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ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

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THE ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

YOUTH FORUM

Third Forum of the Alliance

*Rio de Janeiro,
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Ladies and Gentlemen

Dear Friends

- It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to the 3rd Global Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations. Thanks for being here!

- From Istanbul to Rio, what a long journey! I am not thinking only in terms of distance, of elapsed time, but also in terms of progress achieved.

- Indeed you are young and you would probably wish the Global Youth Movement to go faster and to achieve more.

- But believe me: that is not as easy as we might like it to be. However, that is all the more reason to try harder, with all our will and with all our tools

- It is better to move smoothly and shape a solid framework for the Global Youth Movement clear about its goals that lives up to the expectations than have only a few ideas that are unlikely to turn into achievements.

Dear friends

- I hope this reunion in Rio will be a fantastic opportunity for you to make a step further in your debates regarding the Youth Global Movement.
- But I also hope that you can benefit from being here to enrich your experience and knowledge about the “Other” – Brazil is an extraordinary example of how to live together peacefully and live up to the best of various traditions.
- Furthermore, I draw your attention to two new opportunities that the Alliance created for you and that will be announced tomorrow

- The first one is the 1st AoC Summer Scholl, which will be organized in Portugal from 15-21 August 2010.

- The aim of this summer school is to bring together young people (up to the age of 30) from various regions and different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, academic and professional profiles, walks of life and interests.

- Its purpose is threefold:
 - to share worldviews, knowledge and experiences;
 - to create a network of “Alliance of Civilizations’ voices”;
 - to agree on a number of projects to be developed through the network of the “Dialogue Café”.

- The summer school will combine a wide array of activities ranging from courses on various subjects related with history, politics, law, international affairs, science, media literacy and religion; programs on the Alliance of Civilizations' initiative and projects, and on other initiatives aimed at promoting intercultural and interreligious dialogue and cooperation; project management workshops; seminars on capacity building; to a number of cultural, gastronomic and athletic activities.

- However, I would very much look forward to receiving suggestions from you on how you see this opportunity and how to live up to the best of your expectations.

- The second project that I want to highlight here is the Dialogue Café, which will be launched **in Lisbon** and Rio de Janeiro at 3rd Global Forum of UN Alliance of Civilizations, but we hope that 10 more Dialogue Cafes will open on 5 continents by the end of 2011!

- As you may know, Dialogue Café is a non-profit initiative, sponsored by the Alliance, 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.

- Dialogue Café results from the radical but simple idea that people have many things in common and given the opportunity, they will explore their common interests, sparking collaborations and stimulating ideas that address the major issues of today.

- Furthermore, Dialogue Café believes that these kinds of conversations and collaborations can lead to new ways of thinking and doing: they can empower individuals and communities, break down prejudice and misconceptions and promote greater understanding and co-operation across cultures.

- So, I think, dear Friends, that you have here an extraordinary new tool which is at your service!

Dear Friends

- I don't want to take more of your time as I know you have a busy programme for this afternoon.
- However, before closing, let me make a quotation from Phil Wood and Charles Landry whom remind us in their book *The Intercultural City, Planning for Diversity Advantage*, that "dealing with and valuing diversity, difference and the desire for distinctiveness is the central dilemma of our age. Acknowledging and living at ease with the landscape of diversities is different from focusing on differences. The challenges is to create a coherent narrative for diversity and how it can answer the problems of our age."
- I thought this might inspire your works
- Enjoy Brazil!
- Many thanks