

## **Living together in Inclusive societies: A challenge and a goal**

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Representing UNESCO's Director-General at the 7th Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAO) held in Baku, Azerbaijan, Qian Tang, Assistant Director-General for Education, emphasized 'the immense need for social cohesion and intercultural dialogue in these turbulent times'.

Addressing the UNAOC Group of Friends High Level Meeting on 26 April, Mr Tang underlined the challenges facing UNESCO in fulfilling its mission to contribute to peace, the eradication of poverty, and the promotion of sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information. He reiterated the central role of education as the world faces 'the real danger of losing young women and men to violent extremism and forced migrations (...) There is no stronger foundation [than Education] for recovery, and reconciliation,' he said.'

'Mr Tang said that, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, notably SDG 4 on education, UNESCO works towards 'inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.'

'He underlined that Global Citizenship Education 'nurtures respect for all, a sense of belonging to a common humanity and helps learners become responsible global citizens in a diverse and increasingly complex world'.

He also highlighted the pertinence of initiatives led by UNESCO such as Unite4Heritage global media campaign, the Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Programme for a Culture of Peace and Dialogue and the UNESCO-UNAOC-UNITWIN Network on Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue.

The Assistant Director-General for Education ended by recalling UNESCO's Director-General statement during the previous World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue held in Baku: 'Cultural diversity is the other name for human dignity and human rights. All cultures are interlinked, and we need to embrace them all, to fully feel ourselves, to fully feel human'. During his visit to Baku, Mr Tang met Azerbaijani government officials, including the Minister of Education, to discuss cooperation between Azerbaijan and UNESCO in the field of education.