



From: High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations
To: Participants of the UNAOC Group of Friends Meeting
Date and Venue: 19 April 2017, CR-2, UNHQ, New York

Annotated Agenda

1) The Role of Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue Processes as a Tool for Preventing Conflict and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding

The Secretary-General has emphasized since taking office his commitment to integrating prevention to the three pillars of the work of the United Nations. As he indicated, “Our most serious shortcoming — and here I refer to the entire international community – is our inability to prevent crises”. Enhancing the capacity within the United Nations system to advance this agenda in the field will require enormous effort. The Secretary-General has already pointed the way forward to serious reforms for that purpose.

The Secretary-General knows that dialogue is a critical tool to be used in pursuing effective preventive action. As he has said, “...we can achieve this only through reasoned discussion, based on facts and the pursuit of truth”. UNAOC has consistently championed the importance of dialogue in preventing conflict and diffusing religiously and culturally based tensions. The 2006 High-level Group Report guiding UNAOC activities called for the use of dialogue processes to promote social inclusion. It emphasized the need for a dialogue among nations based on universal values and fundamental principles of human rights to prevent polarization.

In that regard, the High Representative has focused his attention on the role of religious leaders and interfaith organizations in fostering dialogue between and among religious identity groups. To that end he, along with the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly, hosted a High-Level Thematic Debate at the General Assembly in April 2015 titled, “Promoting Tolerance and Reconciliation: Fostering Peaceful, Inclusive Societies and Countering Violent Extremism”.

In this context, the High Representative has invited the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Tarranco, to address the Group of Friends and expand on the role of interreligious and intercultural dialogue in preventing crises and fostering peace and reconciliation.

2) UNAOC Planned Activities for 2017

The High Representative will address the Group of Friends to provide an advance view of the activities planned for 2017. This includes the projects anticipated as well as those special events now under consideration.

3) AOB