

Annual Report of the **United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)**

JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2024



#OneHumanity. Many cultures.





UNAOC

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

The present report reflects the main activities and projects carried out by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) between January and December 2024.

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"It is my profound pride to lead a small but agile office whose staff demonstrate their resolve and dedication to promoting peace, mutual respect, and understanding across cultures and nations."



FOREWORD

A MESSAGE FROM THE UNAOC HIGH REPRESENTATIVE

I am delighted to present the 2024 annual report of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), which outlines the initiatives and impact made by the UNAOC team across policy, advocacy, and capacity-building areas. It is my profound pride to lead a small but agile office whose staff demonstrate their resolve and dedication to promoting peace, mutual respect, and understanding across cultures and nations.

The year 2024 has witnessed a critical juncture in global peace and security, marked by multiple conflicts and crises that contain identity-based components, exacerbate divisions and erode trust. Never before have the global community's aspirations for durable peace and a brighter future for all been so dire. With that in mind,

I put together the UNAOC Plan of Action for 2024-2026, which serves as our roadmap and framework to launch new initiatives to serve humanity. UNAOC has also provided support for the "Pact for the Future", negotiated and adopted by Member States in September 2024, and we remain committed to implementing the Pact's goals and actions that fall under the UNAOC mandate.

The year 2024 has also been quite notable for the Alliance. We marked the 20th anniversary since the Governments of Spain and Türkiye joined forces in initiating the idea of the Alliance in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks in New York and the chain of terrorist attacks that followed in Bali, Madrid, London and Istanbul. An original concept of bringing the



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international community together and building bridges between societies in an effort to help prevent identity-based conflicts and sustain peace evolved into UNAOC – a well-established entity within the United Nations Secretariat, supported today by its Group of Friends. I am very pleased that the Group of Friends have enlarged over the years. During the reporting period (January to December 2024), the total number have reached 160 members including Member States and international organizations.

One of the highlights in 2024, was the 10th UNAOC Global Forum, which took place in the vibrant town of Cascais, generously hosted by Government of Portugal. The Forum was a remarkable event that enabled UNAOC to celebrate its achievements, dive into the evolution of the global landscape from 2004 to 2024, and chart the way forward for the organization. Over a hundred UNAOC programme alumni and beneficiaries testified in Cascais how impactful and life-changing their experiences with UNAOC have been. Nearly 120 official delegations adopted the Cascais political declaration, underscoring their support for UNAOC as a unique and inclusive multi-stakeholder platform for the United Nations contributing to advancing the culture of peace and promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue for peace and mutual respect. The declaration also reflected the support the UNAOC Group of Friends to my initiatives to advance UNAOC programming activities and to continue promoting the vision of an Alliance for Peace and living together as one humanity.

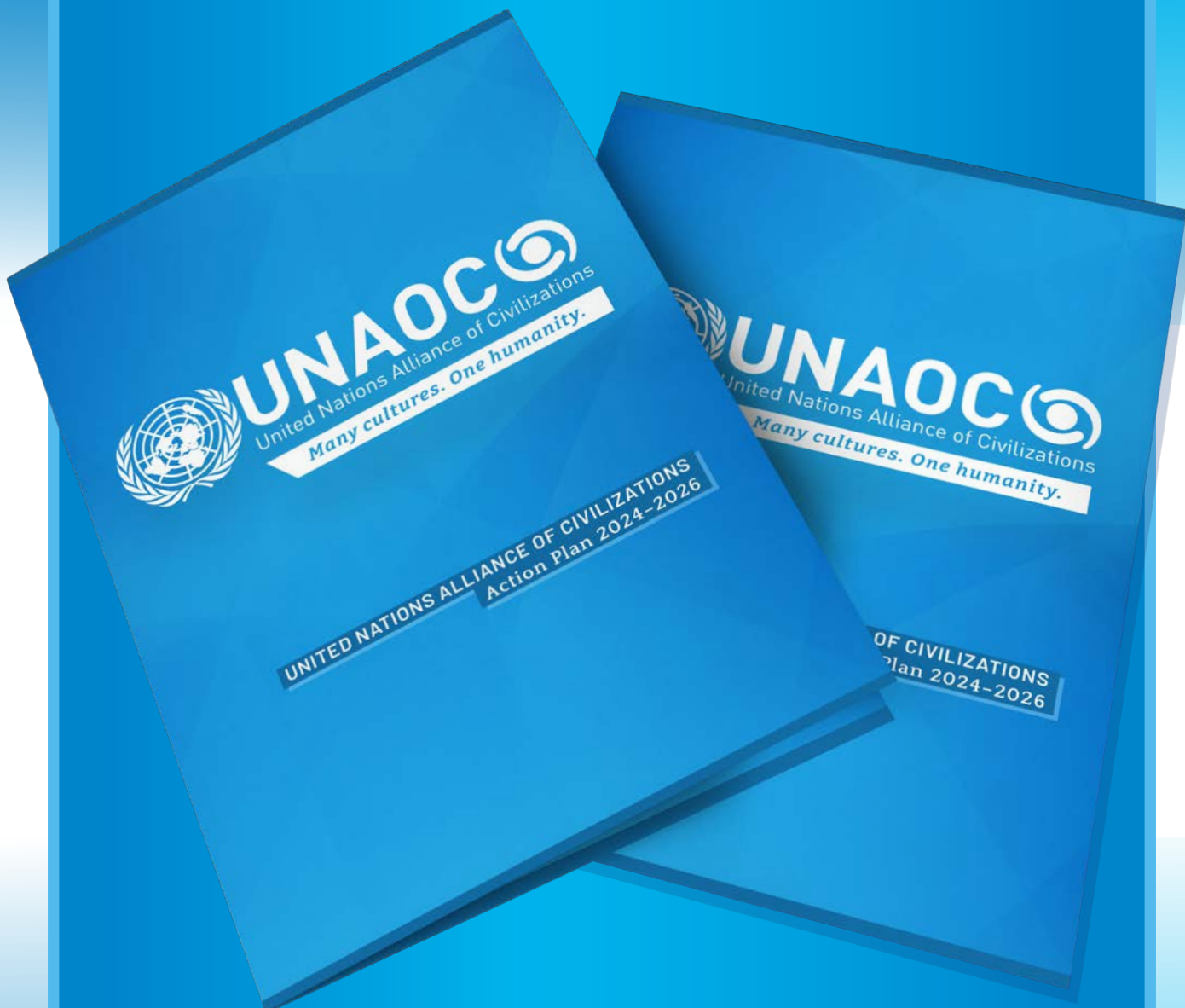
I take the opportunity to extend my profound gratitude to all our partners and donors, who provided in-kind support to UNAOC activities and contributed to the voluntary trust fund. I especially express my deep appreciation for the two co-sponsors of UNAOC, the Governments of Spain and Türkiye for their consistent political and financial support over the past twenty years.

Through the unwavering commitment of our partners, we helped empower and strengthen the capacities of civil society organizations in Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and Africa. We provided opportunities for young people to be heard in international fora and make a meaningful contribution to policy dialogues in the fields of global peace and security, conflict prevention and resolution. As its *raison d'être*, UNAOC served as a platform for intercultural and interreligious dialogue by convening advocacy and mediation within and between diverse faiths and cultural communities. We have also continued to spearhead the implementation of several recommendations in the United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites and delivered a multi-stakeholder United Nations conference in Cascais, taking stock of the progress made and collecting recommendations for future activities. All of our work has been delivered in close collaboration with the United Nations system offices and agencies, leveraging each other's expertise and available resources.

As we embark on 2025, I look ahead with optimism. Lifted by the commitments of Member States to support UNAOC and announcements made in Cascais, I will steer UNAOC as a soft power tool for preventive diplomacy with my utmost determination. We will continue to diffuse tensions in our fragmented world and forge peaceful coexistence on the ground. And we will spare no effort in standing up against all forms of hatred and discrimination, promoting dialogue and mutual respect, and protecting human rights and the dignity of all.

Miguel Ángel Moratinos

United Nations Under-Secretary-General,
High Representative for the United Nations
Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)



In 2024, the High Representative developed and launched a new Action Plan for 2023-2026, outlining several additional focus areas and action points.



Scan the QR Code to Download the Action Plan.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2024–2026

INTRODUCTION BY MS. NIHAL SAAD, UNAOC DIRECTOR

Building on the UNAOC Action Plan 2019–2023, and taking into account emerging trends in the global peace and security landscape, the High Representative guided the [UNAOC Plan of Action for 2024–2026](#). The Plan outlines focus areas that enhance UNAOC's ability to carry out its mandate. Reflecting UNAOC's identity as a multi-stakeholder platform for dialogue across regions, the Plan prioritizes: prevention; mediation; preventing and counteracting violent extremism; promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue, including dialogue among civilizations for our shared humanity; and addressing religious intolerance, bigotry and discrimination in all its forms.

Guided by this framework, UNAOC advanced intercultural dialogue and fostered inclusive societies across many parts of the world through the implementation of various programs and initiatives across its main pillars. With a renewed emphasis on education, youth empowerment, religious and cultural diversity and social inclusion, UNAOC programming addressed global challenges such as polarization and discrimination based on religion, belief or ethnicity while

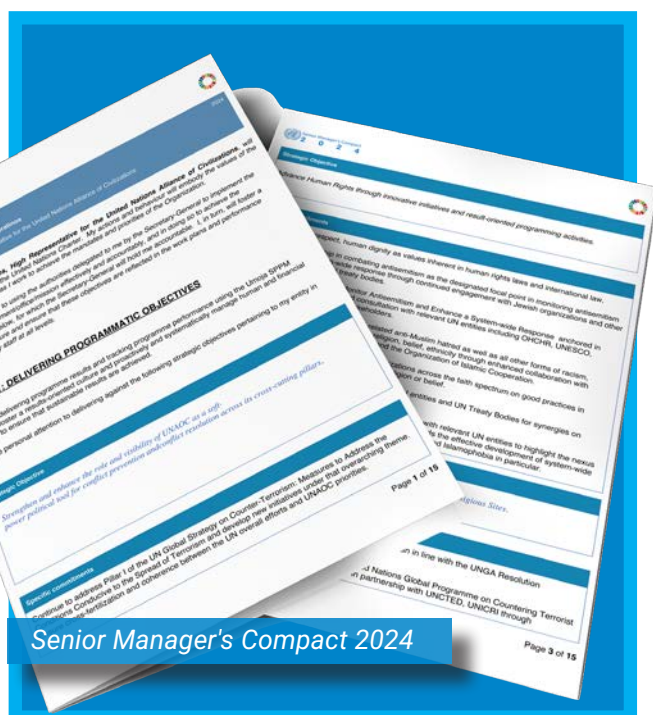


Ms. Nihal Saad,
Director, United Nations
Alliance of Civilizations

promoting mutual understanding among mutual respect. Leveraging its pioneering approach, UNAOC launched initiatives to empower youth as agents of change, strengthen inclusive education, and build bridges between cultures. These were implemented in close partnership with governments, municipalities, other UN entities, the private sector, academia, and civil society—demonstrating UNAOC's whole-of-society approach.

The High Representative continued to exercise the authority delegated by the United Nations Secretary-General, steering UNAOC in line with the priorities set out in his Senior Manager's Compact for 2024, while ensuring close complementarity and coherence with other United Nations entities with relevant mandates.

During the reporting period, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations continued to strengthen its convening power as a global platform for dialogue and a bridge-builder across diverse religions, beliefs and cultures staying true to our motto, "Many cultures, one humanity".



Senior Manager's Compact 2024

MISSION AND VISION

UNAOC serves as a soft-power political tool of the United Nations Secretary-General for conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

UNAOC aims to improve understanding and cooperation among nations and peoples across cultures and to reduce polarization at local and global levels. UNAOC helps develop more inclusive societies in which diversity is experienced as an asset.

THE STATUS OF THE UNITED NATIONS INITIATIVE

UNAOC was launched in July 2005 by the former United Nations Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Kofi Annan, as a response to the need for a committed effort by the international community – both at the institutional and civil society levels – to bridge divides and overcome prejudice, misconceptions, misperceptions and polarization that potentially threaten world peace. The special status and mandate of UNAOC have been recognized by the Member States in the United Nations General Assembly resolutions A/RES/64/14 of 10 November 2009 and A/RES/69/312 of 6 July 2015.



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of Civilizations

ascais, Portugal



UNITED NATIONS
ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS
GLOBAL FORUM

CASCAIS, PORTUGAL 2022



#CascaisForum



CHAPTER 1

10TH UNAOC GLOBAL FORUM IN CASCAIS, PORTUGAL



On 25-27 November 2024, UNAOC convened its **10th Global Forum** under the overarching theme, **“United in Peace: Restoring Trust, Reshaping the Future – Reflecting on Two Decades of Dialogue for Humanity”**. The Forum was generously hosted by Portugal under the leadership of H.E. Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Host Country, who opened the event and welcomed over 1,200 participants to the vibrant city of Cascais.

Political leaders, representatives of international and regional organizations, religious leaders and faith actors, the private sector, civil society, academia, youth, arts and media, as well as donor agencies and foundations addressed the global issues pertinent to peace and security and called for restoring trust and

for uniting in peace. They reflected on the original concept of the ‘Alliance of Civilizations’, initiated in September 2004 by the Government of Spain and co-sponsored by the Government of Türkiye, and how it evolved into a vibrant and well-established United Nations entity, supported by 160 members of the UNAOC Group of Friends today. Participants reflected on the enduring mission of UNAOC to promote dialogue, trust and mutual understanding, while reaffirming its commitment to fostering peace and inclusion in an increasingly interconnected and multicultural world.

The three-day gathering featured two plenary sessions and nine thematic panels, covering themes relevant to the Alliance’s cross-cutting pillars and priority areas.



“The most powerful force of all is the recognition that we are more united by our common fate than divided by our distinct identities. That is the essence of the United Nations – and the raison d’être of the Alliance of Civilizations. Let’s stand together with our shared faith in humanity.”

H.E. Mr. António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General, Cascais, November 2024

“The preventive diplomacy must be focused on intercultural dialogue, interfaith dialogue, such as we see here in the Alliance of Civilizations... It is necessary that we raise our vision to better understand, more deeply understand everything that unites us. It must be what drives us as humanity to seek the best for us on this planet. The Alliance of Civilizations is the diplomacy of values, focused on people, on tearing down walls and sharing spaces.”

His Majesty Don Felipe VI, King of Spain, Cascais, November 2024





H.E. Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Host Country; H.E. Mr. António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General; His Majesty King Felipe VI of Spain; H.E. Mr. Hakan Fidan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye, and the High Representative for UNAOC at the Opening Ceremony of the 10th UNAOC Global Forum, Cascais, November 2024.

"I want to highlight the importance of the meeting today – it is urgent that we represent an Alliance inspired by the United Nations... It is a significant Forum in the world because the world is marred by selfishness, intolerance, arrogance and isolationism."

H.E. Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of Portugal, Cascais, November 2024



Ms. Nihal Saad, UNAOC Director, and Mr. Caetano Xavier from Portugal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, served as the Masters of Ceremony.



UNAOC HIGH-LEVEL GROUP OF FRIENDS MEETING

At the **UNAOC high-level meeting of the Group of Friends**, attended by 118 official delegations, delegates reaffirmed their political support for UNAOC, including through the adoption of the **Cascais Declaration**. The Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia announced its proposal to host the 11th UNAOC Global Forum in 2025.



"The Alliance is a crucial forum to demonstrate that many countries share the same vision and ready to change the current international system into a better one. We need to implement our action plan to realise the potential of the Alliance... We should increase the visibility of the Alliance, we need to transform the Alliance into a soft power tool..."

H.E. Mr. Hakan Fidan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye, Cascais, November 2024



"We support the UNAOC Plan of Action for 2024-2026 – this is an excellent tool to tackle many challenges before us today. (It is in line) with the Our Common Agenda and the Pact for the Future. It does contain a call for prevention, for multilateralism and intercultural dialogue."

H.E. Mr. José Manuel Albares Bueno, Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation of Spain, Cascais, November 2024

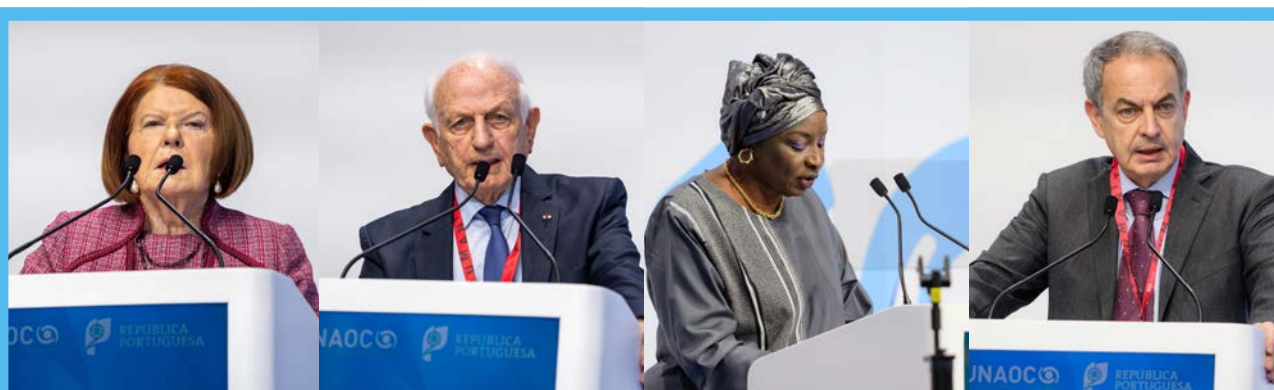


"The Alliance of Civilizations is an instrument, a concrete tool for peace and for intercultural dialogue, as well as interfaith dialogue that will help us fight extremism. The Cascais Declaration recognizes the invaluable work of the Alliance of Civilizations in the promotion of better and more proficient dialogue and respect of civilizations."

H.E. Mr. Paulo Rangel, Minister for State and Foreign Affairs of the Portuguese Republic, Cascais, November 2024

SPECIAL SEGMENTS

The Forum also presented special segments and side events, including **"Special Reflections"** in which prominent global leaders shared insights on the Alliance's two decades of dialogue, **a tribute to honour the memory of late President Jorge Sampaio**, the first High Representative for UNAOC and former President of Portugal. At the **Intergenerational Dialogue** entitled "Building the future together: Intergenerational dialogue for peace and sustainable development", UNAOC youth alumni and high-level officials addressed key challenges in advancing peace and fostering inclusion by reflecting on key Action Points outlined in the Pact for the Future. Hosted by the Government of Portugal and the Portuguese Football Federation, a special side event entitled **"One Humanity Match for Peace and Inclusion"** brought together celebrated athletes, global leaders and youth to highlight the transformative power of sports as a platform for promoting peace, diversity and inclusion.



H.E. Ms. Vaira Vīķe-reiberiga, President of Latvia (1999-2007); H.E. Mr. Andre Azoulay, Senior Advisor to His Majesty the King of Morocco; H.E. Ms. Aminata Touré, Prime Minister of Senegal (2013-2014); and H.E. Mr. Jose Luis Zapatero, Prime Minister of Spain (2004-2011) shared profound insights on the Alliance's two decades of dialogue and the urgent need to forge a path for peace for One Humanity in a segment titled "Special Reflections", Cascais, November 2024.

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“Fear can only kill freedom, dignity, and hope. The Alliance of Civilizations is a source of hope for us. We must support it...to serve peace above all else.”

H.E. Mr. Jose Luis Zapatero, Prime Minister of Spain (2004-2011)

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“The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations promotes mutual understanding between countries and peoples, overcoming hostility, prejudice and xenophobia. We highly value our long-term partnership with the Alliance. As a member of the Group of Friends of the Alliance, Kazakhstan actively participates in its events and contributes to the development and implementation of the initiatives of this organization.”

H.E. Mr. Maulen Ashimbayev, Chairman of the Senate of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan - Head of the Secretariat of the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, Cascais, November 2024

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“Jorge Sampaio was a wise man and, thanks to this, he was able to contribute to greater freedom, to democracy and to dialogue, as well as to this search for mutual understanding concerning the great issues faced by humanity.”

H.E. Mr. José Maria Pereira Neves, President of Cabo Verde, Cascais, November 2024

“President Sampaio’s visionary leadership was a building block of what UNAOC has become today.”

H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, former High Representative of UNAOC and President of the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, Cascais, November 2024

PLURAL+ YOUTH VIDEO FESTIVAL

The Forum served as a platform to showcase important projects and initiatives. During the **PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival** ceremony, UNAOC and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) announced the 2024 recipients, celebrating 32 standout films from 21 countries. In addition to International Jury Recognitions in three age categories, they conferred Special Recognitions for Combating Xenophobia and Discrimination, and for Inclusive Action on Climate Change and its Impact on Migration. A discussion segment with PLURAL+ partner representatives followed the screenings, providing a dynamic platform for an interactive discussion on the themes of the films and the broader impact of the Festival. The event underscored the continued importance of collaborative efforts to address global challenges and promote a culture of peace through innovative, youth-led media.



"The message I wanted to share through my video (is that) before anything else—our nationality, gender, or religion—we're all human. I truly believe that everyone has incredible potential to make the world a better place, and this video was born from my own belief in that... and in myself."

Junhyuk "Roy" Ahn (United States of America),
Recipient of the PLURAL+ 2024 International Jury Recognition,
13 to 17 Years Old Category, Cascais, November 2024

INTERCULTURAL INNOVATION HUB (IIH)

The **Intercultural Innovation Hub (IIH)** took center stage as ten grassroots initiatives from ten countries were honored in a prestigious ceremony at the Forum. As a flagship UNAOC initiative in partnership with the BMW Group and supported by Accenture, IIH has been a catalyst for change, empowering innovative solutions that foster intercultural dialogue, social cohesion and inclusive societies. The recognition of these initiatives underscored the vital role of the IIH in amplifying grassroots efforts, driving sustainable peace and reinforcing the global commitment to cultural diversity and mutual understanding as key pillars of social cohesion.



“Today, we face challenges in our society, politics, and on the playgrounds. Discrimination, racism and gender inequality. The solution is to break the borders of mindsets, beliefs and differences. To overcome barriers, we must build bridges.”

Mahdi Bahrami, Youth Leader and Coach,
Breaking Grounds - Social Change Through Sport
(Austria), 2024 Intercultural Innovation Hub Recipient





UNAOC YOUTH FORUM

At the **Youth Forum**, the host Government and UNAOC gathered over 120 young leaders from more than 70 countries to celebrate the work and impact of the UNAOC programmes. Set in the historic Forte de São Julião da Barra, the event provided a unique platform for youth to connect and share their personal stories of how their engagement with UNAOC transformed their life journey, and honed their intercultural competencies and leadership skills. Their commitment to fostering peaceful and inclusive societies was further demonstrated by their calls for action to promote peace and solidarity worldwide. This diverse network of young leaders and their testimonies to the positive impact of UNAOC programmes underscored the UNAOC dedication to empowering young people as agents of change and fostering a global culture of understanding and collaboration.



Over 120 young leaders from more than 70 countries gathered in Cascais for the UNAOC Youth Forum, Cascais, November 2024.



"UNAOC has profoundly influenced my work by promoting dialogue, understanding, and collaboration across diverse cultures. Working with NGOs across Africa and South Africa, I've seen how UNAOC's focus on intercultural dialogue complements the use of sport as a tool for peacebuilding."
Zaine da Silva, South Africa, Global Sports Programme, Cascais, November 2024

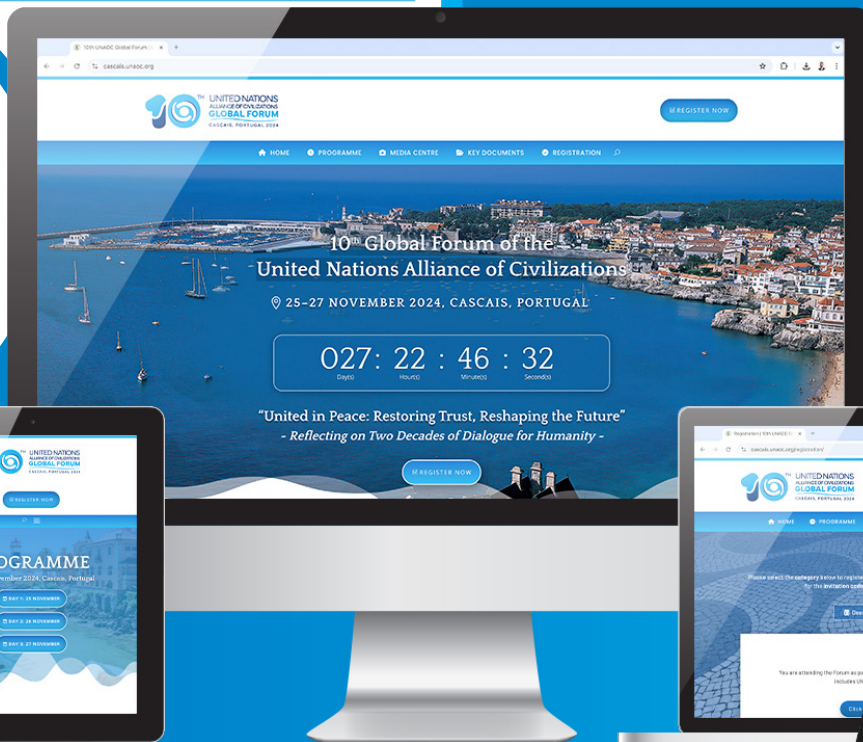


The Minister of State and Foreign Affairs of Portugal and the High Representative for UNAOC highlighted key outcomes, addressed media questions, and reaffirmed the Forum's core messages to a global audience during a Press Conference at the conclusion of the Forum, Cascais, November 2024.

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

To promote its **10th Global Forum**, UNAOC developed a comprehensive media and communications plan – integrating an intricate balance of web-based knowledge sharing, social media activations, visual storytelling and multimedia content strategies. Centering on the main hashtag **#CascaisForum**, as well as the secondary hashtags **#UNAOCyouth** and **#OneHumanity**, the campaign focused on amplifying the themes addressed at the Forum. The strategic approach resulted in approximately **13.9 million reach** on social media throughout the three days of the Forum.

The Forum was covered by up to **281 local, regional and international journalists and media entities**. The United Nations News and Media team provided coverage on the ground, with several articles featuring the Forum published on the UN News Centre's multilingual websites and social media accounts.



13.9 Million

Social Media Reach

#CascaisForum

#OneHumanity

#UNAOCyouth

10TH GLOBAL FORUM PLENARY SESSIONS, THEMATIC D



DISCUSSIONS, AND SIDE EVENTS (in no particular order)



A background image showing a close-up of hands holding a book. The hands are dark-skinned and the book has a textured cover. The image is overlaid with a blue gradient.

CHAPTER 2

ADDRESSING RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE, BIGOTRY AND OTHER FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION



ADDRESSING RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE, BIGOTRY AND OTHER FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

Under the Charter of the United Nations, all states pledged to promote and encourage universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction as to religion or belief, and the positive role that the exercise of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and full respect for the freedom to seek, receive and impart information can play in strengthening democracy and combating religious intolerance, and reaffirming further that the exercise of the right to freedom of expression carries with it special duties and responsibilities, in accordance with article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Today, there is a deep concern at vile acts that advocate religious hatred and thereby undermine the spirit of tolerance and respect for diversity. The continuing incidents of intolerance, discrimination and violence against persons based on their religion or belief drives a wedge among communities and diminishes them. Member States pledged The Pact for the Future in **Action 18(c)** to "**combat racism and eliminate discrimination, xenophobia and religious intolerance, and all other forms of intolerance and discrimination from our societies and promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue.**"

With that in mind, UNAOC continued to strengthen its convening power as a global platform for dialogue and a bridge-builder across diverse religions and beliefs leading on two significant portfolios namely combatting Antisemitism and Islamophobia.

COMBATING ANTISEMITISM

In 2020, the Secretary-General designated the High Representative for UNAOC as the United Nations Focal Point to monitor antisemitism and enhance a system-wide response. This role emerged from the 2019 report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief. Since then, the High Representative has consistently spoken out against all manifestations of antisemitism, underscoring that the United Nations is fully engaged in combating religious intolerance and discrimination.

Building on consultations with United Nations bodies, Special Envoys and Coordinators to Combat Antisemitism, UNAOC finalized the United Nations Action Plan to Enhance Monitoring and Response to Antisemitism with the aim of officially launching it in January 2025. The High Representative also participated in commemorative events, policy forums, and high-level visits—including Auschwitz-Birkenau, the International Day of Commemoration of Holocaust victims, and meetings of the of Special Envoys and Coordinators Combating Antisemitism.

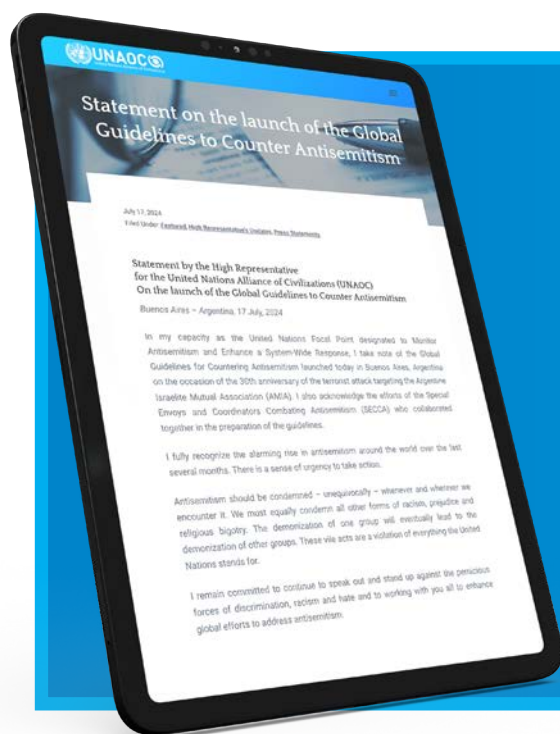
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“Antisemitism and Jew hatred is not a thing of the past. It is still thriving and is rising again at an alarming speed...We all have a responsibility to address and combat antisemitism. I say we because I believe that siloed approaches will fall short. We should intensify our prevention efforts, to denounce discrimination and to resolve conflicts before they engulf everything and everyone.”

The High Representative for UNAOC, Buenos Aires, July 2024



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“Antisemitism should be condemned – unequivocally – whenever and wherever we encounter it. We must equally condemn all other forms of racism, prejudice and religious bigotry. The demonization of one group will eventually lead to the demonization of other groups. These vile acts are a violation of everything the United Nations stands for.”

Excerpt from the Statement by the High Representative for UNAOC on the launch of the Global Guidelines to Counter Antisemitism, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 17 July 2024



The High Representative for UNAOC and H.E. Ms. Deborah Lipstadt, US Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism, exchanged views on actions to combat antisemitism, Washington, D.C., June 2024



The High Representative for UNAOC exchanged views with Ms. Deborah Lyons, Canada's Special Envoy on Holocaust remembrance and combating antisemitism, New York, March 2024



The High Representative participated in "Working Together to Counter Antisemitism – A Global Human Rights Challenge" event, Geneva, September 2024



The High Representative for UNAOC addressed distinguished participants of the Symposium on Antisemitism in Europe, organized by the European Jewish Association, Auschwitz-Birkenau, January 2024



International Meeting of Special Envoys and Coordinators Combating Antisemitism (SECCA) on the margins of "Building a Safer Future: 30 Years After the AMIA Bombing" event, organized by the World Jewish Congress and the Latin American Jewish Congress, Buenos Aires, July 2024



The High Representative for UNAOC and Mr. March Sievers, Director of the American Jewish Committee (AJC) in Abu Dhabi, Mr. Jason Isaacson, AJC Chief Policy and Political Affairs Officer; Mr. Benjamin Rogers, AJC Director of Middle East and North Africa initiatives; and Ms. Reva Gorelick, AJC Inaugural Program Director meet in the margins of #IDCT2024, Abu Dhabi, February 2024

COMBATING ISLAMOPHOBIA

Islamophobia is on the rise in many parts of the world. Anti-Muslim hatred and Islamophobic patterns are manifested in structural and systemic discrimination, socioeconomic exclusion, unequal immigration policies, unwarranted surveillance and profiling and restrictions in accessing citizenship, education, employment and justice.

Building on UNGA resolutions The International Day to Combat Islamophobia in 2022 and UNGA resolution : Measures to Combat Islamophobia” and Human Rights Council resolution 53/1 on countering religious hatred constituting incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, UNAOC continued to work on advancing respect,

understanding , compassion and dialogue. It is to be recalled that the exercise of the right to freedom of expression carries with it special duties and responsibilities, as stipulated in articles 19 and 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In line with Human Rights Council resolution 52/38 of 4 April 2023 on combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against, persons based on religion or belief, the High Representative continued to speak out against all forms of religious bigotry and manifestations of Anti-Muslim hatred and Islamophobic incidents including desecration of places of worship.

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“When any form of religious bigotry, such as Islamophobia, exists in a society, other forms of racism and discrimination will most likely emerge in that society, whether it is a democratic or a totalitarian one...The path to building just, inclusive and cohesive societies begins with full respect for all human rights for all individuals, without distinction.”

UNAOC Director, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, March 2024



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UNAOC Director addressed the Coordination Meeting on Anti-Muslim Hatred at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, March 2024



In the framework of the COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, the High Representative addressed the Opening Ceremony of the Global Summit of Religious Leaders, Baku, November 2024



High-level event on "Middle East and the Changing World", hosted by King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies in partnership with the Nizami Ganjavi International Center and UNAOC, Riyadh, May 2024



The High Representative had an audience with His Eminence, the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Sheikh Ahmed El Tayeb, Cairo, April 2024



The High Representative had a bilateral meeting with H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), New York, September 2024

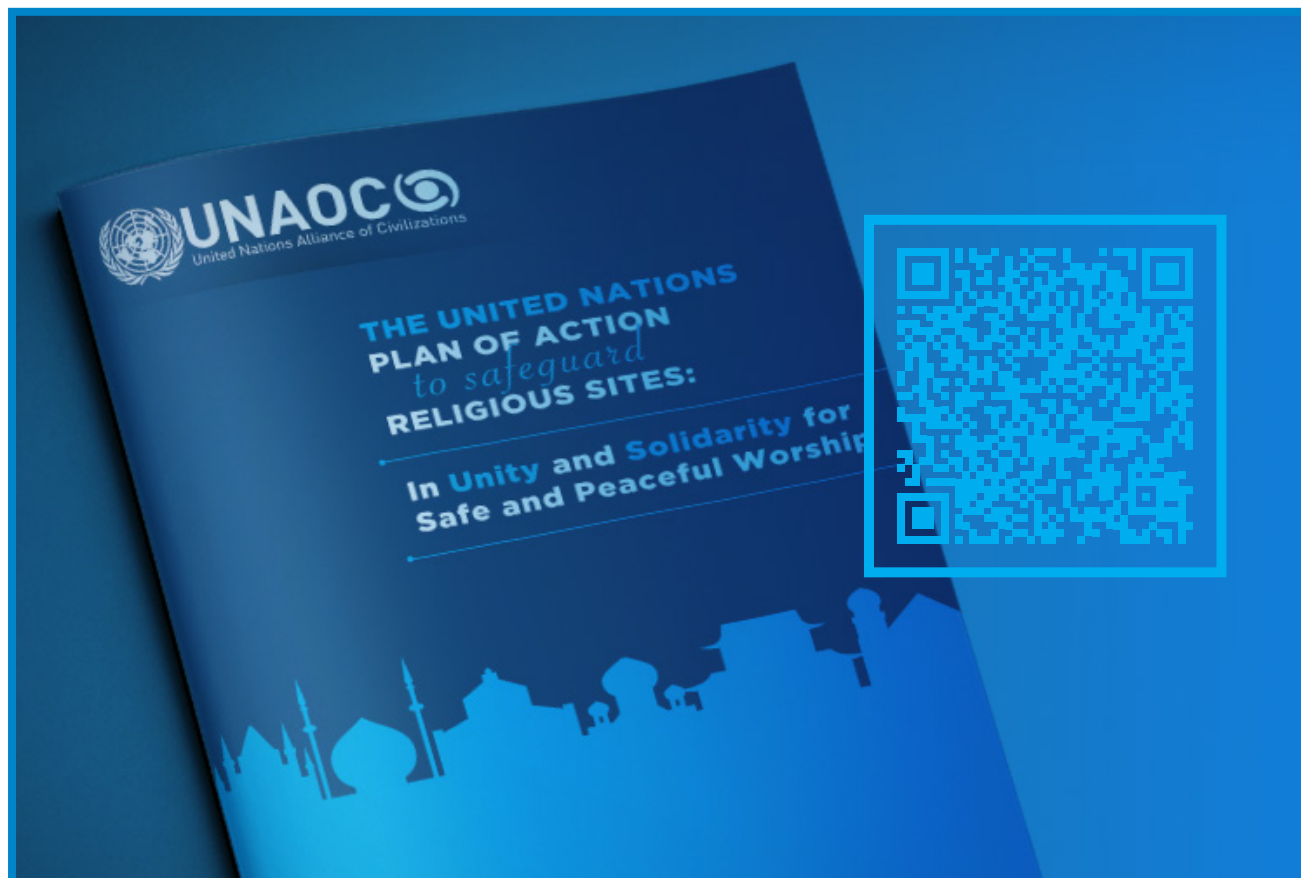


The High Representative signed a Memorandum of Understanding with H.E. Nazim Ahmad, Diplomatic Representative of the Ismaili Imamate to Portugal, Cascais, November 2024



The High Representative met with H.E. Mr. Munir Akram, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, New York, September 2024

UNITED NATIONS PLAN OF ACTION TO SAFEGUARD RELIGIOUS SITES: A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION TO SUPPORT THE EFFORTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY



Following the Christchurch mosque attacks of March 2019, UNAOC developed the United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites: In Unity and Solidarity for Safe and Peaceful Worship, launched by the Secretary-General in September 2019.

In November 2024, in line with General Assembly resolution 75/258, UNAOC convened the United Nations Global Conference on Safeguarding Religious Sites in Cascais, Portugal, during the margins of the 10th UNAOC Global Forum. The event brought together over 40 religious leaders, faith-based organizations, and government officials, who shared national good practices on promoting social cohesion, tackling hate speech, protecting worship sites in conflict zones, and strengthening education for mutual respect.

Speakers underscored the need to create more spaces for religious leaders and civil society to foster dialogue, prevent extremism, and support public policies for security and cohesion.

These efforts are reinforced by UNAOC's engagement in broader multilateral partnerships addressing terrorist threats against vulnerable targets including religious sites.

In this context, UNAOC has remained actively involved in the United Nations Global Programme on Countering Terrorist Threats against Vulnerable Targets, led by UNOCT in partnership with UNCTED, UNICRI, and UNAOC. In 2024, UNAOC leadership participated in Steering Committee meetings, workshops, and a dedicated Compact Working Group session on safeguarding religious sites.

UNAOC also continued to amplify the global call to action #forSafeWorship, which has reached more than 6.3 million people since its launch, and which, by the end of 2024, had drawn nearly 100,000 visitors to its dedicated website.

Through its strategic direction for 2024–2026, its advisory mechanisms, and its entrusted mandates, UNAOC has demonstrated its role as a soft-power political tool of the Secretary-General for conflict prevention and conflict resolution. Whether by advancing intercultural dialogue, addressing all forms of discrimination and bigotry based on religion or belief, safeguarding religious sites, UNAOC contributes to building inclusive, resilient and peaceful societies where diversity is valued as an asset.



The High Representative for UNAOC exchanged views on best practices in combating religious intolerance and safeguarding religious sites with Dr. Nasaruddin Umar, Grand Imam of Masjid Istiqlal, and Dr. Ari M. Gordon, American Jewish Committee (AJC) Director of Muslim-Jewish Relations, New York, February 2024.



Ms. Nihal Saad, UNAOC Director, delivered keynote remarks at the Third Parliamentary Policy Dialogue on "Protecting Religious Sites, Symbols and Objects against Terrorist Threats, convened by UNOCT and supported by the Shura Council of the State of Qatar, and in partnership with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly, Istanbul, May 2024.

"The protection of religious sites is addressed by Member States through a variety of normative frameworks and policy instruments including national security strategies and national legislations. Although Members of Parliament and religious leaders have different mandates, they share the common goal of serving their communities and promoting their well-being. Their collaboration is crucial so that appropriate measures and adequate approaches are taken to ensure the safety of worshippers."

Ms. Nihal Saad, UNAOC Director, Istanbul, May 2024



UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON SAFEGUARDING RELIGIOUS SITES

The “United Nations Global Conference on Safeguarding Religious Sites: A Multistakeholder Approach” convened Member States, religious leaders, international organizations and civil society to address the critical role that various stakeholders must play in safeguarding religious sites. The Conference emphasized good practices and actionable recommendations from diverse stakeholders aimed at bolstering preventive measures and enhancing the resilience of faith-based communities and facilities against terrorist threats and attacks. The event was held pursuant to the United Nations General Assembly resolution 75/258 on “Promoting a culture of peace and tolerance to safeguard religious sites”, with an objective to spearhead political support for specific actions to take forward the United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites.





UNAOC Director, Ms. Nihal Saad, and the Head of the UNOCT Programme Office in Madrid and Coordinator of the United Nations Global Programme on Countering Terrorist Threats against Vulnerable Targets, Mr. Ignacio Ibáñez, presented the latest progress made in the implementation of the “United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites: In Unity and Solidarity for Safe and Peaceful Worship”, Cascais, November 2024.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites is anchored in the following principles



RESPECT

for all peoples, regardless of their faith, culture and history



RESPONSIBILITY

to build bridges of mutual understanding and cooperation



DIALOGUE

As a tool to better communicate and engage with one another



SOLIDARITY

To support and share compassion for one another, particularly in times of sorrow or trouble



STAYING TOGETHER

as one to ensure that unity in response to attacks against religious sites is sustained and reinforced overtime



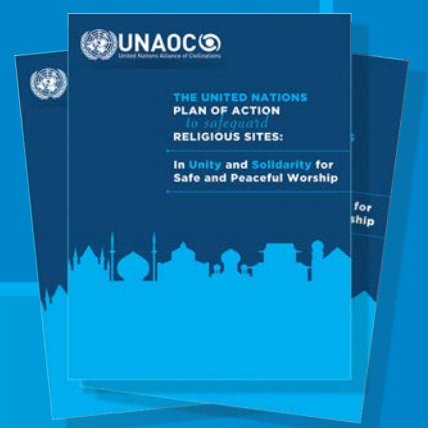
DIVERSITY

to accept and respect the differences among human beings



STANDING TOGETHER

as one to respond with unity to attempts to divide us





CHAPTER 3

PARTNERS AND INSTITUTIONS: WORKING TOGETHER IN COMPLEMENTARITY

GROUP OF FRIENDS

Members of the **UNAOC Group of Friends (GoF)** continued to provide guidance and engage with UNAOC through bilateral and group consultations. On 27 September, the High Representative convened the annual UNAOC Group of Friends high-level meeting, during which delegates expressed their support for UNAOC and its Plan of Action for 2024-2026.

The High Representative held 227 formal meetings and engagements in 2024 – virtually and in person – in United Nations offices in New York and Geneva, and several capitals. He visited 23 Member States and non-Member States, including Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Dominican Republic, Egypt, France, Germany, Holy See, Montenegro, Morocco, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Switzerland, Türkiye, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States of America capital of Washington, DC. Consultations with capitals and diplomatic missions continued through written communication and numerous contacts. Members of the GoF were briefed on UNAOC work through newsletters and other communications materials.



At the UNAOC Group of Friends High-level meeting, delegates reaffirmed their support for UNAOC and its Plan of Action 2024–2026, New York, September 2024.

MEETINGS WITH HEADS OF STATE / GOVERNMENT



H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan



H.E. Mr. Pedro Sánchez, Prime Minister of Spain



H.E. Mr. Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, President of Egypt (with Members of the Board of Trustees of Bibliotheca Alexandrina)



H.E. Mrs. Gordana Siljanovska Davkova, President of the Republic of North Macedonia



H.E. Mr. César Bernardo Arévalo de León, President of the Republic of Guatemala



H.E. Mr. Ali Asadov, Prime Minister of Azerbaijan



H.E. Mr. Petr Pavel, President of the Czech Republic

MEETINGS WITH MINISTERS



H.E. Mr. Riyad Al-Maliki, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the State of Palestine



H.E. Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia



H.E. Mr. Yusuf Maitama Tugga, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nigeria



H.E. Mr. Ararat Mirzoyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia



H.E. Mr. Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister of Foreign of Cuba



H.E. Mr. Jeyhun Aziz Oglu Bayramov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan



H.E. Mr. Roberto Álvarez Gil, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic



H.E. Mr. Murat Nurtleu, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan



H.E. Mr. Mohamed Salem Ould Merzoug, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Mauritanians Abroad, and H.E. Ms. Yassine Fall, Minister of African Integration and Foreign Affairs of Senegal



H.E. Sheikh Salem Bin Khalid Al Qassimi, Minister of Culture of the United Arab Emirates



His Eminence Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State of the Vatican City



H.E. Mrs. Noura Al Kaabi, Minister of State of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates

MEETINGS WITH HEADS OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS



H.E. Mr. Sultan Raev, Secretary-General of the International Organization of Turkic Culture



H.E. Ms. Marija Pejčinović Burić, 14th Secretary General of the Council of Europe



H.E. Mr. Martin Chungong, Secretary-General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union



H.E. Dr. Omar Alieu Touray, President of the Economic Community of West African States Commission



H.E. Mr. Luis Almagro, Secretary-General of the Organization of American States



H.E. Dr. Zuhair Alharthi, Secretary-General of KAICIID Dialogue Centre



H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation



H.E. Mr. Ahmed Abul Gheit, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States



H.E. Mr. Alain Berset, 15th Secretary-General of the Council of Europe



H.E. Mr. Philemon Yang, President of the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly and the High Representative discussed areas of mutual concerns, New York, November 2024



The UNAOC delegation participated in the Antalya Diplomacy Forum 2024, convened under the auspices of H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, President of the Republic of Türkiye, and on the initiative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, Antalya, March 2024

JOINING FORCES TO DELIVER AS ONE

UNAOC continued to expand collaboration with a variety of United Nations agencies and entities on the issues of preventing violent extremism conducive to terrorism, mediation, countering hate speech, promoting joint programming in the areas of sport for peace, youth and education, as well as human rights.

UNAOC liaised and coordinated its work with the following agencies, offices and entities of the United Nations: Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA); Department of Global Communications (DGC); Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA); IOM; United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women); UNCTED; United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); UNOCT; United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT); UNESCO; Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide (UNOSAPG); United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); United Nations Office on Disarmament Affairs (UNODA); UNICRI; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; United Nations

Youth Office and the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

The High Representative for UNAOC and Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs, Mr. Felipe Paullier, discussed strengthening collaboration between UNAOC and the United Nations Youth Office, New York, March 2024.



The Senior Representative of UNAOC Geneva office, Mr. Hakan Kivanç, shared UNAOC efforts to promote constructive narratives about migration and highlighted the UNAOC partnership with the IOM at the 14th Global Forum on Migration and Development, Geneva, January 2024.



PRIVATE SECTOR



Ms. Ilka Horstmeier, Member of the Board of Management of BMW AG, People and Real Estate, Labour Relations Director, reflects on two decades of dialogue for humanity during the 10th UNAOC Global Forum in Cascais, November 2024.

UNAOC recognizes that tackling global challenges requires collective action. Through a strategic private-sector partnerships, UNAOC continued to implement the **Intercultural Innovation Hub** – a collaboration between UNAOC and the **BMW Group**, with the support of **Accenture** – which amplifies innovative solutions for intercultural dialogue. This initiative exemplifies action-driven collaboration, ensuring that local changemakers are equipped with the necessary skills to create sustainable, transformative change in their communities and beyond.

"The Intercultural Innovation Hub provides a unique opportunity to drive change through innovation and collaboration. Since 2018, we have been proud to offer our expertise, practical training, and mentorship programs to empower global change-makers, helping them develop and scale their ideas for positive impact."

Mr. Roland Mayr, Accenture, Senior Managing Director, Cascais, November 2024



CIVIL SOCIETY AND OTHER NON-STATE PARTNERS

UNAOC continued to invest in partnerships with civil society, faith actors, sports associations and clubs to build complementarity and synergies to maximize the impact of its programming.

During the reporting period, UNAOC signed memorandums of understanding with the European Public Law Organization; Higher Committee of Human Fraternity; Ismaili Imamat; Fatwa Authorities Worldwide and Fundación Grandes Valores Delegación en España.



The High Representative for UNAOC participated in a workshop on the Summit of the Future titled, "Program on the Fraternal Economy of Integral and Sustainable Development", organized by the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, The Vatican City, March 2024.

UNAOC has also expanded its collaboration with civil society and sports organizations, reinforcing its commitment to fostering inclusion, unity and intercultural dialogue through sport. Several major sports governing bodies and organizations joined the #OneHumanity campaign and entered memorandums of understanding with UNAOC: International Table Volleyball Federation; International Korfball Federation; Getafe Club de Fútbol (Getafe CF); Down España; the European Non-Governmental Sports Organization and Fundación Grandes Valores and Fútbol Más. Partner organizations actively promoted the #OneHumanity campaign through innovative projects, campaigns and events.



On the margins of the XI Global Baku Forum, the High Representative for UNAOC met with His Virtue Sheikhul-Islam Allahshukur Pashazadeh, Chair of the Caucasus Muslims' Board and Co-Chair of the Interreligious Council, Baku, March 2024.



The High Representative expressed his appreciation to the Secretary-General of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center, Mr. Rovshan Muradov, for hosting the XI Global Baku Forum.



On the sidelines of the High-level Counter-Terrorism Meeting, the High Representative for UNAOC met with His Eminence Cardinal John Olorunfemi Onaiyekan of Nigeria and His Eminence Sultan Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III, Abuja, April 2024.



The High Representative had an audience with His Eminence, the Grand Imam of AlAzhar Sheikh Ahmed El Tayeb, Cairo, April 2024.



The UNAOC delegation was received by His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians at the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin in Armenia, Yerevan, September 2024.



Dr. Francis Kuria Kagema, Secretary-General of Religions for Peace, and the High Representative for UNAOC discussed ongoing collaboration of UNAOC and Religions for Peace, New York, September 2024.



Ms. Nihal Saad, UNAOC Director, received a delegation of the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism, New York, October 2024.

CITIES AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES

UNAOC works to enhance its partnerships and expand the scope of its engagement with local actors to include cities and municipalities, often on the frontlines in addressing challenges linked to intercultural and interreligious tensions erupting within diverse communities. In September, 10 city representatives from Africa, Europe, and Central and Latin America, delegates from the United Cities and Local Government and a representative from the Association of Municipalities of Brazil convened and discussed an action plan of the High Representative. Participants agreed on the sharing of experiences among cities and the implementation of shared city-to-city projects under the umbrella of the UNAOC's "City Dialogue". As a follow-up, a group of mayors from France, Italy and Spain presented good practices for building social cohesion within their multicultural communities at the 10th UNAOC Global Forum in Cascais.

"Through the City Dialogue, we will promote projects that directly involve civil society, so that residents benefit from the internationalization of municipalities."

Ms. Amparo Sayago, Director of International Relations,
Municipality of Quilmes (Argentina), September 2024



The High Representative convened a virtual meeting with mayors and city representatives to discuss his action plan, New York, September 2024.

Mr. Antonio R. Osuna, Mayor of Mérida, Spain, and the High Representative for UNAOC discussed social inclusion, multiculturalism, the role of youth and promoting mutual understanding between different cultures in the context of migration within the European Union, New York, June 2024.



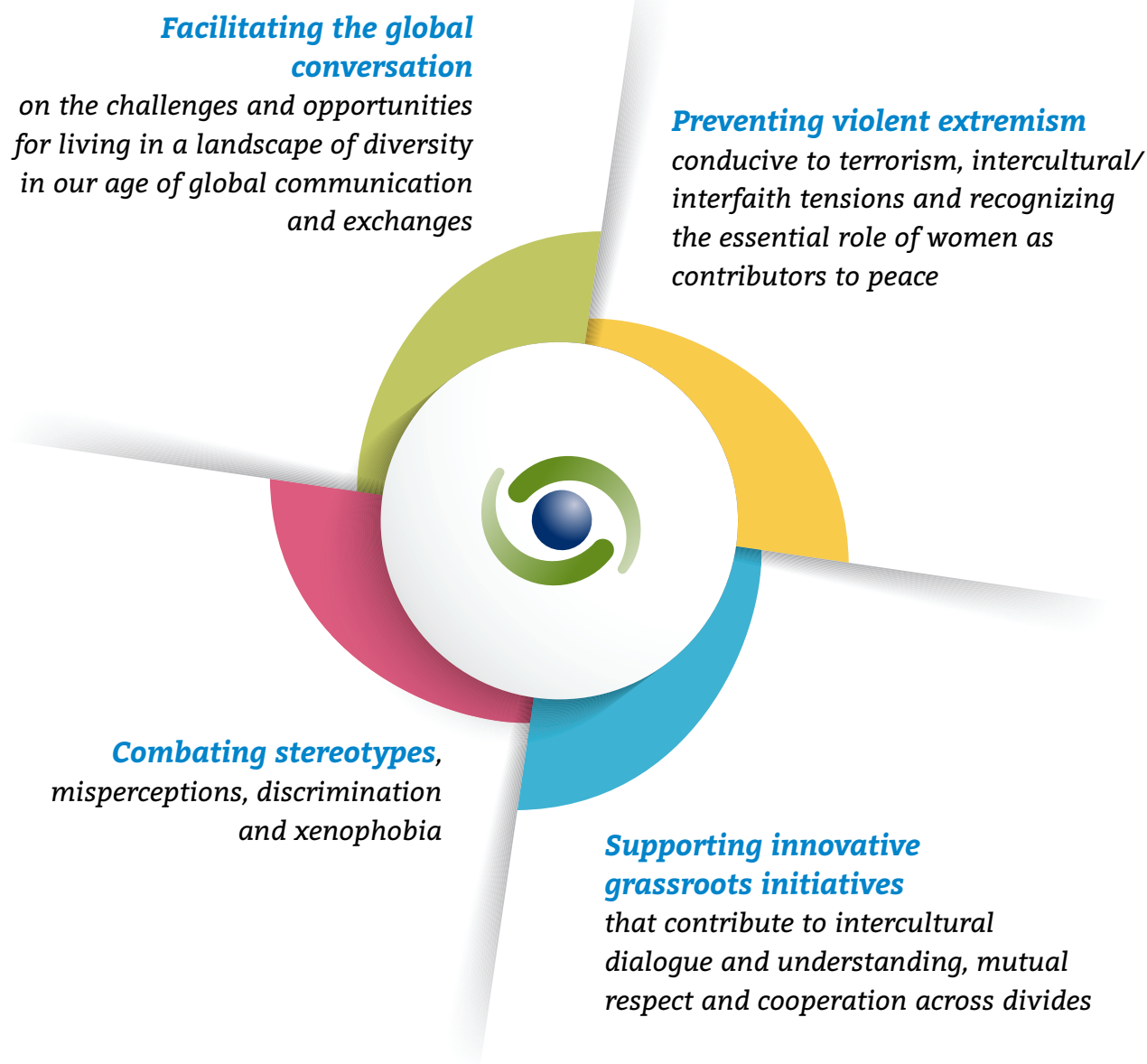
Mayors of La Courneuve (France), Soria (Spain), Arezzo (Italy) and the municipal counselor of the Cascais administration (Portugal) shared challenges and good practices for building social cohesion and engage with all community members on the city level at the 10th UNAOC Global Forum in Cascais, November 2024.

A background image showing several hands of different skin tones holding small, hand-painted globes of the Earth. The globes are blue with green and yellow landmasses. The hands are arranged in a circle, holding the globes towards the center. The overall image has a blue tint.

CHAPTER 4

PROGRAMMING AT LOCAL AND GLOBAL LEVELS: TARGETED INTERVENTIONS FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION AND BUILDING MUTUAL RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING

Guided by the **UNAOC Plan of Action 2024-2026** and aligning with the United Nations' agenda and strategies, UNAOC focuses its programming efforts on:



Committed to its mandate and the needs of those most affected, UNAOC adopts an inclusive, impact-driven approach across its projects. By leveraging the expertise of partners and participants, it continuously enhances existing programmes and develops innovative initiatives. Through regular assessments of lessons learned and best practices, UNAOC refines its strategies and ensures adaptability. These valuable findings are shared in policy forums, fostering the scalability and sustainable expansion of successful approaches worldwide.

YOUTH AND EDUCATION FIELDS OF ACTION

Recognizing the essential role of youth in society, UNAOC empowers young people worldwide by providing education, training and opportunities, enabling them to become agents of positive social change and inclusion.

In 2024, UNAOC launched the 10th edition of its flagship **Youth Solidarity Fund (YSF)**—one of the few initiatives within the United Nations system that directly funds and empowers youth-led organizations. Through YSF, young people are not just participants in peacebuilding efforts—they are leaders, innovators and catalysts for change. By equipping them with essential resources, funding and decision-making power, YSF enables youth to design, implement and evaluate projects that drive real impact in their communities and contribute to the broader sustainable development agenda. Beyond financial support, UNAOC leverages the expertise of past

YSF alumni, ensuring that youth voices shape and refine the programme to remain relevant, adaptive and responsive to emerging global challenges. With young people at its core—as partners, strategists and beneficiaries—YSF has been a pioneer in advancing youth-led solutions for peace and social cohesion. Since its inception in 2008, YSF has funded 80 youth-led organizations across over 40 countries, impacting over 3.4 million people.

During the reporting period, UNAOC empowered seven youth-led organizations with seed funding, capacity-building and mentorship, enabling them to drive meaningful change in their communities. Equipped with these critical resources, they not only implemented transformative, locally driven initiatives but also strengthened their leadership, resilience and organizational capacity to sustain long-term impact.

YSF 2024 RECIPIENTS: KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

DETECT, REACT, PROTECT! — YOUTH FOR PEACE (BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA)

This project empowered youth to combat hate speech and promote freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) through education, dialogue, and awareness campaigns. A key achievement was the development of the “ABC of Hate Speech and Freedom of Religion or Belief” handbook, published in two languages and distributed to over 10,000 contacts within a global interfaith network community. A youth camp brought together 20 participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, fostering critical discussions on hate speech, prejudice and freedom of expression. Through interactive learning and visits to religious sites, participants challenged stereotypes, built trust and committed to countering divisive narratives. The project culminated in a digital awareness campaign, reaching 60,000 people, sparking dialogue and shedding light on an often-overlooked issue in the region. With hands-on tools and engaged youth, the initiative laid the groundwork for sustained advocacy and action.



YSF 2024 RECIPIENTS: KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

BRIDGING COMMUNITIES: PROMOTING INTERCULTURAL AND INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AMONG AFRICAN AND EGYPTIAN YOUTH IN EGYPT — DIVERSE VOICES, UNITED COMMUNITIES — ALMAHROUSA FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION (EGYPT)

This project empowered young migrants and Egyptians in Greater Cairo to foster inclusive, peaceful communities through leadership training and dialogue. Fifty youth leaders gained skills to promote diversity, counter hate speech and challenge extremism, while 17 dialogue sessions strengthened connections and raised awareness of discrimination against African refugees. Key recommendations shaped two policy notes shared with policymakers, media and NGOs, advocating against ethnic and religious polarization. Five cultural exchange events helped shift attitudes, fostering appreciation for migrant cultures. The project's insights were also submitted to the Parliament, aimed at influencing discussions on asylum-seeker legislation.



"Cultural diversity is not the issue. The key solution to integration is to understand each other and collaborate together on the basis of Humanity; that's what will unite us."

Project participant from a migrant community in Egypt

TRAINING OF YOUNG PEOPLE TO PROMOTE PEACE 'NO KUDJI PAZ' — FORUM DE INTERVENÇÃO SOCIAL DAS JOVENS RAPARIGAS / FINSJOR (GUINEA-BISSAU)



"I used to think peace was out of reach, but this project has shown me that young people can be catalysts for social change. I feel more empowered to lead meaningful initiatives in my community."

Project participant from Guinea-Bissau

This project empowered 100 youth with skills in non-violent communication and conflict resolution, strengthening their role in nationwide peacebuilding efforts. By addressing election-related violence, these youth became agents of change, promoting peaceful political engagement within their communities. Through educational 'djumbai' sessions and six radio debates, they raised awareness of the causes and consequences of violence, reaching hundreds of listeners. An extensive school campaign engaged 900 students, fostering a culture of peace. The initiative culminated in a national conference, creating a platform for youth to shape the peacebuilding agenda in Guinea-Bissau.

YSF 2024 RECIPIENTS: KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

ENGAGING YOUTH IN INCREASING RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE AWARENESS THROUGH ONLINE PEACE NARRATIVE CAMPAIGNS TO SAFEGUARD RELIGIOUS SITES — YPMIC (INDONESIA)



"This peace training has enriched my understanding of media and information dissemination. We, as youth, play a crucial role in maintaining peace and I hope that such projects and activities will continue to be organized in the future."

Project participant from Indonesia

This project mobilized youth to promote peace narratives and protect religious sites through education, dialogue and digital advocacy. It developed two training handbooks tailored for Gen Z that were used in workshops and site visits, fostering empathy, respect and a deeper understanding of religious diversity. A key component was the digital peace campaign, where participants identified and countered online hate speech with positive narratives. Six youth-led campaigns were showcased in a public exhibition and talk show, engaging government officials, religious leaders and the wider community, amplifying the message of tolerance and safeguarding religious sites.

BRIDGING FAITHS: FOSTERING INTERRELIGIOUS TOLERANCE AMONG MUSLIM AND CHRISTIAN YOUTH IN ZOMBA — ZOMBA CENTER FOR CREATIVE ARTS / ZOCCA (MALAWI)

This project united Muslim and Christian youth to break stereotypes and strengthen social cohesion through sports, arts and community-driven initiatives. Religious and local leaders joined in, fostering relationships through play, cultural exchanges and public space beautification. Structured dialogues and workshops deepened interfaith understanding, while ongoing collaborative activities helped reduce stereotypes and misconceptions. The initiative built trust, decreased tensions and fostered youth leadership, leading to new partnerships among faith-based organizations and joint advocacy efforts for peace and social justice in Zomba.



"UNAOC's support has been instrumental in amplifying my voice and efforts, enabling me to make a meaningful difference in promoting peace and social cohesion."

Pemphero Honester Mapanje, YSF 2024 Project Coordinator, Malawi

YSF 2024 RECIPIENTS: KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR PEACE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION — IKON INITIATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (SIERRA LEONE)

This project tackled election-related violence in Bombali district by promoting peace education, intercultural dialogue and conflict resolution. Through sports, drama and open discussions, it created safe spaces for dialogue, fostering empathy and mutual respect in a highly divisive environment. Trained youth peacebuilders led workshops, sports tournaments and drama performances, equipping communities with the skills to embrace diversity and resolve conflicts peacefully. Carefully crafted peace messages further amplified the impact, strengthening social cohesion and community resilience against violence.



"The training sessions empowered me to step up as a peace advocate. I now have the confidence to speak with my friends and family about resolving conflicts peacefully."

Project participant and youth volunteer from
Sierra Leone

AMPLIFYING COMMUNITY VOICES FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE IN RWENZORI REGION - ACCESS YOUTH INITIATIVE (UGANDA)



"This project has allowed us to create spaces for youth to unite and engage in meaningful dialogue. As religious leaders, we've witnessed how this project has positively transformed the lives of our young people."

Project participant and young religious leader
from Uganda

This project empowered youth as peacebuilders and fostered trust between conflict-affected communities through intergenerational exchange, community service and mentorship. Thirty peer mediators and 20 civic leaders were trained to resolve conflicts and shift attitudes, while five Peace Clubs in schools engaged over 200 students in peace campaigns. Through peace camps, over 100 young people—including ex-combatants and refugees—built resilient relationships, and 20 religious leaders identified actions to counter radicalization and promote social inclusion. By engaging diverse community groups, the project strengthened intra- and inter-community trust and laid the groundwork for lasting peace.

In 2024, UNAOC launched the 7th edition of the **Young Peacebuilders Programme (YPB)**, empowering young leaders with the skills and networks to drive impactful peacebuilding efforts. Through a dynamic, needs-based curriculum, participants gained expertise in conflict resolution, mediation and non-violent communication, equipping them to tackle pressing challenges in their communities. YPB also serves as a vital platform, bridging the gap between youth and decision-makers to ensure their voices shape policies and solutions. Since its inception, YPB has empowered 137 young leaders from 50 countries, fostering a global network of changemakers committed to building more peaceful and inclusive societies.

The 7th edition focused on Latin America and the Caribbean, training 18 young peacebuilders from Argentina, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago and the Bolivarian Republic of

Venezuela. Participants followed a comprehensive learning journey, including online modules and an in-person workshop in Cáceres, Spain, where they refined their skills, explored project management tools and exchanged strategies to implement high-impact grassroots initiatives in their home countries. The diverse and action-driven projects developed through YPB tackled urgent issues, from inclusion and violence prevention to combating hate speech and fostering interfaith dialogue. At the culmination of the programme, participants showcased their work at the 10th UNAOC Global Forum in Cascais, Portugal, where they engaged with high-level political leaders and fellow peacebuilders, further expanding their networks and influence.

Also in 2024, UNAOC launched the 8th edition of YPB, bringing the programme for the first time to South Caucasus and Central Asia, reinforcing its commitment to scaling youth-led peacebuilding efforts worldwide.



“The most important thing I gained from the UNAOC Young Peacebuilders Programme is the belief that I, we, can make a difference in peace issues. It gave me the technical tools to build more peaceful and just communities and the confidence to bring those ideas to life.”

Ana Altamiranda, YPB participant, Argentina

MEDIA AND MIGRATION FIELDS OF ACTION



"I am honoured to be here—this means that young people's creative work truly matters. Our stories have the power to connect people, inspire action, and remind us that a more harmonious world depends on our shared responsibility.."

Chaela Fuentes Tordillo, Recipient of the PLURAL+ 2024 Special Recognition for Inclusive Action on Climate Change and its Impact on Migration, Philippines



The media possesses a powerful ability to shape and redefine collective narratives, influencing societal attitudes and behaviours. Both traditional and digital platforms play an essential role in promoting mutual respect, enhancing understanding and bridging cultural divides.

Recognizing the transformative power of media, UNAOC leverages it to address migration, diversity and inclusion while championing the creative voices of young people through the **PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival**. Launched in 2009 as a joint initiative of UNAOC and IOM, the PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival serves as a global platform empowering youth to produce short films on pressing social issues. Aligned with objectives 16 and 17 of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the

initiative promotes inclusion, combats discrimination and advances evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration. UNAOC and IOM provide young people around the world with visibility and a distribution platform to showcase their creative work on migration, diversity, social inclusion and the prevention of xenophobia.

The 2024 PLURAL+ ceremony celebrated 32 videos from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Egypt, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, the Russian Federation, Spain, Timor-Leste, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America and Yemen. These videos were carefully selected from hundreds of entries received worldwide.

The **2024 PLURAL+ International Jury Recognitions** were conferred to:

- The **second-grade students at the Maestro Camilo Hernández Primary School from Spain** (Up to 12 Years Old Category) for their short film **Weirdies**, that joyfully celebrates the beauty of individuality and diversity, reminding audiences that embracing differences unites us all.
- **Junhyuk “Roy” Ahn from the United States** (13–17 Years Old Category) for his film **Just Talk**, a video animation that explores the themes of xenophobia and social inclusion, showcasing the transformative power of dialogue and understanding in overcoming stereotypes.
- **Ms. Phelister Amondi Awuor and Mr. Walter Mwori Athobwa from Kenya** (18–25 Years Old Category) for their film **Include Me**, featuring a poignant visual poem that advocates for the inclusion of women in decision-making processes and highlights the challenges they face, such as poverty and lack of access to education and resources.

In addition, UNAOC and IOM conferred recognitions in the following **two special categories**:

- The **PLURAL+ 2024 Special Recognition for Combating Xenophobia and Discrimination: Ms. Ana Julia Freitas de Castro and her six students from the Public School of Santa Teresinha in Brazil**, for their impactful film **Deuses Distintos**. Their video delves into the issue of religious intolerance, inspiring mutual respect by examining the impact of discrimination on vulnerable communities.
- The **PLURAL+ 2024 Special Recognition for Inclusive Action on Climate Change and Its Impact on Migration: Ms. Chaela Tordillo and Mr. Kervin Quieta from the Philippines**, for their film **Old Times**. Through the lens of a displaced fisherman returning to his submerged hometown, the film powerfully reflects on loss, resilience, and the urgent need for climate action.

Through the PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival, UNAOC helped advance intercultural dialogue and foster mutual respect by enabling youth from diverse backgrounds to share their stories with global audiences. As a global distribution platform for youth-produced media, PLURAL+ showcased the selected films through multiple communication channels and shared them with the United Nations community. In addition, PLURAL+ leveraged its network of more than 20 partner organizations to confer additional recognitions and further disseminate selected films on their platforms, effectively promoting a culture of peace, mutual respect and understanding.



"Our short film highlights the importance of respect, friendship, and acceptance, reminding us that diversity is what makes us human and inclusion is what makes us strong as a community. We sincerely thank the PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival for showcasing our work. Your support inspires us to keep telling stories that matter."

Virginia Lubián Egido, CEIP Maestro Camilo Hernández, Recipients of the PLURAL+ 2024 International Jury Recognition, Up to 12 Years Old Category, Spain



To view the 2024 PLURAL+ recipients, please visit <https://pluralplus.unaoc.org/2024-recipients>

UNAOC continues to strengthen its partnerships and broaden its engagement with local actors, including cities and municipalities, which are often at the forefront of addressing intercultural and interreligious tensions within diverse communities. Building on the success of the first edition of its **News Generation Against Hate (Les Médias C'est Nous)** programme with youth in La Courneuve (France), UNAOC has successfully implemented a second edition. This initiative equips a new group of young participants with the skills and knowledge to amplify their voices within their local communities and actively contribute to their social and political environments.

The second edition of News Generation Against Hate introduced a dynamic new programme in the context of the Summer 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games. While maintaining its core format, this edition leveraged sports as a powerful tool for intercultural dialogue, equipping youth with the knowledge and skills to critically engage with key societal issues and actively contribute to public discourse at local, national and global levels. UNAOC hosted a culminating event on 17 April at the United Nations Office in Geneva. Twenty young participants showcased their projects under the theme Promoting Sports as a Tool for Intercultural Dialogue, demonstrating how media and storytelling can foster mutual understanding and counter divisive narratives.



"Addressing UN representatives and diplomats gave us the strength to share our voice, and make our vision for the youth a reality."

Adame Traore, News Generation Against Hate participant, France



STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF WOMEN AS ESSENTIAL CONTRIBUTORS TO PEACE



Acknowledging the crucial role of women in peace processes, UNAOC partners with stakeholders to enhance their contributions as key facilitators of trust and confidence within their communities, while creating space for their voices as peacemakers and socio-cultural mediators. In a strategic partnership with Mujeres por África (MxA), a Spanish non-profit organization championing equal rights and opportunities for African women, UNAOC launched the **Women's Alliance for Peace (WA4P)** to strengthen the role of women as mediators and peacebuilders. WA4P empowers women to lead conflict resolution efforts, particularly in sociocultural and religious contexts, while advancing gender equality and sustainable peace. An Advisory Council of prominent African women provides strategic direction to ensure the initiative's impact. Since February 2021, UNAOC has directly engaged with female mediators in Mali and the Central African Republic through monthly webinars, identifying critical needs and tailoring targeted support.

Building on the training cycle concluded in 2023 and pursuing its engagement with female mediators

at the local and community level, in the course of 2024, UNAOC organized a series of six online workshops and meetings with women leaders at local and national levels from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali and Central African Republic. In July, UNAOC played a pivotal role in a high-level international conference titled "Conflict Mediation and Peacebuilding: Strengthening the Role of Women", organized by Fundación Mujeres por África in Kinshasa. Bringing together delegations of women mediators from conflict-affected regions, alongside national authorities, multilateral agencies and civil society organizations, the event tackled pressing issues such as violence prevention, disarmament and sustainable peacebuilding. At the 10th UNAOC Global Forum, a dedicated thematic panel showcased the transformative contributions of women mediators in intercultural and interreligious dialogue. The session not only highlighted their successes but also charted pathways to enhance their leadership in conflict mitigation and peace processes. Through these sustained efforts, UNAOC reaffirms its commitment to amplifying women's voices in peacebuilding, equipping them with tools to drive change, and fostering more inclusive and resilient societies.

FOSTERING INTERCULTURAL AND INTERFAITH DIALOGUE THROUGH INNOVATION



“We are so proud of our strong partnership with UNAOC. This collaboration enables us to recognize some of the remarkable cross-cultural work being done worldwide.”

Ms. Ilka Horstmeier, Member of the Board of Management of BMW AG, People and Real Estate, Labour Relations Director, Cascais, November 2024

Recognizing the crucial significance of intercultural and interfaith dialogue, UNAOC drives innovative programs and initiatives that empower civil society organizations and individuals. By equipping them with essential tools, skills, and networks, UNAOC enables them to create meaningful change within their communities and beyond. By fostering collaboration, innovation and inclusive dialogue, UNAOC strengthens global efforts to build bridges, counter division and promote shared values.

Through the **Intercultural Innovation Hub**, UNAOC and the **BMW Group**, with the support of **Accenture**, continue to empower grassroots initiatives that foster dialogue, diversity and social cohesion. In March 2024, a second in-person workshop in São Paulo, Brazil, concluded the 12-month support for 10 projects from Australia, Brazil, Colombia, Germany, Guatemala, Indonesia, Israel, Jordan, Mexico and South Africa, which joined the Hub in mid-2023. The workshop strengthened their capacity to implement sustainable change, focusing on key areas such as sustainable funding strategies, leadership, and

organizational culture. It also provided a platform for participants to exchange best practices and reflect on the transformative impact of IIH in amplifying their reach and effectiveness. By equipping grassroots changemakers with essential tools and resources, UNAOC and its partners are driving sustainable impact and building more inclusive and peaceful societies.

In November 2024, IIH welcomed 10 new grassroots initiatives during a ceremony at the 10th UNAOC Global Forum in Cascais, Portugal. Organizations from Austria, Botswana, Canada, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Nigeria, Peru, the United States of America and Zambia were selected following a competitive selection process. Their projects address critical issues, including diversity and inclusion, gender equality and women’s empowerment, and the use of art, culture and sports for social change. The selected initiatives will receive funding, a 12-month tailored capacity-building programme and customized mentoring provided by UNAOC and the BMW Group, with the support of Accenture.

THE 2024 **INTERCULTURAL INNOVATION HUB** RECIPIENTS

BREAKING GROUNDS - SOCIAL CHANGE THROUGH SPORT (AUSTRIA) — KICKEN OHNE GRENZEN - EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH FOOTBALL

Breaking Grounds uses football to bring together young refugees from different backgrounds and offers them a place to belong and participate. The programme encourages participants to recognize and build on their strengths to increase their self-esteem and resilience. Youth leaders are also equipped to implement community-based sports initiatives themselves after the programme, ultimately becoming role models for social cohesion.



CIRCUS ZAMBIA (ZAMBIA) — SOCIAL CIRCUS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Circus Zambia is focused on empowering youth groups with the tools and skills to lead transformative change by replicating a proven social circus methodology and business model across youth organizations in Zambia. The social circus model not only fosters the creation of inclusive, healthy and secure communities, but also serves as a pathway to sustainable revenue through circus arts.



DEVATOP CENTRE FOR AFRICA DEVELOPMENT (NIGERIA) — TALKAM HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVE

Devatop Centre for Africa Development uses technology to stimulate and mobilize community actions across Nigeria and other African countries to promote and protect human rights while fostering an inclusive society rooted in social justice. Through its mobile application and web app, the initiative fosters civic engagement, accountability and transparency in addressing human rights issues with a focus on inclusivity. It also supports the tracking of cases, provides online human rights courses and facilitates social networking for advocacy and support.



THE 2024 **INTERCULTURAL INNOVATION HUB** RECIPIENTS

GLOBAL NOMADS GROUP (USA) — CONTENT CREATION LAB

The Global Nomads Group connects global youth in experiences that provide connections and skills-building. Through its virtual internship, young people co-create original curricula on pressing topics like climate justice, inclusive leadership, contemporary careers and mental health. Young designers collaborate with peers from all over the world in designing learning content that is widely disseminated to others via their youth-designed digital platform.



INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR PEACE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA (KENYA) — YOUTH AND YOUNG WOMEN LEADERS MEDIATION AND REGIONAL ADVOCACY INITIATIVES



IPHRD-Africa aims to create spaces for dialogue among youth and promote peaceful coexistence and social cohesion while enhancing the participation of young women and men in peace processes and their capacities for conflict prevention and resolution. Through a comprehensive approach involving training, mentorship, trauma healing and psychosocial support, the project equips participants with skills, knowledge and tools for mediation, negotiation and dialogue.

PROFONANPE (PERU) — BUILDING CAPACITY OF INDIGENOUS LEADERS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Profonanpe aims to increase the resilience of Indigenous communities in carbon-rich wetland ecosystems. The project focuses on strengthening the technical capacities of Indigenous leaders to effectively tackle the challenges within their territories and contribute to resource management, governance and the protection of their lands in a culturally inclusive manner.



SHREEJA INDIA (INDIA) — FOOTBALL AND BEYOND

Shreeja India empowers vulnerable girls and children from marginalized communities using football and integrates it with education, mental wellness, social awareness and skill development interventions. This holistic approach empowers girls and facilitates access to basic education, nutrition, health and livelihood opportunities within communities.

THE 2024 **INTERCULTURAL INNOVATION HUB** RECIPIENTS

(continued)

YAYASAN KOTA KITA SURAKARTA (INDONESIA) — SURAKARTA SPACE SHAPER: EMPOWERING CHILDREN TO DESIGN CHILD-FRIENDLY AND INCLUSIVE CITY



Yayasan Kota Kita Surakarta emphasizes the importance of intercultural understanding in fostering urban citizenship, encouraging children to respect and incorporate diverse cultural perspectives into their active participation. Through a series of training sessions, young participants enhance their knowledge, skills and experiences, enabling them to play a meaningful role in their communities and city development.

YELLOWHEAD INDIGENOUS EDUCATION FOUNDATION (CANADA) — EXPLORING WÂHKÔHTOWIN

The Yellowhead Indigenous Education Foundation uses its educational board game to spark reflections among non-Indigenous people on the meaning and impact of the treaties signed between First Nations and the Canadian Government, and how their relations can be improved. It recognizes that the first step to reconciling and rebuilding their relationship is understanding their shared history and the impact of events, policy and legislation historically and in the present day, emphasizing the values of collaboration over competition, and putting an emphasis on cultural retention.



YOUNG MINDS AFRICA TRUST (BOTSWANA) — MODEL PARLIAMENT AFRICA

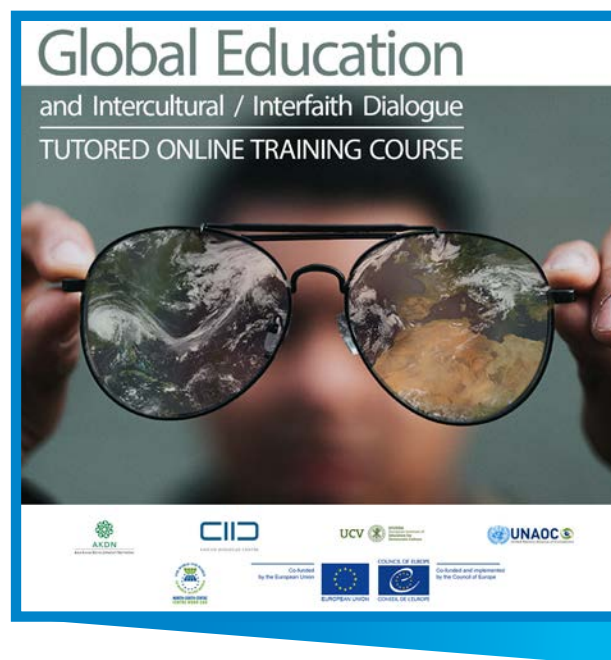


Young Minds Africa Trust empowers young women aged 18-27 to become active participants in civic leadership and governance. Participants undergo comprehensive training aimed at transforming their perspectives on political engagement, gaining firsthand experience through site visits to meet and learn from Members of Parliament. By fostering a deep understanding of political processes, it aims to increase female representation in politics and contribute to achieving gender balance in parliament.

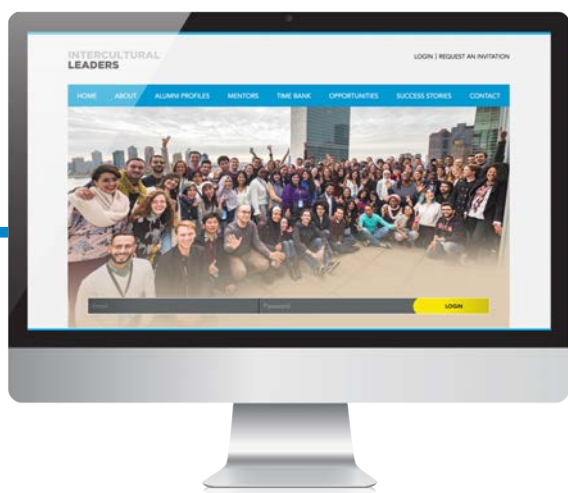
SEE THE 2024 IIH RECIPIENTS HERE:
www.interculturalinnovation.org/current-recipients



To foster competencies essential for a democratic culture, it is crucial to emphasize the role of intercultural and interfaith dialogue. This requires exploring its core aspects, understanding its components and gaining the knowledge and skills necessary for such interactions. Global education can fill this gap, adding the value of reflective learning, multiple perspectives and the development of critical thinking. Under the leadership of the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe and in collaboration with the AKDN-Aga Khan Development Network, KAICIID-Dialogue Centre and Universidad Católica de Valencia's European Institute of Education for Democratic Culture, UNAOC collaborated in the development and implementation of the second edition of the **Tutored Online Training Course on Global Education and Intercultural/Interfaith Dialogue**. The course was conducted online and with tutors accompanying the participants through the different modules. Selected after a competitive application process, 45 participants, members of civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, media and education practitioners from both formal and non-formal sectors, enhanced their competencies in global education, intercultural/interfaith dialogue and human rights.



Acknowledging the need to create opportunities for sharing good practices and collaboration in addressing global challenges, UNAOC leverages its large alumni network to advance its mission, and amplify its impact and outreach through the **Intercultural Leaders Platform**. Originally developed in collaboration with BMW Group, Intercultural Leaders is a knowledge-sharing platform that brings together alumni of various UNAOC programmes and projects, professionals from partner organizations and a group of mentors to promote inclusive societies and drive social cohesion. Through this platform, UNAOC continued to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and fostered networking and collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including civil society organizations and young leaders. Additionally, UNAOC provided access to opportunities and resources aimed at accelerating the individual and organizational efforts of alumni to build sustainable peace and inclusive societies, such as access to funding, capacity-development opportunities, as well as international events and programmes. By the end of December 2024, 1,098 alumni had joined the platform. By providing an open space for constructive dialogue and opportunities for alumni to contribute their expertise and experience, UNAOC maintains its comprehensive approach to addressing global challenges and fostering mutual understanding and cooperation.



1,098 alumni

have joined the platform as of December 2024

HARNESSING SPORT AND ITS VALUES TO PREVENT VIOLENT EXTREMISM

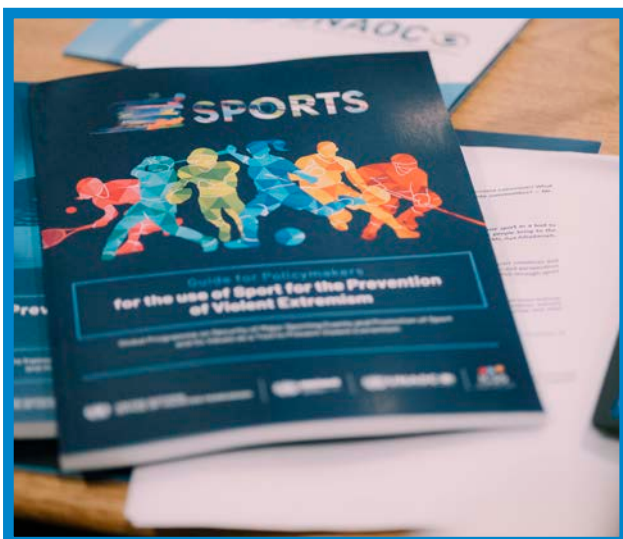
UNAOC recognizes the transformative power of sport in promoting peace, inclusion, and mutual understanding across diverse cultures and civilizations. Through targeted initiatives, UNAOC leverages sport as a force for unity, emphasizing its role in building social cohesion, fostering resilience and preventing violent extremism.

In 2024, UNAOC reinforced its leadership in promoting sport as a powerful tool for preventing violent extremism and fostering social cohesion through its active engagement in the **United Nations Global Programme on Security of Major Sporting Events and Promotion of Sport and Its Values as a Tool to Prevent Violent Extremism**. As a key partner, UNAOC played a pivotal role in shaping global policy discussions, advocating for sport as a driver of peace and ensuring youth perspectives remain central to prevention efforts. Demonstrating its commitment to action, UNAOC, in collaboration with UNOCT, UNICRI and the International Centre for Sport Security, supported the launch of the e-learning course on **“Prevention of Violent Extremism through Sport”**.



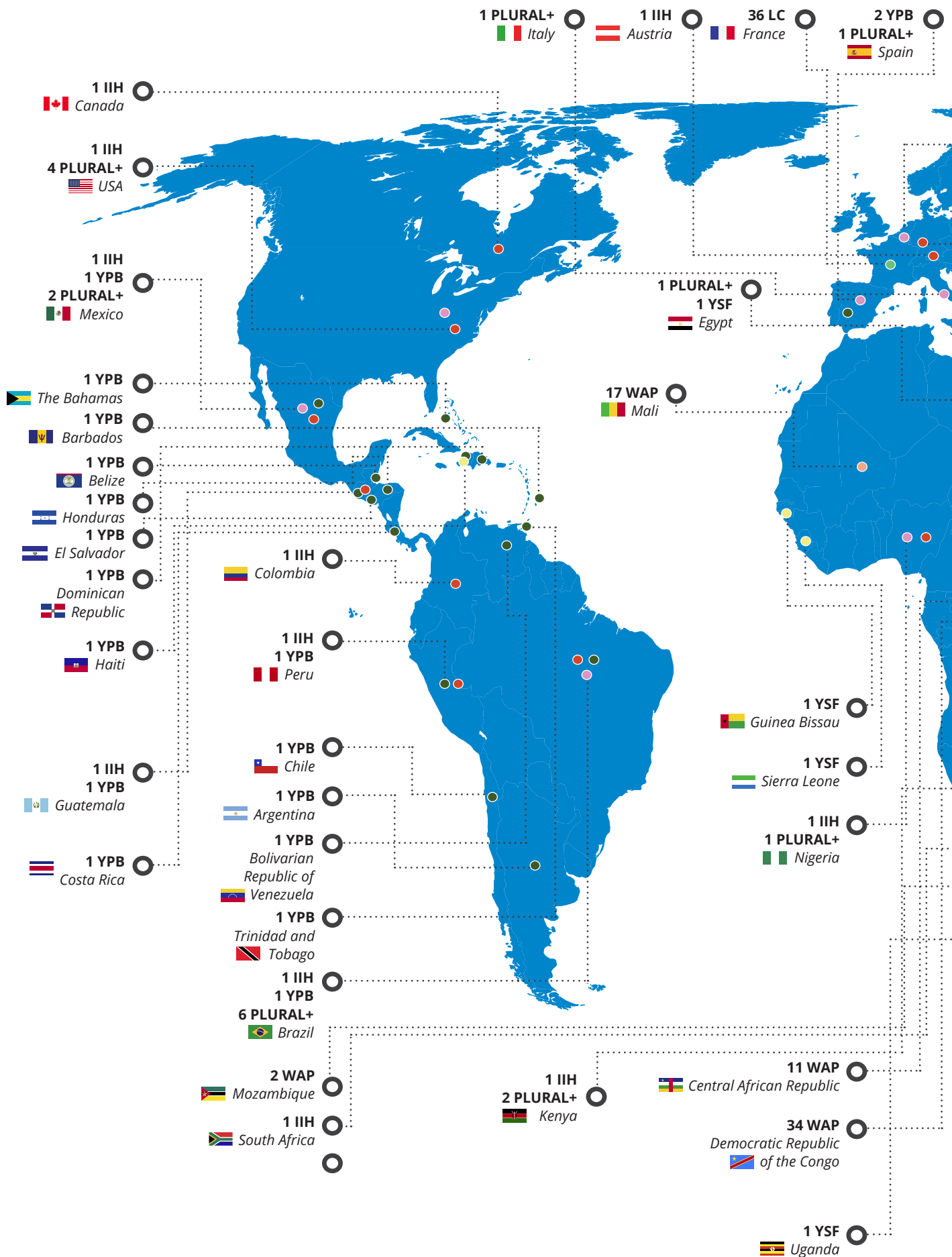
"The universality of sport is being demonstrated by its ability to transcend boundaries, break stereotypes and bring people together. UNAOC celebrates the role of sport in advancing diversity and social cohesion. The values inherent in sport, such as mutual respect, solidarity and integrity, are at the heart of our mission."

H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos,
High Representative for UNAOC, New
York, July 2024

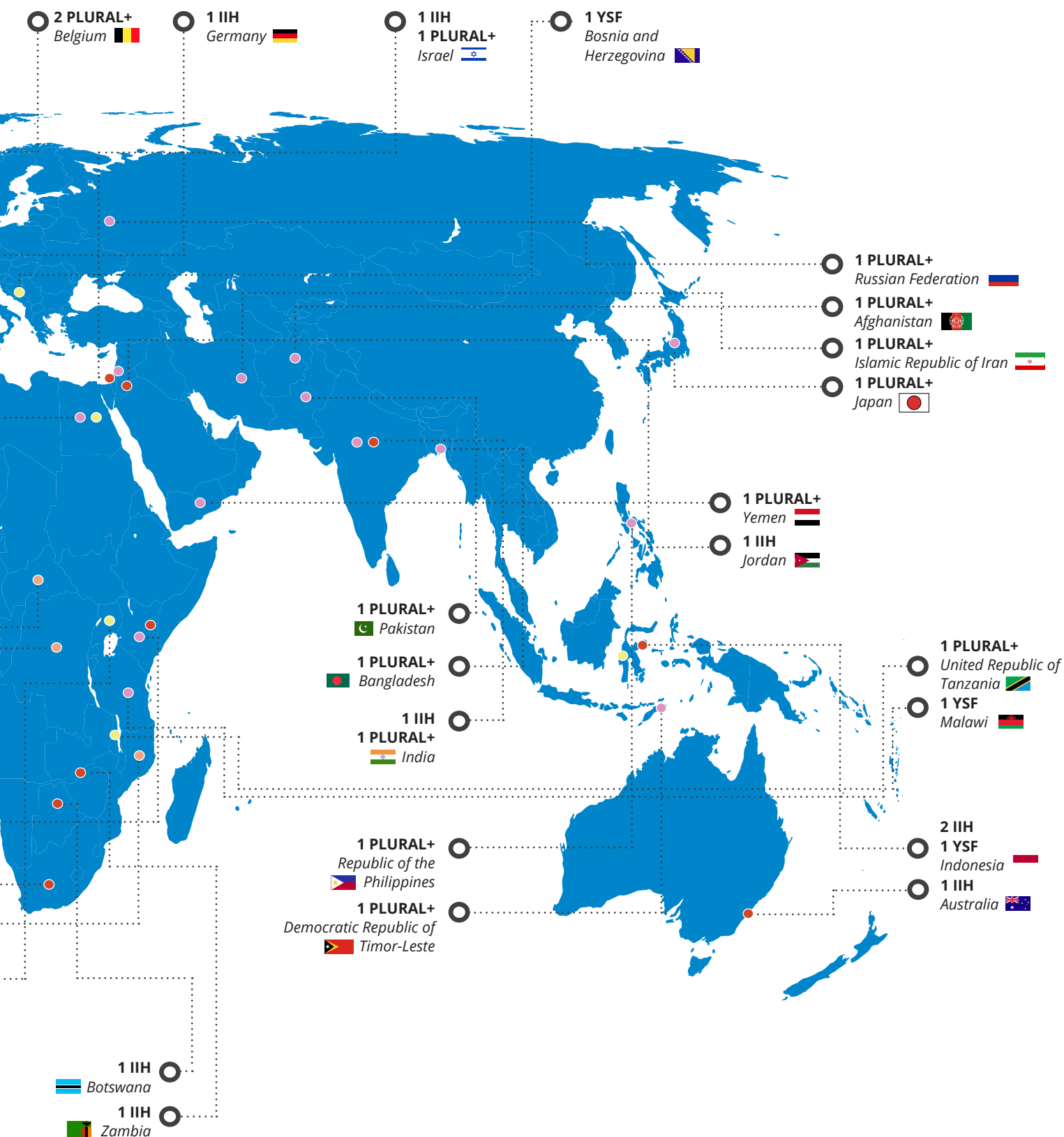


Designed to benefit policymakers, practitioners and civil society leaders, the course delivers seven thematic modules packed with practical tools, evidence-based strategies and real-world insights on harnessing sport's transformative power in PVE efforts. In the course, UNAOC underscored the critical need for cross-sector collaboration and innovative, action-oriented approaches, highlighting the e-learning course as a key milestone in providing stakeholders with tangible resources and a platform for sustained engagement.

UNAOC LOCAL AND GL



GLOBAL PROGRAMMING



- **IIH** = Intercultural Innovation Hub Recipients
- **YPB** = UNAOC Young Peacebuilders
- **PLURAL+** = PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival Recipients
- **YSF** = UNAOC Youth Solidarity Fund Recipients
- **LC** = La Courneuve News Generation Against Hate Participants
- **WAP** = Women's Alliance for Peace



CHAPTER 5

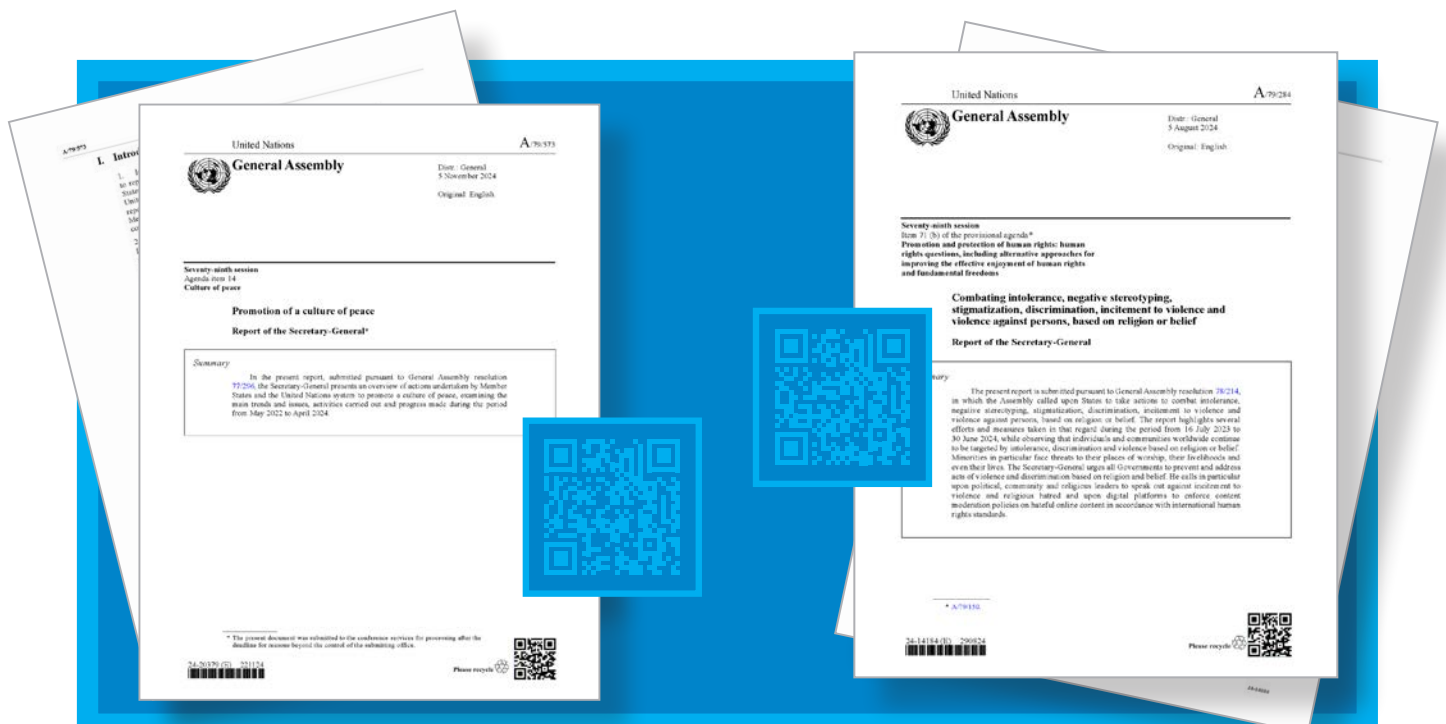
POLICY ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH: PROMOTING UNAOC PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

PROMOTING INTERFAITH AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

UNAOC acted as a co-chair of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Religion and Sustainable Development, along with UNFPA and UNOSAPG, after the tenure of co-chair was renewed for the period 2023 to 2025. Throughout 2024, together with UNOSAPG, UNAOC organized a series of advocacy events. In March, UNAOC, UNOSAPG and OHCHR hosted a virtual thematic discussion on the impact of anti-blasphemy and anti-apostasy laws. Following briefings by human rights experts, members of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Religion and Sustainable Development and the Multi-Faith Advisory Council discussed how individuals and communities could best be protected against incitement to hatred and imminent violence based on religion or belief, as an alternative to laws against blasphemy and apostasy and their negative human rights impacts. In September, UNAOC highlighted good practices in engaging with faith leaders and actors, exchanging actionable strategies for achieving sustainable development and peace, and advocating for the inclusion of faith language in UN processes at the #UNGA79 side event entitled, "Faith-based Solutions for the Pact for the Future and Beyond", co-sponsored by the United Nations Environment Programme and the U.N. Multi-faith Advisory Council.



Co-chairs of the United Nations Interagency Task Force on Religion and Sustainable Development, UNAOC, UNOSAPG, as well as OHCHR, hosted a virtual thematic discussion on the impact of anti-blasphemy and anti-apostasy laws, March 2024.



The work of UNAOC in promoting interfaith and intercultural dialogue and expanding its policy, advocacy work and related programming found due recognition in the United Nations General Assembly resolutions adopted by Member States during the seventy-eighth and seventy-ninth sessions of the General Assembly. UNAOC also was recognized in reports released by the United Nations Secretary-General in 2024 that covered issues that fall under the scope of UNAOC pillars and initiatives. Examples include the report on Combating intolerance, negative stereotyping, stigmatization, discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against persons, based on religion or belief, and the report A/79/573 on the Promotion of a culture of peace.

Throughout the year, the High Representative highlighted the work of UNAOC and the role of faith and religious leaders in conflict prevention as well as preventing and countering all forms of discrimination, xenophobia and religious intolerance, including Islamophobia, antisemitism and Christianophobia. In February, UNAOC celebrated the International Day of Human Fraternity during a commemorative event co-organized with the Permanent Missions of Egypt and the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations. Numerous presentations and speaking engagements were made during other high-level events, including the Second Tokyo Roundtable titled “Beyond War and Toward Reconciliation: Multi-Religious Peace Roundtable”, supported by UNAOC and organized by Religions for Peace International and Religions for Peace Japan (February); International Dialogue of

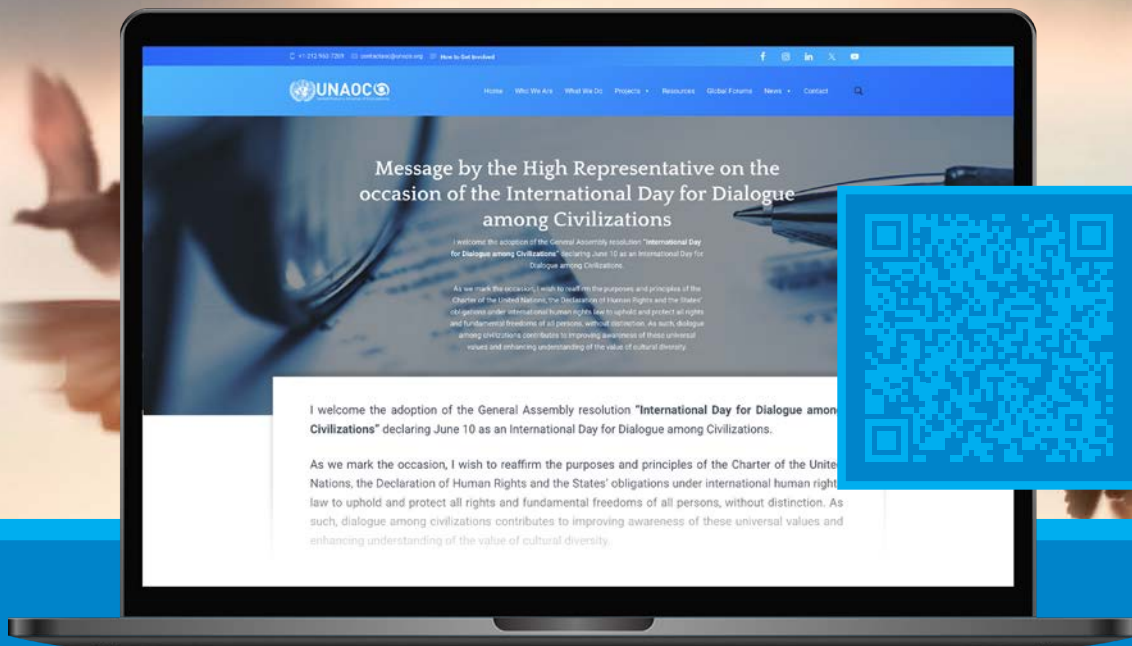
Civilisations and Tolerance Conference (Abu Dhabi, February); 9th Geneva Interfaith Dialogue at the Palais des Nations, co-organized by the Permanent Mission of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and UNITAR (Geneva, February); High-Level event on the occasion of the International Day to Combat Islamophobia (New York, March); coordination meeting on Combating anti-Muslim Hatred held by the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, March); the high-level panel discussion on Interfaith Dialogue, organized by the IPU during its 148th Assembly (Geneva, March); Multi-Faith High-Level Forum, organized by Religions for Peace and UNICEF (New York, March); “The Middle East in a Changing World: Uncertainties, Risks, and Opportunities” discussion, hosted by King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies in partnership with the Nizami Ganjavi International Center and UNAOC (Riyadh, May); a high-level panel discussion entitled “Promoting Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development through Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue”, co-organized by UNAOC and the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the United Nations (New York, September); the Global Summit of Religious Leaders on the margins of COP29: “World Religions for A Green Planet” (Baku, October); Euro-Mediterranean Civil Society Conference titled “Reclaiming our Shared Humanity. Countering Polarisation, Dehumanisation, and Radicalisation driven by the Middle East Conflict”, organized by the European Institute of the Mediterranean (Barcelona, October).



“The path to building just, inclusive and cohesive societies begins with full respect for all human rights for all individuals, without distinction. Racism, xenophobia, religious intolerance such as Islamophobia, antisemitism, persecution of minority Christians and all forms of discrimination based on religion, belief, ethnicity, gender or culture are all violations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Human Rights law and the UN Charter.”

Ms. Nihal Saad, UNAOC Director, Strasbourg, March 2024





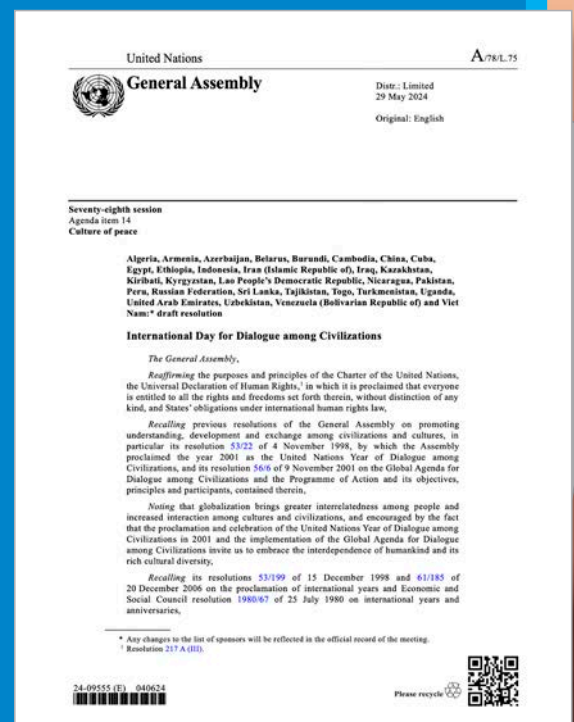
MESSAGE OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE FOR UNAOC ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR DIALOGUE AMONG CIVILIZATIONS, NEW YORK, JUNE 2024

I welcome the adoption of the General Assembly resolution “**International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations**” declaring June 10 as an International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations.

As we mark the occasion, I wish to reaffirm the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Declaration of Human Rights and the States’ obligations under international human rights law to uphold and protect all rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons, without distinction. As such, dialogue among civilizations contributes to improving awareness of these universal values and enhancing understanding of the value of cultural diversity.

In this context, I wish to express my gratitude to China and all Member States, co-sponsors of the resolution for their appreciation of the valuable role of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in promoting greater understanding and respect among civilizations, cultures, religions and beliefs as well as for UNAOC’ Global Forums considered as a global platform for dialogue among state and non-state actors including civil society organizations, religious leaders, youth, media, artists and athletes.

On the International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations, let’s celebrate our diversity; Let’s recommit to respect our differences; Let’s protect human dignity, indiscriminately.



PROMOTING A CULTURE OF PEACE AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

UNAOC remained committed to fostering intercultural dialogue and advancing a culture of peace by implementing multidimensional initiatives in collaboration with Member States and non-state stakeholders.

UNAOC is a partner of the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, the 6th edition of which was hosted by the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan and inaugurated by the President, H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, in May 2024. Representing the United Nations Secretary-General and also speaking in his own capacity, the High Representative underscored that dialogue across cultures, religions and civilizations is the platform that UNAOC continues to advocate



UNAOC Director highlighted the work of UNAOC in fostering dialogue among different cultures and religions to create empathy and understanding in a side event on “Freedom of religion or belief as a tool for the promotion of peace”, organized by the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations in New York, October 2024.



UNAOC Director delivered a keynote address at the opening session of the Ninth International Fatwa Conference, at the invitation of His Eminence Dr. Shawky Allam, the Grand Mufti of Egypt, Cairo, July 2024.



“I conclude with a call to commit to dialogue to transform relations among communities affected by conflict and rebuild trust so that former enemies can envision and realize a shared future. Dialogue paves the way for true reconciliation, to moving from a divided past towards a better future.”



High Representative for UNAOC, Yerevan Dialogue Forum on “Strengthening Multiculturalism in a Divided World”, September 2024



not only because it is its mandate and the mission, but also because it believes that dialogue is an imperative for sustainable peace. Later in September, the High Representative participated in the Yerevan Dialogue Forum on “Strengthening Multiculturalism in a Divided World”, hosted by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia. In his remarks, the High Representative emphasized that intercultural dialogue offers a forward-looking model for managing cultural diversity, preventing ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural divides, and enabling to move forward together to deal with different identities constructively on the basis of shared universal values.



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“We need the power of conscience to stay united. Now is a time for solidarity, not divisiveness. Mutual respect, not xenophobia. Love, not hatred.”

Ms. Nihal Saad, UNAOC Director, New York, April 2024

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On the occasion of his visits to Azerbaijan and Armenia, the High Representative met with political leaders, commending the leadership of both countries for their wisdom and courage, and for mastering the political will to get closer to a peace agreement.

UNAOC has actively commemorated the International Day of Conscience 2024. The UNAOC Director presented the work of UNAOC at the Bahá’í International Center in New York during the meeting on “Building the Culture of Peace with Love and Conscience”, organized by the Global Security Institute. She also delivered remarks at the event entitled “Harmony in Diversity: Promoting Peaceful Coexistence” on 5 April, convened by the Kingdom of Bahrain. On the occasion of the International Day of Peace, 21 September, the High Representative shared the message of peace, mutual respect and compassion at the high-level event, “A Beacon of Light in the Darkness”.

In his blog, the High Representative posted “Enough is Enough: A Call for Peace in the Middle East”, reflecting on the gravity of the situation in the Middle East and calling on the international community to save lives and legitimately proclaim that “enough is enough.” He noted that no one can or should justify Hamas’s attacks and its dehumanizing acts of October 7th, 2023. One of the main priorities will thus continue to be the unconditional liberation of the Israeli hostages—the sooner, the better. But neither can we sit back and do nothing as the dramatic situation in Gaza unfolds before our eyes, where in addition to Hamas being the main target of Israeli military action, much of the Palestinian civilian population remains on the receiving end of all the destruction. This is not only an existential conflict between two communities, nations, and narratives—the Israeli and Palestinian. What is at stake is the credibility and viability of a system of international governance that has proven itself incapable of stopping a dehumanizing trend that is already shaping up to become one of the most fateful moments in human history.

To read the full post, please visit:

<https://blog.unaoc.org/2024/05/enough-is-enough-a-call-for-peace-in-the-middle-east/>



SUPPORTING THE YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA

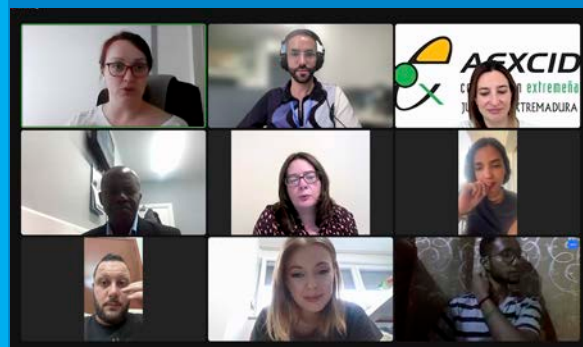
UNAOC continued supporting the work of the Interagency Network on Youth Development and the Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security by actively participating in regular meetings and collaborating with partners on relevant initiatives. In partnership with the UNFPA, UNODC, UNODA, OHCHR, the Major Group for Children and Youth and the United Network of Young Peacebuilders, UNAOC co-organized a thematic session related to SDG 16 entitled “Engaging Youth in Building Peaceful and Inclusive Societies” at the United Nations Economic and Social Council Youth Forum 2024, New York. Two UNAOC Young Peacebuilders programme alumni, Ms. Bahia Ghatti from Argentina and Mr. Rolando Pelicot from Panama, participated as panelists, underscoring the vital role of youth in shaping sustainable and peaceful solutions to increasing polarization, conflicts and violence in their communities.

Several other global events featured contributions of the UNAOC alumni to exchanges of views and discussion around critical topics. For example, 20 young leaders took part in the 6th World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue in Baku, Azerbaijan, May 2024. UNAOC staged two Intergenerational Dialogue sessions in which a selected group of youth alumni discussed with the United Nations officials the good practices on preventing violent extremism through the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, sports and other innovative tools; and the importance of placing young people and women at the forefront of peacebuilding efforts. Many UNAOC youth alumni were present during the Summit of the Future Action Days in New York, which brought together all stakeholders that played a key role in shaping the Pact for the Future.

Throughout the year, UNAOC provided input to the reports of the Secretary-General on Youth and peace and security (S/2024/207) and on Policies and programmes involving youth (E/CN.5/2025/4). The reports showcased the capacity-building work of



Youth alumni of UNAOC programmes participated in a side event at the 6th World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue in Baku, Azerbaijan, May 2024.



UNAOC participated in an online civic advocacy training for Youth participants organized by the European Association for Local Democracy, May 2024.

UNAOC and how it serves as a platform for dialogue between youth and policymakers to ensure that young voices contribute to peacebuilding policies and actions.

The annual Youth 2030 Progress Report summarized the advancements made by the United Nations system in strengthening the global youth commitments and youth agenda with and for youth. UNAOC was recognized for nine actions and functions on youth across eight Youth 2030 priority areas. Some specific programmes and initiatives were highlighted as leading examples of good practices, such as the Sport for One Humanity (Partnerships for Innovations); Intercultural Leaders (Knowledge Portal); and the Youth Forum in Ghana, organized in the framework of the Global Sports Programme (UN-led programmes, projects and campaigns - WITH Youth). A detailed summary of all UNAOC youth-related projects and activities was compiled in the UN Snapshot Series.



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“We must place the voices and leadership of young people, women and minorities at the forefront of peacebuilding efforts for it is only through their empowerment and inclusion that we can create a just and sustainable peace.”

Lynda Nkechi Emmanuel, UNAOC youth alumna, Nigeria

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UNAOC has also advocated for and showcased the work of young people in peacebuilding at global events, convened by Member States and civil society partners, namely: Civic Advocacy Training for Youth Participants, organized by the European Association for Local Democracy (May); the 17th Summer School for Young Diplomats, co-organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro, UNDP Montenegro and the Union for the Mediterranean (June); the Ohrid Cultural Diplomacy Forum 2024, convened by the Office of President Gjorge Ivanov and the Academy for Cultural Diplomacy (October).

“

“It is a lot harder to change hearts later in life. For that reason, investing in youth is a question of return on investment. The impact we can have when we invest in youth is paramount to advancing inclusion.”

Jason Wee, UNAOC youth alumnus, Malaysia



PREVENTING AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM CONDUCTIVE TO TERRORISM, INCLUDING THROUGH THE USE OF SPORT

UNAOC is a signatory of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact and acts as a vice-chair of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism. In 2024, UNAOC continued to take part in the Compact's sessions and meetings, including but not limited to the following: 10th United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Committee Meeting "Session 3 UN Counter-Terrorism Compact's coordination with regional organizations, civil society, and the private sector in preventing and countering terrorism in Africa" (January); Commemoration of the International Day for the Prevention of Violent Extremism as and when Conducive to Terrorism (February); and quarterly briefings to Member States in New York.

At the High-level African Counter Terrorism Meeting in Abuja, Nigeria (April 2024), the High Representative for UNAOC reaffirmed the commitment of UNAOC to promote the UN Joint Appeal for Africa and highlighted UNAOC projects implemented in Africa that serve as good practices in addressing Pillar I of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.



The High Representative for UNAOC addressed the United Nations International Conference on Victims of Terrorism, organized by UNOCT and the Kingdom of Spain at the Palacio de Congresos Europa, October 2024.



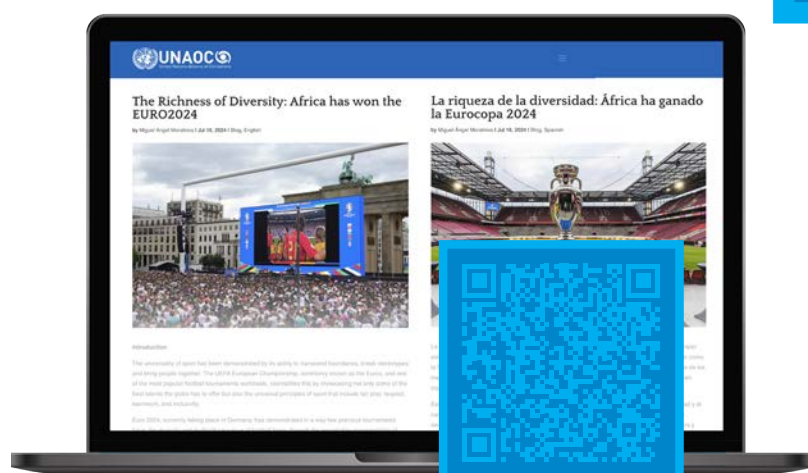
"Including the voices of young people in policy making and implementation of sport-PVE strategies is important. Recognizing this factor, UNAOC deliverables in the UN Global Sports Program were informed by the outcome of a series of consultations with youth ensuring that their unique skills and perspectives on PVE through sport are effectively considered by decision-makers."

Ms. Nihal Saad, UNAOC Director, at the launch of the UN Global Sports Programme's E-Learning Course on the Prevention of Violent Extremism through Sport, February 2024



CONTRIBUTING TO SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE AGENDA

UNAOC recognizes the transformative power of sport as a tool for development and peace, actively contributing to global efforts to foster social cohesion and counter discrimination. UNAOC continues to advance the role of sport in fostering inclusive societies, solidarity and unity through strategic advocacy, high-level dialogues and international cooperation. Reflecting on these efforts during the “Effective Management and Safeguarding of Major Sporting Events” conference, organized by UNOCT and hosted by Naif Arab University for Security Sciences in Riyadh (May 2024), Mr. Doğan Aşık, UNAOC Partnerships Consultant stated: “The Policy Recommendations from a Youth Perspective on PVE-Through-Sport emerged from a series of youth consultations facilitated by UNAOC, engaging over 100 young civil society leaders worldwide. These consultations reinforced the need for systematic youth inclusion in policy design and implementation, recognizing sport’s power in fostering resilience, social cohesion and leadership. Their impact is



"The universality of sport has been demonstrated by its ability to transcend boundaries, break stereotypes and bring people together."

High Representative's blog, July 2024

already evident—driving youth-led initiatives, cross-sector collaboration, and greater recognition of sport as a tool for peace and inclusion”.

UNAOC remains committed to advocating for inclusive, youth-centered approaches to sport for development and peace, ensuring that sport continues to serve as a powerful force for dialogue, mutual understanding and social transformation worldwide. That message was reinforced by the High Representative for UNAOC during the pre-Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games event in Paris. He has also reflected on the universality of sport and its ability to transcend boundaries, break stereotypes and bring people together in his blog post “The Richness of Diversity: Africa has won the EURO2024”.

OP-EDS BY THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE



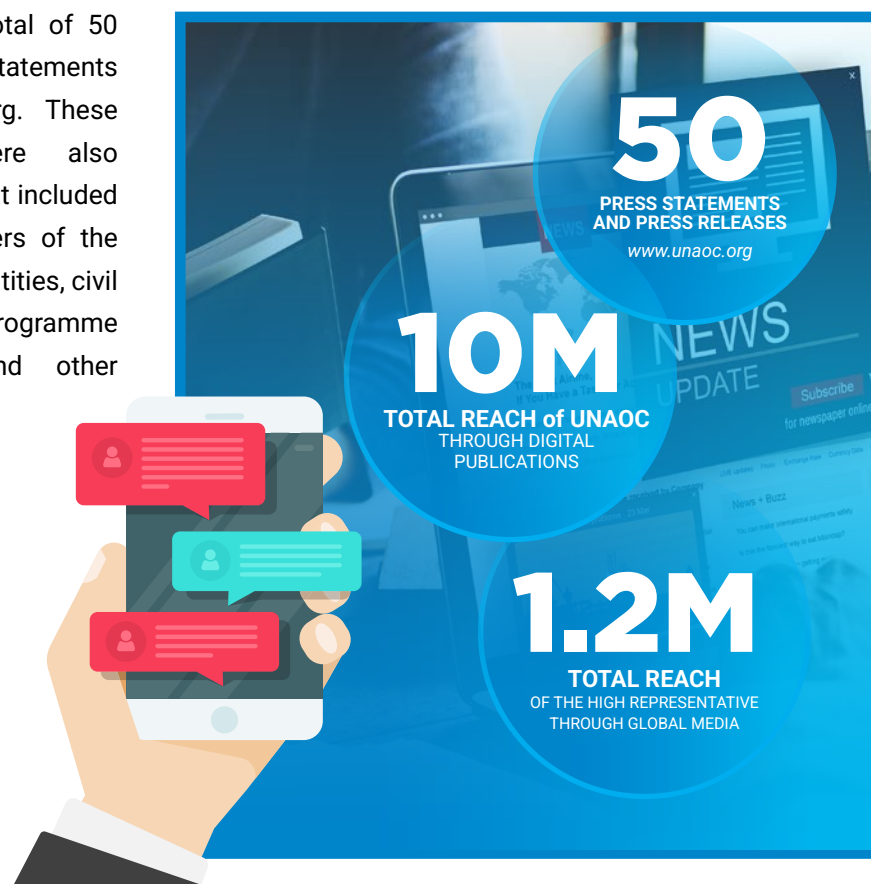
Read the High Representative's blog "Convivencia" at <https://blog.unaoc.org/>

On behalf of UNAOC, the High Representative reflected on global issues that are of grave concern to the well-being of humanity in opinion pieces published to his blog entitled "Convivencia" – which is the Spanish word for "coexistence". In an essay entitled "Auschwitz: Humanity's Hell", the High Representative recalled how throughout history, wars and conflicts have painted vivid portraits of horror and desolation, but never before has humankind witnessed death and destruction of such profound magnitude inflicted upon an entire people – in this case, the systemic annihilation of Jews, non-Jewish Poles, Romani and Soviet prisoners of war in Auschwitz, the concentration and extermination camp. The High Representative called for standing up once and for all against the extremist ideologies that are at the root of atrocity crimes.

PRESS STATEMENTS AND PRESS RELEASES

In 2024, UNAOC published a total of 50 press releases and press statements on its website, www.unaoc.org. These communications products were also disseminated to a vast network that included media contacts, partners, members of the Group of Friends, United Nations entities, civil society organizations, UNAOC programme alumni, online subscribers and other stakeholders.

Mentions of the High Representative's name in global media and international publications reached 1.2 million users. Media mentions for UNAOC on online publications, excluding social media, generated an audience reach of 10 million in 2024.



SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE

In addition to his blogs, op-eds, interviews and statements, the High Representative to leverage the social media platform X.com (formerly Twitter) to condemn attacks on places of worship and denounce incidents of religious intolerance and other forms of discrimination based on religion or belief. Through his X account, @MiguelMoratinos, he published statements deploring such acts, as well as a total of 53 posts spotlighting his advocacy and preventive diplomacy efforts throughout the world, reaching over 1.4 million users.



MEDIA COVERAGE



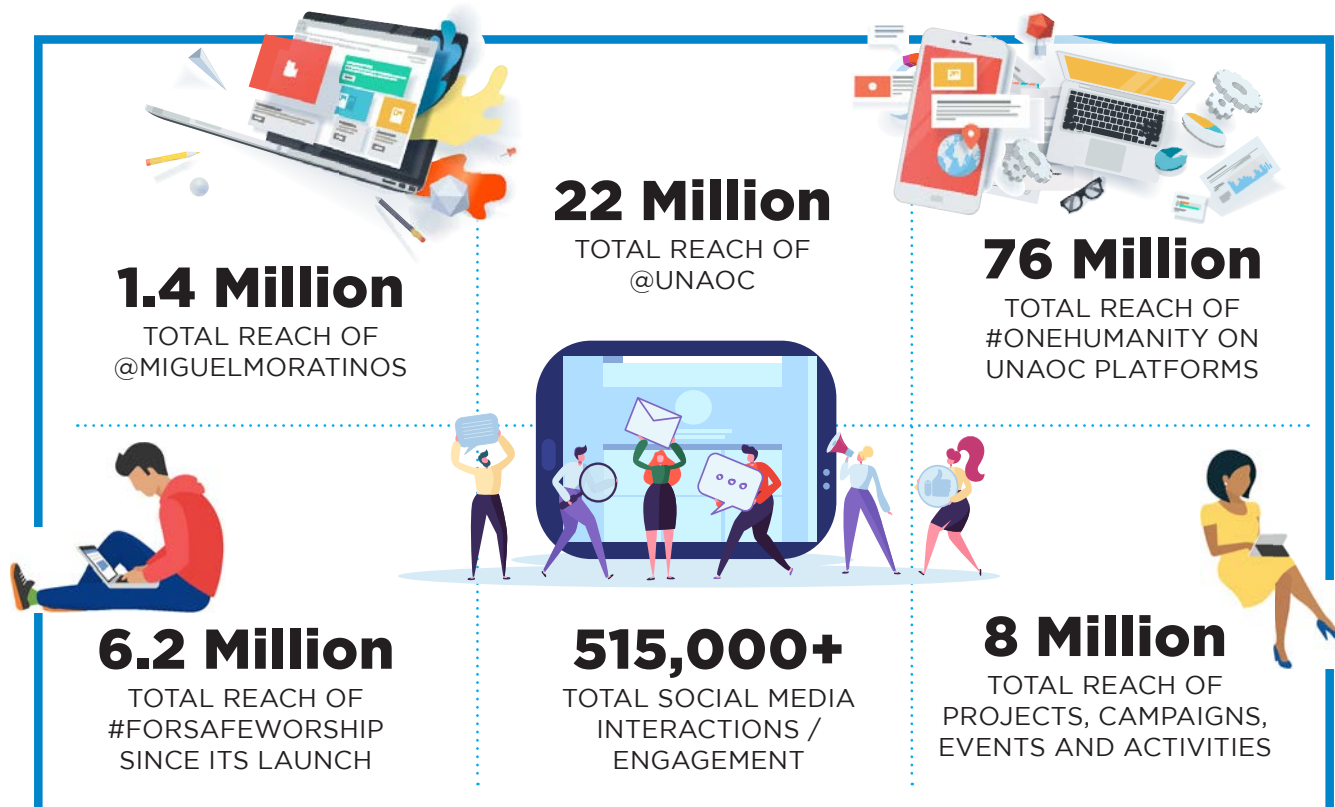
Leading international, national and community media outlets, including print, television, radio, web and digital mediums, covered activities and advocacy efforts carried out by the High Representative and UNAOC staff members in 2024. Coverage included media coverage of UNAOC programming and political advocacies in multiple languages, such as EuroNews (Europe), El País (Spain), TRT (Türkiye), *Corriere della Sera* (Italy), *Diário do Litoral* (Portugal), *Azerbaijan24* (Azerbaijan), *Kuwait Times* (Kuwait), *Arab News* (Saudi Arabia), *Sky News* (UAE), and several others – with mentions of UNAOC generating a total reach of 10 million users, excluding social media. The High Representative for UNAOC was interviewed and profiled in *Mares30* (Spain), the *People's Daily* (China), *El Diario* (Spain), *L'essentiel* (France), *Peace and Accord* (Kazakhstan), *El Ciervo* (Spain), *North Africa Post*, *Abu Dhabi TV* (UAE), and *Agence MAP* (Morocco), among others.

DIGITAL OUTREACH AND SOCIAL MEDIA

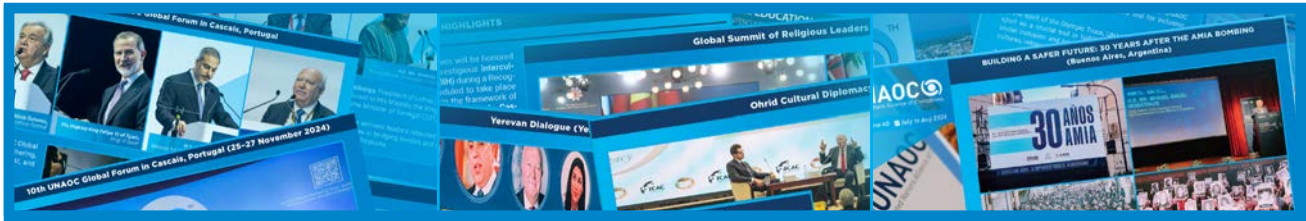
UNAOC remains at the forefront of the ever-evolving landscape of global communications through a comprehensive digital outreach, social media and content management strategy. Across multiple websites, microsites and social media platforms, UNAOC continues to amplify key messages, engage diverse audiences, foster its community of stakeholders and promote the values of solidarity, inclusion and mutual respect.

On major social media platforms, mentions of UNAOC reached over 22 million users with over 320,000 interactions. The hashtag #OneHumanity generated a total reach of 76 million with a robust engagement of over 515,000 interactions.

Other UNAOC campaigns, events, and activities – including #UNAOCyouth (highlighting youth-focused initiatives), #CascaisForum (focused on the 10th Global Forum), #UNAOCgof2024 (covering the high-level Ministerial Group of Friends meeting), as well as flagship programmes such as the Intercultural Innovation Hub and PLURAL+ (#PLURALplus24) – generated a total social media reach of approximately 8 million.



MULTIMEDIA PUBLICATIONS

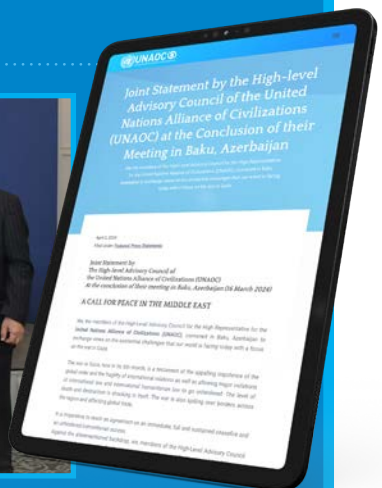


UNAOC consistently produced a range of communication materials for both print and digital distribution, including a periodic “News Flash” newsletter that offers comprehensive coverage of the organization’s events, high-level meetings, project activities and more. Additionally, UNAOC produced and published a variety of digital cards, infographics, videos, reels and a wide range of interactive multimedia elements to enhance the visibility of its ongoing projects and initiatives. This robust content strategy played a crucial role in promoting several activations on social media, including project-

specific calls for applications and submissions, special UNAOC events, the #forSafeWorship global call to action and advocacy campaigns, among others. UNAOC amplified its global presence through dynamic live coverage of meetings, symposiums, and high-profile events, reaching millions and sparking meaningful engagement among its growing online community. More notably, the main UNAOC website and its full suite of project and campaign microsites remained the central repository for real-time updates and live content, delivering UNAOC impact stories to a diverse, worldwide audience.

HIGH-LEVEL ADVISORY COUNCIL OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE

The High-level Advisory Council of the High Representative routinely provided external expertise on international affairs and trends pertinent to the UNAOC mandate and areas of work to the High Representative. Members of the Council engage voluntarily with the High Representative and comprise a diverse group of women and men from a wide geographic representation who are leaders from the business sector, academia, the arts and literature, politics and religion.



On the sidelines of the XI Global Baku Forum, the High Representative for UNAOC convened a working lunch with the High-Level Advisory Council members: H.E. Mr. Amre Moussa, (Chair) former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt and former Secretary-General of the League of Arab States; H.E. Mr. Ammar Abdelwahed El Khudairy, Founding Chairman of Amwal Capital Partners; H.E. Ms. Benita Ferrero-Waldner, former Foreign Minister of the Republic of Austria and former European Commissioner for External Relations; H.E. Mr. Egemen Bağış, Ph.D., Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye in the Czechia and former Minister for European Union Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye; Dr. Elkhail M. Binebine, Moroccan businessman; H.E. Ms. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, former President of the Republic of Croatia; H.E. Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa, President of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly and former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic Ecuador; H.E. Dr. Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, President of Latvia (1999–2007) and Co-Chair of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center; and H.E. Dr. Yehuda Lancry, former Ambassador of Israel to France and former Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations, Baku, March 2024

CHAPTER 6

FUNDING



The achievements and progress outlined in this report have been made possible through generous contributions to the UNAOC voluntary trust fund. UNAOC operational and programming work are entirely funded by voluntary contributions without any allocations from the United Nations regular budget.

During the financial year 2024, UNAOC raised US\$3,235,622.36 in voluntary contributions from 10 donors.

2024 DONORS OF THE UNAOC TRUST FUND

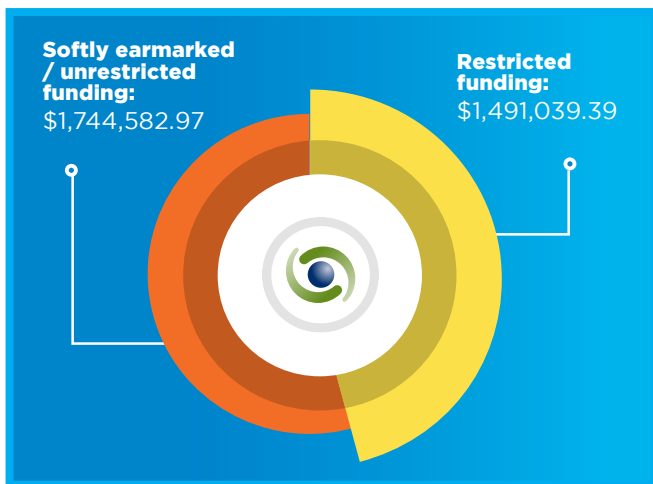
DONOR	AMOUNT (US)
BMW Group	500,000.00
Kazakhstan	70,000.00
Qatar	100,000.00
Türkiye	1,000,000.00
Azerbaijan	1,000,000.00
Accenture	100,030.00
	20,000.00
Portugal	1619.97.00
	31,173.00
Saudi Arabia	300,000.00
Luxembourg	21,79000
Sweden (SIDA)	91,009.39
	\$3,235,622.36

The UNAOC office and its programming activities received in-kind support from State and non-State donors and partners. In particular, the Government of Türkiye seconded an official to the UNAOC liaison office in Geneva. The Government of Portugal has generously hosted the 10th UNAOC Global Forum in Cascais. The BMW Group and Accenture offered pro bono workshop facilities and expert services to IIH recipients.

Cash liquidity challenges continued to persist throughout 2024, with the majority of the voluntary contributions arriving in the trust fund during the second half of the calendar year. The

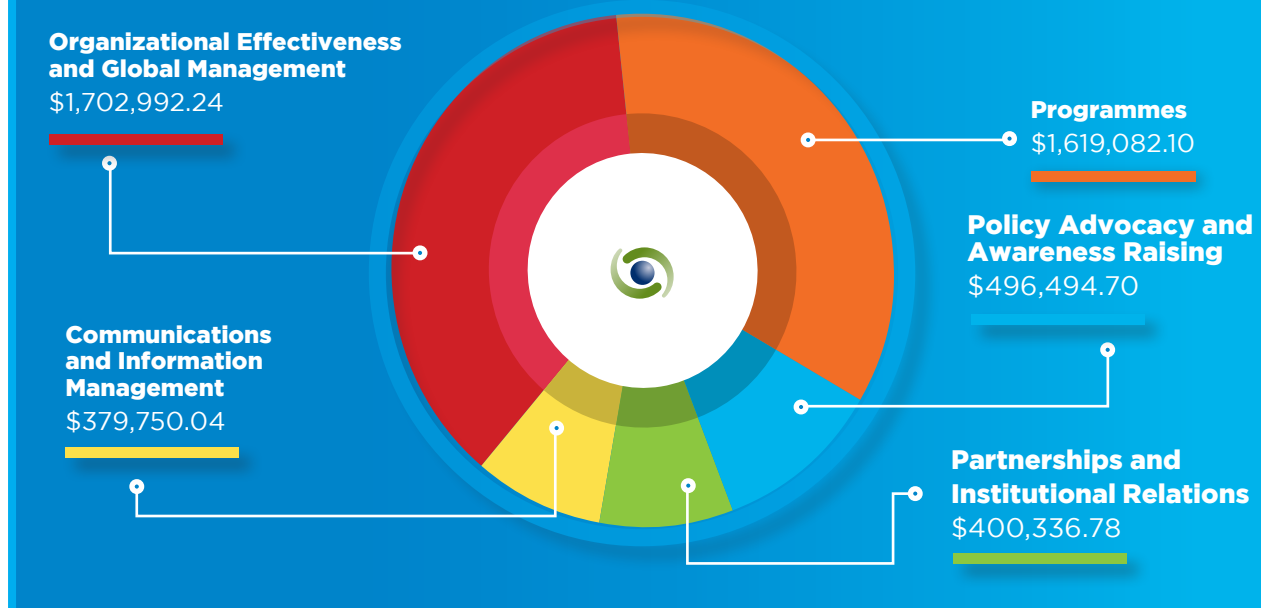
delayed timeline of the UNAOC voluntary trust fund replenishment impacted the ability to issue long-term personnel contracts and the advance planning of programming activities.


UNAOC continued to implement cash conservation measures and to seek cost savings whenever possible while remaining committed to the principles of organizational efficiency, effectiveness, results orientation and transparency. The budget allocations were prioritized for the planning and execution of the 10th UNAOC Global Forum and programmes. Non-essential international travel expenses were reduced to zero.



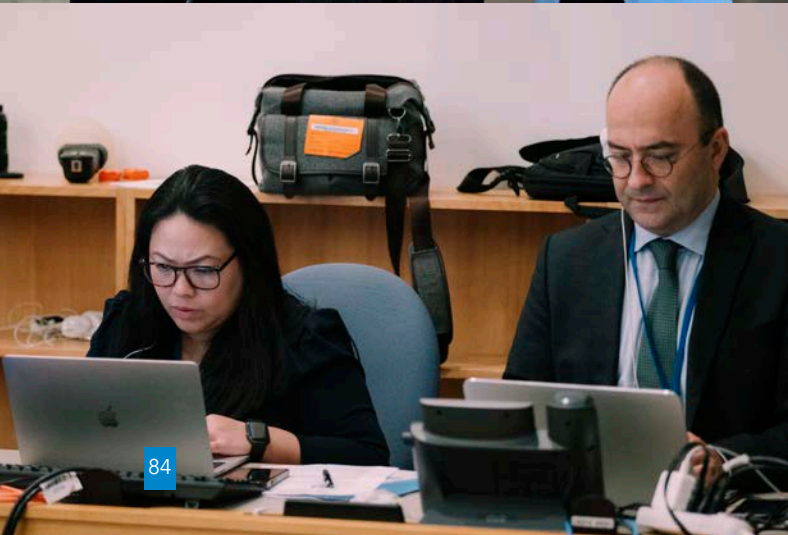
Note: All FY 2024 figures are provisional and aim to provide aggregate data by substantive and administrative types of activities carried out by UNAOC. They are inclusive of project support costs. Information on the closing balance and investments is reflected in the statements of financial position for the UNAOC voluntary trust fund, issued by the United Nations Secretariat on an annual basis. The UNAOC voluntary trust fund is administered by the United Nations and is subject to an audit by the United Nations Board of Auditors in conformity with the International Standards on Auditing and the United Nations Financial Regulations and Rules.

2024 UNAOC EXPENDITURES





THE UNAOC TEAM IN ACTION







H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos
Under-Secretary-General, High Representative
for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)



Nihal Saad
Director



Hakan Kıvınc
Senior Representative, UNAOC Geneva Office



Alessandro Girola
Chief, Programming
and Projects Unit



Anna Pavlyuchenko
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Head of Administration Unit



Julie Ann Ladan
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Dana Podmolikova
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Carlos Fernandez
Project Management
Support Senior Assistant



Chuqiu Peng
Administration Senior
Assistant



Charles Tenenbaum
Mediation and Identity-
Based Conflict Resolution
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Judith Macharia
Project Management
Support Senior Assistant



Nerea Martí Ayuso
Personal Assistant to the
High Representative



Miriam Rubio
Programme Management
Support – Senior Assistant



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“One humanity. Many cultures.”

UNAOC aims to improve understanding and cooperation among nations and peoples across cultures and to reduce polarization at local and global levels. It helps develop more inclusive societies, in which diversity is experienced as an asset.

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)

www.unaoc.org **#OneHumanity**