CONTACT: Ms. Paulina Mayasari, pitics@gmail.com

Peace Camp, Barcelona, Youth/Education

One hundred 13-14 year-olds from cities all around the world gather at the annual Peace Camp, learning about integration, citizen participation and forming lasting relationships.

CONTACT: Ms. Raimon Ramis, rramis@fundacioforum.org



Peaceworks, Gujarat/Kashmir (India), Arts/Education

Peaceworks supports youth to promote peaceful co-existence and mutual respect through the arts.

CONTACT: Ms. Meena Megha Malhotra, feedback@seagullindia.com

RandomKid, Various locations, Youth

RandomKid helps any child to solve problems by joining their efforts with the other like-minded youth worldwide.

CONTACT: Ms. Anne Royse Ginther, anne@randomkid.org

Traveling Peace Academy, Asia, Religion/Education

Traveling Peace Academy increases the capacity of local leaders in conflict zones to create sustainable peace in their communities by providing training and helpful partnerships.

CONTACT: Mr. Charles P. Gibbs, rmurphy@uri.org

Undergraduate ParliaMentors, Three Faiths Forum, United Kingdom, Education

Undergraduate ParliaMentors gives trios of politics students of Muslim, Christian and Jewish backgrounds the opportunity to be mentored by parliamentarians.

CONTACT: Mr. Stephen Shashoua, Stephen@threfaithsforum.org.uk

Bridge the gap, Various locations, Youth/Online Media

The host of this reality web series about sustainable development travels to developing countries, identifying problems and finding practical ways viewers can make real change happen.

CONTACT: Mr. Chris Bashinelli, chrisbashinelli@bridgethegaptv.com



YOUTH AT THE RIO FORUM

"Today's youth have the responsibility to work toward global understanding. Participation is their right."

Julian Lugo Mendez

The Third Annual United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Forum held in Rio de Janeiro brought together representatives from all over the world and the Youth Event was no exception. Participation included 140 youth between the ages of 18 to 35 representing over 60 countries.

CULTURAL YOUTH WALK

The youth portion of the program began with a Cultural Youth Walk in Rio de Janeiro's Saara neighborhood. Saara, a marketplace, brings together, in a peaceful, respectful and productive atmosphere, over 1,500 merchants from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. Participants in the Cultural Youth Walk were led by local students who translated merchants' stories about their ability to resolve cultural disputes and collaborate for a successful business environment. Alyne, a youth volunteer for the Cultural Youth Walk stated "I had never heard about the UNAOC until I received an email from college informing us about the Cultural Youth Walk and the UNAOC Forum in Rio. The idea of working as a volunteer in a project of UN involving young people, cultural respect for a better world really got my attention." The day ended with the youth getting to know one another and a dozen volunteering to speak about their experience in Saara in front of the entire group over dinner.





YOUTH EVENT

The next day, the Youth Event was held and topics included: Democracy, Good Governance, and Cultural Diversity; Empowering Women through Education; Living Together in Urban Societies, etc. These discussions topics were the same chosen for the Forum itself; discussing these during the Youth Event presented youth with an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the various aspects of these topics as well as to develop key messages for their participation in the Forum thematic sessions. Youth took on leadership roles in the organization of their discussions, identifying themselves as discussion moderators, presenters, note takers, or reporters.

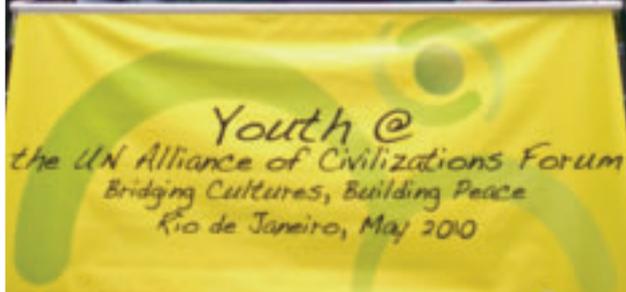
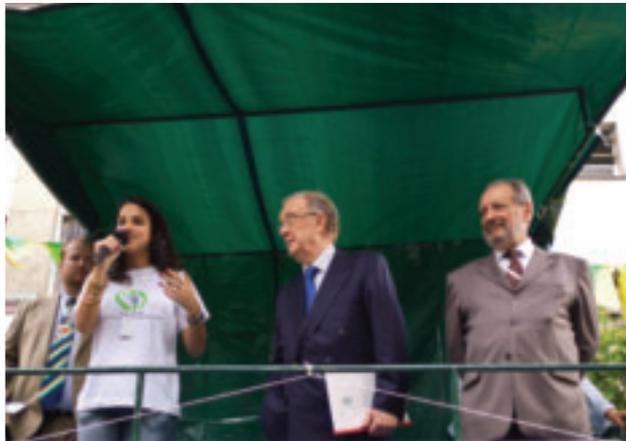
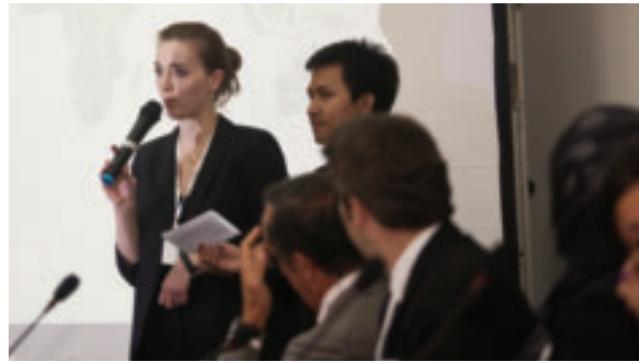
After the day of discussions, the youth met as a collective group and reporters delivered the main points from the discussions of the various topics held during the day. After all the reporters discussed their issues, the floor was opened to the group to decide on what major points to convey to all the Forum participants in the formal presentation of Youth Recommendations (see Outcomes section for detailed Youth Recommendations).

In addition to discussing the various themes of the Forum, youth discussed the upcoming International Year of Youth on Dialogue and Mutual Understanding, commencing on August 12, 2010. This year coincided with the 25th anniversary of the first International Youth Year in 1985 on the theme Participation, Development and Peace. The 2010-2011 International Year of Youth aims to raise awareness about the need to increase commitment and investment in youth, mobilize and engage for increased youth participation and partnerships, as well as connect and build bridges as a way to advance intercultural understanding among youth.

Lastly, young participants adopted the concept paper of the Global Youth Movement for the Alliance of Civilizations (GYMAOC) which builds on the Youth for the Alliance of Civilizations Initiative developed by the Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation and first presented at the High Level Conference held in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November 2007 under the patronage of H.E. Mehriban Aliyeva, the First Lady of Azerbaijan, UNESCO/ ISESCO Goodwill Ambassador. During the fall 2010, Azerbaijan will host the First Convention of the GYMAOC.

As result of their work during the Cultural Youth Walk and Youth Event, the young leaders present at the Forum prepared a series of recommendations to other leaders. These recommendations can be found in the Outcomes section of this report.

In the context of the Youth Event and the Forum, the UNAOC teamed up with Soliya, an international non-governmental organization developing a diverse and global community of young adults who use new media and communication technologies to promote understanding and empathy within and between their societies. A number of selected youth from around the world received advanced new media training to be "Mediators." Mediators use new media and communication technologies to promote better cross-cultural understanding within and between their societies. Prior to the Rio Forum, these Mediators conducted video interviews with a diversity of individuals in their communities on issues relevant to thematic sessions held at the Rio Forum. The best of those videos produced by young Mediators were presented prior to 5 of the thematic sessions and served to stimulate discussions and add a rich media element while also connecting it to common public perspectives on the issue.





Youth Solidarity Fund Winners for 2009-2010

The UNAOC Youth Solidarity Fund is an international competitive program which provides seed funding of up to US\$30,000 to youth organizations for the implementation of initiatives aiming to advance intercultural and interfaith dialogue at the local, national, regional or international level. In 2009-2010, 530 proposals were submitted from distinct youth organizations representing 99 countries on all continents. A total of 18 projects were funded thanks to a US\$460,000 funding envelope. The project coordinators of these winning projects attended the Rio Forum.

ORGANIZATION: Champions of the Society, Nigeria
PROJECT TITLE: Tolerance Academy
PROJECT COORDINATOR: Jonah Ayodele Obajeun
CONTACT: haywhydydx@yahoo.com

ORGANIZATION: AIESEC Nigeria
PROJECT TITLE: Project Worldview
PROJECT COORDINATOR: Olaoluwa Taiwo
CONTACT: olaoluwa.taiwo@aiesec.net and www.aiesecnigeria.org

ORGANIZATION: Youth of the United Nations Association of Tanzania
PROJECT TITLE: Youth Involvement and Participation in promotion of peace, security and Human Right
PROJECT COORDINATOR: Lawrence Ezekiel Chuma
CONTACT: lawrence52002@yahoo.com and Lawrence.chuma@gmail.com and www.yunatz.org

ORGANIZATION: Somali Youth Leadership Forum, Somalia
PROJECT TITLE: Promoting Peace Dialogue amongst youth
PROJECT COORDINATOR: Vaishali Morjaria
CONTACT: Somaliyouth_leadership@yahoo.com

ORGANIZATION: Blue Sky Youth Network, Macedonia
PROJECT TITLE: "Youth Meeting Point"
PROJECT COORDINATOR: Marko Markovski
CONTACT: marko.markovski@bluesky.org.mk and www.bluesky.org.mk

ORGANIZATION: OGGRO Agamir, Bangladesh
PROJECT TITLE: Dalit and Muslim Youths United
PROJECT COORDINATOR: Farzeen Alam
CONTACT: farzeen7@hotmail.com

ORGANIZATION: Intersections International, USA
PROJECT TITLE: The TE'A Project (Theatre/ Engagement and Action): Being Young and Muslim In America, post 9/11
PROJECT COORDINATOR: Sara Reef
CONTACT: sreef@intersectionsinternational.org and www.IntersectionsInternational.org

ORGANIZATION: Uzima Foundation-Africa, Kenya
PROJECT TITLE: Vijana vitendo ni sasa! (Swahili for "Youth Act Now!")
PROJECT COORDINATOR: Winnie Kinaro
CONTACT: wkinaro@uzimafoundation.org and wkinaro@yahoo.com and http://uzimafoundation.org

ORGANIZATION: Tipindule Community Youth Organization, Malawi
PROJECT TITLE: Increasing Tolerance Among Youth of Different Faiths
PROJECT COORDINATOR: Violet Nkupata
CONTACT: tipinduleyouth@yahoo.co.uk

ORGANIZATION: Youth Synergy for Development, Cameroon
PROJECT TITLE: United Despite our Diversity
PROJECT COORDINATOR: Isaac Yves Nyengue Bahanak
CONTACT: bahanakisaac@yahoo.fr

(continued)



Youth Solidarity Fund Winners for 2009-2010 (continued)

ORGANIZATION: Youth Alive!, Kenya

PROJECT TITLE: Husika Urekebishe, 'Participate to Restore'

PROJECT COORDINATOR: Lydia Kerubo

CONTACT: lkerubo@youthalivekenya.org and www.youthalivekenya.org

ORGANIZATION: Chanan Development Association, Pakistan

PROJECT TITLE: Youth-Peer Education and Awareness Campaign to reduce Extremism

PROJECT COORDINATOR: Muhammad Shahzad

CONTACT: cda.pakistan@yahoo.com

ORGANIZATION: Inti Watana Youth Organization, Bolivia

PROJECT TITLE: Youth Leaders builders of the harmonious coexistence in Latin America

PROJECT COORDINATOR: Oscar Antonio Alberto Navia

CONTACT: cacho_aan@hotmail.com

ORGANIZATION: Youth LEAD Project, Egypt

PROJECT TITLE: Stronger Together: Promoting a Cohesive Youth Community for Peace through Radio, Hip-Hop, Sports and Cultural Exchange

PROJECT COORDINATOR: Natalie Forcier

CONTACT: n.forcier@youthleadproject.org and www.standrewsrefugeeservices.org

ORGANIZATION: Tomorrow's Youth Organization, Palestine

PROJECT TITLE: Speaking for Ourselves: Youth led Do-plomacy

PROJECT COORDINATOR: Imad Mansour

CONTACT: imad@tomorrowsyouth.org and www.tomorrowsyouth.org

ORGANIZATION: Palestinian Vision Organization, Palestine

PROJECT TITLE: Young Achievement

PROJECT COORDINATOR: Emad Alja'Onui

CONTACT: emad@palvision.ps and www.palvision.ps

ORGANIZATION: Cerebra, Bosnia and Herzegovina

PROJECT TITLE: Youth Can Do

PROJECT COORDINATOR: Nela Sladojevic

CONTACT: nela@cerebra-ngo.org and nela.sladojevic@gmail.com and www.cerebra-ngo.org

ORGANIZATION: The Intercultural Communication and Leadership School, United Kingdom

PROJECT TITLE: Micro Cosmos Intercultural

PROJECT COORDINATOR: Aimé Sindyigaya

CONTACT: aime@intercivilization.net and www.intercivilization.net

PLENARY SESSIONS

Opening Plenary

The Rio Forum was opened by the President of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, with welcoming remarks also delivered by the Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan; Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Ángel Moratinos, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon; and the High Representative of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, President Jorge Sampaio.

H.H. Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser Al Missned of Qatar, the host of the Forum in 2011, also took the floor.



“This Forum shows that we did not let ourselves be defeated by distance or by the skepticism of those who doubt our capacity to work together.”

H.E. President Lula da Silva

H.E. President Lula da Silva opened the Forum by explaining that Brazil’s strong support for the UN Alliance of Civilizations reflected the principles of cultural diversity, tolerance and equal opportunity which underpin Brazilian society and also its foreign policy. The President recalled Brazil’s efforts, in collaboration with Turkey, to find a negotiated solution to the issue of Iran’s nuclear capability. He emphasized that conflicts around the world could not be resolved without tackling their root causes, particularly the social and economic factors which lead to inequality, and also effective regional and international institutions. It was noted that Latin America and the Caribbean were engaged in an

unprecedented process of regional integration and that this ultimately served to defend the values of diversity rather than weaken them. The President also called for nations to continue working to achieve social progress in spite of the pressures of the global financial crisis.

H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Prime Minister of Turkey declared that prejudiced perceptions of other cultures created as great a problem for the world as the financial crisis, climate change, terrorism or nuclear proliferation. He declared that cultural differences between peoples were inevitable and desirable, contributing towards the richness of global

“Those who leave the feeling of justice, the feeling of equality, or the feeling of freedom of conscience out of international relations, lay the foundations of a fatal destruction.”

H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan



society, and that in spite of this diversity there was a universal humanity uniting all communities. The Prime Minister called for the international system and the governments of all countries to embrace an inclusive political order in which the security and prosperity of all peoples was the goal, and also emphasized the need to address conflicts in Gaza, Iraq, the Balkans and Caucasus.

H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain, reminded that the UN Alliance of Civilizations was created only five years ago. Mr. Moratinos praised the initiative that H.E. Mr. José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, President of the Spanish government, addressed

to the General Assembly in a crucial moment where misperceptions and mistrust gained ground in international relations. He emphasized the importance of the Alliance as a key global platform for advancing tolerance and intercultural understanding and underlined its potential to contribute to broadening the agenda on global security by helping to defuse tensions and build trust across cultures. As the “cultural pillar” of the United Nations’ global action, the Alliance helped draw attention to the need to address intercultural challenges in the global political agenda.

H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General hailed the Rio Forum as an event taking place at

“The Alliance of Civilizations is essential to fight the obsolete mentalities that do not understand the challenges confronting us in the 21st century.”

H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos





“Stronger cooperation for intercultural dialogue, a wide engagement at grass roots-level, but also leadership at all levels, are all indispensable driving forces for change.”

H.E. President Jorge Sampaio

a unique moment in Brazil’s history, with power shifting in the world and Brazil rising to become a global player. He spoke of his experiences of meeting young people in Brazil’s favelas, and their tremendous passion, commitment and potential to improve their lives. The Secretary-General called on world leaders to do more to reach out and listen to young people, and to focus on improving education as a means of tackling extremism, and promoting peace and reconciliation in all societies. He referenced his own experience of growing up as a child in Korea, and seeing the international community rebuilding the country — a visible demonstration of the power of cultures uniting in a common cause.

H.E. President Jorge Sampaio briefly summarized the accomplishments of the initiative to date, hailing the successful consolidation of the project’s global scope and reach. President Sampaio said that the Rio Forum had exerted an extremely positive impact on the strategic development of the Alliance, serving as a spur to the addition of new members from Latin America and Africa — as well as the United States — and further engaging partners in its mission. The President was optimistic but realistic in his assessment of the capacity of the Alliance to respond to international conflicts and domestic tensions, noting that there were many great challenges towards achieving the goals of the Alliance — but that this also provided all the more reason to try harder.



“Regardless of religious tradition, we have a common faith: a faith in our shared future. Let us harness our common humanity and make a better world.”

H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon

“The Arab community with its human, natural and strategic potential can, along with other major groups from Asia and Latin America, form a driving force to enhance the values of the UN Alliance of Civilizations.”

H.H. Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser Al Missned



H.H. Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser Al Missned called for the Rio Forum to serve as a turning point for the UN Alliance of Civilizations initiative. She praised the first five years of the Alliance’s work, which focused on opening new channels for international and intercultural dialogue, and called for the vision of the Alliance to now be realized at the global level through the practical work being carried out through projects at the grassroots level. She called for the strengthening of the role of major regional organizations in the work of the Alliance, and stressed that groups in the Middle East, Asia and Latin America could serve as the driving force for the initiative. Reaffirming President Lula’s remarks, Sheikha Mozah called for the root causes of cross-cultural tensions to be eradicated, specifically the Israel-Palestine conflict. But she also stated that broader global challenges could be addressed in the context of fighting injustice, such as issues of environmental degradation and sharing of resources.

Summit Plenary: Cultural Diversity as The Path to Peace

H.E. Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki, outgoing President of the 64th session of the UN General Assembly, noted that the UNAOC was expanding day by day in terms of its partnerships and its purview. The Rio Forum represented a special development for the Alliance as Brazil, from his perspective, was a paragon for a multicultural society. He expressed a sincere hope that the third forum would allow the Alliance to not only expand the scope of its work, but also take great strides in building peace around the world.

Mr. Treki explained that he viewed the work of the Alliance as highly important which is why he has focused on the issue of cross-cultural dialogue and tried to place it high on the agenda of the General Assembly, including convening a debate on it. He referenced the fact that the work of the Alliance also plays a role in helping the global community confront violent radicalization by replacing polarized discourses with greater mutual understanding.

Mr. Treki observed that within the area of relations between Muslim-majority countries and the West, one particularly charged issue is freedom of expression. He spoke at some length about the importance of freedom of expression, but also noted



“Ignorance breeds fear. Fear of change. Fear of others. But most of all, it produces the fear to act, and embrace the promise that the new age of diversity and global integration is bringing.”

H.E. Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki

that it should be exercised with respect for people’s religious values.

H.E. Mr. Saud Al Faisal, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, read a message from **His Majesty King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud**.

King Abdullah believed that the Rio Forum would help promote peace and understanding among nations and peoples. The Alliance represented a joint effort to oppose violence and hatred and promote dialogue, disarmament and peace.

He stressed that Islam was a religion of peace, dialogue and respect for others. For that reason, Saudi Arabia had started to develop an active policy to promote dialogue, understanding and cooperation among cultures and civilizations. King Abdullah highlighted the importance of promoting education and fighting illiteracy in order to address prejudices and promote intercultural dialogue.

King Abdullah recalled several initiatives that he has undertaken in this regard, including the International Interfaith Conference held in Madrid in July 2008 that gathered 200 representatives of the main world religions. King Abdullah concluded by expressing the wish that all the members of the UNAOC’s Group of Friends will work together to achieve dialogue and mutual respect among all communities.



“It’s time for religions and systems of belief to deliver an important message to fight intolerance and hatred.”

H.E. Mr. Saud Al Faisal

H.E. Ms. Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, President of the Republic of Argentina, highlighted her country's support for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations. This organization, she said, is an instrument that can help build a different world, one in which ethnic and religious differences are not barriers to the development and integration of societies.

President Kirchner recalled Argentina's rich history and the significant role immigrants played in the building of the country. Co-existence, she explained, is not only a product of tolerance, but is achieved through dialogue, a process that involves both integration and respect for differences. Education, insisted President Kirchner, is paramount. Through school, children learn about respect for diversity and shared universal values.

At a political level, President Kirchner underlined the country's refusal to discriminate against immigrants and its rejection of legislation that prevents individuals from expressing their identity or their religious affiliation through the clothes they wear.

The Argentine President stressed that the construction of a Palestinian state, its international recognition and the right of Israel to live in peace inside internationally recognized borders would greatly contribute to the Alliance of Civilizations we all aspire to build.

H.E. Mr. José Socrates, Prime Minister of Portugal, highlighted some of the deep-seated changes the world had undergone over the last twenty years. We have moved from a bipolar to a multipolar world in which cultural diversity emerged as a central question. One of the main challenges is to develop institutional and regulatory frameworks that reflected the changes in the cultural, religious, political and economic makeup of the world.

In this context, the Alliance could play a significant role by developing a common frame of action for the promotion of intercultural understanding and good governance of cultural diversity.

The Portuguese Prime Minister stressed that diversity should be perceived as an engine for innovation, creativity and progress. He underscored, in particular, the work achieved by the community of Portuguese speaking countries, which contributes significantly to cross-cultural dialogue and understanding.



"Terrorism has nothing to do with religions, it is just political."

H.E. Ms. Cristina Fernández de Kirchner

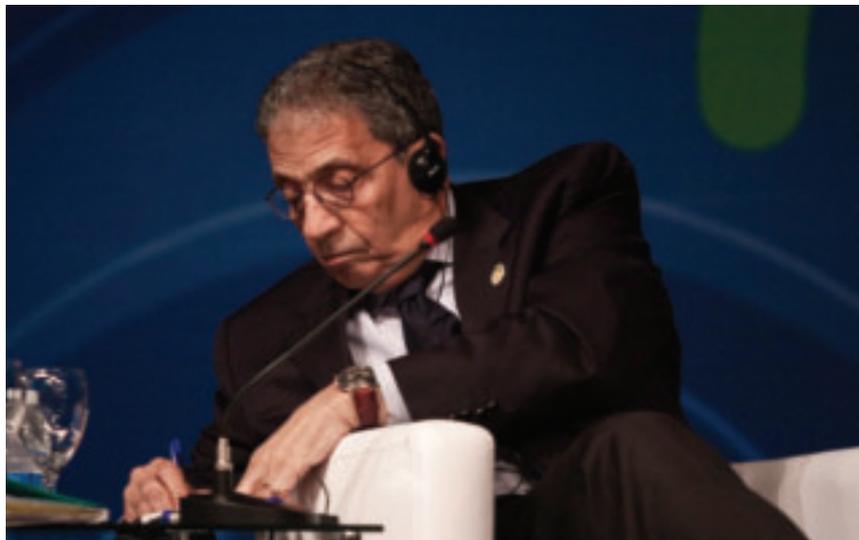


"The world advances only if we get to know people better and interact with each other more."

H.E. Mr. José Socrates

“How can we persuade a child that connecting with others is the way to achieve peace when he does not even have access to school?”

H.E. Mr. Amr Moussa



H.E. Mr. Amr Moussa, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, highlighted the contribution of Arab countries in the UN Alliance of Civilizations. Arab states, he said, acknowledge the importance of the UNAOC in its many fields of action, including building consensus, fighting radicalism and hatred and promoting diversity.

But according to Mr. Moussa, dialogue among civilizations can only be effective if it addresses people’s basic needs. The UNAOC should not only address the issues of diversity and dialogue. It should also work to alleviate the suffering of ordinary people. The UNAOC has to convince people that its efforts are aimed at positively affecting their lives as well as their present and future well being.

Mr. Moussa concluded by addressing an issue which, in his opinion, is one of the major issues that affects the dialogue among civilizations, i.e. the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He stressed that the UNAOC should firmly advocate for a solution to the conflict, insisting that, if the UNAOC is to succeed, a just and peaceful solution must be found to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

H.E. Mr. Enrique Iglesias, Secretary General of the Ibero-American General Secretariat, felt encouraged by the progress made by the UN Alliance of Civilizations. There was a growing recognition that improving understanding and respect among diverse cultures was becoming a priority everywhere in the world. Mr. Iglesias also underlined the example of Latin America, a region made up of a diversity of cultures coexisting and interacting creatively.

Mr. Iglesias expressed concern about the profound economic crisis the world was facing. Political change, according to him, was necessary. It was also crucial to counter the wave of anti-immigrant feelings that arose in many parts of the world.

Additional efforts were needed in order to avoid the tensions generated by intolerance, xenophobia or competition for employment. Immigrants, said Mr. Iglesias, were contributing significantly to society. To create a more equitable world order, we need to face head on the issues of poverty, discrimination and exclusion.



“Immigrants are contributing and have all rights to be considered not as third or second class, but as first class citizens.”

H.E. Mr. Enrique Iglesias

“The best thing about this UN Alliance of Civilizations is that everyone here recognizes that we all are civilizations; and that there is not and there will not be any single civilization superior or inferior; even more, that there are not civilized and uncivilized peoples.”

H.E. Mr. Evo Morales

H.E. Mr. Evo Morales, President of Bolivia, described the rich heritage of Native American civilizations. He highlighted the need to acknowledge their past contributions and recognize their influence today, so that their role could be secured in the future. He recalled the history of violence and colonization that marked Native Americans’ past and underlined the fact that Native Americans wanted to maintain their beliefs, values, culture, wisdom and language in the present day.

He recognized the important role of the UNAOC because the Alliance consecrates the idea that there is a diversity of civilizations and that no one culture is superior to others. Civilizations, cultures and societies must recognize and value differences and overcome the fear of diversity. This is essential because wars and conquests have always been preceded by the devaluation and stigmatization of the dominated people. Cultural differences have been used to create fear and to justify invasions and wars.

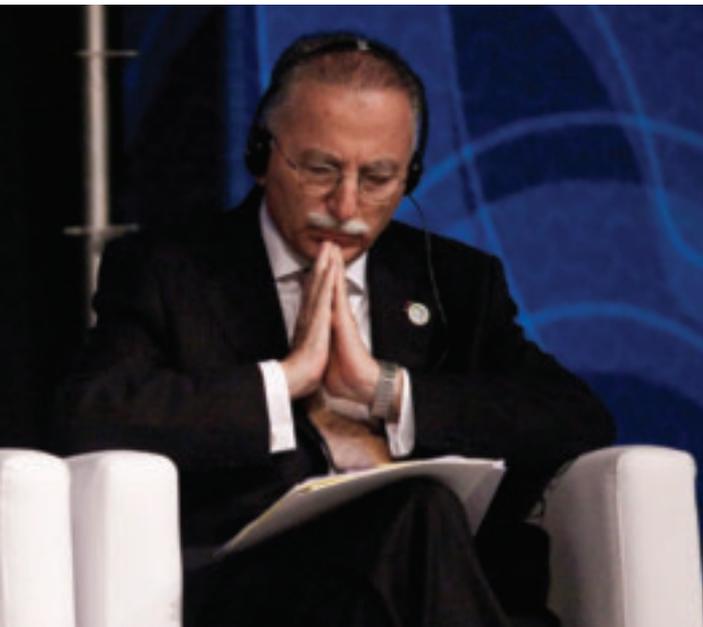
President Morales concluded with a warning against ideologies such as capitalism that use people as tools and do not treat them as goals in themselves. Promoting cultural diversity helps emphasize the value of individuals and of the cultures they belong to.



“It is time to overcome cultural, racial and religious preconceptions, reconcile human diversity and rebuild trust relations between people and nations of different origins and cultures.”

H.E. Mr. Pedro Verona Rodrigues Pires





“Diversity means learning from each other.”

H.E. Mr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu

H.E. Mr. Pedro Verona Rodrigues Pires, President of Cape Verde outlined some of the key challenges the world was faced with, including a lack of security, armed conflicts, despair and intolerance. He stated that the Rio Forum presented an opportunity to develop new joint solutions to the problems the world was facing.

He stressed that it was time for the world to overcome cultural, racial and religious preconceptions, reconcile human diversity and rebuild relations of trust among people and nations of different origins and cultures. President Pires reasserted the need for justice for every human being, and for every culture. When individuals and cultures perceive that their rights are being violated, they feel humiliated and oppressed.

President Pires recalled the fact that historically, relations between cultures and civilizations have been marked by mistrust, resentment, fear and suspicion. These failures could be overcome by creating a favorable atmosphere for dialogue to address selfishness and cultural misunderstandings. He also emphasized the important role of media in combating stereotypes and bridging cultural differences.

According to **H.E. Mr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu**, Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the dynamics of globalization have altered global demographics and will continue to do so. This constitutes an unavoidable and irreversible historic shift.

To achieve peace and security, Mr. Ihsanoglu argued, the world needs to build a culture of peace through intercultural dialogue, address racism and intolerance and promote human rights. In particular, addressing double standards in matters of human rights must be a priority.

Tensions between cultures, said Mr. Ihsanoglu, are still generating new conflicts. Despite the end of Cold War, he stressed, the world is facing new divisions and polarizations. The issue of migration is the source of increasing frictions and disputes. As a result, the international community needs to redouble its efforts to promote respect, tolerance and mutual understanding.

The role of education in bringing cultures closer together must be acknowledged. Education opens young people's minds, expands their horizons and provides them with the tools they need to live in complex, multicultural societies.

According to **H.E. Mr. Marc Perrin de Brichambaut**, Secretary-General of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the task of promoting cultural diversity at international level has become more complex, as the free flow of information does not necessarily translate into understanding or mutual respect between cultural groups.

From its experience in consolidating peace, promoting respect of minorities, supporting democratic institutions, and reconciling cultures, the OSCE has learned several lessons. First, inclusiveness.

“Cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature.”

H.E. Ms. Irina Bokova

“All key decisions are better taken by consensus and mutual understanding.”

H.E. Mr. Marc Perrin de Brichambaut



All states, big and small, belonging to different context cultures, deserve equal respect, and should conduct regular dialogue. Second, cooperation. This is important, as all key decisions are better taken by consensus and mutual understanding. And third, thoroughness. To be effective, policies and actions need to take into consideration security, economic, military, human rights and cultural issues. Finally, common norms adopted by all are essential, specially to promote tolerance, intercultural dialogue and fundamental freedoms.

The Secretary-General also underlined the role of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations as a unique platform and catalyst that seeks to energize a network of states and civil society leaders to build trust and cooperation among diverse cultures.

H.E. Ms. Irina Bokova, Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) stated that the aims of UNESCO converged with those of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, as it too sees cultural diversity as a path to peace.

UNESCO works to eliminate ignorance and prejudice in order to build peace among increasingly diverse societies, encouraging cultural dialogue. One of the key challenges today is to translate the noble goals of promoting intercultural understanding and dialogue into concrete actions. In that respect, education plays an important role. Indeed, asked Ms. Bokova, how can we talk about eliminating prejudices if we still have 760 million of people who do not know how to read and write?

That is why the promotion of cultural diversity must be incorporated as a right and principle in development strategies. Cultural diversity is a cross-cutting element of the three pillars needed to develop a society: economic, social and environmental.

It is also crucial to empower women, youth, indigenous communities and ethnic minorities by developing education and policies, creating synergies between formal education and learning communities, and valuing native languages, arts and heritages.

Plenary Session: Education for Intercultural Citizenship

The Plenary on “Education for Intercultural Citizenship”, chaired by Ms. Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, featured remarks by H.E. Sen. Cristovam Buarque, Former Minister of Education of Brazil; H.E. Mr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, Director-General of ISESCO; H.R.H. Raja Nazrin Shah, Crown Prince of Perak (Malaysia); Prof. Lynn Davies, from the University of Birmingham; Dr. J. Michael Adams, President-Elect of the International Association of University Presidents, and Mr. Diogo Vasconcelos from Dialogue Café Association.

Ms. Bokova reminded how timely this discussion is in this International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures. In a world that has become richer from the diversity of its cultures, she stressed the importance of intercultural citizenship, i.e. empowering people so they can better interact together and make profit from intercultural exchange. While mentioning existing UNESCO tools contributing to the reflection on this issue (especially the report of the International Commission for Education in the Twenty-first Century *Learning: the Treasure Within*, the UNESCO *Guidelines on Intercultural Education*, the *Global Monitoring Report on Education for All 2010* on the challenges of marginalization as well as the UNESCO World Report *Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue* and its advocacy for cultural literacy), she called for the transformation of concepts into action. Ms. Bokova also made reference to the importance of partnerships and referred to the collaboration between the OSCE, the Council of Europe and UNESCO in producing a Compendium of Good Practice in Human Rights Education, including inter cultural citizenship, as well as the project currently underway among the same organizations on the prevention of discrimination toward Muslims in education.

Sen. Buarque called for a new humanism and for a new Marshall Plan for education, implying better access to education and new educational approaches. He stated that we are at the crossroads between one way leading towards divided human societies, and another way opening up for sustainable societies and integrating the diversity of their cultures and where all the social ladders are fully working.

Mr. Altwaijri underscored that education should be the most important element for creating an Alliance of Civilizations. Indeed, education can help people to be proud of their identities and heritage and to open to other cultures and engage positively with them. An important agenda for this is the revision of textbooks to encourage the respect of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. To this end, we have to go beyond the boundaries of nationalities and identities and generate new movements involving the public sector and the civil society.

“We cannot reduce the misconceptions that are in the hearts of many people if we do not know them, and the key to know them is education.”

H.E. Mr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri



H.R.H. Nazrin Shah agreed that a multicultural society, in which cultures can flourish freely, is our best hope for peace. In this respect, he praised the Malaysian model, in which 'the others' are not assimilated, but integrated with mutual understanding and respect. A specific curriculum could be developed favouring intercultural skills. A better use should be made also of new collaborative digital technologies like Facebook.

Prof. Davies underscored the importance of factors contributing to social change, for creating active citizenship for social progress and anti-extremism initiatives. In this respect, she strongly advocated for a greater involvement of women into the existing projects as well as for a greater attention to be

given to young people's ideas. Prof. Davies called for women's voices be heard in equal numbers at future international gatherings of the Alliance.

Dr. Adams reminded delegates of the paradox that, while human innovation comes from differences, 70 percent of conflicts have cultural or religious dimensions. Thus he emphasized the need to equip young people with skills that will help them to address future challenges.

Mr. Willis presented Dialogue Café, a joint initiative of UNAOC, CISCO and the Anna Lindh Foundation, insisting on the benefits of creating emotional connections through virtual face-to-face encounters.



Closing Ceremony

The closing ceremony began with the enthusiastic and encouraging presentation of the conclusions of the youth representatives. H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain, expressed his satisfaction for the high level of participation in the Rio Forum, noting that this huge movement is essential to change the world by providing strong political will combined with individual commitments to change mentalities. He therefore invited the participants to act as focal points in their countries in the promotion of the goals of the UNAOC.

H.E. Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, then underscored that the UNAOC Forum has become the largest international forum after the UN General Assembly. Furthermore, policy-makers, politicians and intellectuals around the world believe that the UNAOC Forum has become the main international forum to discuss global cultural issues. This engagement of countries and international organizations shows how much this initiative is needed in current times to solve political issues through cultural dialogue. Indeed, Mr. Davutoğlu shared his conviction that without respect for cultural differences it will be impossible to establish a new political order in the world.

Then, on behalf of H.E. Mr. Celso Amorim, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, the Ambassador of Brazil reminded that the hosting country is a proudly multicultural country and is willing to share its model of integration and coexistence with the world. The ambassador drew attention to the high levels of participation in the Forum with several thousand participants, more than a hundred delegations, almost a dozen of them led by heads of state and several other dozens by ministers. This interest must be translated into a real commitment with the national plans and, especially, in the development of the Regional Strategies. In this regard, the Ambassador insisted on the importance of the existing and future Regional Strategies to pursue the goals of the Alliance.

Before the conclusion of the ceremony, H.E. Sheikh Nasser bin Mohammad bin Abdulaziz Al Thani, Minister of Qatar briefly expressed his satisfaction in hosting the Fourth UN Alliance of Civilizations Forum in Doha in 2011 and extended an invitation on behalf of the government of Qatar.

H.E. President Jorge Sampaio, High Representative for the UNAOC, concluded this Third Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilizations by emphasizing the fruitful efforts of the organization. The high level of discussions, panels, and partnerships established shone over a few shortcomings. After thanking the organizers, participants and delegations, President Sampaio insisted that the alliance between peoples and the unity of humanity is the only way to resist the challenges that lie ahead. The High Representative expressed his conviction that the Rio Forum has been a turning point of the UNAOC in terms of content, dynamism, accountability, engagement and participation.



THEMATIC SESSIONS

Thematic Session 1: Democracy, Good Governance and Cultural Diversity

(Organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in cooperation
with the Carter Center)

PANELISTS

H.E. Kjell Magne Bondevik,
Former Prime Minister of Norway and
Club de Madrid Member

H.E. Joao Luiz Silva Ferreira,
Minister of Culture, Brazil

Ms. Marta Lagos,
Executive Director, Latinobarómetro

Mr. Melvut Cavusoglu,
President, Parliamentary
Assembly of the Council of Europe

Professor Franz Magnis Suseno,
Indonesia

Senator Angel Alonso Díaz-Caneja,
Mexico, Vice-President of the IPU, Moderator

Ambassador Anda Filip,
Director of External Relations, IPU, Rapporteur

The overarching theme of the Rio Forum — ‘bridging cultures, building peace’ — provided an excellent opportunity to reflect on the mechanisms that can be put in place or reinforced in order to enhance understanding and respect among cultural and religious communities.

Opening statements underscored the foundations of rule of law, freedom of expression, and respect for a plurality of views for democracy and peace. An emphasis should be placed by politicians to foster political tolerance among citizens and political leaders through education and, most importantly, by upholding the highest standards of ethics in public life.

The importance of diversity as a source of strength for democracy was also underscored. Discussants asserted that democracy necessitates the acceptance of and respect for basic human rights, minorities, and individual liberties. A prerequisite of democracy is a public space where citizens can express themselves freely and without fear. Trust in institutions, dialogue within the diverse sectors of society and political tolerance were highlighted as key components of good governance in a context of cultural diversity.

Speakers pointed out that while in some societies globalization and increased migration have led to more diverse societies, in others diversity has been a fact for centuries. In both cases, well-facilitated dialogue is needed to identify common values and understand differences between people in order to facilitate peaceful coexistence of diverse societies.

Some participants stressed that youth required special attention, whereas others expressed concern over the conditions faced by religious groups in places of conflict.



Other action-oriented recommendations of the meeting included the following:

- Building trust through inter-religious dialogue can be done. The fruitful talks held between religious leaders from the Islamic Council and the Lutheran Church during the Danish newspaper cartoon crisis showed how regular consultations and discussion can help diffuse tension and misperceptions.
- Authorities can facilitate and promote the effective participation of ethnic and cultural minorities in public life. Political parties

have a specific responsibility to help ensure gender equality and the political representation of minorities.

- Politicians also need to invest in youth: ensure education for all, offer space for youth to express themselves in public life, and facilitate exchanges among youth of different cultural and religious backgrounds. One concrete proposal referred to the establishment of youth political shadow systems to advise government officials with youth perceptions and suggestions on major political, economic and social issues.

Thematic Session 2: Empowering Women Through Education

(Organized with MenEngage and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, United Nations)

This session highlighted the importance of empowering women through education, and showcased some good practices by governments and civil society in this arena, as presented by viewpoints from young people and academic experts on this issue. A diverse panel comprising men and women of various ages, professional and sectoral backgrounds, and countries spoke at this session to an equally diverse audience.

An innovative element of this session was the Soliya Terana project which allowed voices from diverse countries to be represented in the session via video. At the opening of the session, short video statements of four young voices — from Jordan, France, Pakistan, and the Netherlands — were featured. In these statements, youth revealed their vision of the importance of education of women to enable them to contribute positively to society as employees, mothers and citizens.

This session emphasized the transformative power of education, not only for women, but for societies and the world. Recognizing this, some governments have chosen to magnify this transformative power through policies at the national level and through their international aid policies. Governments have recognized that better-educated women, through their potential income-generating power and increased

PANELISTS

Ms. Nilcea Freire, Minister,
Special Secretariat for Gender Policy, Brazil

H.E. Dr. Esther Brimmer,
Assistant Secretary of State for International
Organization Affairs, USA (Remarks delivered by Deputy
Counselor for ECOSOC issues at the U.S. Mission to the
United Nations in New York, Ms. Laurie Phipps)

Prof. Teresa Langle de Paz,
Co-Director, Mediterranean Voices, Spain

Mr. Laxman Belbase, Regional Coordinator,
MenEngage Alliance, South Asia, Nepal

Mr. Ted Bunch,
Co-Founder, A Call to Men

Dr. Siti Musdah Mulia, Research Professor,
Institute of Sciences, Indonesia

Ms. Mona Eltawahy, Freelance Journalist,
Egypt, Moderator

Dr. Thomas Uthup,
Research Manager, UNAOC, Rapporteur



autonomy, have positive impacts not only on their own lives but also that of their societies and children. In some developed and developing countries, the policy actions taken have ensured that women have reached parity — and in some cases exceeded — the educational attainments of men. It is necessary to underline that governmental actions alone cannot advance the educational status of the women and consequent autonomy and access to opportunity.

One strategy for donor countries and the international aid community to remove the obstacles to educating girls is to assess the degree of educational inequity, identify gender-related obstacles, and implement remedies to remove and overcome barriers. Effective accomplishment of this strategy requires a focus on basic education for girls and other disadvantaged populations, effective public-private partnerships from the global to the local level, and the willingness to consider informal/non-formal educational delivery systems.

Academic experts spoke on the necessity to include women's voices in intellectual history and placing educational efforts in a thorough framework and transcultural/multicultural contextualization of female, feminist and gender aware genealogies. This approach to education is the best way to include sensitivity to diversity of all kinds — including gender. In a concrete sense, there is a need to promote access to promote gender equity in all sectors of education — from capacity-building and training for current educationists to removing the disparities in education for women.

NGO representatives emphasized the importance of educating boys and girls, men and women through both formal and informal education. It was emphasized that both boys and men should be seen not only as perpetrators of gender inequity, but also as potential allies. This could be heightened through appropriate ways of engagement with them through a holistic approach that appreciated the multidimensionality of particular societies and different stages of men's life-cycles. In particular, it was noted that early childhood was an appropriate time to influence a mindset that was more positive toward gender equity. Education by schools, parents, and community elders was seen as particularly helpful in reformulating notions of masculinity without associations to violence, silence, and toughness.



Thematic Session 3: Shaping Perceptions, Challenging Stereotypes — the Role of the Media Today

(Organized in cooperation with the Anna Lindh Foundation)

PANELISTS

Mr. Philippe Cayla,
Chairman and CEO, Euronews

Ms. Melody Moezzi,
Commentator, for National Public Radio's All
Things Considered, USA

Ms. Randa Achmawi,
Senior Diplomatic Correspondent,
Al-Ahram Hebdo, Egypt

Mrs. Maryam Al-Khater,
Deputy Director General, Doha Center for
Media Freedom and Columnist and writer for
Al-Sharq newspaper, Qatar

Mr. Paul Walton,
Director of Communications,
Anna Lindh Foundation, UK

Mr. Muddassar Ahmed,
CEO, Unitas Communications

Mr. Yen Feng, Straits Times,
Singapore, Moderator

Ms. Stephanie Durand,
UNAOC Media Development
Consultant, Rapporteur

This session brought together media professionals and experts who regularly comment on world affairs to discuss the role of media in bridging cross-cultural divides. Focusing on a number of concrete case studies (such as the Gaza crisis and the controversy over Minarets in Switzerland), the session explored the influence of the media in shaping public perceptions and the role of experts and analysts in improving understanding of complex intercultural conflicts.

The discussion revolved around some of the key reasons for misperceptions across cultural divides and how they are reflected in the media. In that context, panelists underlined the importance of language. Words do not carry the same weight or meaning in different parts of the world and the media can play a crucial role in "translating" realities and values from one culture to another.

In a fast moving media environment, where consumers are offered a wide array of news sources to choose from, the challenge is to identify credible and reliable information. Today more than ever, there is a need for authoritative sources, particularly in situations of intercultural tensions, in order to help dispel misperceptions and stereotypes. The media is also ideally placed to contextualize information, break down stereotypes, and provide historical background to complex stories.



The power of the media to influence opinion is also manifest in the way in which perceptions of a particular situation can rapidly change. For instance, the public perception of Iran was transformed between the time of the elections and recent moves to impose sanctions on the country.

Participants also underlined the challenge of reconciling freedom of expression and mutual understanding. Some suggested that self-limitations on freedom of speech are needed. However, the emphasis should not be on censorship, but on

journalism ethics and on upholding principles of fairness and transparency.

Finally, others questioned the idea that the role of the media should be to promote social harmony. There are occasions, for example, when the media should not shy away from offering criticism of minorities, when that is justified. One should avoid focusing journalism on 'public relations' goals. Indeed, the role of the journalist is also to be critical, to challenge the status quo, in order to generate change on the ground.

Thematic Session 4: Living Together in Urban Societies

(Organized by the Council of Europe and United Cities and Local Governments)

PANELISTS

H.E. Mr. Marcio Fortes, Minister for Cities, Brazil

Mr. Alfredo Sánchez Monteseirín,
Mayor of Seville, Spain

Ms. Irena Guidikova,
Head of Division of Cultural Policy,
Diversity and Dialogue, Council of Europe

Mr. António Costa,
Mayor of Lisbon, Portugal

Mr. Vincenzo Scotti,
Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Italy

Mr. Kadir Topbaş,
Mayor of Istanbul, Co-President of United Cities
and Local Governments, Turkey

Mr. Sérgio Besserman Vianna,
President of the Chamber for Sustainable
Development of the City of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Ms. Cecilia Martinez,
Director of UN-HABITAT regional Office for Latin
America and Caribbean

Mr. Phil Wood, urban therapist, researcher and
analyst, United Kingdom, Moderator

Mr. Eduardo Miralles I Ventimilla,
UCLG, Rapporteur

This session highlighted the central role that cities play in managing diversity in their societies. Goals for the session were to discuss methods to deal with conflict and disputes in the urban context; to explore how new practices can be extended to other contexts; and to draw lessons from several practical examples such as the 'Intercultural City' project, the use of city diplomacy for conflict prevention and resolution, and the multicultural experience of Rio de Janeiro.

Intercultural cities, throughout history, have been places where ethnic, cultural, social and religious barriers have been overcome for the benefit of social actors. It was highlighted that cultural diversity is an integral element of numerous cities, such as Istanbul, Seville, Bristol, Rio de Janeiro, Cordoba, Reggio Emilia and Lisbon. One of the central issues discussed in the session was introduced by Ms. Irena Guidikova from the Council of Europe. She spoke about the necessity to move away from the traditional patterns of 'assimilation' and even 'multiculturalism' to build the new paradigm of "intercultural cities." The intercultural city is characterized by new urban spaces that are not only environmentally sustainable but also culturally and socially sustainable. In addition, Intercultural Cities embrace diversity as a factor contributing to development, growth and competitiveness. Speakers nevertheless stressed the fact that cities face the challenge to effectively make the best of diversity to fight against poverty and social inequalities, ensuring that all citizens are equal.



Panelists also addressed the need of cities for concrete, practical, feasible and replicable projects and good practices in dealing with diversity. These initiatives must be accompanied by a conceptual framework including follow-up and evaluation that is crucial to its replication in different contexts. The various speakers agreed that both concrete projects and more theoretical strategies are essential to the development of a sustainable long-term plan to achieve their diversity advantage. Some of the projects proposed as models during the session include the Lisbon-based project Children's House for Refugees, the Italian Piazza Vittorio Intercultural Orchestra or the program Caminhada de Culturas.

Finally, the session highlighted the important role of multi-level governance in managing diversity. The panelists agreed that the formula for successful

culturally diverse cities involves three components: First, local governments need to possess the expertise and adequate human and financial resources. As an example, the project of the Italian Foundation Della Rocca, "Right to the City", presented by Mr. Vincenzo Scotti, the Italian Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs, has been designed with the intention to provide expertise and resources to the cities so that they can address their own diversity issues. Second, the existence of a national framework of action for the management of diversity is necessary to act appropriately at the local level. And third, as stated by Mr. Sérgio Besserman Vianna, member of the Chamber for Sustainable Development of Rio de Janeiro, it is necessary to have close coordination and interconnections between the global national strategic plan and local action plans.

Thematic Session 5: New Media: Towards New Forms of Social Engagement and Participation

(Organized in partnership with Soliya)

The session explored how new media, from blogs to Twitter and YouTube, influences the way public opinion is shaped on issues of cross-cultural diversity. More specifically, it looked at the real impact of new media and citizen journalists on public debates on issues that divide communities along cultural, religious, and political fault lines.

Panelist opened the discussion by posing a number of questions. We live in a world awash with information and opportunities to learn about other cultures; yet it seems that social networking reinforces the tendency to cluster around small, familiar communities, rather than open up to wider and more diverse networks. New media and social networking hold the promise of bringing people of the world closer together, yet cross-cultural conflicts and tensions everywhere on the planet seem to indicate otherwise. Do blogs,

PANELISTS

Mr. Riyaad Minty, Head of Social Media, Al Jazeera, Qatar

Ms. Mona El Tahawy, Journalist

Mr. Luís Nassif, Journalist, Brazil

Mr. Ricken Patel, Executive Director, AVAAZ, Canada

Mr. Ramzi Khoury, Creator, Sleepless in Gaza, Palestine, and Senior Arab world Advisor, UNAOC

Mr. Lucas Welch, Founder and Chief Innovation Officer, Soliya, USA, Moderator

Mr. Daanish Masood, Media, UNAOC Secretariat, Rapporteur

video posts and social networking websites actually widen the gap of misunderstanding among different communities? Or can they contribute to building trust despite existing or perceived political divides?

Examples of Muslims who are active for progressive causes online were shown, including an awareness-raising campaign run by young men in Iran in solidarity with Iranian women around the wearing the chador. Additionally, other examples were shown of people in different parts of the world, where public debate is limited, connecting with each other online to create an intellectual and collegial atmosphere to debate issues. While the expectation that new media will overthrow despotic regimes is unrealistic, new media does bear the potential to help spur the development of civil society, and raise awareness, which in turn can galvanize people around demanding greater rights.

Another example of an effective awareness-raising campaign that was shared by panelists during the session was a reality TV show shot entirely for YouTube that takes place in the West Bank and Gaza. The show's makers want to create an opportunity for people outside Gaza, Arab Jerusalem, and the West Bank to grasp how young Palestinians live their daily lives. The show focuses on how Palestinians also experience moments of personal and community achievement, and the warmth of friends and family life under occupation. The show has successfully crossed over to mainstream media as it will now be shown by a number of major broadcasters in the Middle East and the United States.

Panelists also highlighted the point that the distinction between new media and mainstream media is a fallacy. This fallacy becomes more clear when we consider how media, and specifically the different mediums in which news and information is disseminated, has evolved over time. At the same time, we must also take into account how new forms of communication are changing the information landscape. In the case of the war in Gaza, while the access of global media to the conflict zone was highly limited, live tweeting took place which helped the world understand how things looked from on the ground.

At the same time, it is critical to note journalists often undertake serious personal risks when reporting on controversial issues online in certain parts of the world. Since a lot of political activism takes place online, governments perceive online journalists as particularly threatening. Within the online journalist community the question that is raised, ironically, is not so much one of "Freedom of Expression" but one of freedom after expression, i.e. after one has expressed one's political views.

But in places and in conflicts where opportunities to engage the broader public are limited, online activism can provide an opportunity for the public to take meaningful action every time an injustice occurs. One will be continuously surprised by the level of action and goodwill that one can generate through new media vehicles. Thus, when we talk about the potential of new media, we are remiss if we do not address, in the context of the same discussion, the power of new media generated movements.



Thematic Session 6: Human Rights, Ethics and Solution to Conflicts

(Co-organized by the People's Movement for Human Rights
and the Danish Institute for Human Rights)



PANELISTS

H.E. Mr. Paulo Vanucci,
Minister for Human Rights, Brazil

Ms. Shulamith Koenig, Founding President
and former Executive Director of The People's
Movement for Human Rights Learning
(PDHRE), USA

Ms. Charlotte Flindt Pedersen, Deputy
Director, Danish Institute for Human Rights
(DIHR), Denmark

Ms. Olenka Ochoa, Human Rights Activist, Peru

Dr. Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, UN Special
Rapporteur on the situation of human rights
in Myanmar

Mr. Radhouane Nouicer, Director of the
UNHCR's Regional Bureau for the Middle East
and North Africa

Dr. Kamal Hossain, Chairman,
Bangladesh Institute of Law and International
Affairs, Moderator

Mrs. Beate Winkler, Interim Director,
European Union Agency for Fundamental
Rights, Austria, Rapporteur

The session discussed the transforming power of an holistic vision of Human Rights as a way of living and being in community and in dignity and equality by building on the commonality among human beings, across all differences. During the exchanges a number of practical challenges and areas for priority action were identified.

Human rights, it was stressed, are rights naturally possessed by all human beings because they are human. In their daily lives, individuals can



make learning experiences about human rights realization or denial, for themselves and for the others. These rights are not bestowed on them by any superior authority. They cling to the skin. The aim is that these rights, essential to living a life of dignity in community, be seen as a common culture and the guide to all relationships as well as a framework for action and a lifestyle. They are, in the words of one panelist, the banks of the river in which life can flow freely. Strengthening the banks requires awareness raising and an encouragement to use the human rights language to achieve justice and fair treatment of all.

Learning about human rights as a way of life requires a development of the 3 "C" and "I" factors: on the one hand, there has to be cooperation, communication and competence; and on the other hand, information, inspiration and involvement must also be available and present. Without prejudice to the duties and obligations of states, it is important that human rights be promoted by citizens for the benefit of all and with the involvement of all. This would include, for example, children, refugees and stateless people.

Emphasis was put on the need to address, wherever relevant, trauma like colonization, slavery or genocide and to put the fight against poverty and insecurity at the core of collective agendas. It is only through coming out from these negative conditions that the core of human rights can be addressed.

Establishing human rights as a way of life, at the center of our societies' daily functioning, calls for new forms of cooperation between state and civil society. Examples of such new arrangements at local level can be found in the development of Human Rights Cities. Such changes will tremendously benefit from strong commitment and leadership by politicians. They will further be facilitated by strategic actions like Human Rights Plans and Human Rights Commissions. These institutions have the mandate and the outreach to discuss at national level with all relevant actors what it takes to give full effect to the recognition that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights (Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights). New initiatives regularly flow from such human rights dialogues, in particular in support of education to respect for diversity and valuing differences, greater

gender equality or more frequent opportunities for face to face contact across communities.

To sum up, in the words of the chair "what is needed at all levels is a new social contract and a personal commitment by all of us, by you and me."

Thematic Session 7: History as a Tool for Cultural Co-Operation

(Co-organized by the Council of Europe, the North-South Center, and the Islamic Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture — IRCICA)

All the members of the panel confirmed that there is generally an increasing interest for history and more particularly for history teaching in public opinion in the world in general. They also confirmed that history plays a fundamental role in any intercultural dialogue, whatever the substance, the form or the level. Indeed, in this context the first question often is "where do you come from" and "myself where do I come from"?

PANELISTS

Mr. Gaspar Zarrias, secretary for Institutional Relations and Political Autonomy of the PSOE, Spain

Prof. Thomas W. Zeiler, Director of the Global Studies Academic Program of the University of Colorado, and executive editor of the journal *Diplomatic History*, USA

Prof. Mustapha Tlili, Director, Center for Dialogues at New York University, USA

Mr. Joao Carlos Nogueira, Secretary-General, Ministry of the Secretariat for Policies of Promotion of Racial Equality, Brazil

Mr. Halit Eren, Director-General, IRICA, Co-Moderator

Mr. Denis Huber, Executive Director, North-South Centre, Co-Moderator

Mr. Jean-Pierre Titz, Council of Europe, Rapporteur



Consequently, the question of learning and teaching history appears as an essential political requirement whenever intercultural dialogue is promoted. In that sense, history is indeed an instrument of cultural co-operation, but the objectives and the choices made in the field of history teaching policy should be transparent.

In view of this, although it is not advisable, quite to the contrary, to avoid the sensitive questions and the histories of conflicts, it is necessary also to highlight the interactions and convergences between the cultures.

Several speakers highlighted the necessity to centre history teaching on the acquisition of competences giving the keys for research and most of all for critical analysis of sources, especially those that are available from now on thanks to the new technologies of information. In that respect the search for a balance between the acquisition of contents and of competences, especially intercultural, is a necessity, even if that balance is particularly difficult to establish.

All the speakers also stressed that the academic knowledge concerning interactions and exchanges between cultures is well established but that the difficulty consisted in transferring this knowledge to teachers and - through them - to pupils and to public opinion in general. In that respect, one regrets the lack of suitable teaching material put at the disposal of teachers in the classrooms.

In conclusion of the session, the participants more particularly: encouraged the UN Alliance of Civilizations to continue in a pragmatic way the

development of the network of historians and history teachers started at the 2nd Forum in Istanbul (April 2009); recommended to the actors responsible for teaching and learning history to support the development of the use of new technologies with a view to put historical sources showing the interactions between the countries, the cultures, civilizations, etc., at the disposal of an audience as large as possible; encouraged the Ministries of Education to develop active pedagogical methods with a view to acquire a capacity for dialogue, research, critical analysis of sources and the implementation of activities between schools of different countries or continents; and encouraged the development of history teaching as a means to claim and show solidarity of cultures rather than to highlight their differences. This point was also underscored by a youth representative who highlighted the need to have "inclusive" histories.

The seminar also encouraged the international organizations represented in this seminar, namely IRCICA, ALECSO, the Council of Europe, the North-South Centre, UNESCO, Anna Lindh Foundation and non-governmental organizations to reinforce their co-operation in the field. The project that has been developed by the three organizing structures of the session on the history of interactions in the Mediterranean was quoted in example in this respect. About a hundred participants attended the session.

Thematic Session 8: Employment and Poverty Reduction in Times of Crisis

(Organized in collaboration with the Club of Madrid and the Oslo Centre for Peace and Human Rights)

PANELISTS

H.E. Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik, Ex Prime Minister of Norway and Club de Madrid Member

Mr. Ron Bruder, Founder and CEO, EFE Foundation

Mr. Ricardo Henriques, Institute of Applied Economic Research, Brazil

H.E. Mr. John Kufuor, Ex President of Ghana and Club de Madrid Member

Mr. Jean Marinat, Deputy Secretary General, International Labour Organization

Ms. Beatriz Merino, National Ombudswoman of Peru

Mr. Ahmed Younis, Director of Strategic Partnerships and Communications at Silatech

Ms. Necla Tschirgi, Senior Researcher, Former Senior Policy Advisor at UN Peacebuilding Support Office (moderator), Canada

Mr. Carlos Valdes, Program Assistant, Shared Society Project, Club De Madrid, Rapporteur

The focus of this session was on the unequal impact of crises on groups that are marginalized on the basis of their identity and the need to identify strategies to address this issue in times of crises. All panelists were encouraged to address the following questions:

1. What is the particular problem at the intersection of cultural diversity and socio-economic development that your presentation addresses?
2. Why was the issue important in the given context?
3. How did the responsible entities (whether government, labour union, private sector, non-governmental organizations or aid agencies) deal with the issue?
4. What strategies were employed? What were the main results?
5. What lessons were learned?
6. Are these lessons applicable in other contexts? If so, how?

One of the major messages from the panelists was that the current crisis is the result of 4 crises: food crisis, oil crisis, energy crisis and financial crisis. To stop the civilian population from being the most vulnerable group in this situation, a shared society must be built where all citizens share responsibility and thus create the basis for a responsible leadership for future.

Another main message from the panelists was that to combine the reduction of poverty with the reduction of inequalities, the state has to generate options to train people and educate youth to make them skillful and competitive to access the job market. The same amount of political will deployed to save the banking system must be used to generate options to create employment.

Employment is an integral part of youth development. Panelists expressed the opinion that to address the creation of employment we have to address the mindset of youth and see them as part



of the solution and not as part of the problem. Youth are leaders of tomorrow but without empowering youth and investing in them there will be no tomorrow. Training youth, and enhancing their skills at work, facilitates access to employment. Also, chances for a peaceful society are enhanced by young people having jobs.

Related to the issue of youth and employment, panelists also raised the issue of education. They opined that education needed to be based on quality rather than quantity, as exclusion and lower levels of education are linked to each other.

Thematic Session 9: The Dialogue of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order

(Co-organized with Professor Cândido Mendes, Rector of Universidade Candido Mendes, UNAOC Ambassador)

The well known 1993 Foreign Affairs article by Samuel Huntington named “The clash of civilizations?”, which travelled around the world for better and for worse, was the theme and also the background for this lively debate, moderated by the well-seasoned Al Jazeera reporter, Riz Khan, and brought together a vast range of personalities and gave rise to intense debate with the audiences that filled the hall.

The article stated: “It is my hypothesis that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future”.

Almost two decades have elapsed since the publication of this article. Panelists were asked to revisit Samuel Huntington in order to understand how international conflicts at the intersection of the “West” and the “Muslim world” have dominated headlines, international politics and diplomacy, as well as how addressing these issues has also become a domestic imperative for several countries in the world.

Panelists pointed to the fact that whether we like it or not we have to compete together in the global market. If we really believe in a shared society we can make the development of a country in terms of poverty reduction more sustainable. In order to build an economy that serves the citizens and a shared society that generate inclusive policies, political leadership will be important.

PANELISTS

Ms. Nilcea Freire, Minister

H.E. Jose Miguel Insulza, Secretary-General, OAS

H.E. Mr. Ahmet Davutoglu, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Turkey

H.E. Mr. Marc Brichambaut, Secretary General of the OSCE

Professor Cândido Mendes, Rector of Universidade Candido Mendes, UNAOC Ambassador

H.E. Mr. André Azoulay, President of the Anna Lindh Foundation, Advisor to his Majesty King of Morocco, Member of the UNAOC High Level Group

Ms. Alla Glinchikova, Deputy Director of the Russian Institute for Studies on Globalisation and Social Movements, Russia

Mr. Riz Khan, Senior News Anchor, Al Jazeera International, USA, Moderator

Dr. Helena Barroco, Special Adviser to the High Representative of the UNAOC, Rapporteur

Beyond abstract statements about mutual interest joining the “West” and “Islam”, the panel was asked to address concrete conditions under which meaningful, action-oriented dialogue can take place in order to defuse tensions, overcome disagreements and resolve disputes and conflicts, by exploring past examples of successful dialogue and addressing main challenges ahead. Moreover they were also requested to discuss concrete steps that should be taken to improve relations and rebut polemicists who believe in the so-called “clash of civilisations”.

In their interventions panellists raised a number of common issues such as what is our knowledge of the evolving contours of the so-called “West-Muslim” Dialogue? How much has cooperation at grass roots level helped to bridge the divides? How is the current economic, financial and social crisis impacting on tensions? How is dialogue at the intersection of Islam and the West informed by the critical international political issues of the day? How are new rising global players contributing to craft new rules for international cooperation? How is a new emerging cultural dialogue paradigm in international politics shaping a new world order?

However, the answers given differed considerably and a number of different perspectives were brought to the discussion, generating considerable attention. In this regard, it is worth stressing that Minister Davutoglu emphasized the need for a new vision to underpin a new world order with new institutions able to cope with present challenges, and that in this regard the UNAOC as the 2nd largest UN Forum is a promising example of this much-needed but emerging inclusive approach that has to be developed at all

levels, nationally, regionally and globally. Secretary General Insulza focused his speech on the challenge of transforming any crisis into a new opportunity and on missed opportunities to change the world order to adapt it to globalization. He also mentioned that several regions such as the Latin-American one were undergoing transition periods but so far results are mixed and the end still unknown.

Ambassador Marc de Brichambaut recalled the founding principle of the OSCE 50 years ago to emphasize its main contribution in shaping a wide region comprising North America, Europe and Central Asia and the sharing of common principles underpinning “secular humanism” (i.e., human rights, democracy, rule of law, open society, common peace, capacity building, cooperative states). Stressing the role of states in building this common framework he particularly emphasized the role of civil society and the need to empower the younger generations today. Professor Alla Glinchikova, in turn, shared with participants her rather gloomy perspective as to a possible clash of civilizations still to come. In her view the understanding of democracy, inclusion, diversity and human rights is not universal nor fully shared to exclude this possibility.

President André Azoulay corroborated to a certain extent the views of the previous panelist reaffirming that the clash is not over. Fortunately, awareness of the risk is on the rise and has reinforced the idea that instrumentalizing cultures, religions and civilizations is unacceptable. In remaking the world order, a key point is to find political solutions to political problems, as in the case of the Middle East conflict. Achieving the Union for the Mediterranean will also represent a step forward in building a new world based on the Alliance’s goals. Professor Cândido Mendes drew attention to the urgency of going beyond some common ideas on fundamental concepts such as for instance on dialogue, to reach tolerance and have a full understanding of terrorism. He claimed the need to rethink concepts such as culture, civilization, universalism progress, modernity, secularization and fundamentalism and to find new foundations for a new humanism. Contrary to most of the speakers who criticized Huntington’s conceptually wrong views on the clash of civilizations, professor Cândido Mendes paid tribute to him, emphasizing that, in his opinion, Huntington greatly helped in understanding democracy, culture and the new dialectics of change.



Thematic Session 10: Migrants as Agents for Change and Development

(Organized with the International Organization of Migration — IOM)

PANELISTS

H.E. Mr. Luiz Paulo Barreto,
Minister of Justice, Brazil

H.E. Mr. Enrique Iglesias, Secretary General
of the Secretario General Iberoamericano
(SEGIB), Uruguay

H.E. Mr. Domingos Simões, Executive Secretary
of the Comunidade dos Países de Língua
Portuguesa. (CPLP), Guinea Bissau

Ms. Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, Journalist at
The Independent, UK

Mr. Franco Montanari, Architect, Italy, Respondent

Mr. Francesco Alessandria, Architect and
Professor of Technical Urban Planning,
Italy, Respondent

Ambassador William Lacy Swing,
Director General of the IOM, Moderator

Ms. Christine Aghazarm, IOM, Rapporteur

This session underscored the contribution that migration can make to progress and development in host and origin societies when adequate legal frameworks are in place. The discussion panel identified different areas to further the impact of migrants in fostering development gains and analyzed how these ideas and integration policies are being developed by a wide range of stakeholders, including policy-makers, civil society and faith-based organizations. Panelists and audience participants also discussed whether efforts for social cohesion can feed into the prevention of international conflicts. The panel also explored the ways in which migrants can retain ties with their countries of origin so that they can be actors of development in their respective countries.

Mr. William Lacy Swing, IOM's Director General opened the session by emphasizing the importance that remittances have in an era of great human mobility to foster progress, especially in developing countries. Panelists reaffirmed the clear nexus between migration and development and between integration of migrants and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Indeed, it was pointed out that the achievement of the MDGs would only be possible if an overall diversity approach (incorporating religion, ethnicity, and culture) was taken. The main obstacle to this approach is fear that prevents migrants and nationals from living together in a peaceful and constructive way. The UK-based journalist Ms. Yasmin Alibhai-Brown reminded the panelists that integration is a two-way street, and that the perceptions, the needs and the desires of both migrants and nationals really influence the integration process. Moreover, media, politicians or normal individuals always expect migrants to perform better than locals. This situation creates growing distrustful perceptions of migrants that translate into negative attitudes. Mr. Luis Paulo Barreto, Minister of Justice of Brazil, stated that these attitudes can only be overcome with more open migration policies and with an open dialogue and debate among actors. In a highly globalized world, migration needs to be grounded in Human Rights.



The second idea that was broadly discussed was the inadequacy of current legal migration frameworks to fight against xenophobia and discrimination and to promote integration. Migration flows have taken new diverse forms, including asylum, labor migration, forced migration, intra-regional or inter-state migration, family reunification, irregular forms of migration, and so on. This diversity of

migration streams demonstrates the difficulty of applying individual global approaches or policies to different contexts. It was highlighted that relevant stakeholders must further work together towards a more positive and collective agenda that takes into consideration all the actors involved in the migration and integration processes.

Thematic Session 11: The Social Impact of Media Literacy

(Organized with the Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication)

At this session, the social importance of media literacy was addressed by the panelists from a multi stakeholder perspective. Media literacy was identified as an empowerment tool that facilitates the active participation of citizens in the political process of contemporary societies. This process is linked to the Latin-American tradition of alternative communication systems advocated by the pedagogue Paulo Freire. Several Brazilian media literacy projects currently implemented include the participation of young people in the process of media production and self expression, initiatives that develop citizenship education through team work and the collaboration with others in the creative process. However, although Brazil has successful media literacy projects in development, they have not yet become part of the public education policy.

An elaboration of the overall notion of media literacy as a platform for social inclusion, especially in the new digital environment, noted the extensive interactions made possible by social media that challenge youngsters to become even more involved as participants in their communities. This is a new environment that develops digital narratives, facilitating self-representation and the visibility of "the other." Participatory Culture, a new concept emerging from the media environment evolving from Web 2.0 technologies and systems of communication, was identified as promoting a more active partaking of citizens in democratic societies, enabling them to engage in social discourse and deeper dialogue with their communities.

PANELISTS

Dr. Mira Feuerstein, Head of the Media Studies Department at Oranim Academic Educational College, Israel

Mr. Ignacio Hernaiz, Director of Canal Encuentro and Director General of Educ.ar, Argentina

Dr. Ramon Tuazon, President of the Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication (AIJC), Philippines; Chairman of the Commission on Higher Education, Technical Panel for Journalism, Broadcasting and Communication, Philippines

Dr. Ismar Soares, Director of the Communication and Education Department of the School of Communication and Arts, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil; Vice-president of the World Council for Media Education

Dr. Mogens Schmidt, Deputy Assistant Director General, Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO, Moderator

Mr. Jordi Torrent, Media Literacy, UNAOC Secretariat, Rapporteur

The example of Canal Encuentro, Argentina's leading educational public TV broadcaster, was presented at the session. Encuentro promotes cultural diversity, democratic access to knowledge and a unique multi-platform convergence of television, internet and Argentina's public school system. This necessitates the importance of addressing television audiences as citizens, and not as consumers, offering quality content that stimulates reflection, debate and the development of critical thinking skills applied to media messages. Identifying youth-produced media is an important component of media literacy. Encuentro provides tools for self expression by enabling young people to create their own media messages by using their free of charge web-based editing programs.

UNESCO's Teacher Training Curricula for media and information literacy was also highlighted as a new resource that clearly identifies the core competencies and areas of general education associated with Media and Information Literacy. The Curricula has been produced in consultation with stakeholders from around the world (the UNAOC included) and will be made available to Ministries of Education interested in including media and information literacy programs in their educational systems. This resource

is meant to facilitate the integration of media literacy within the school curricula across the globe, resulting, among other things, in the critical awareness of the ethical responsibilities inherent on the more prevalent use and distribution of user-generated media messages. These responsibilities are usually not yet addressed in most educational programs but recognized as part of the core thematic areas of Media and Information Literacy. Comments from the respondents of the session, including Paolo Celot, General Secretary of the European Association of Viewer's Interest, identified the need for clear Media Literacy indicators that will support the development of Media Literacy policies and programs across different sectors of our cotemporary societies.

In conclusion, media literacy was identified as a necessary source for social inclusion as well as a platform that facilitates the development of citizenship participation in pluralistic societies. Media literacy initiatives that move beyond formal education settings, such as television programming, websites and multi-platform projects connected to school curricula, media production workshops for minorities, and training programs for citizenship inclusion and representation, were recognized as key elements for the promotion of intercultural dialogue.



Thematic Session 12: The Role of Religious Leaders in Promoting Peace and Human Development

(Organized in partnership with Religions for Peace)



PANELISTS

H.E. Mr. José Miguel Insulza, Secretary General, Organization of American States, Chile

Mr. Rashad Hussain, US Special Envoy to the Organization of Islamic Conference, USA

Mr. Mike Hardy, Programme Leader — Intercultural Dialogue, British Council, UK

Dr. Lilian Sison, Dean of the the Graduate School of the University of Santo Tomas in Manila, Philippines

H.E. Shaban Mubaje, Mufti of Uganda

Dr. Grégor Puppinck, Director, of the European Center for Law and Justice, France

Prof. Dr. Franz Magnis-Suseno, Jesuit philosopher and essayist, Indonesia

HRH Raja Nazrin Shah, Malaysia Special Envoy on Interfaith and Intercivilisational Dialogue

Dr. Bill Vendley, Secretary General of Religions for Peace International, Moderator

Mr. Daanish Masood, Media, UNAOC Secretariat, Rapporteur

Organized in collaboration with Religions for Peace, this session brought together religious leaders, government officials, and experts from various denominations to explore the constructive role of religious communities in peace building, human development and promoting social cohesion.

The panelists presented a number of case studies that highlighted how religious communities and their leaders have actively contributed to address issues of violent conflict, social cohesion and human development. Enlightened by the case studies, the debate that ensued challenged some of the misconceptions about the role of religion in public life, in particular, the widespread belief that religion is a source of conflict and violence.

Looking at the case of Malaysia, religious freedom is enshrined in the Malaysian constitution. Every major religious festival is celebrated by most of the population. However, nation-building is still in progress and there are some challenges. Religion can play a huge role in human development. More than this, religious leaders are playing an important role in advancing the Millennium Development Goals.

Panelists also stressed the critical role of religious leaders in preventing violent extremism. People who are using Islam to justify violence, in the case of some movements, often lack the qualifications to speak from such a mantle. This is why, for instance, the new administration in the United States has moved away from using the terms 'jihadist' or 'Islamist', as it does not want to encourage the perception that those advocating violence against innocents are actually religious leaders.

In this context, panelists emphasized that religious leaders must continue to speak out against terrorism. They must condemn violence whenever it takes place. In addition, religious leaders should cooperate with governments to further international security.

Panelists also spoke on the link between peace and justice as being very important. Religion leaders spend most of their time leading prayer, but how is that connected to peace? Prayer is necessary to

peace as it is how many human beings contemplate their reality. Secondly, peace must be promoted through justice. Religious leaders have a role to play both before and after conflicts. Most importantly, truth and peace are interconnected through justice — without truth, there is no justice, and without justice, there is no peace.

Finally, theological reflection is also crucial. There is a long tradition of this in both the Muslim community and the Christian community. Such reflection can form the basis of dialogue and getting to know and understand each other better. This is a necessary step in improving relations.

Special Session: The UN Alliance of Civilizations and Haiti

In view of the catastrophic 7.0 magnitude earthquake on January 12, 2010 in Haiti, the Brazilian Government organized a special session on the UN Alliance of Civilizations and Haiti in Rio. The objective of the session was to underline the struggles being undergone by Haitian society in the wake of the earthquake and offer examples of the collaboration between international organizations and countries in the reconstruction of Haiti.

In her welcoming remarks, Ms. Machado emphasized that the values exemplified by the UN Alliance of Civilizations implied the solidarity of civilizations in coming together for the sake of humanity, and was exemplified by the need for global solidarity with Haiti in her time of need. Ms. Machado emphasized that the several commonalities between Haiti and Brazil in the past, present and future required Brazil to provide assistance to Haiti in several forms even before the earthquake. While emphasizing that Haitians would be the main actors responsible for reconstructing their country, Ms. Machado invited other Group of Friends countries to join in the global humanitarian effort.

Prime Minister Bellerive of Haiti laid out the factual challenges that faced his country, both historically and especially in the aftermath of the earthquake. These challenges included deep-seated poverty, historical, religious and linguistic isolation in continental and global perceptions of Haiti. Nevertheless, in the aftermath of the January 12th earthquake, Haiti was extremely pleased and grateful for the outpouring of support from the continent and also from places around the globe such as Turkey, Kosovo, African countries, Belgium, Spain and many others. The Prime Minister also stressed that the first responders to the catastrophe were Haitians

PANELISTS

Ms. Vera Barrouin Machado, Undersecretary General for Political Affairs, Foreign Affairs Ministry, Brazil (Chair)

H.E. Mr Jean-Max Bellerive, Prime Minister, Haiti

Mr. Edmond Mulet, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General and Head of Mission of MINUSTAH (United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti)

Mr. Ricardo Seitenfus, Special Representative for Haiti, Organization of American States

Ms. Cecilia Martinez, Director, UN-Habitat Regional Office for Latin America

Mr. Marco Farani, Director, Brazilian Agency for Cooperation

Mr. Luis Nassif, Brazilian Journalist, Moderator





themselves. He expressed his optimism about a brighter future for Haiti.

While not ignoring the several issues and challenges that Haiti has faced in its past and future, OAS Special Representative Ricardo Seitenfus noted that one principal recommendation that he would have would be to ensure that projects for international cooperation in Haiti should take care not to weaken the Haitian state. He took note of the “dignity, the courage, and the extraordinary solidarity” of the Haitian people who responded in the first few days of the earthquake to rescue their family and friends.

Mr. Edmond Mulet, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General and head of MINUSTAH, pointed to the several efforts being made by MINUSTAH in areas as diverse as shelter, sanitation, transportation, economic revitalization, and security. In the area of security especially, the MINUSTAH program of community violence reduction aims at building trust and understanding across different groups in society, analogous to the UNAOC’s efforts. Mr. Mulet emphasized that the global community’s support for Haiti in the aftermath of the earthquake would be key to political stability and consistent development which would enable Haiti to stand on its own feet.

Ms. Cecilia Martinez of UN-Habitat provided a historical context of urbanization in Haiti that led to concentrations of population in Port-Au-Prince and acute vulnerabilities to all types of risks, ecological degradation, and disparities in access to services. However, UN-Habitat, in the aftermath of the earthquake, has seen the possibilities of helping to guide reconstruction and rehabilitation of earthquake-affected areas on the basis of empowerment of local populations, strategic planning for emergencies in urban areas, and the incorporation of a holistic strategy with the assistance of partners to address standards, security, and capacity.

The last speaker of the session, Mr. Marco Farani from the Brazilian Agency for Cooperation, outlined the several ways in which Brazil was helping with not only humanitarian aid but also the reconstruction of Haiti. Examples of cooperation were provided in the areas of agriculture, roads, energy, garbage disposal, security, violence against women, milk banks, housing and many others.

Special Session: Building Public-Private Partnerships for Intercultural Dialogue and Diversity

PANELISTS

Ms. Pascale Thumerelle, Vice-President, Director of Sustainable Development of Vivendi, France

Mr. Nelson Savioli, Secretary General of the Fundacao Roberto Marinho, Brazil

Mr. Marcelo Drugg Barreto Vianna, Partner Deloitte-Touche Tohmatsu, Brazil

Mr. Effenus Henderson, Chief Diversity Officer Weyerhaeuser, USA

Mr. Mansour Javidan, Board Member Business for Diplomatic Action and Dean of Research, Thunderbird School of Global Management, USA

Mr. Fernando Rossetti, Secretary general, GIFE (Grupo de Institutos Fundações e Empresas), Brazil

Dr. Tariq H. Cheema, Founder & CEO of the World Congress of Muslim Philanthropists

Mr. Andrew Barnett, Gulbenkian Foundation

Mr. Jean-Christophe Bas, UNAOC, Strategic Development and Partnerships, Moderator

Ms. Cly Wallace Aramian, UNAOC Consultant, UK, Rapporteur

The aim of this Special Session was to open new avenues and identify innovative tools to complement action carried out by governments to promote intercultural understanding and dialogue. The main assumption is that some of the most innovative and effective approaches today are coming from a new generation of business leaders and philanthropists, who are using their business skills, community understanding and cross-border perspectives to help build cultures of respect, understanding and inclusiveness in today's global society.

The Report on Doing Business in a Multicultural World launched at the Istanbul Forum in April 2009, and the subsequent launch of the Business Coalition for Intercultural Dialogue and Cooperation, were aimed at showcasing, connecting, and promoting the role of corporations in this area. What lessons can be learned from their experiences? How can they be scaled up? How can intercultural dialogue be mainstreamed into the corporate social responsibility and sustainability agendas? And how can business and civil society better engage with governments to address the cross-cultural challenges of today's world?

Session participants shared their ideas about how the private and civil society sectors can help to



foster intercultural dialogue and cooperation and what their organizations are doing in this area. Participants then recommended some concrete actions to enable and encourage public-private-civil sector collaboration to foster intercultural dialogue and cooperation, including:

- **Integrating intercultural dialogue and diversity into the global sustainability agenda:** In current discussions of sustainability, attention is focused nearly entirely on the environment. The message must be continually reinforced that cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue are also critical to building a sustainable future, and should be considered an integral part of sustainable development and corporate social responsibility. Our current notions of sustainability do not yet sufficiently incorporate intercultural dialogue and cooperation. As interested companies and foundations, panelists felt they could build on the pioneering work of the UN Alliance of Civilizations to 'mainstream' this important area into the global sustainability agenda.
- **Performance standards:** Evaluation is critical. Socially responsible investors must be able to assess the sustainability performance of companies in which they might choose to invest. Various sets of guidelines and indicators have been established to help companies define their impact on society and assess their own performance on environmental, economic and social sustainability. To date, there has been a lack of guidelines and indicators to assess an organization's performance in managing cultural diversity and fostering intercultural dialogue. We should work with groups such as the Global Reporting Initiative to develop and define standards and indicators that will allow us to analyze and measure our impact in this area.

At the governmental level, it was observed that the World Trade Organization (WTO), by establishing rules and standards for international trade, played a major role in the globalization of business. It was suggested that it might be time to establish a similar framework of universal principles and guidelines for promoting intercultural dialogue and cooperation.

- **Encouraging inclusive leadership:** Cultural diversity is a fact in today's world. The challenge is how to embrace this diversity and foster inclusive leadership — in business, government and civil society. Work is currently being done to identify and define key 'inclusive behaviours', and to develop mechanisms to encourage our leaders to adopt them. The private sector is leading this work, but it could provide vital lessons for governments and local authorities addressing diversity in their communities. We should encourage this research, and identify ways to share the findings with governments and civil society.
- **Educating global citizens:** Perhaps the most important thing we can do to promote intercultural dialogue and cooperation is to teach our children in a different way. Business people get a real-world education in inclusive cross-cultural behaviors, but the lesson should begin in childhood. Government ministers of education should be called together to discuss how education can be reformed to help create global citizens.
- **Facilitating global foundation work:** The United Nations could help create a better environment for foundations, possibly in the context of a 'UN Year of Philanthropy': helping to define what is philanthropy globally, given the various national approaches operating in a globalized world, and setting standards for accountability. It should also be understood that foundations offer more than grant funding; they have depth of experience in responding to societal issues, and the capacity to bring people together across disciplines and sectors.
- **Youth:** Young people are vital to creating cultures of cultural dialogue and cooperation. It is vital for companies to attract and retain young people, who increasingly want to join organizations that are socially responsible, diverse and inclusive. Therefore, if businesses want to be successful, they must engage youth in an inclusive work environment.

At the end of the meeting, partners agreed to generate a set of rough indicators and measures to assess progress made by countries in the field of intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity.

PRE-FORUM DAY

EVENTS & WORKING SESSIONS (27 MAY)

Parliamentary Conference: The Role of Legislators in Promoting Intercultural Dialogue & Cooperation

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) together with the Parliament of Brazil, organized a half-day parliamentary meeting on The Role of legislators in promoting intercultural dialogue and cooperation. The meeting was attended by MPs from some 20 countries and three regional parliamentary organizations. The session was chaired by Brazilian Speaker Mr. Michel Temer and received a keynote address by UNAOC High Representative Jorge Sampaio.

The parliamentary session provided a unique opportunity for parliamentarians to examine how parliaments can give wider political and strategic coherence to the ongoing UNAOC projects and programs; to review progress in the implementation of the IPU Bali Resolution of 2007 on ensuring respect for and peaceful coexistence between all religious communities and beliefs in a globalized world; and to discuss modalities to enhance the effective political participation of minorities and indigenous groups.

Participating MPs were briefed on the various UNAOC programmes and heard first-hand about the role and work of UNAOC focal points. Participants shared a number of national experiences and good practices developed within the context of culturally diverse countries such as Brazil, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Senegal and Morocco.

Some MPs made practical recommendations to bridge cultures and promote effective dialogue among the diverse communities within society. These included the need to specifically place issues related to cultural diversity on the domestic political agenda, to invest in education, successful participation of minorities in political life — gaining access to parliament as well as being able to actively influence the work of parliament, — as

well as making better use of new information and communication technologies (ICT) and hence modernizing parliamentary processes, increasing transparency and accountability.

At the end of the meeting, parliamentarians welcomed three youth representatives who underlined that integration policies should always target and involve youth. They also underscored the type of support youth organizations can bring to national campaigns aimed at combating extremism and intolerance.

After the parliamentary meeting, the legislators actively participated in the various sessions and proceedings of the Forum. They left Rio with a better understanding of the main objectives of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, as well as with the commitment to integrate their findings into their work in parliament.

Roundtable on “Addressing Islamophobia: Building on Unused Opportunities for Mutual Respect & Inclusion” — an Overview of the Debates

Co-organized by the UNAOC, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the Council of Europe (CoE) and the British Council, the aim of this roundtable was to hold an informed debate on how to address Islamophobia from a result-oriented perspective.

This roundtable, announced in advance via the Forum’s website and open to public participation, attracted a big audience and brought together a high-level array of panelists who shared their different points of views during a debate moderated by Mr. Iqbal Riza, Special Advisor to the United Nations Secretary-General for the UN Alliance of Civilizations. To introduce the debate several notes were prepared in advance and distributed among the participants, namely a note by President Sampaio, High Representative of the UNAOC; a note by Ambassador Ömür Orhun, Adviser to the OIC and Focal Point of the OIC to the UNAOC; and a note by Mrs. Beate Winkler, Director of the former European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia.

Further to the points made in the written note, in his opening remarks President Sampaio stressed the twofold purpose of this roundtable — to serve as a platform to engage a meaningful dialogue about confronting Islamophobia and to generate concrete proposals for action at the global and regional level.

Professor Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the OIC Secretary General, underscored the dangerous implications of the growing trend of Islamophobia in particular in European societies where after all, he stressed, Muslims are not aliens. Advocating a constructive engagement rather than confrontation to tackle Islamophobia, he called upon western countries to stop looking at the concept of defamation of religions with suspicion and mentioned a number of ongoing initiatives aimed at raising global awareness to the basic tenets of moderation in Islam such as a Conference that the OIC will organize in 2011 aimed at bringing “historical reconciliation between Islam and Christianity”.

Ms. Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO, recalled that from the outset UNESCO’s action has been based on the idea of eliminating ignorance

and prejudices among cultures, so UNESCO has always highlighted the major contribution of Islamic culture to humanity and has endeavored to develop a positive view of the Islamophobia problem. In this regard, the role of education was underscored.

Mr. Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, Secretary General of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), provided an overview of the way his organization works in favor of tolerance and non-discrimination regarding the Jewish, Islamic, Christian and other religions. On the issue of discrimination against Muslims, he addressed some key points namely: release of annual reports on hate crime by ODHIR in spite of lack of comprehensive data collection mechanisms and of appropriate financial and human resources to monitor crimes of this kind in some countries; role of public discourse by key leaders to develop a different narrative and combat stereotypes; and discriminatory state practices. Additionally, some important OSCE initiatives were mentioned, such as the “Toledo Guiding Principles on Teaching about Religion and Beliefs in Public Schools” and the forthcoming “ODHIR Guidelines for Educators on Intolerance against Muslims”, a joint initiative by the Council of Europe and UNESCO. Together, these tools should contribute to build the references for combating discrimination against Muslims. Last but not least, Ambassador Marc Perrin de Brichambaut called upon the need for a consensus on how this phenomenon should be addressed by states, intergovernmental organizations and civil society. In this regard, he stressed three final points: the need to protect each individual and each community, including



Muslim communities against any act of intolerance and discrimination; the need to protect our societies and our states themselves against the actions of religious extremists, including those abusing religion for religious purposes; the need to continue the work of education and the work of outreach to the media, to all generations.

Ambassador Usen Suleimenov made a speech on behalf of the Kazakh Chairmanship of the OSCE stressing that his country, because of its 136 nationalities representing 46 confessions, was developing an active policy designed to promote tolerance, non-discrimination and respect between different cultures and religions in his country. This explains also that the Republic of Kazakhstan, as the Chair of the OSCE in 2010, has chosen a slogan of "Four Ts", which stand for Trust, Transparency, Tradition, and Tolerance, and made the topic of Tolerance and Non-Discrimination one of its main priorities in hosting the OSCE High-Level Conference on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination on 29-30 June 2010 this year. Furthermore, as the Chair of the Organization of Islamic Conference in 2011, Kazakhstan intends to continue these endeavors.

Ms. Beate Winkler, former Director of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, and current Adviser for European Policies on Inclusive Societies and Intercultural Dialogue emphasized three main messages: the need to create change and prevent negative perceptions, attitudes and images on Muslims from blocking positive developments; the need to integrate into all strategies for action the factual but also the emotional dimension of this problem; the need to address the "negative perceptions", expressed particularly by the media, as well as developing political leadership and organizing high cultural and sport events.

Professor Mike Hardy, Programme Leader Intercultural Dialogue of the British Council pointed out the need for constructive engagement and the role of the British Council (BC) in this regard. He stressed the involvement of the BC in the front line of intercultural dialogue and explained in more detail its initiative named 'Our Shared Europe', launched a couple of years ago to explore and raise awareness, very directly, about the amazing contribution that Muslims have made to the past, to the present, and to the potential of Europe as a terrain and as a domain.

Mr. André Azoulay, President of the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures, stressed that Islamophobia was not an issue for Muslims, but an issue for all of us. He called upon the international community to speak out, to say things clearly and to show the same commitment to all forms of intolerance and discrimination, be it against Judaism or Muslims. He also addressed the need to develop a positive approach to the fact that there are today close to ten million Europeans belonging to the Islamic faith. Finally he mentioned that when the 'Union for the Mediterranean' is achieved, it will be a historical turning point for countries and peoples from both sides of the Mediterranean.

José María Ferré, Spanish Ambassador at Large for Relations with Muslim Communities Abroad, the Cordoba Conference on Intolerance and Discrimination towards Muslims, recalling the Spanish Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2007 as well as the Seminar on "Freedom of religion in a Democratic Society" co-organized by the UNAOC and the Spanish Presidency of the EU at the beginning of May 2010, stressed the central role of human rights in Europe, namely the principle of freedom of religion for minorities living in secular societies. In this regard, he also tackled the role played by various interreligious and intercultural dialogue initiatives to foster freedom of religion, such as the Saudi Initiative or the 'Common Word' supported by Jordan.

Professor Stefano Allievi, Professor of Sociology at the University of Padua, focused his remarks on his study on "Conflict over Mosques in Europe — Policy Issues and Trends" conducted in eleven countries of Europe. Professor Allievi's main point is that in Europe there is not such a problem of freedom of religion for Islam at least in quantitative terms (around eight million Muslims and ten thousand halls of prayer), but only at qualitative level, seen in the increasing number of cultural and religious conflicts emerging everywhere. In this regard, the role of "political entrepreneurs of Islamophobia" was stressed as well of the media. Cultural pluralism and the ambiguity surrounding what can be called "exceptionalism" were also tackled. Professor Allievi ended by mentioning his current work on the issue of training of religious persons, Imams, religious actors in general, which according to him might become the next thermometer for Islamophobia in Europe.

Ambassador Ömür Orhun, Special Envoy of the OIC Secretary General and Focal Point of the OIC to the UNAOC, stressed the issue of identity and focused in particular on Muslims of Europe who can contribute to the re-definition of Europeanness with their own and distinct identities in spite of a growing trend in a Europe that views Islam as a threat to national security and identity. As a conclusion, he requested a normative approach to combat Islamophobia based on a definition of Islamophobia that we all might agree on.

Ambassador Alexandre Fasel of Switzerland, Swiss Focal Point for the UNAOC, addressed the issue of recent developments that involve the minaret ban in his country recalling the position of the Swiss Federal Government and of the Federal Parliament against the popular consultation and their call to vote against the proposal, which was accepted, in the end, by a majority.

Reflecting on the latest findings of scientific research that shows that the vote was not against the Swiss Muslim community, but rather expressed a reaction against an abstract yet negative image of Islam (perceived to be violent, to oppress women and to want the spread of Sharia law), Ambassador Fasel explained the ongoing work aimed at: increasing the search, together with the Swiss Muslim communities and the Federal Authorities, for ways and means to enhance the visibility of the Swiss Muslim community, so that there is a clear understanding of who they are, and their level of integration in the Swiss society; working with the media; at the international level, developing a practical dialogue, which goes beyond mere practical cognitive dialogue, so that a common narrative can be created upon which to build the views we have of each other.

Mr. Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, recalled the work carried out by the Assembly on the basis of the European Convention on Human Rights, especially its article 9 (on freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including the right to manifest one's religion or beliefs) and article 10 (on freedom of expression, including the right to express religious or philosophical views or oppose and criticize them). Despite the unique legal protection that the Convention and the European Court of Human Rights provide, Mr. Çavuşoğlu recognized that the reality in the various countries is far more complicated and that racism, xenophobia and all sorts of manifestations of

intolerance against people of different religious beliefs are a fact of everyday life in our societies. In particular Islamophobia, in recent years, has been steadily on the rise, noting that growing anti-Muslim feelings amongst the non-Muslim population go hand in hand with growing feelings of victimization, frustration and alienation by Muslims and that Islamophobia is mostly the result of ignorance, misperception and lack of communication and dialogue.

He eventually stressed that for the Parliamentary Assembly, in combating Islamophobia, as well as any other form of intolerance based on religious principles, the key to success lies in active, constructive cooperation within societies. He recalled that, on the one hand, European governments have a duty to ensure equal rights and opportunities — both in law and in practice — for all, regardless of their ethnic, cultural and religious origin and that, on the other hand, Muslims and Muslim communities should be the first ones to condemn and combat any form of political extremism under the cover of Islam.

He announced that during the June session, the Parliamentary Assembly will be debating a major report on "Islam and Islamophobia in Europe".

Ms. Dalia Mogahed, Senior Analyst and Executive Director of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies, went through some highlights on studies done at her Center on perception of Islam and Muslims and made a few points on why it is in the self-interest of non-Muslim majority societies to combat Islamophobia.

On the former, she stressed that in the United States, Islam and Muslims are the most negatively viewed religious group of the ones tested by Gallup (about 43% of Americans say that they have at least some prejudice against Muslims, 9% say they have a great deal of prejudice) and that this extreme prejudice was correlated not with the level of education, nor with religious practice but with that person's opinion of Jews, so that anti-Semitic sentiment was the strongest predictor of anti-Muslim sentiments. Ms. Mogahed stressed the importance of this empirical link between Islamophobia and anti-Semitism and pointed out that the two things should be dealt with together and should even be studied together. The second finding that she highlighted was that one's opinion of Islam, as a faith, was far more powerful in predicting whether people had prejudice or tolerance than was one's personal interaction with Muslims.

This suggests that what really forms people's opinion of Muslims, as a group, is their perception of Islam as a faith — what it teaches, what it stands for — that colors their view of the group much more than the exceptional Muslim doctor or dentist that they might know who is acceptable.

As a concluding remark, Ms. Mogahed underscored the need for western societies — western democracies specifically — to care about Islamophobia because it is an ideology that fuels extremist narratives and should be seen as a threat to national security. She stressed that, in the end, Islamophobia is not something western societies need to combat simply to be generous or to be charitable to Muslims. It is something that is hurting everyone; it truly is hurting society as a whole.

Mr. Rashad Hussain, the US Special Envoy to the OIC, mentioned what the United States is doing to combat this problem, Islamophobia, from the actions taken within the United States and within the international community. First, of course, there had been the President's outreach on this issue, making it clear several times and on various occasions that Islam is actually not a problem, but is a part of the solution. Furthermore, there are a number of actions taken, such as increased educational exchanges and real people-to-people interaction. Lastly, another area the President mentioned in his Cairo speech was the defense of the ability to practice Islam, which is something he talked about in terms of a woman's right to wear hijab, something that the United States continues to defend. The second point is the legal channel because in the United States there is a legal mechanism in place by which to combat Islamophobia (First Amendment to the US Constitution; the Bill of Rights guarantees free practice of religion) even if there are certain limits to the legal avenue.

Mr. Radhouane Nouicer, UNHCR representative to Rio Forum, focused his speech on the refugees and asylum seekers dimension of the problem, pointing out two complementary facts: today a majority of asylum-seekers and refugees in the world adhere to the Islamic faith and most of the populations hosting them are also Muslim. Furthermore, he stressed that this occurs at a time when the level of extremism — ethnic and religious — is on the rise around the globe, even in the world's most developed societies, and when racism, xenophobia and populist fear-mongering manipulate public opinion and confuse refugees with illegal immigrants and even terrorists.

As a contribution to dispelling this confusion and these misperceptions, Mr. Nouicer mentioned that UNHCR commissioned a comparative study titled "The right to asylum between Islamic Sharia and international refugee law" that shows that more than any other historical source, Islamic law and tradition underpin the modern-day framework upon which UNHCR bases its global activities on behalf of refugees. He referred to the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the UN Alliance of Civilizations and the UNHCR to support each other's efforts in promoting cross-cultural understanding and reconciliation among nations and people across cultures and religions, and to help counter forces that fuel polarization and extremism.

Dr. Hadi Adanali, Adviser to the Prime Minister of Turkey, underscored that mutual distrust and mutual alienation dominate the atmosphere of interactions between communities. He drew attention to the need to unlearn ignorance, scale up efforts to develop further interactions among communities at grassroots level, to dwell upon school curricula as well as the need for a more positive role to be developed by media coverage, particularly through the Rapid Response Media Mechanism that was launched by the UN Alliance of Civilizations.

Mr. Nazim Ahmad, Representative in Portugal and in Mozambique of the Aga Khan Development Network, stressing that his understanding was underpinned by his own Shia Ismaili Muslim tradition, focused on the need to address not the so-called clash of civilizations but the clash of ignorance that is filled by the education vacuum that persists in not teaching enough about the others.

Ignorance, which can frequently lead to fear, is the root cause of many phobias, and is certainly at the heart of what is called Islamophobia. Some of the clashes, which captured the media headlines in some parts, occur where passions of free speech confuse liberty with license. In this regard, Mr. Nazim quoted His Highness the Aga Khan, the hereditary Imam of the time of the Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims, calling for a renewal of an ethical commitment or "ethical sensibility which can be shared across denominational lines and can foster a universal moral outlook" as a central requirement if we are to find our way through the minefields and quick sands of modern life.

With such an impressive number of panelists, because of lack of time it was not possible to enlarge the debate to the audience, much to the regret of some attendees who expressed their frustration. In his concluding remarks, President Sampaio expressed his satisfaction with the roundtable which brought to light some differences in points of views but also allowed a sharing of experiences, concerns and expectations, besides gathering ideas for possible future actions. In his final intervention, Mr. Riza pointed out that although the debate was very much focused on Muslims in Europe, Islamophobia is a global issue and also exists in the Muslim world, including in his own country, Pakistan.



Roundtable: Joint Reporting Across Cultures

Moderated by Patrick Butler, Vice-President of Programs at the International Center for Journalists, the session featured the awardees of the first UNAOC Cross-Cultural Reporting Award, who presented their work and discussed the challenges and opportunities they faced in producing it.

First prize winners Ruth Eglash of The Jerusalem Post and Hani Hazaimah of The Jordan Times explained how they developed columns on the state of relations between Israel and Jordan and how they coped with the debate this provoked. The team set out to investigate Israeli and Jordanian young people's perceptions of each other, 15 years after the two countries signed a peace treaty. They found startling evidence that the education systems in both countries foster prejudice and misunderstanding.

They decided the results of their reports would be too inflammatory to publish in either country, and the final product addressed why they could not tell the story. Their work appeared in The Huffington Post, The Jerusalem Post, Palestine Note, The Common Ground News Service and Radio Chicagoland.

Asmaa Fathy of Egyptian magazine El Mawqef Al Arabi, Aleksandar Milosevic of Daily Serbia, and Tarek Mounir of Egyptian newspaper Al Raai took second place for their innovative Web site Hijabskirt Info (hijabskirt.info). They explained how their website analyzed difference in cultural perceptions, starting with the Muslim hijab and the Western miniskirt. The Montenegro Daily News and AllVoices.com featured articles on this project.

Finally, third-place winners, Naveed Ahmad of Pakistan's Geo TV and Syria-based Alia Turki Al-Rabeo of the Kuwaiti newspaper, Awan, presented another multimedia Web site called Silent Heroes (www.silent-heroes.net), which profiles individuals who challenge stereotypes across cultural divides. In particular, the project profiles Maath Al Barmawy, a Syrian living in Karachi, Pakistan who helps Pakistani workers find jobs abroad. Stories in the package ran in 19 news outlets in the Middle East and Pakistan, including Urdu News, Iraqi123.com, and the Voice of America's Urdu Service.

The reporting teams were formed at a conference on Freedom of Expression in the Digital Age held in Alexandria, Egypt, in February 2010, supported by the UN Alliance of Civilizations and the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation and administered by the International Center for Journalists, with the support of the Alexandria Library. Meeting over a period of three days, 45 journalists participated in hands-on workshops on writing opinion pieces and using new digital tools. They engaged in vigorous debates on stereotypes, loaded language and graphic images.

Building Partnerships for the Online Community on Migration and Integration

Online Community on Migration and Integration — Building Inclusive Societies (IBIS): the newly launched website (www.unaoc.org/communities/migrationintegration) was introduced during this

session. IBIS aims at reinforcing efforts to harmonize the coexistence between newcomers and host communities, so as to improve social cohesion and to shift popular perceptions of migration — from threat to opportunity. IBIS is an interactive community that 1) highlights successful models of integration of migrants to counter polarizing speech and stereotypes, and 2) encourages the replication of these models in other contexts, while promoting further involvement of a wide range of stakeholders. As a source of information and a virtual space for exchange and learning, IBIS supports coordination and cooperation between integration practitioners and advocates for active involvement of governments in implementing socio-economic, political-legal and cultural integration practices, and in protecting migrants human rights and the well being of all communities involved.

The small but significant group of participants included representatives from civil society, and from local and national governments. Potential partners discussed ways to build partnerships around the Online Community on Migration and Integration, notably by disseminating the call for good practices in integration to National and Local Governments, Civil Society and the private sector of each country. Other contributions were discussed, such as cooperation on launching debates or workshops in the regions represented.

Presentation of the Anna Lindh Foundation Report on Intercultural Trends

Featuring H.E. Mr. André Azoulay, President of the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation and a member of the Alliance of Civilizations High-level Group; Eleonora Insalaco, Project Leader for the Anna Lindh Report; Dalia Mogahed, Executive Director of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies; Thomas Uthup, Research Director, UNAOC; and Emmanuel Kattan, Senior Communications Adviser, UNAOC, this session focused on the forthcoming 'Anna Lindh Report on Intercultural Trends'.

Panelists discussed the main components of the Anna Lindh Foundation Report, which features the very first public opinion poll carried out with Gallup

on cross-cultural trends and values across the 43 country 'Union for the Mediterranean'. The panel commended the Report's innovative participatory methodology, emphasized its outreach to ordinary voices, and its policy-relevance to the Mediterranean area.

This report represents a scientific tool which not only measures the evolution of our mutual perceptions, but which set outs a roadmap in terms of the priority actions we must implement in order to significantly reverse those trends towards discrimination, xenophobia and ideological clashes.

Another objective of the report is to explore, for the first time, the readiness of people across Europe, North Africa and the Middle East to a unified entity and a shared project around the Mediterranean. The Anna Lindh Report will be officially launched in September 2010.

Measuring the Impact of Intercultural Dialogue and Mainstreaming it in the Global Policy Agenda

The Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilizations held in Rio provided the platform to discuss informally the project of creating a measurement tool to assess the economic and social impact of intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity. After opening remarks from Jean-Christophe Bas at UNAOC, Catherine Fieschi from the British Council think-tank, Counterpoint; Pascale Thumerelle of Vivendi, and Katerina Stenou of UNESCO made interventions on this subject.

Although intercultural understanding and cultural diversity are crucial to peace and development, they do not yet figure as prominently on the global agenda. One main aim of a proposed project of "Measuring Impact of Intercultural Dialogue," therefore, would be to explore how best to mainstream intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity and make it an integral part of the sustainable development agenda.

Discussions then ensued on a basic measurement tool also serving as a ranking tool to enable this mainstreaming which would lead to greater clarity



of concept — and therefore greater potential buy-in. This would also reveal a clear connection between cultural relations policies and a country's capacity to deliver certain key public goods (stability, security, prosperity and development). Such measurement tools were also needed in the private sector which should work with the media, government, and civil society sectors on this project. Participants noted that while much of the data existed, what was needed was a repackaging of the data as well as some clear measures, although there was a caution against using measures that may be too stark, given the complexity of culture.

Participants agreed that the crucial next steps were to conduct a mapping exercise of existing data; soliciting guidance from organizations that have developed measurement tools; in parallel, to create a credible tool and advocate for its recognition in the sustainable development agenda at national and international forums; and have a follow-up meeting to reflect further on the nature and the content of the project and to set up an agenda.

UNESCO Special Event: Roundtable on the UNESCO World Report Investing in Cultural Diversity & Intercultural Dialogue

A Roundtable was organized by UNESCO for a regional launch of the UNESCO World Report Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural

Dialogue. The Round Table was chaired by Ms. Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, H.E. Mr. André Azoulay, President of the Anna Lindh Foundation, H.E. Olabiyi Babalola Joseph Yai, former Chairperson of UNESCO's Executive Board, Prof. Magda Abu-Fadil, Director of the Journalism Training Program at the American University of Beirut, Prof. Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, Professor of Anthropology and Social Sciences at the University of Chicago, with, as a conclusion, a video message by Prof. Homi Bhabha, Anne F. Rothenberg Professor and Director of the Humanities Center at Harvard University.

Ms. Bokova reminded the audience that the UNESCO World Report is the result of global consultations involving more than 50 experts worldwide for exploring new strategies aimed at favoring intercultural dialogue and taking stock of the importance of cultural diversity in education, science, culture and communication and information policies. She highlighted some of the key messages of the World Report, among which were: the importance of a dynamic approach to cultural diversity aiming at accompanying cultural change; the challenge of cultural identities and the need to recognize the existence of multiple identities facilitating intercultural exchange; the need to reject the 'clash of civilizations' thesis and any approach emphasizing differences and boundaries between cultures to the detriment of mutual exchange and enrichment; the need to integrate diversity in educational methods and contents and to fight against stereotypes in the media; the need to reconcile cultural diversity and universally proclaimed human rights through rejecting relativism; the importance of cultural diversity for sustainable development and social cohesion as well as for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. Azoulay strongly emphasized a rejection of the 'clash of civilizations' thesis and the need for common values, as it is one of the ambitions of the Mediterranean Union. Through the example of the city of Essaouira, in Morocco, he demonstrated how a diversity of cultures (Phoenicians, Jews, Berber and Muslim Arabs) can contribute to local development.

Ambassador Yai reminded that intercultural dialogue was UNESCO's very *raison d'être* and should not be interpreted as a mere reaction to 9/11. It is a difficult exercise, which implies to promote cultural literacy without falling into the trap of cultural

determinism, and requires self confidence, openness and reflexivity. Multilingualism and “passeurs” can contribute to it, and also new platforms aiming at a convergence of world memories.

Prof. Abu-Fadil underscored the huge challenges linked to the acceptance of cultural differences, while avoiding the pitfalls of stereotyping, political correctness and communitarian claims. Hence, journalists had great responsibility and it was important to provide them with proper tools for quality media.

Prof. Carneiro da Cunha agreed that intercultural competencies should become an educational priority through multilingual education and the development of cultural intelligence. She also pointed out the challenge of protecting minority cultures without harming the vitality of their traditions as well as the need for new definitions of ‘development’ and ‘progress’.

Prof. Bhabha praised the World Report for being a provocative tool that can positively contribute to the adoption of new strategies for intercultural dialogue. He stressed that we live in a world in transition, where identities are changing and where diversity tends to turn into difference, thus creating polarity and conflict. For countering such tendencies, political rationality may not be enough. What is needed is to counterbalance humiliation, shame, fear and anxiety phenomena.

Expanding International Exchanges and Scholarship Programs Session

(Organized with AFS Intercultural Programs and the Institute of International Education)

Several Group of Friends countries emphasize exchanges in their public policies, either explicitly through National Plans for the UN Alliance of Civilizations or implicitly through several programs in this area. The objectives of this session were to examine the structural, political and operational challenges that inhibit the expansion of exchanges, explore good practices, and make recommendations to enhance exchanges.

This session convened focal points/designees from ISESCO (Dr. Ahmed Said Ould Bah, Chef De Cabinet); Germany (Ambassador Heidrun Tempel and Katja

Weigelt), Jordan (Rakan Abu-Dalhoun, Ministry of Foreign Affairs), the United States (Rick A. Ruth, US Department of State) Romania (Wajiha Haris, Scheherzade Foundation), New Zealand (Alex Lennox-Marwick, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Qatar (Maha Al-Merekhi (Qatar Foundation). The session was chaired by Francisco Cazal, CEO, AFS Intercultural Programs. Dr. Manuela Höglmeier of the German Institute for Foreign Cultural relations made a presentation of the German CrossCulture Internships Programme, which provides an opportunity to young professionals and volunteers from Germany and countries of the Islamic world to gain professional competence and international experience through placements in various professional areas in the other cultural area. The rapporteur for the session was Ms. Melissa Miles of AFS Intercultural Programs.

In order to confront some of the challenges and noting that solutions will need to be adapted to be culturally relevant, the following initial suggestions were proposed at the session with various players — governments, civil society actors, corporations, religious communities and others — in mind:

- Exchanges need to be established as a strategic political priority, especially at the national level. National actors should be engaged in establishing student mobility on their agendas, especially with reference to students from groups that are from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Formal recognition of the value and role of intercultural exchange should be included in national public policies in areas such as educational, cultural, human resource and economic policies, and funding emphases must be linked accordingly.



- To help do this, the effectiveness of exchanges needs to be demonstrated by ongoing evaluation of programs and their impact. Evaluations should be made in audience-appropriate terms and provide timely, actionable information to policy and decision makers so that they continue to appreciate and emphasize exchanges in public policy and lend their support to remove related barriers.
- Continue ongoing dialogue between key players in the exchanges arena, possibly via an umbrella framework but informally as well. It was proposed that interested actors might come together in Berlin in October 2010 and have an initial discussion at the UNAOC's focal point meeting. Gatherings and discussion should focus on successful practices sharing, including how to deepen impact via the greater use of intercultural communications and educational content in programs.
- Leverage technology to create and promote information centers for actors to learn about and contribute to exchange opportunities, including innovation initiatives.

These might be explored further in the report that the UN Alliance of Civilizations, in collaboration with AFS Intercultural Programs (AFS) and International Institute of Education (IIE), will publish for the Doha Forum in 2011 in which various experts will provide an overview of the existing landscape and further analyses of challenges and needs. The UN Alliance of Civilizations was urged to lead on the issue of international exchanges by sensitizing the global community on the impact of exchanges on promoting positive intercultural relations.

UNAOC Chair on Media and Information Literacy for Intercultural Dialogue

The UNAOC Chair on Media and Information Literacy for Intercultural Dialogue (UAC-MILID) is a network of six universities (from Brazil, China, Egypt, Jamaica, Spain and USA) working together within the overall thematic framework of developing more inclusive societies through the implementation of media and information literacy in educational systems

(from primary to higher education) around the world. Each academic year one of the universities will be the "engine" in charge of developing, coordinating, implementing and promoting the outcomes of UAC-MILID. UAC-MILID is an initiative developed in collaboration with UNESCO and will be integrated within UNESCO's Chairs and UNITWIN program.

The session was well attended with representatives of eleven countries in addition to UNESCO and the European Union. Dr. Laura Cervi, Autònoma University of Barcelona, presented the draft program of the first year of UAC-MILID. Highlights of the program will include an international symposium in the Spring of 2011 in Cordoba, Spain, attended by all UAC-MILID members as well as representatives of educational broadcasters from around the world. The first year will conclude in Cairo with the presentation of a book, co-published with NORDICOM, assembling thematically relevant articles from the six universities. The event will be co-organized by Cairo University and will also mark the commencement of activities of UAC-MILID's second year.

Dr. Esther Hamburger, Sao Paulo University, presented the draft program of the third year of UAC-MILID, when the SPU will become the engine of UAC-MILID. SPU's contribution will mostly be built upon SPU's strong citizen media programs and will involve the production of television programming focusing on the promotion of intercultural dialogue. Dr. Mogens Schmidt, Deputy Assistant Director General, Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO, addressed the participants connecting UAC-MILID not only with UNESCO's Chairs and UNITWIN program but also with the upcoming UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Teachers Training Curriculum, a resource aiming at facilitating the inclusion of Media



and Information Literacy education in schools of education around the world. Matteo Zacchetti, Media Literacy Programme, European Commission, outlined the significance of UAC-MILID and encouraged the development of working collaborations with the European Commission's Media Literacy initiatives.

Inauguration in Rio and Lisbon of the Two First Dialogue Cafés of the Global Network

On 27th May 2010, the first two Dialogue Cafés in Lisbon at the Museum of Design and Fashion (MUDE) and Rio de Janeiro at the Candido Mendes University (UCAM) were officially launched benefiting from the global outreach given to the event by the 3rd Global Forum of the Alliance.

For the launch, an ambitious day long program of events was prepared and implemented to capture the diversity and richness of the kinds of activities to be enabled through Dialogue Café. The kick-off started with a discussion between a group of school students aged 15-18 in Lisbon and a group in Rio de Janeiro, on the subject of sustainability and climate change. This was followed by a discussion between university students on the theme of e-learning. The session was introduced by Eliane Costa in Rio de Janeiro and then the students talked animatedly on issues such as distance learning, digital inclusion and new models of learning.

This was followed by the official inauguration. In Rio de Janeiro, participants included Prof. Candido Mendes, the Dean of the Candido Mendes University, host of the Dialogue Café, President Sampaio, the High Representative for the UN Alliance of Civilizations, Diogo Vasconcelos for the Dialogue Café Association, and Simon Willis, CISCO Global Vice-President. In Lisbon, the ceremony was attended by the Mayor of Lisbon, Mr. Antonio Costa; the President of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, partner to the Project, Mr. Rui Vilar; the President of the FCCN, Mr. Pedro Veiga; and the Director of MUDE, Ms. Barbara Coutinho.

The official inauguration was followed by a cultural moment including traditional Portuguese Fado, theatre sketches, bossa nova and jazz.



The Role of Cultural Routes in Building the Alliance of Civilizations

(Organized by Abraham Path International)

In the past two decades the rise of travel with meaning on cultural, historical, and religious based routes has skyrocketed in popularity. As but one example, between 2002 and 2008, general tourism grew by 33 percent, but religious and 'travel with meaning' swelled by a startling 85 percent. Given this dramatic increase, this panel asked the following primary question: How can these cultural routes and other tourism related products help in the creation of Alliances of Civilizations?

The session drew on the experience of three existing cultural routes — Abraham's Path; the Camino Santiago de Compostela; and the Via Francigena. Dr. William Ury, Chair, Abraham's Path and Dr. Yunus E. Sola, Executive Director, Abraham's Path facilitated the session.

The panel, which included the president of the Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce, Salim Taufic Schahin, the organization's Foreign Relations vice president, Helmi Nasr, and its secretary general, Michel Alaby, moved the participants, who witnessed the growing commitment of youth to the different paths discussed. "The presence of the young people was very stimulating, because the future is in their hands. It is important to see that they already have notions of respect, tolerance, and peace," stated Schahin.

Creative Economy: Trade as Appreciation of Cultural Diversity

(Organized by the UNDP Special Unit for South-South Cooperation)

Among the several arguments advanced during the Third UNAOC Forum, there was a reiterative and consistent call for i) contributions to an action plan to advance a Culture of Peace, ii) creativity and innovation to advance this movement, and iii) using the arts, communication media and other creative sectors to contribute to that approach. These calls found enormous echo during the panel discussion on “Creative Economy: Trade as Appreciation of Cultural Diversity.”

Mr. Simplicio, Chief at the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation in UNDP, contextualized these discussions. Mr. Ben-Shalom, Senior Advisor for the UN International Decade for a Culture of Peace, summarized that Decade’s agenda; while Ms. Deheinzelin, Head of Entusiasmo Cultural, discussed the Creative Economy. Ms. Mouchly-Weiss, Vice Chairman at Kreab Gavin Anderson, discussed how cultural perspectives affect peace and how those perceptions can be influenced through international trade and cultural exchanges.

Ms. Pastuk, Director of Acao Comunitaria do Brasil (ACB), and Ms. Guimaraes, Director of International Programmes at the Building and Social Housing Foundation (BSHF), described the strategy through which their practices promote a Culture of Peace through creative economic activity. ACB’s successes developing creative skills for youth in economically disfavored neighborhoods not only enhances the livelihoods of this NGOs’ beneficiaries, it also reduces urban violence by providing employment alternatives. BSHF’s promotion of exchanges of best practices brings different cultures closer together in the exploration of creative solutions to common problems.

Two assertions received much support from all panelists. First, countries with flourishing trade relations are more likely to remain at peace, since their degree of interdependence is higher and since war would undermine the benefits of trade. Second, trade in creative goods and services, such as journalism, music, dance, fashion, etc. also

contributes to a Culture of Peace. Creative goods and services convey information about diverse cultures and thereby promote appreciation of cultural diversity.

Promoting Values and Principles for a Sustainable Future

(Organized by the Earth Charter Initiative and the Glocal Forum)

The Earth Charter has been used widely as an ethical framework and educational instrument around the world with a vision that humanity “must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth Community with a common destiny.” Values and principles of Earth Charter are essential for the building of any Alliance of Civilizations.

Speakers at this session were Oscar Motomura, Member of Earth Charter International Council and CEO of Amana-Key Group; Leonardo Boff, Theologian, Author and Member of Original Earth Charter Commission; and Cristina Moreno, Strategic Planning Specialist and member of the Earth Charter Network of Volunteers in Brazil.

The speakers explained the systemic/integrated nature of the Earth Charter vision, and of its potential to inspire the peoples of the world to engage collectively in actions that reflect the essential ethical principles for sustainable ways of living. The Earth Charter focuses on four integrated pillars:

- Respect and care for the community of life
- Ecological integrity
- Social and economic justice
- Democracy, nonviolence, and peace

In order to better understand these interconnected values and principles and how they can be used as a reference for everyday activities, Boff called attention to respect and care for the community of life and also, for democracy and peace.

He said that for building a just, sustainable and peaceful global society, we need to understand the true sense of Universal Responsibility, which

is, quoting the Earth Charter: "The spirit of human solidarity and kinship with all life is strengthened when we live with reverence for the mystery of being, gratitude for the gift of life, and humility regarding the human place in nature."

Oscar Motomura talked about social and economic justice and ecological integrity. He explained how the Earth Charter can be quite instrumental in policy making, business, planning and education processes. In other words, he said that it can be a reference in different realms of the human activities in a very natural/biological form. Motomura expressed his point of view about business Ethics and business responsibility to social justice.

Finally, Cristina Moreno talked about the Earth Charter in Action Movement and how this volunteer initiative is generating creative actions all around the world, with a special view in Brazil.

Presentation of Budrus, Award-Winning Documentary Film, Followed by Discussion With the Director



The Rio Forum saw the presentation of the award-winning feature documentary film Budrus. The film tells the story of a Palestinian community organizer, Ayed Morrar, who unites local Fatah and Hamas members, along with Israeli supporters, in an unarmed movement to save his village of Budrus from destruction by Israel's Separation Barrier.

Success eludes them until his 15-year-old daughter, Iltezam, launches a women's contingent that quickly moves to the front lines. Struggling side by side, father and daughter unleash an inspiring movement that is still gaining ground today.

During the discussion that followed, the Director, Julia Bacha, explained that, while the film is about one Palestinian village, it tells a much bigger story about what is possible in the Middle East. Ayed succeeded in doing what many people believe to be impossible: he united feuding Palestinian groups, including Fatah and Hamas; he brought women to the heart of the struggle by encouraging his daughter Iltezam's leadership; and welcomed hundreds of Israelis to cross into Palestinian territory for the first time and join this nonviolent effort.

Presentation of "Then and Now: Beyond Borders and Differences"

The presentation of the film Then and Now: Beyond Borders and Differences was preceded by a short selection of awarded videos from the PLURAL + Youth Video Festival. Recognizing youth as powerful agents of social change in a world often characterized by intolerance, cultural and religious divisions, PLURAL+ is aimed at involving youth in addressing the key challenges in their communities related to migrant integration, inclusiveness, identity, diversity, human rights and social cohesiveness. William Lacy Swing, General Director, International Organizations for Migration, and Marc Scheuer, Director, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, opened the session with remarks pointing at the need to support young people's voices in the current and often heated debate regarding migration, and identified PLURAL + as a good platform for supporting youth media production and distribution. Enrique Gaspar, President, NEXOSAlianza, gave the PLURAL + A Collective Effort Award to representatives of the youth video makers of "Meeting in Mars", from Instituto Marlin Azul, Brazil.

The session continued with the presentation of the first five segments of Then and Now: Beyond Borders and Differences, a collective film addressing contemporary forms of spirituality within a cross-



cultural perspective. This film project, which will ultimately consist of 15 short segments from 15 filmmakers from across the world, is produced by ART for the World and will also include an art exhibition which will be featured during the 2011 Venice Biennale. Participants in the discussion included Adelina von Furstenberg, President, ART for the World; Danilo Santos de Miranda, Regional Director, SESC Sao Paulo; Jean-Pierre Titz, Head of History Education Division, Council of Europe; and the filmmakers Tata Amaral (Brazil), Fanny Ardant (France) and Masbedo (Italy). Jordi Torrent, Media Literacy Program Manager, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, moderated the session.



Open Space

As an experimental event, several organizations were provided the opportunity to make presentations in their field to interested participants. Scheduled organizations and topics included:

- EAVI (European Association for Viewers Interests) Secretary General Paolo Celot presented the results of a study entitled "Assessment Criteria for Media Literacy Events"
- Jaime Carril, Elias Szczytnicki, Rosa Guerreiro, Anisia de Figueiredo, Alberto Milkewitz from RILEP (Latin-American Inter-Religious Network on Peace Education) presented an update on their efforts, in conjunction with Religions for Peace International and UNESCO, to promote just and harmonious societies in their region through formal and non-formal peace education programs.
- Dr. Ibrahim Saleh Al-Naimi, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue, made a presentation on "The Role of Religious leaders in Promoting Human Solidarity."
- Patrick Haenni, from Religioscope Foundation/ Islamonline, Switzerland, presented his new book, co-authored with Stephane Lathion, entitled *Les Minarets de la discorde. Eclairage sur un débat suisse et européen* (Infolio, Paris, 2009).
- Peter (Pece) Gorgievski, Global Dialogue Foundation, updated the audience on the meeting in Melbourne, Australia, in October 2010 on "Unity in Diversity — Global Dialogue Summit."
- Dr. Abdelmadjid Amrani and Dr. Hassina Hemamid of the University of Batna had a presentation entitled "An Appeal to One Civilization to the One World."
- Prof. Shulamith Koenig of the People's Movement for Human Rights Learning, spoke on the Initiative of Developing Human Rights Cities.
- Ajarat Bada (Nigeria, USA), Catherine Peter (South-Africa/UK), Bogdan Gogulan (Russia/UK) of the One Young World made a presentation on the "Missing Millennium Development Goal — Ensure Interfaith Collaboration for Peace."
- Luciano Vian and Marilia Lobo of Verus Comunicação, spoke on "Portal RPI: Culture as Business Strategy."
- Sarah Zaaïmi, Youth and Education Programmes Officer of the Anna Lindh Foundation spoke about her organization's work in building bridges between cultures in the Mediterranean.



APPENDICES

List of Panelists, Presenters and Heads of Delegations

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Al-Ahram, Egypt

His Excellency Mr. Mohamed-El

Aziz Ben Achour

Director-General of ALESCO

Mr. J. Michael Adams

President elect, IAUP and President,
Fairleigh Dickinson University, USA

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Adviser to the Prime Minister of Turkey

Mr. Alex Afonso da Cruz Pamplona

People's University Institute

Mr. Naveed Ahmad

GEO TV, Pakistan

Mr. Nazim Ahmad Aga Khan

Development Network Representative in
Portugal and Mozambique

Mr. Muddassar Ahmed

CEO, Unitas Communications

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His Excellency Abdul Rahman

Mohamed Al Ouwaisi

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Ms. Abeer Adnan Ala Deen

OneVoice Movement

Mr. Michel Alaby

"Secretary-General, Arab Brazilian
Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Farzeen Alam

OGGRO – Agamir Bangladesh

Mr. Gustavo Ali Alarcon

Youth of the Council of Methodist
Evangelical Churches of Latin America
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Ms. Majd Albeltaji

UNOY Peacebuilders

Mr. Oscar Antonio Alberto Navia

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United Nations Association of the
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Mr. Francesco Alessandria

Architect and Professor of Technical
Urban Planning

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Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saudi
Arabia Saudi Arabia

Mr. Ahmed Abdul Ghafoor

Mahmood Alghlam

President of the Iraqi Sunni Waqf Iraq

Mr. Mohammad Alhamadi

Delegate from Qatar

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Ambassador of El Salvador in
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Ms. Fanny Ardant

Actress and Filmmaker, France

Ms. Askin Asan

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Mr. Mohammad Asideh

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Secretary-General of the United Nations

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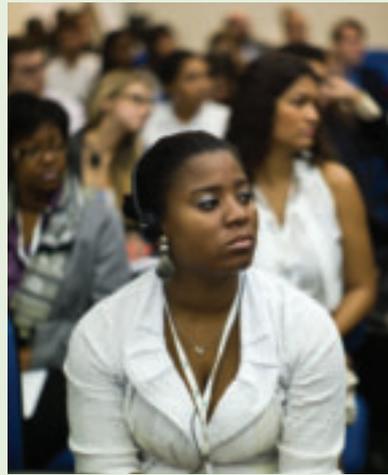
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